

Rochford District Local Wildlife Sites Review 2007



IMPORTANT NOTES

Nomenclature

The term "Site of Importance for Nature Conservation" (SINC) used in previous reports is here replaced by the currently generally accepted term of "Local Wildlife Site".

Rationale

It is hoped that this identification of important Local Wildlife Sites is not seen as a hindrance to the livelihood of those landowners affected, or an attempt to blindly influence the management of such sites. It is an attempt to describe the wildlife resource we have in the county as a whole, which has been preserved thus far as a result of the management by landowners and together we hope to be able to help landowners retain and enhance this biodiversity for the future.

Public Access

Identification as a Local Wildlife Site within this report does not confer any right of public access to the site, above and beyond any Public Rights of Way that may exist. The vast majority of the Sites are in private ownership and this should be respected at all times.

Land Ownership

It has always been the intention of the Essex Wildlife Trust to contact all landowners of Local Wildlife Sites, advising them of this identification and promoting nature conservation management of the site. To that end, the Essex Wildlife Trust has appointed a Local Wildlife Sites Officer. While this lengthy undertaking is in progress it is requested that the Essex Wildlife Trust is contacted prior to any formal approach regarding any Site identified within this report.

Boundaries

Whilst every attempt has been made to ensure accurate mapping of the site boundaries, the accompanying maps should be considered as being illustrative only. The Essex Wildlife Trust should be consulted over the precise boundary of all sites, should any dispute occur or precise determination be required.

Planning

The information within this report should not be used as a bypass to the normal planning consultation process. It is inevitable that, with the passage of time, some Local Wildlife Sites will be lost or damaged to the extent that they are no longer considered as such. Similarly, new Sites may be identified and periodically added to the list for the borough. For these reasons, the Essex Wildlife Trust still wishes to be consulted on all planning proposals, regardless of whether or not they apparently affect a Site detailed within this report. This report will allow a greater understanding of the wildlife resources of the district/borough and will make the consultation process much faster and more cost-effective.

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ROCHFORD DISTRICT
LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

This report has been produced by Essex Ecology Services Ltd. (EECOS), the ecological consultancy of the Essex Wildlife Trust, on behalf of Rochford District Council. It comprises the results of a review of existing and potential Local Wildlife Sites, intended to contribute to the Local Development Framework evidence base.

1.2 Background

A previous survey report, produced in 1993, incorporated a basic land use survey with an exercise to identify the most important wildlife habitats present within the district. These important wildlife habitats were identified as “Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation” [SINC], with the results summarised in “Nature conservation – A Reference Guide” produced by the Essex Wildlife Trust. In the intervening years these sites have been referred to as County Wildlife Sites and, in some places, Wildlife Sites, but in Essex the term Local Wildlife Sites has now been adopted and is used throughout this report to refer to sites of this designation, irrespective of the terminology that was used at the time.

1.3 Objectives of Review

The principal objective of this review is to update the Local Wildlife Site network within Rochford District in the light of changes in available knowledge and by application of draft site selection criteria for Essex. This updated information can contribute to a robust evidence base as required of each Local Authority as part of their Local Development Framework.

1.4 Review Process and Methodology

The basis for this review has been a consultation exercise to identify potential new Sites and a field survey of these and of all existing Local Wildlife Sites. All of these sites were then assessed against the current Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria to determine whether or not they qualified for Local Wildlife Site status. Species and habitats now afforded attention via county or national Biodiversity Action Plans were specifically considered and their representation within the Local Wildlife Site network ensured. The Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria have been developed through reviews in other Essex districts and modified in line with national guidelines and following a wide consultation exercise. The criteria are still being modified and there are likely to be further changes before their official publication. The version used during this review is the most up to date draft, dated March 2007.

Following on from the assessment process, a draft suite of Local Wildlife Sites was compiled and circulated for consultation and comment. These comments have been incorporated as far as possible within the final list of sites, while maintaining the rigour of the published Site Selection Criteria.

For some groups, such as invertebrates, the state of our knowledge concerning their distribution and ecological requirements is still quite limited, so that whilst criteria are now being put in place to select sites on the grounds of their invertebrate interest, the actual ability to do so is still at an early stage. However, development of the various biodiversity initiatives across the county and the production of a draft Essex Red Data List have helped in focussing on the needs of these populations and identifying their key population localities. These data should continue to feed into subsequent Local Wildlife Site reviews, improving the effectiveness of their nature conservation role.

1.5 Limitations of the Survey

Details of ownership of existing or proposed Local Wildlife Sites were not available when the survey was carried out and so access has largely been restricted to public rights of way. Where obvious, the owners of the site were approached at the time of the assessment.

For many of the sites there is still a lack of data available regarding invertebrate populations and other species information. Every reasonable effort has been made to obtain the additional information necessary to fully assess existing and proposed sites, but this information will be continually updated which may affect the status of some sites.

The scope of the review limited the process to, in most cases, a single visit to each site. While efforts were made to visit each site at the most appropriate season, inevitably some features of some sites were not visible at the time of the visit.

2. RESULTS

2.1 Identification of Wildlife Sites

The suite of Local Wildlife Sites has been amended from those identified in the report in 1993 for the following reasons:

1. Some sites have been de-selected on account of their decreased nature conservation value or failure to satisfactorily meet the revised selection criteria;
2. A few new, modified or previously overlooked sites have been identified and added to the register;
3. SSSIs have been removed from the system;
4. Some sites have been amalgamated where they lie next to each other or are otherwise sufficiently connected.

A major change is that areas designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest SSSI, included in the previous survey, are now no longer included in the Local Wildlife Site network, in line with national guidance. With regards to Rochford District, this removes: (old SINC identification numbers are given for ease of reference).

- W10 Hockley Woods SSSI (92.9 ha) TQ 832915
- G5 Butler's Farm Field (3.2 ha) TQ 902899; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- G6 Mucking Hall Marsh (3.3 ha) TQ 913898; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- FW2 Stannetts Lake and Creek (13.1 ha) TQ 925914; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C2 River Crouch Marshes SSSI, part EWT Reserve (45.5 ha within the seawall) TQ 835957 and TQ 927950; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C3 Lower Raypits Farm Seawall/Saltings part of EWT Reserve (2.6 ha excluding saltings) TQ 918965; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C4. Lion Creek Seawall EWT Reserve (3.0 ha) TQ 923951; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C6. Wallasea Seawall (1.5 ha) TQ 985946 to TQ 985932; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C7. Foulness SSSI (1051.3 ha within the seawalls) TQ 990900.

Another deviation from past Local Wildlife Site policy is in the inclusion of sites containing inter-tidal habitats. In the past Local Wildlife Status has been restricted to terrestrial and freshwater habitats, but it was felt during this review that this excluded important wildlife sites that fall outside of the SSSI boundaries. Both mudflats and saltmarsh are national Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats.

Site numbering has also been changed. Previously, sites were roughly grouped into habitat categories of Woodland, Grassland, Mosaic, Freshwater, Coastal or Heathland, with an appropriate letter code and sequential number. Given that this process was repeated across the 14 boroughs/districts in Essex, this means that the county had 14 “W1” SINC’s i.e. the first woodland site in each local authority area. In order to make the county-wide system less complicated, a new system has been introduced whereby each site has a borough/district and number code, with all Rochford Sites now being prefixed “R” and with no indication of the habitat(s) present on the site.

The proposed, revised list of Rochford Local Wildlife Sites is included in Appendix 1 with the revised Local Wildlife Site Register in Appendix 2.

2.2 Deletions

A few sites have been withdrawn from the Local Wildlife Sites register (old SINC identification numbers are given for ease of reference):

- W2 “Hullbridge Wood” (1.8 ha) TQ808954; the habitat present is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria and the site has been degraded by intensive public access and inappropriate management;
- W3 “Hambro Hill Wood” (1.7 ha) TQ817921; this site does not appear on OS maps from the late 19th century and cannot therefore be considered as “ancient”; there are no other data available to justify its inclusion;
- W29. Buller’s Grove (0.7 ha) TQ 885937; there are no data to justify this site’s inclusion;
- W31 Bartonhall Grove (3.3 ha) TQ 906918; the habitat is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria and no species data are available;
- G1 A127 Special Roadside Verge (1700.0 metres) TQ778908 to TQ784906 and TQ782915 to TQ780907; habitat present is no longer of sufficient quality to meet site selection criteria
- M1. Blounts Mosaic (5.0 ha) TQ816926; the majority of habitat present is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria, but the wooded section at the eastern end has been added to W4 Blounts Wood;
- M2 Eastwood Rise Lake (3.7 ha) TQ834899; the habitat is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria and no species data are available; the site should be reviewed if access can be secured or survey information becomes available;
- M5 Creeksea Road Pits (20.9 ha) TQ922942; a considerable area of this site has been lost to land fill and no data are available on the remainder.

2.3 Additions

A number of new sites have been added to the Local Wildlife Sites register. These are:

- Hullbridge Road Meadow (0.6 ha) TQ806937; reported lowland grassland habitat including population of Green-winged Orchids;

- Lion Creek Meadow (3.1 ha) TQ922947; good quality coastal grassland habitat adjacent to SSSI, Shrill Carder Bee and Scarce Emerald Damselfly present;
- Barling Pits (10.1 ha) TQ935896; reedbed, scrub and saltmarsh communities, invertebrate and bird interest; adjacent to SSSI;
- Wakering Landfill Site (24.0 ha) TQ953886; flower rich grassland on brownfield site, coastal grassland community, Sea Clover, Pale Flax, Dittander, breeding Skylark, invertebrate interest; adjacent reedy fleet; adjacent to SSSI;
- River Roach at Rochford (8.1 ha) TQ883903; herb rich grassland; relict grazing marsh, reedbed and saltmarsh; Red Data Book horsefly *Atylotus latistriatus*; although partly inter-tidal the location of this site makes it vulnerable to adverse impacts from neighbouring industrial land use and so it is recommended for inclusion;
- Wallasea Island Managed Realignment (90.3 ha) TQ964946; Mudflats and embryo saltmarsh; it is anticipated that this site will be incorporated into the Crouch and Roach SSSI when the boundary is next reassessed, but its inclusion as a LoWS is recommended in the meantime.

2.4 Amendments

Several former sites have been significantly revised, affected by both additions and deletions of land. These are (old SINC identification numbers are given for ease of reference):

- W1 Kingley Wood TQ794900; additional woodland habitat added
- W4 Blounts Wood TQ818928; to be extended to include wooded parts of M1, which is being deleted;
- Hockley Woods Complex TQ826918; amalgamation of W5, W7, W9 and W16, all of which are on the periphery of Hockley Woods SSSI; additional block of woodland added in northwest corner;
- Hockleyhall/Crabtree Woods TQ832934; amalgamation of W12 and W13; additional block of formerly contiguous woodland added south of the railway line;
- W15 Bett's Wood TQ834928; additional woodland habitat added;
- W24 Beckney Wood TQ848940; additional contiguous blocks of woodland added;
- M3 Magnolia Nature Reserve and Fields TQ860927; change of name from "Rouncefall and Magnolia Fields"; additional blocks of habitat added to south and east;
- G7 Great Wakering Common TQ 954878; northeast section removed, as grassland has been planted with trees;
- C1 Brandy Hole Marsh Extension TQ830953; extension of site to include habitat created by managed realignment;
- C5 Paglesham Seawall TQ 948922 to TQ 924910; additional section of seawall added to the east.

Several other Sites have been subjected to more modest amendments, mostly associated with more accurate mapping of the boundaries through the use of detailed digital base plans during this review.

2.5 Other Sites

In addition to those sites selected as Local Wildlife Sites, there are two sites, Pulpits Farm, Hockley (TQ849932) and Highsteppers, Ashingdon (TQ862937), that were considered but that did not meet the selection criteria largely, because of a lack of data and poor access. Future survey work may result in these sites fulfilling the selection criteria. The same applies to two sites that are proposed for deletion: M2 Eastwood Rise Lake and M5 Creeksea Road Pits. In addition the newly proposed Barling Pits site could be extended to include areas of the gravel pits and landfill site to the north should access be possible. There are suggestions of importance for the National Trust property Rayleigh Mount, but at present there is insufficient evidence to warrant its inclusion.

The following sites were surveyed and assessed, but failed to meet the site selection criteria. It is not felt that these sites are likely to qualify in the near future, although this may change with time: The Wick, Canewdon; Ironwell Lane, Ashingdon to Hawkwell; Cherry Orchard Country Park; The Paddock, Canewdon (Woodland Trust); Ashingdon Churchyard; Barling Churchyard; Ashingdon Plotlands; Rayleigh Churchyard; grassland around Southend Airport.

2.6 Summary

The 1993 report identified 53 SINC's totalling 1458.5 hectares of land. This included some 1216.4 hectares of what is now SSSI land on nine sites, giving a total of 242.1 hectares of non-SSSI land on 44 SINC's. This present study, which ignores SSSI land, has culminated with the selection of 39 sites totalling 358.3 hectares of Local Wildlife Site land, a net increase of 115.9 hectares, but a loss of five sites.

2.7 Consultation

The responses from the consultation exercise are included in Appendix 3 with, where appropriate, a response to the comment and an indication of the action that resulted.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Local Wildlife Site Network

The number of Local Wildlife Sites within the District has been reduced to 39 following changes in policy relating to SSSIs and the application of more rigorous site selection criteria. Most of the sites that were removed from the network are now considered to be of insufficient quality when measured against the new criteria, either because of a decline in the habitat present over the intervening years or because the Local Wildlife Site “bar” has been raised. In only one case, Creeksea Road Pits, has the site been removed because of a significant change in the character of the site as a result of land use. This site aside, there has been no loss of LoWS habitat as a result of development and there are no apparent, immediate threats.

Of the six new sites, two (R28 and R39) result from the policy change that allows intertidal habitat to be included within the network. These two sites demonstrate the purpose of this change in policy well, one being newly created habitat that does not yet qualify for SSSI status, although it is likely to at some stage in the future, and the other being under threat by virtue of its industrial and urban surroundings.

Two further sites, R34 and R37, are post-industrial sites that have developed particularly interesting communities, which wouldn't have been apparent or as highly valued during the original 1993 survey. The R34 Barling Pits site is still active to a certain extent and it is possible that future working practices could affect the quality of the site, positively or negatively. The remaining new sites, R2 and R32, were overlooked during the 1992 survey through a lack of available information.

The majority of sites, 54%, are still wooded with only five grassland sites, three of which are coastal sites. There is only one open water site, although four of the mosaic sites strongly feature water bodies – ponds or gravel pits. Few of the woodland sites have been positively managed in recent years, a situation that will inevitably lead to a decline in their quality, particularly those with a history of coppicing. As the habitat with the best prospects of financial support for management at the present time, *i.e.* the English Woodland Grant Scheme, it should be possible to encourage the active management of these sites.

Geographically there is a strong concentration of sites around Hockley, Rayleigh and Hawkwell, the most wooded part of the District, with a corresponding absence in the more

agricultural parishes of Canewdon, Stambridge and Sutton. The coastal belt is also well represented, although the vast majority of habitat in that zone is now within SSSIs.

The average size of Local Wildlife Site in Rochford District is 9.2 hectares, which is low in relation to other districts in Essex, but the median is 5.3 hectares, which is more typical. These values are a function of there being few particularly large sites in Rochford, the largest being Wallasea Managed Realignment, but also few particularly small sites, the smallest sites tending to be grasslands.

3.2 UK BAP Priority Habitats

The range of UK BAP Priority Habitats is the basis of many of the habitat selection criteria used during this review and there is a responsibility within the Local Development Framework for Local Authorities to monitor these habitats. There are, therefore, clear overlaps between the LoWS system and the Biodiversity Habitat Action Planning process.

Both UK BAP and Essex BAP habitats and species have been changed in the past year. Nationally, some habitats have been added – Ponds, for example – and others have had their name and/or scope changed – Ancient or Species-rich Hedgerows has changed to Hedgerows, for example. In total 695 species have also been added to the UK Priority List, encompassing birds, freshwater fish, reptiles, amphibians, higher and lower plants, fungi, marine species, invertebrates and mammals. The Essex BAP has also been extended by the addition of habitats and species, most of which correspond to national BAP habitats and species.

These changes were published too late in this review process for their implications to be fully considered, but these are considered in this section, to be applied during future reviews. The site selection criteria will also be adapted to reflect these changes.

The scope of the UK BAP Priority Habitat covering field boundaries has been expanded to include the majority of intact, semi-natural field boundaries under the new title ‘Hedgerows’. The definition requires a hedgerow to consist of more than 80% cover of woody species native to the county. There appears to be no requirement for species diversity or for age, but all hedgerows with a rich basal flora will also be included. It has been estimated that 84% of hedgerows in the UK will qualify and the same kind of percentage could be expected for Rochford District. In the past there has been a presumption that any UK BAP Priority Habitat would qualify a site for consideration as a LoWS, and in most cases it is possible to include all examples of the habitat. With hedgerows it would serve no purpose to include every qualifying hedgerow, as this would lead to a proliferation of LoWS that would dilute their importance at a district and county level. Therefore, there is a need to focus on a

representative selection of hedgerows or hedgerow systems to ensure the inclusion of the habitat within the network. There are no existing sites that have been designated strictly for their hedgerows, although hedgerows are a feature of R24 Magnolia Nature Reserve. In future reviews individual hedgerows of high diversity could be included, but networks of good quality field boundaries that provide links between LoWS or otherwise serve a corridor function are perhaps more significant.

A new Priority Habitat of 'Ponds' has also been included within the recent national review, with qualifying features covering a broad spectrum of features including marginal or aquatic plant communities and the presence of rare or otherwise significant species. This will lead to a large number of ponds qualifying for consideration as LoWS with a similar problem to that described for Hedgerows above. A similar, representative selection of ponds will need to be added to the LoWS network, preferably linked to existing sites or other valuable habitats.

One of the existing UK BAP Priority Habitats is present in the district, but has not been sufficiently well studied to be included in this review. Saline Lagoon habitat is largely identified by the characteristic species of invertebrate that occupy these bodies of water and so specific surveys need to be carried out in order to confirm their status. In Rochford District this habitat is most likely to be found in borrowdykes, although there may be other coastal lagoons offering similar conditions. Existing information might be available for some of these habitat features. The majority of this habitat should already be within the SSSIs or existing LoWS.

3.3 Recommendations for Review

The Local Wildlife Site network should not be static system, as has tended to be the case in Essex in the past. Until this review, the sites and the information held about them had not been updated since 1993, since when there have been considerable changes in the agricultural environment, coastal defence policies and the quantity and quality of information regarding the species and habitats present for our county. Local Wildlife Site policy, particularly in respect to site selection criteria, is also likely to evolve in response to national guidance. This process is likely to continue as rapidly in the future with further agricultural changes looming and other, less certain impacts as a result of climate change.

Ideally, each Local Wildlife Site should be visited every year, to monitor its condition, identify threats and to increase our knowledge of the communities present. In addition, potential Local Wildlife Sites are likely to arise, through habitat creation or because of new information or improved access and these sites will need to be assessed against the site selection criteria. As the criteria change there will also be a need to review the status of the existing sites.

There are also related areas of action that perhaps should be explored within Rochford District; the potential for establishing green corridors to link up existing sites of conservation significance, policies influencing the siting of future development and the detailed implications of the local and national Biodiversity Action Plan reviews, for example.

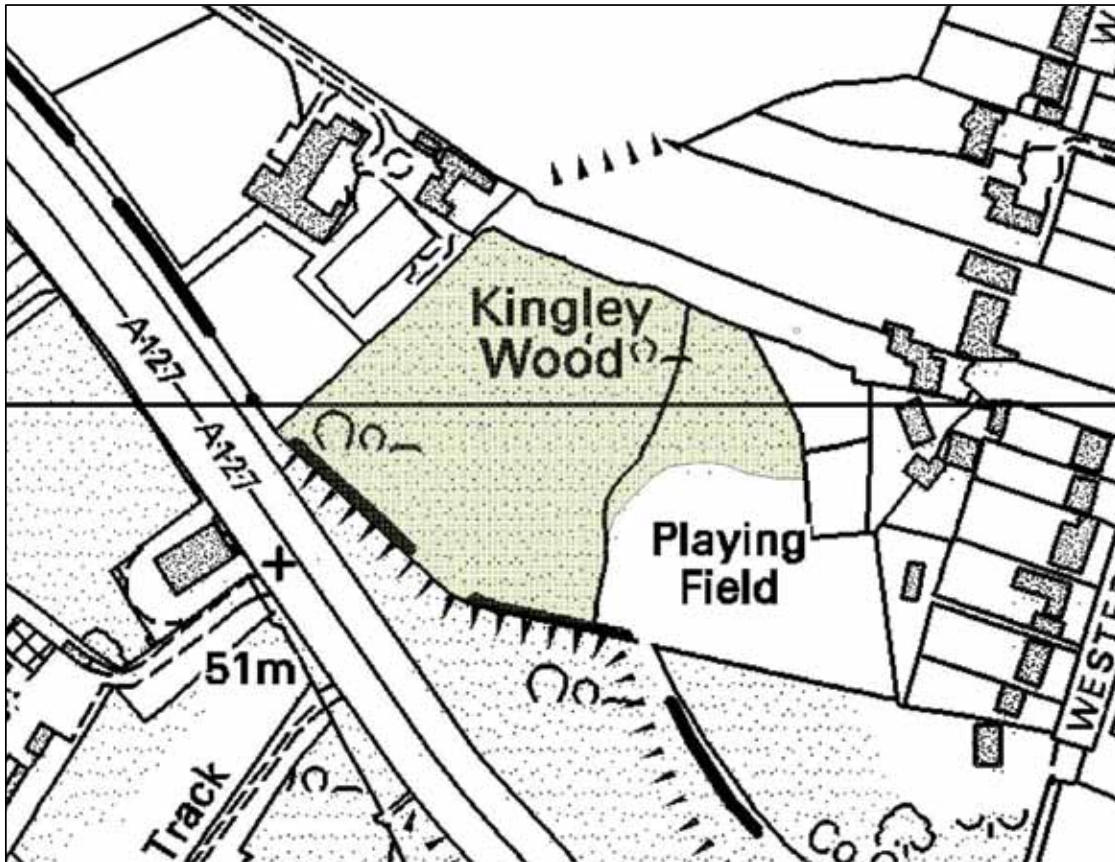
In summary, it is recommended that some form of annual review is instigated to maintain the relevance of the Local Wildlife Site Network and to investigate related issues.

APPENDIX 1
SUMMARY TABLE OF WILDLIFE SITES

Code	Site Name	Area (ha)	Grid Ref.
R1	Kingley Wood	1.7	TQ794900
R2	Hullbridge Road Meadow	0.6	TQ806937
R3	Blounts Wood	3.7	TQ818928
R4	Hockley Woods Complex	14.9	TQ826918
R5	Grove Woods	16.6	TQ827902
R6	Rawreth Hall Wood	2.1	TQ829905
R7	Brandy Hole Marsh Extension	14.0	TQ830953
R8	Hockleyhall/Crabtree Woods	14.6	TQ832934
R9	Folly Wood	1.4	TQ832926
R10	New England Wood	4.0	TQ833903
R11	Bett's Wood	2.9	TQ834928
R12	The Dome Grasslands	5.3	TQ835947
R13	Edwards Hall Park	11.6	TQ837896
R14	Marylands Wood	5.4	TQ838930
R15	Plumberow Wood	5.4	TQ839940
R16	Belchamps Camp, Hockley Woods	1.5	TQ841918
R17	Gustedhall Wood	5.7	TQ841907
R18	The Scrubs	9.6	TQ842903
R19	Primrose Wood	1.3	TQ846904
R20	Cottons	1.0	TQ848902
R21	Beckney Wood	13.2	TQ848940
R22	Potash Wood	13.8	TQ849909
R23	Trinity Wood	3.3	TQ856937
R24	Magnolia Nature Reserve and Fields	29.2	TQ860927
R25	Hyde Wood	2.9	TQ877938
R26	Doggetts Pond	7.0	TQ878915
R27	Sutton Ford Bridge Pasture	2.0	TQ882895
R28	River Roach at Rochford	8.1	TQ883903
R29	Wood Sloppy	2.2	TQ885924
R30	Butts Hill Pond	0.3	TQ899947
R31	The Finches	1.3	TQ905944
R32	Lion Creek Meadow	3.1	TQ922947
R33	Canewdon Special Roadside Verge	0.2	TQ923946 to TQ 925945
R34	Barling Pits	10.1	TQ935896
R35	Star Lane Pits	6.9	TQ937873
R36	Paglesham Seawall	12.3	TQ945917
R37	Wakering Landfill Site	24.0	TQ953886
R38	Great Wakering Common	4.5	TQ954878
R39	Wallasea Island Managed Realignment	90.3	TQ964946

APPENDIX 2 - WILDLIFE SITES REGISTER

R1. Kingley Wood



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R1. Kingley Wood (1.7 ha) TQ 794900

This small, steeply sloping ancient wood, with a westerly aspect is located to the northeast of the A127 road. The main canopy structure is of Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*). The ground flora is mostly dominated by Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*). This wood supports small populations of Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and Yellow archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*). Other species recorded include Common Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum pratense*), Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*) and Creeping Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*).

Selection criteria: HCr1(a), HCr2(a), SCr15

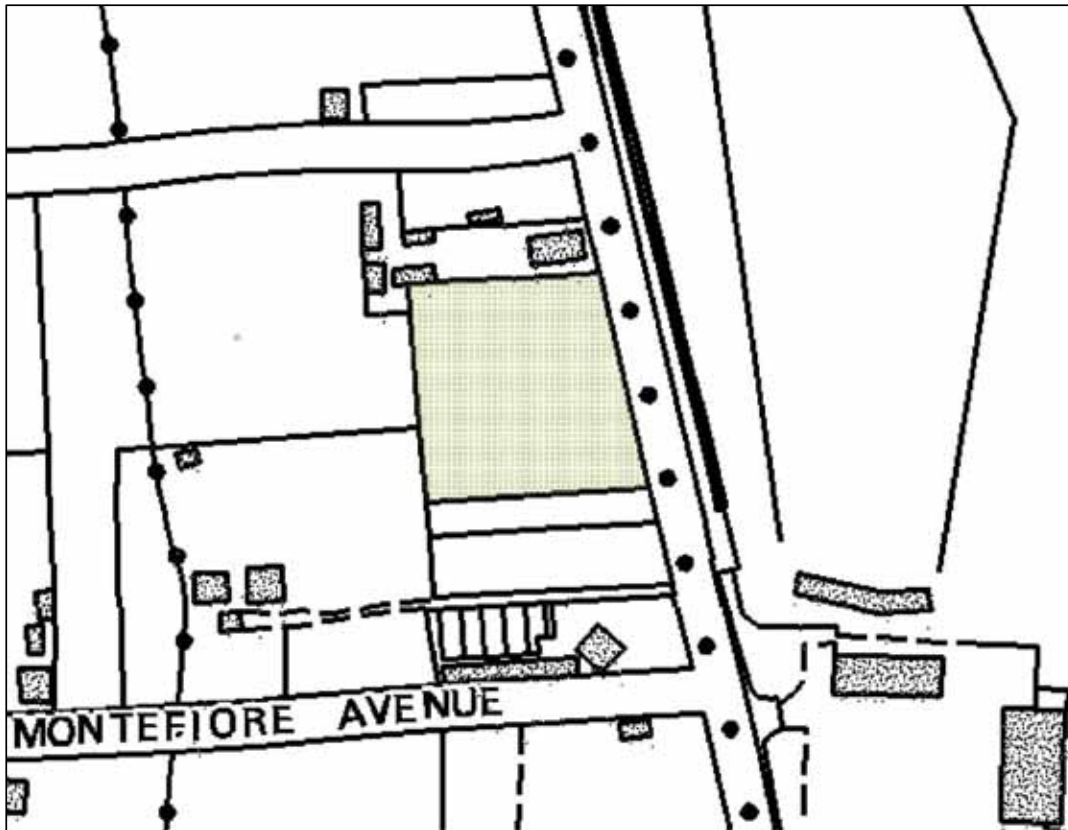
Condition and Threats: The wood is adjacent to a playing field, and is consequently easily accessible. However, public access has not noticeably had any significant impact on the flora.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R2. Hullbridge Road Meadow



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R2. Hullbridge Road Meadow (0.6 ha) TQ806 937

This horse grazed meadow has Green-winged Orchid (*Orchis morio*) recorded in amongst the ground flora. This is an Essex Red data species, which has undergone a decline in numbers in the Essex countryside in recent decades due to modifications to land use, usually involving ploughing up or treatment with chemical herbicides and pesticides.

Selection criteria: HCr10, SCr15

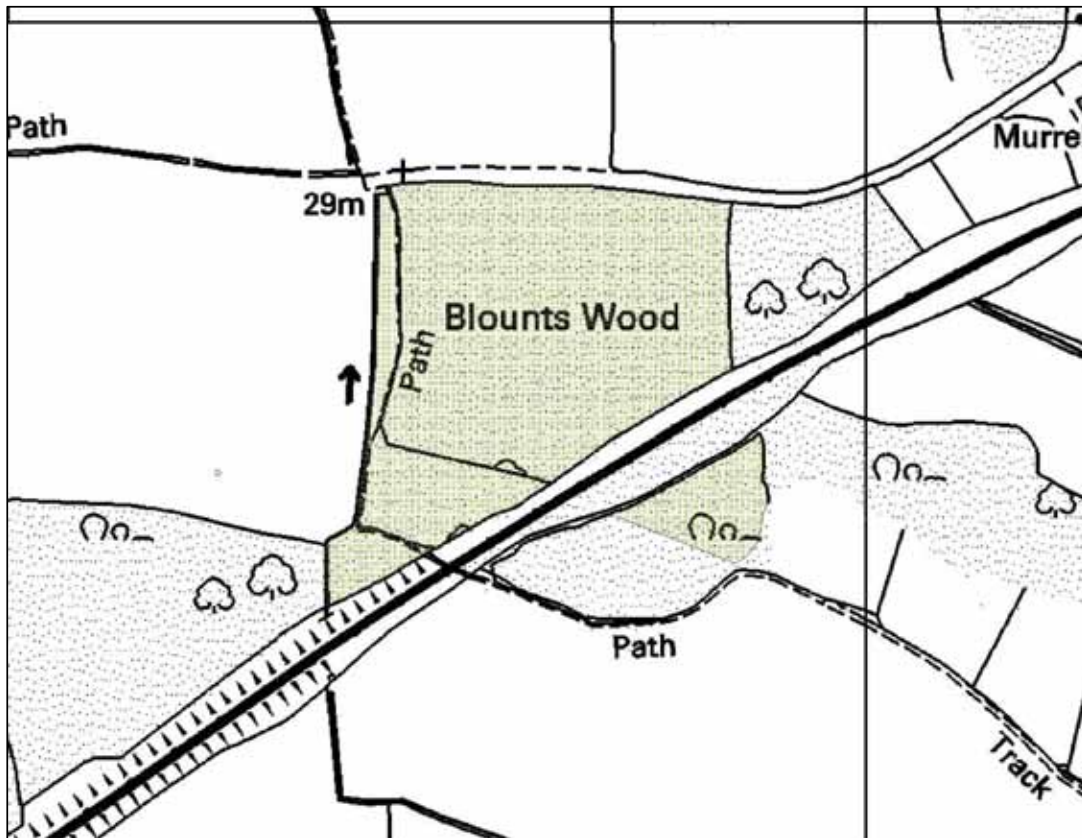
Condition and Threats: Although sometimes plentiful in managed reserves, Green-winged Orchids are vulnerable to any improvement of the soil. The meadow was mown inappropriately in 2007.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Meadows

Date of selection: October 2007

Date of last revision: n/a

R3. Blounts Wood



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R3. Blounts Wood (3.7 ha) TQ 818928

This site comprises ancient wood and some secondary wood to the west and south west sides. Much of the ancient part is characterised by old Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) coppice with Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards, with old Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with Ash in the eastern half. Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus torminalis*) and Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*) occur in the sub-canopy. The rich ground flora includes Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and Yellow archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*). Other species that have been recorded include Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*), Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*) and Three-veined Sandwort (*Moehringia trinervia*). Wood Ants are very active in the ancient woodland block of Blounts Wood.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a), HCr2(a)

Condition and Threats: The structure and integrity of this wood remain intact. There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R4. Hockley Woods Complex



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R4. Hockley Woods Complex (14.9ha) TQ 826 918

This site comprises ancient and non-ancient woodland found on the peripheral margins of Hockley Woods SSSI. Most is located to the west and north sides of the SSSI, being partly within the grounds of an adjacent borstal and partly within private ownership, tending to become the grounds of dwellings. Two small fragments to the south and east sides of the SSSI have public access.

To the north of Beeches Wood (SSSI) are a series of blocks mainly dominated by Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice interspersed with Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards. Other trees to be found include Birch (*Betula* sp.) and Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*). A generally sparse shrub canopy includes Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*) and Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) dominates large areas of the ground flora, which also includes Moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina*) and Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*).

The borstal section is dominated by Sweet Chestnut and Birch over Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). The sections to the north are more diverse, with Pedunculate Oak, Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hornbeam and Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) in the canopy/understorey. Wood Anemone is found in small patches whilst Greater Wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*) and Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*) have also been recorded in the ground flora. Bluebells are found in the southern part of this wood. Whitbreds Wood has a canopy dominated by Sweet Chestnut, Hornbeam, Pedunculate Oak, Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) and Birch. Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus torminalis*) occurs amongst a canopy and the ground flora is dominated by Bramble, but with Bluebell and Wood Anemone also present.

South of the Hockley Woods SSSI is a narrow slither of more recent woodland. This old plantation is dominated by Sweet Chestnut coppice with some, younger Hornbeam and standards of Pedunculate Oak. Holly and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) are the predominant understorey species. The ground flora is typified by Bramble, Bracken and Creeping-Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*). This fragment of wood has small colonies of Bluebell and Wood Anemone, which is usually confined to ancient woodland. A small, block of recent woodland dominated by Pedunculate Oak standards over an open understorey of Hawthorn and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) occupies a corner on the east edge of the SSSI. The ground flora is typified by species such as Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), Wood False Brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*), Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*) and Violets (*Viola* sp.).

Selection criteria: HCr1(a), HCr2(a), SCr15

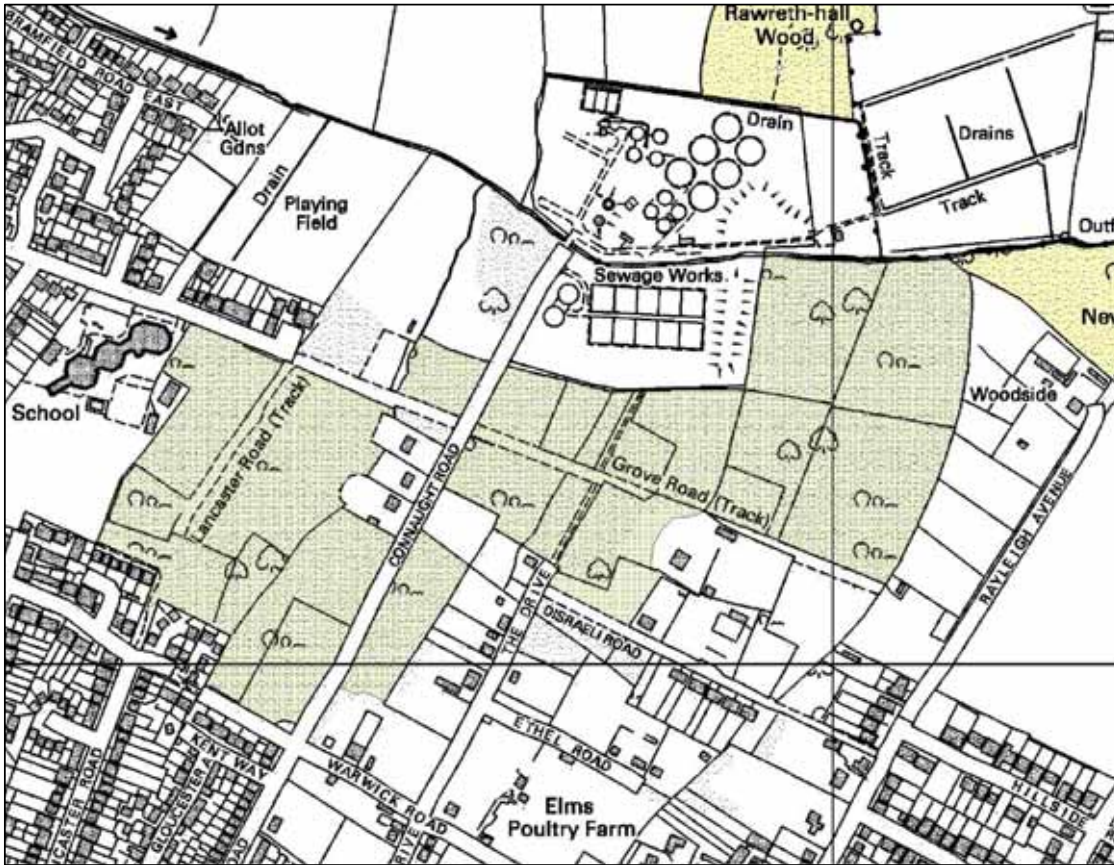
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to most of the woodland blocks, however, where they border housing, potential threats from 'garden style' management does exist. Some woodland blocks have been neglected with bramble dominating large areas of the ground flora.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R5. Grove Woods



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R5. Grove Woods (16.6 ha) TQ 827902

The Grove Woods comprise former plotland now dominated by Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) scrub under a canopy of Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), amongst which a wide variety of other woody species can be found, including Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*). Extensive tracts of berry-bearing scrub are an invaluable food source for birds in autumn, as well as providing good nesting sites for many species. A wide variety of ground flora is present, with the more interesting species such as Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina*) and Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*) found, albeit in limited numbers.

Selection criteria: HCr2(b), HCr6(c)

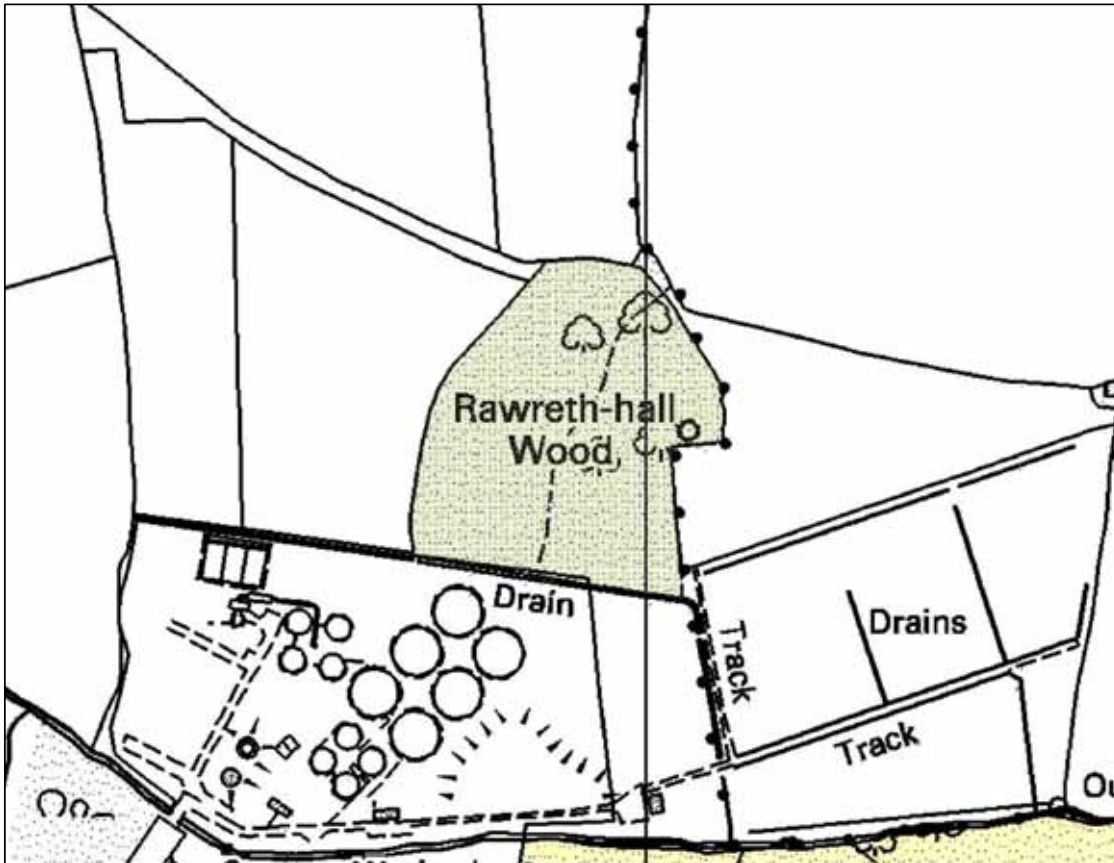
Condition and Threats: There is evidence of management of this site. Grove Woods are well used for recreation, with numerous paths traversing through the various wood/scrub blocks. Therefore, there is more pressure on this kind of habitat.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: None

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R6. Rawreth-hall Wood



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R6. Rawreth-hall Wood (2.1 ha) TQ 829905

Located to the north of the plotlands site of Grove Woods, this ancient wood remnant is dominated by old Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with standards of both Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Sessile Oak (*Q. petraea*), with Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus torminalis*) also present. Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Midland Hawthorn (*C. laevigata*) form the scrub layer. Though there is much Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) the ground flora is moderately rich, with Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*). Other species recorded include Creeping Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*), Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*) and Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*).

Selection criteria: HCr1(a)

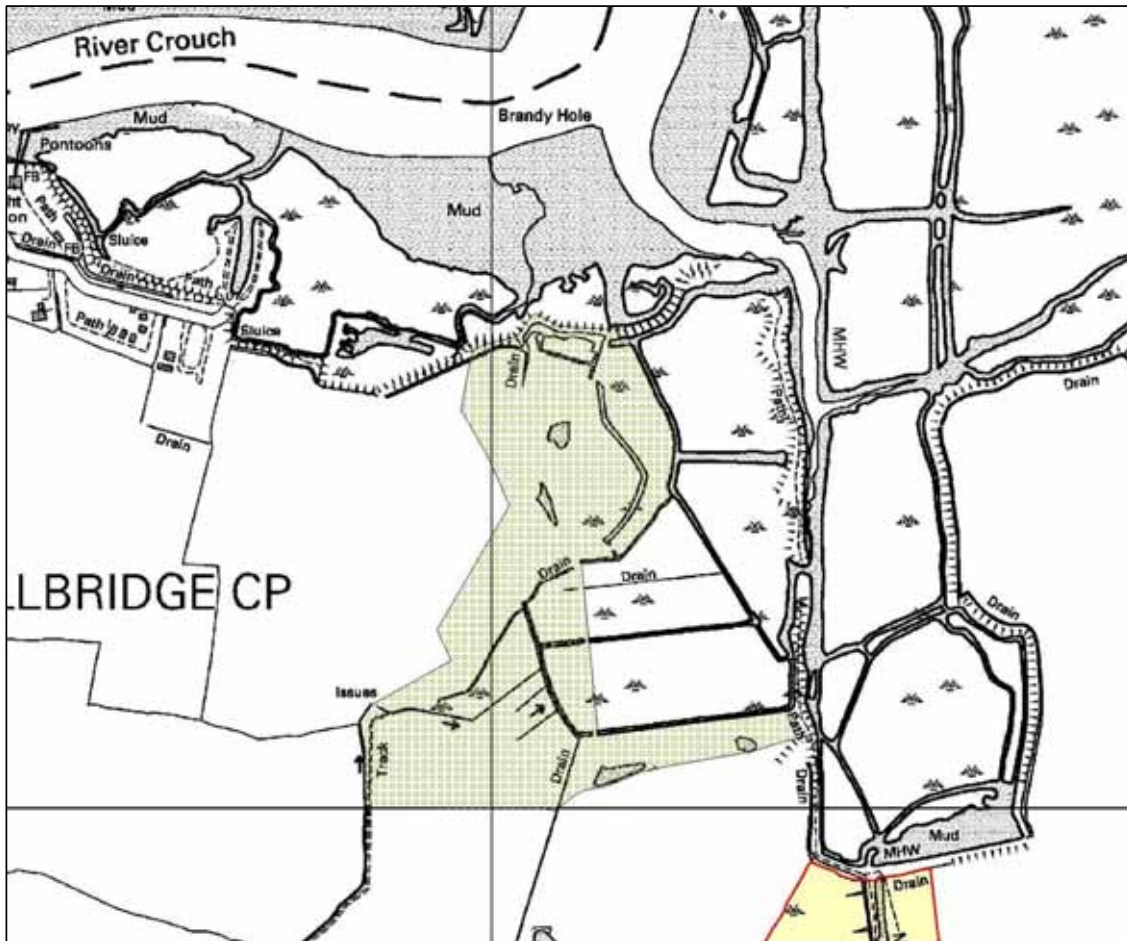
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R7. Brandy Hole Marsh Extension



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R7. Brandy Hole Marsh Extension (14.0 ha) TQ 830953

This site forms a natural extension to the SSSI largely resulting from managed realignment work carried out in 2003. A system of pipes allowing water through the seawall was replaced with breaches in the seawall, with associated landscaping involving a new length of seawall at the southern end of the site. The remainder of the site now shows a natural transition from saltmarsh to grassland with adjoining arable fields.

The majority of the site consists of middle saltmarsh communities grading through upper saltmarsh communities through coastal grassland to what is currently disturbed herb-rich grassland with areas of tall ruderal community.

The middle saltmarsh is dominated by Sea Purslane (*Atriplex portulacoides*) with Sea Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia maritima*) and Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*). This grades into Sea Couch-grass (*Elytrigia atherica*) grassland, which at the limits of tidal influence forms a variable grass sward with locally dominant Creeping Bent-grass (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Marsh Foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*) and Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*). The herb species most typical of coastal grassland include Salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*), Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*), Narrow-leaved Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus glaber*), but other species include Grass Vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*), Fleabane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*) and Smooth Tare

(*Vicia tetrasperma*). Patches of the Nationally Scarce Sea Barley (*Hordeum marinum*) are growing in low lying or disturbed areas.

At the southern end of the site is a small fragment of remnant grazing marsh, situated on either side of a drainage ditch. This area, only a few square metres in extent, holds Spiny Restharrow (*Ononis spinosa*), Trailing St. John's-wort (*Hypericum humifusum*) and Ox-eye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*).

There are a number of water bodies within the site of varying character, some dominated by Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*) and others with sparser Sea Club-rush and Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) fringes.

Skylark and Reed Bunting, both Essex Red List and National Priority BAP species, breed on the site and there are also populations of Water Vole and Common Lizard. Essex Red List invertebrates recorded so far include Long-winged Conehead (*Conocephalus discolor*) and the National Priority BAP species Shril Carder Bee (*Bombus sylvarum*).

Selection criteria: HCr13, HCr16, HCr17, SCr10, SCr11, SCr14, SCr15

Condition and Threats: The area of the site beyond tidal influence has been created only recently and so is not yet established. The apparent quality of the site at present may alter as the communities settle. The site is under the management of the Blackwater Widfowlers' Association, whose plans are not known.

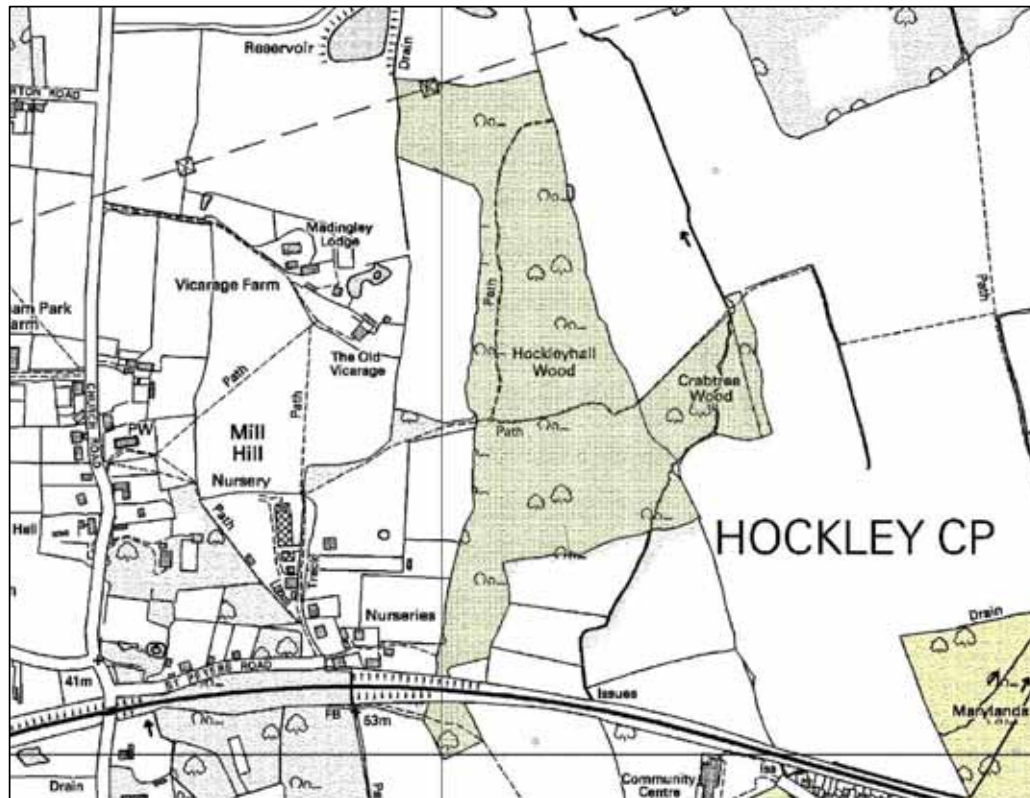
UK BAP Priority Habitats: Coastal Saltmarsh, Intertidal Mudflats

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

N.b. The map given above should be considered provisional, as the habitat features of the site are not available on any published maps or available aerial photos at present.

R8. Hockleyhall/Crabtree Woods



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R8. Hockleyhall/Crabtree Woods (14.9 ha) TQ 832934

The majority of this site comprises ancient woodland, though there is a small area of non-ancient wood. A small fragment of the ancient wood at the southern end was separated from the main block, with the construction of the railway line. Both Hockleyhall and Crabtree ancient woods are dominated by old Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice, with some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). Timber trees are largely Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) but scattered standards of Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*), Hornbeam and Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus torminalis*) also occur. Much of the ground flora is dominated by Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), with areas of Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and locally frequent patches of Creeping-Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*). Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) is fairly rare, with only small patches. Other herb species recorded include Three-nerved Sandwort (*Moehringia trinervia*), Hairy St. John's-wort (*Hypericum hirsutum*), Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*) and Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*). The very old, though not ancient section of Hockleyhall Wood is similarly dominated by Hornbeam with standards of Pedunculate Oak, rendering it ecologically indistinct from neighbouring ancient woodland.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a), HCr1(b)

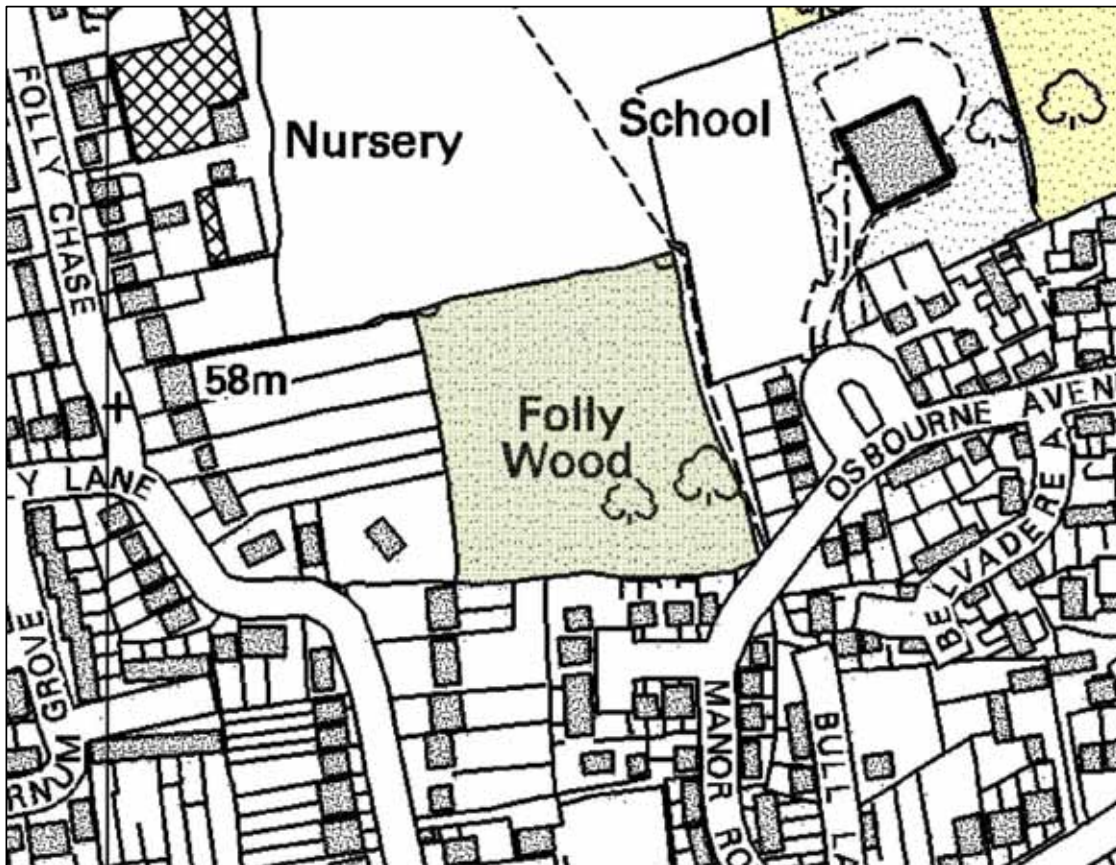
Condition and Threats: The dense shading possibly limits the diversity of the ground flora in Hockleyhall woods. There are no apparent threats to these woods.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R9. Folly Wood



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R9. Folly Wood (1.4 ha) TQ 832926

This probably ancient wood is dominated by Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with standards of both Pedunculate and Sessile Oak (*Quercus robur* and *Q. petraea*). Wild Service (*Sorbus torminalis*), a tree with a very strong affinity to ancient woodland is found along the northern boundary. Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) form the understorey over a ground cover which includes Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Butcher's Broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*) and Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*) and Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*), all species associated with ancient woodland.

Selection criteria: HCr1(b)

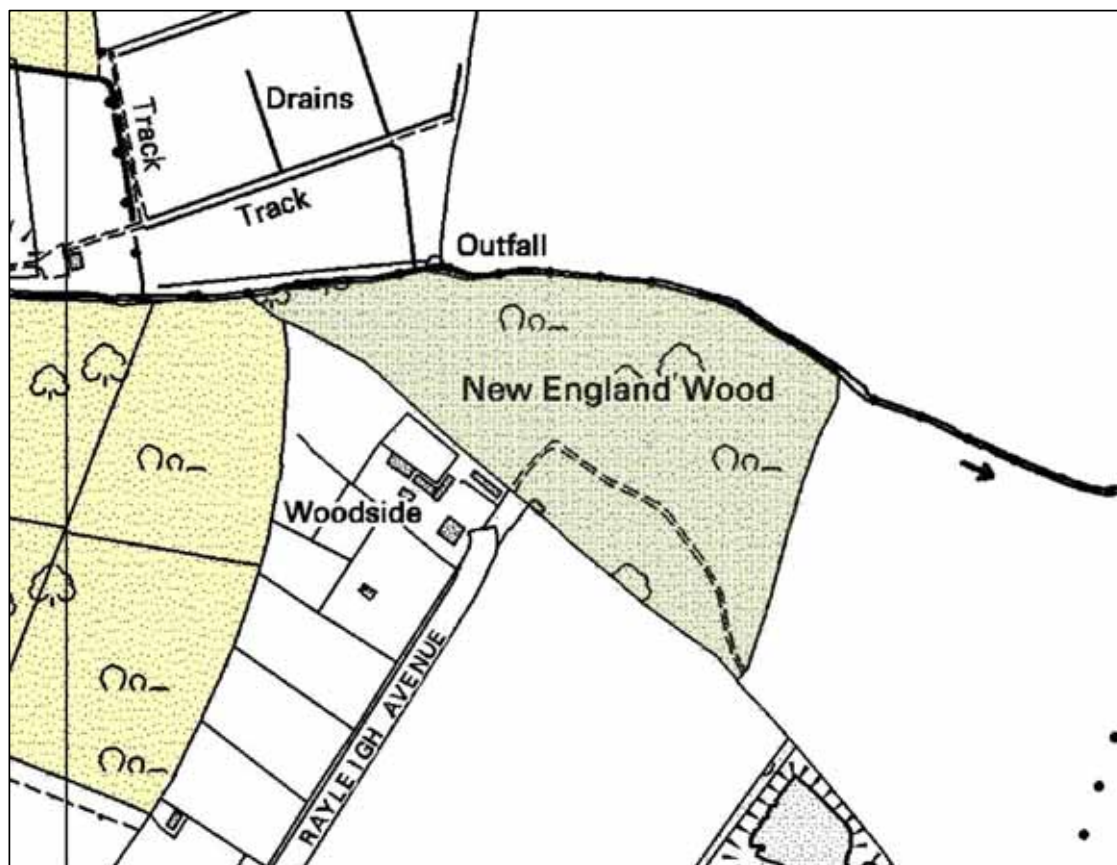
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood, however, deposition of garden waste along the eastern edge of the wood is locally altering the soil composition, with nutrient enrichment and the potential for garden plants to establish at the expense of native species.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R10. New England Wood



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R10. New England Wood (4.0 ha) TQ 833903

New England Wood is dominated by old Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with standards of both Sessile and Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus petraea* and *Q. robur*) and small amounts of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and numerous other woody species. The diverse ground flora includes Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Creeping Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*), Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) and Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*). Early Purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*) and Twayblade Orchid (*Listera ovata*) have also formerly been recorded.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a)

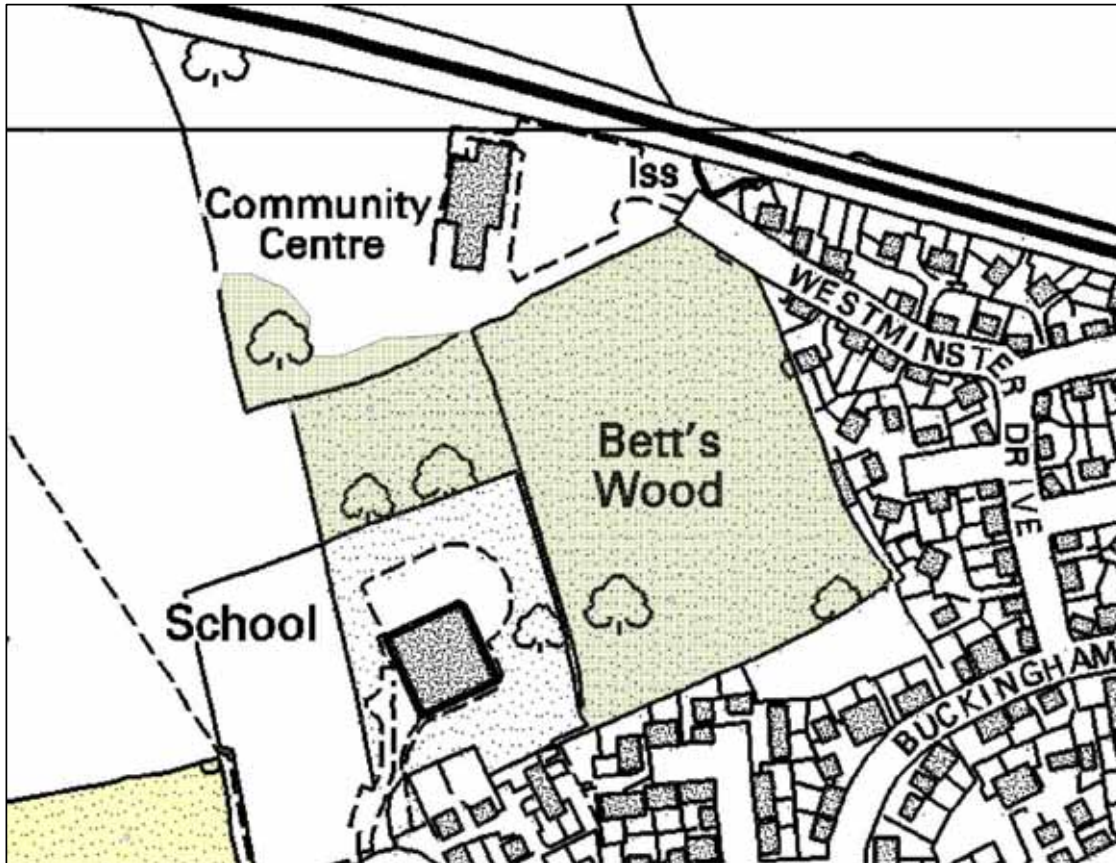
Condition and Threats: Many paths traverse through this wood, which increases the pressure on the habitat due to constant trampling, particularly of path margins. However, there are no apparent threats to these woods.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R11. Bett's Wood



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R11. Bett's Wood (2.9 ha) TQ 834928

Bett's Wood is managed by Rochford District Council as a public open space amongst new housing to the west of Hockley. It has a rather uniform composition of old Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards, along with much Birch (*Betula* spp.). A modest ground flora survives under the dense canopy, with Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*), Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*), Creeping Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*) and Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*) being typical species. Red Wood Ants (*Formica rufa*) thrive in this small woodland and are also found in the additional secondary wood.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a), HCr2(a), SCr14

Condition and Threats: This wood is well used by the public, with a great many paths. This has had an impact on the habitat.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R12. The Dome Grasslands



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R12. The Dome Grasslands (5.3 ha) TQ 835947

The former rifle range site has a tall, waterlogged sward of couch-grasses (*Elytrigia spp.*) with small stands of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*). In contrast, the remainder of the site comprises horse-grazed remnant grazing-marsh with associated brackish ditch. The flora recorded throughout this site includes Wild Celery (*Apium graveolens*), Slender Hare's-ear (*Bupleurum tenuissimum*), Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia sp.*), Hairy Buttercup (*Ranunculus sardous*), Strawberry Clover (*Trifolium fragiferum*), Narrow-leaved Pepperwort (*Lepidium ruderale*) and Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*).

Selection criteria: HCr16, HCr17

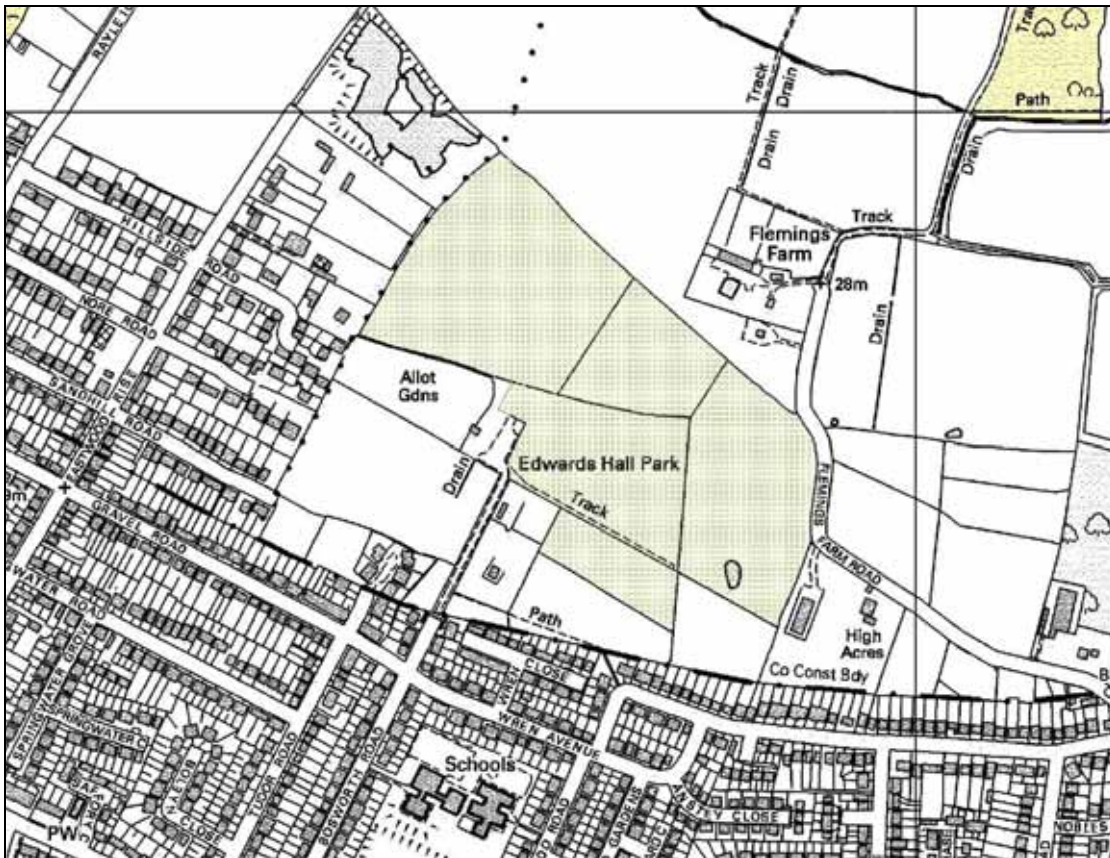
Condition and Threats: Grassland management at this site is generally unsympathetic to the habitats and communities present.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R13. Edwards Hall Park



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R13. Edwards Hall Park (11.6 ha) TQ 837896

This site comprises four fields forming the Edwards Hall Park public open space and a further section of one of these fields outside the park. The site retains evidence of ridge-and-furrow patterning suggests that these meadows have been grassland for several centuries and therefore represent a very rare Essex habitat. A good range of grasses and herbs can be found, reflecting the varied drainage of the site due to both the ridge-and-furrow and the general northerly slope. Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Sweet Vernal Grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), Sheep's Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), Black Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and Crested Dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) are typical species.

To the south of the park, a section of one field is hedged off as a separate paddock, with the closely cropped grass forming a different habitat to the taller swards of the park. Further habitat diversity is provided by several old, thick hedges, which bound the fields.

Selection criteria: HCr10

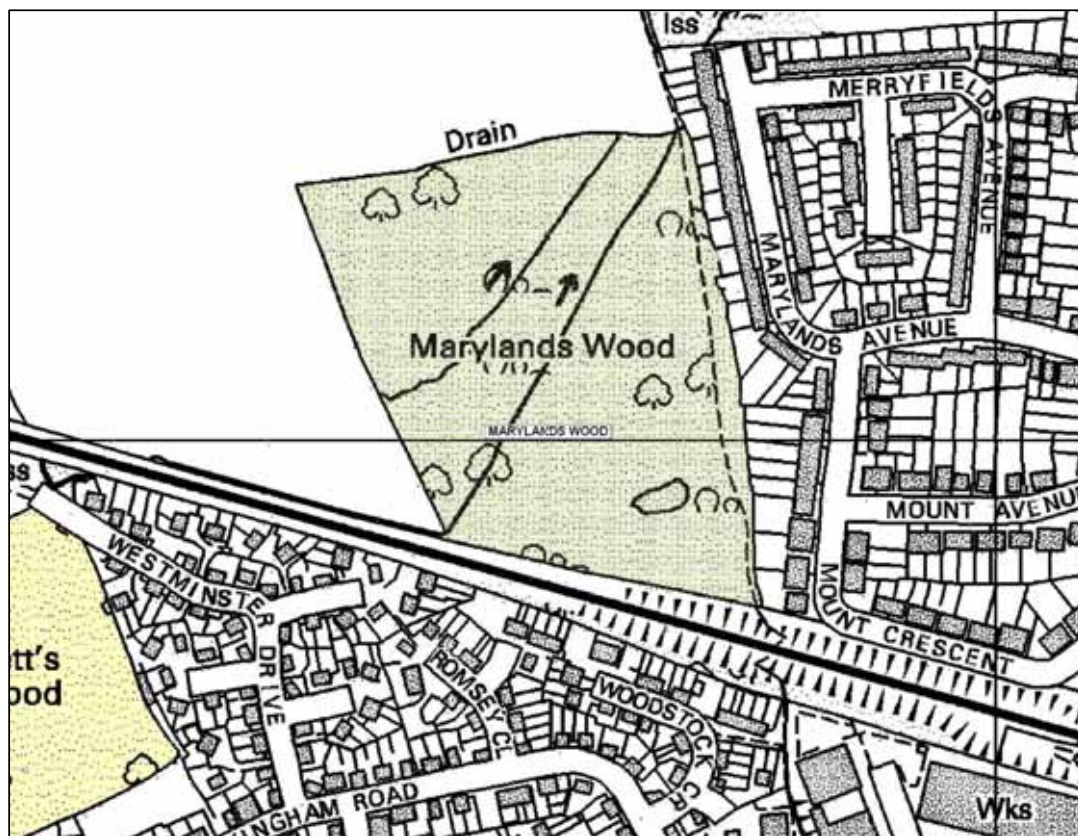
Condition and Threats: This grassland requires careful management in order to encourage more species diversity. However there are no apparent threats to the site.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Meadows

Date of selection: [1993](#)

Date of last revision: October 2007

R14. Marylands Wood



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R14. Marylands Wood (5.4 ha) TQ 838930

Marylands Wood comprises old Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice throughout, with Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards and scattered Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) and Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*) in the shrub canopy. The majority of this woodland is ancient, except for a small triangle on the southern edge. Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) is found in abundance, though generally in localised patches throughout the wood. Other species present include Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*), Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*), Creeping Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*) and Moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina*). Early Purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*) and Greater Butterfly Orchid (*Platanthera chlorantha*) have also been recorded.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a), HCr2(a), SCr15

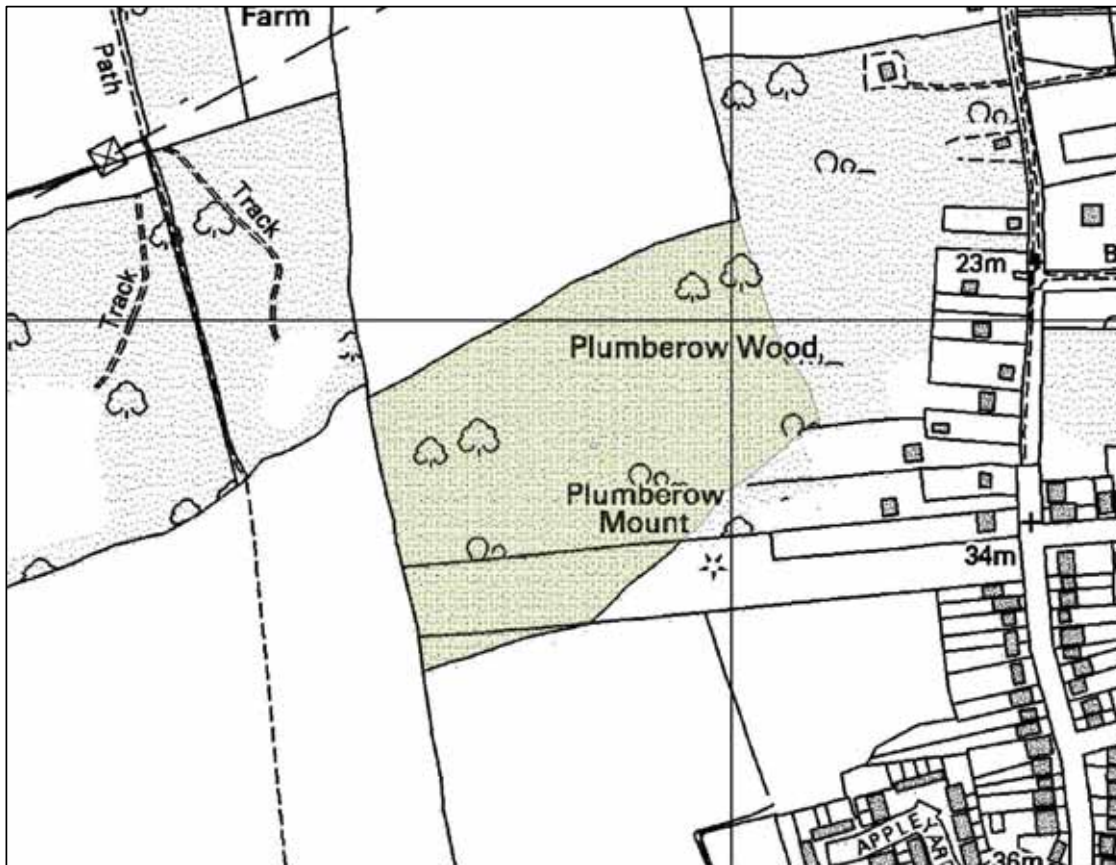
Condition and Threats: This rich flora may be under threat, given the widespread public access and dumping of garden rubbish that currently occurs.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R15. Plumberow Wood



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R15. Plumberow Wood (5.4 ha) TQ 839940

Plumberow Wood has a canopy composed of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), with Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus torminalis*) also present. The understorey has much Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) with some Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*) and Spindle Tree (*Euonymus europaeus*). The rich ground flora includes many ancient woodland indicators, such as Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina*), Yellow Archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*), Early Purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*) and Greater Butterfly Orchid (*Platanthera chlorantha*), an Essex Red List (scarce) species.

Selection criteria: HCr1(b), SCr15

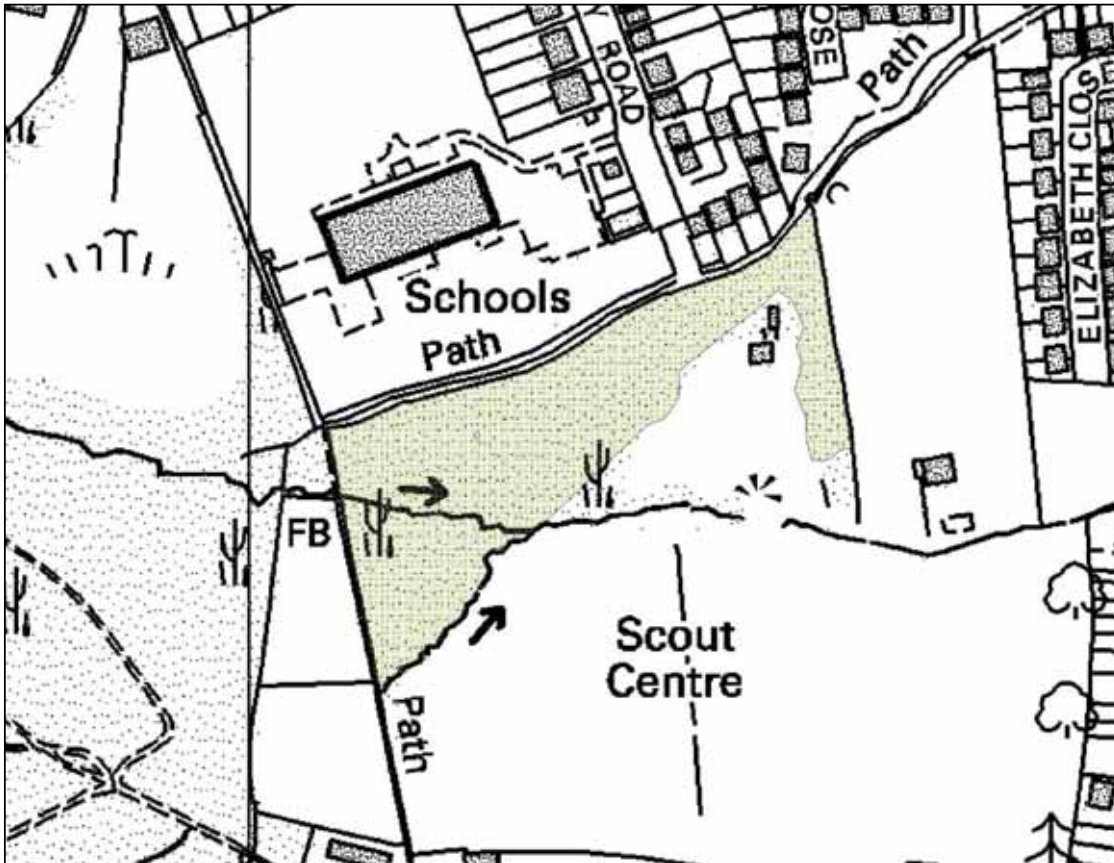
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R16. Belchamps Camp, Hockley Woods



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R16. Belchamps Camp, Hockley Woods (1.5 ha) TQ 841918

This ancient remnant of the Hockley Woods complex is dominated by Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with standards of Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*). Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*) and Remote Sedge (*Carex remota*) still occur, including in that part of the wood just outside the camp perimeter fence.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a)

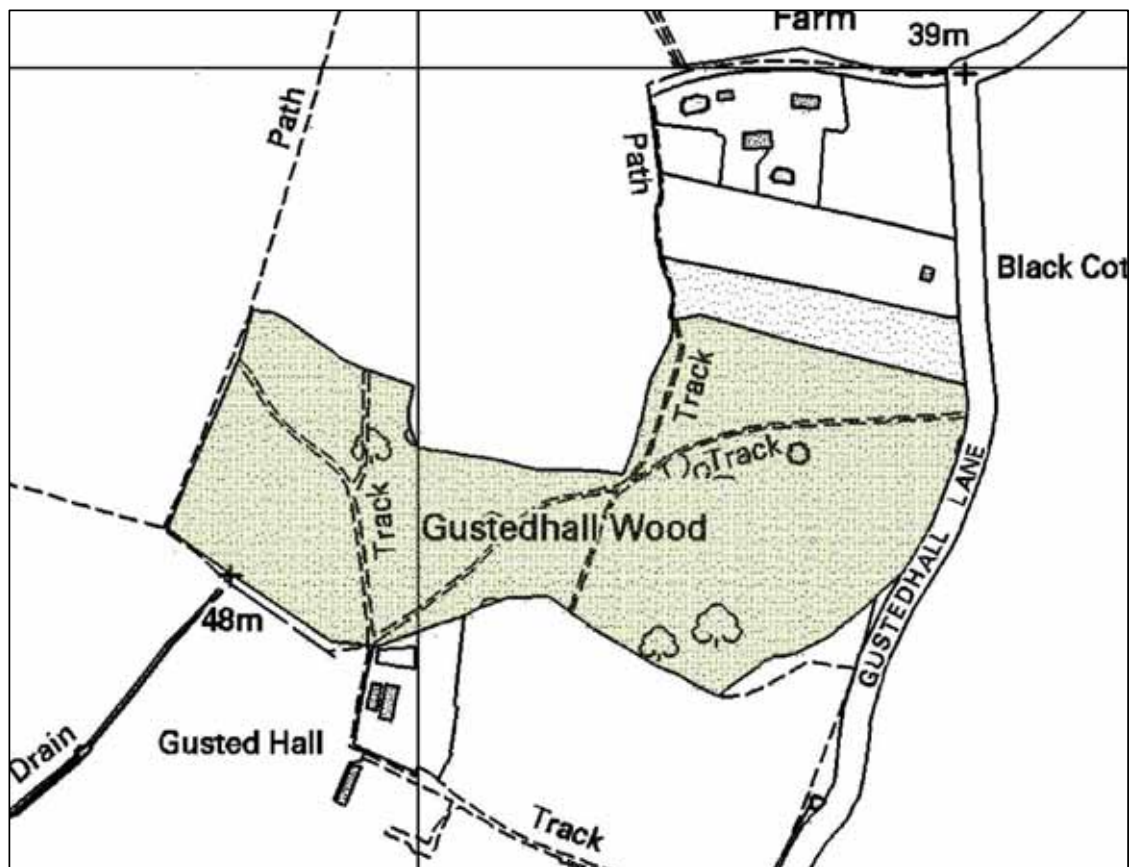
Condition and Threats: This wood is under considerable pressure due to its use for scout camp activities. This has inevitably caused deterioration in the ground flora.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R17. Gustedhall Wood



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R17. Gustedhall Wood (5.7 ha) TQ 841907

This ancient wood has Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice in co-dominance, with some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and standards of Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*). There is much Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) in the understorey, which also includes Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*). Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*) are species of interest in this wood. Other ground flora species recorded include Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*), Creeping Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*), Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) and Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*).

Selection criteria: HCr1(a)

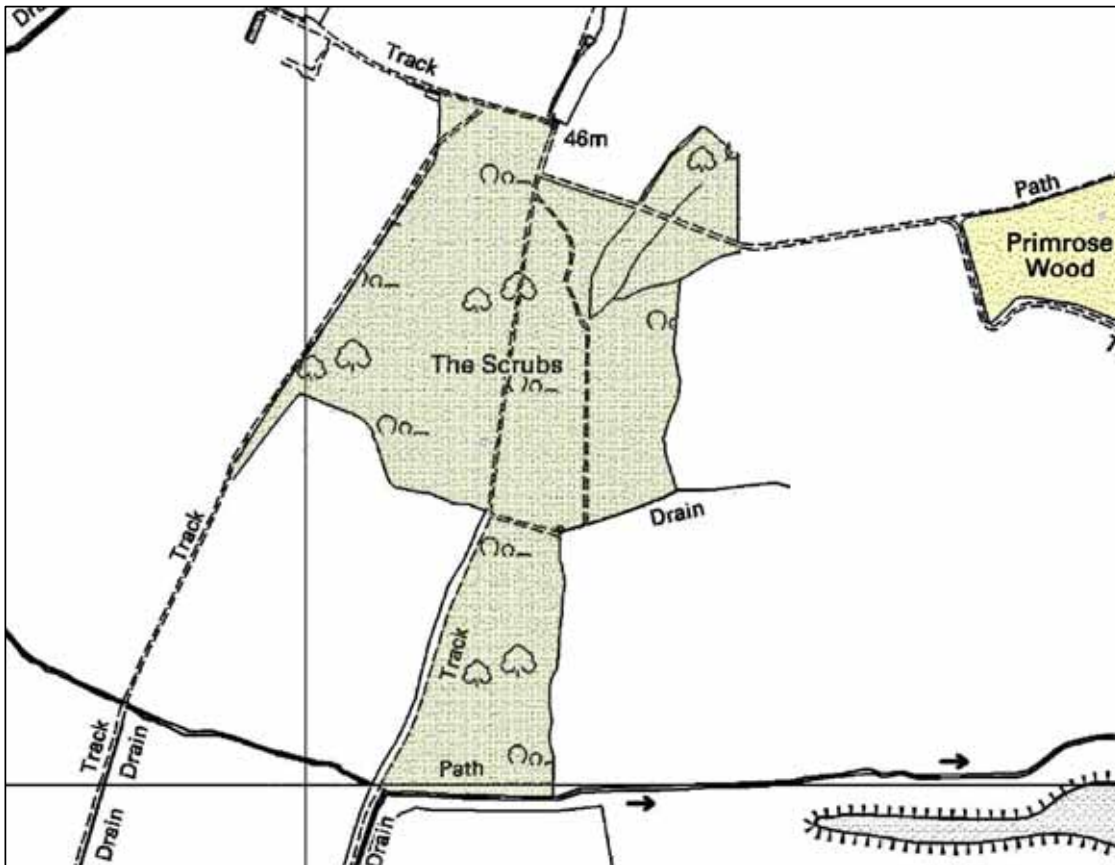
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R18. The Scrubs



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R18. The Scrubs (9.6 ha) TQ 842903

The Scrubs comprises dense Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice under Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards. Birch (*Betula* spp.) is also found within the sub-canopy, whilst the understorey includes Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*), Spindle Tree (*Euonymus europaeus*) and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). Despite dense shading in places, the ground flora is good. Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) form scattered and extensive patches of rich ground flora, whilst lesser amounts of Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*), Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) and Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*) are also found here.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a)

Condition and Threats:

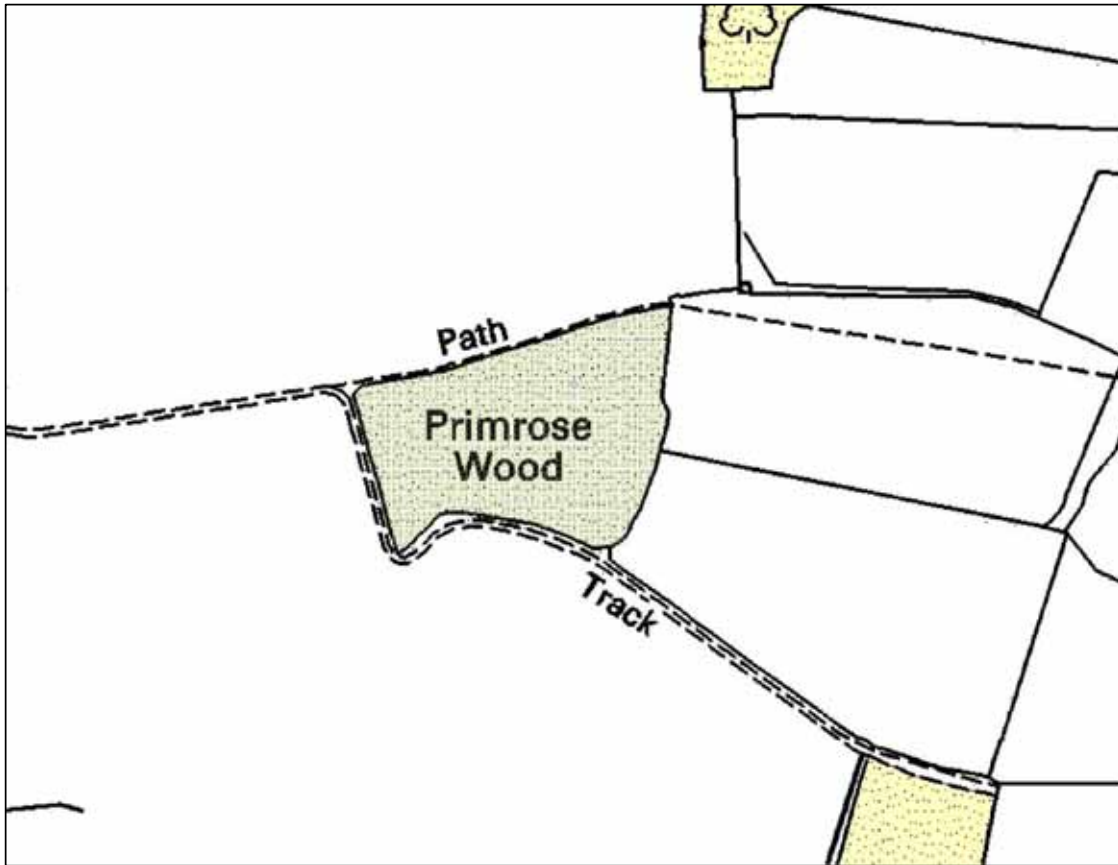
This wood is well used as an area for recreation, with many paths throughout the entire wood. Despite the pressure, particularly where wide well trodden paths render localised areas unfavourable to plants, the wood does not appear to have suffered any severe adverse affects, with its diverse and interesting flora remaining.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R19. Primrose Wood



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R19. Primrose Wood (1.3 ha) TQ 846904

This old wood comprises mainly Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards. The sub-canopy has much Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and, unusually, Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*) also occurs. The moderate ground flora includes Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*), Red Campion (*Silene dioica*) and Greater Stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*).

Selection criteria: HCr2(b)

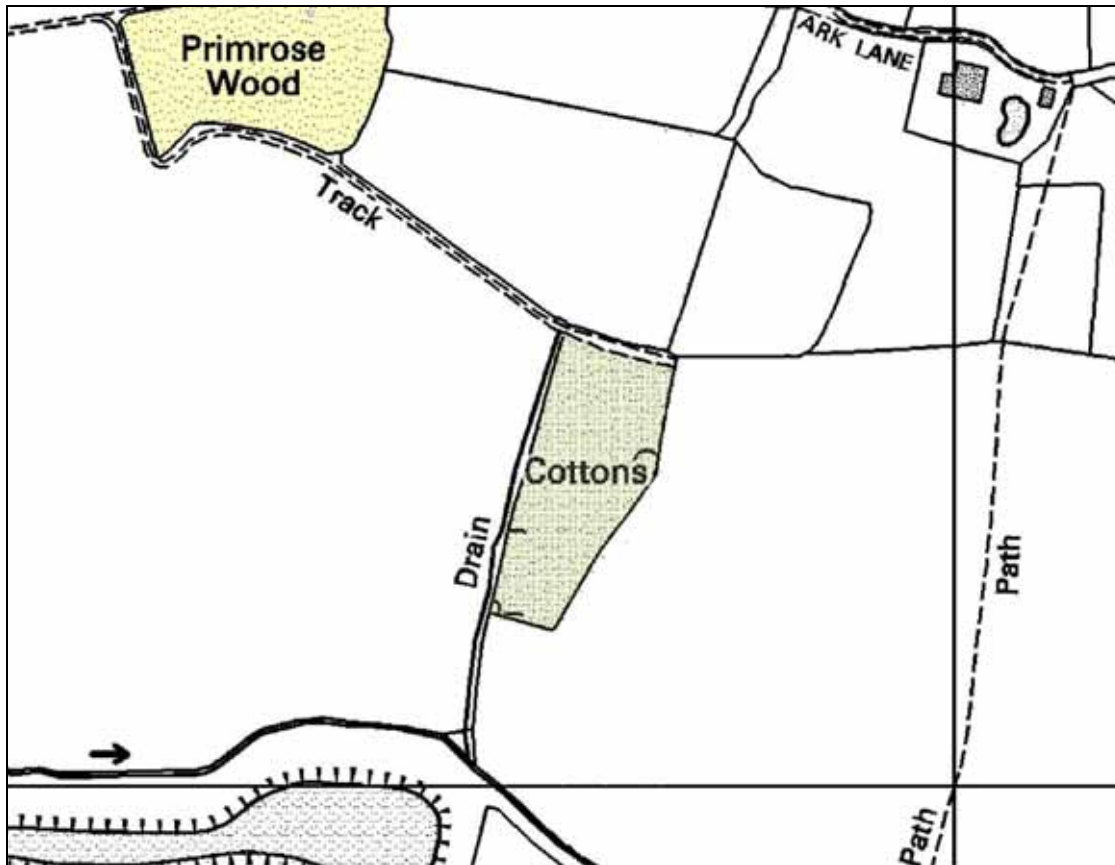
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood and there is evidence that management work has been carried out.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R20. Cottons



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R20. Cottons (1.0 ha) TQ 848902

The canopy of this small wood largely comprises Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) with some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Field Maple (*Acer campestre*). Within the ground layer Goldilocks Buttercup (*Ranunculus auricomus*), Butcher's Broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*), Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina*) and Greater Butterfly Orchid (*Platanthera chlorantha*), an Essex Red List (scarce) species, have been recorded.

Selection criteria: HCr1(b), SCr15

Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R21. Beckney Wood



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R21. Beckney Wood (13.2 ha) TQ 848940

This wood comprises ancient and secondary woodland. Beckney Wood is dominated by old Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and standards of Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*). Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) are found in the shrub canopy. Amongst a diverse ground flora are Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*), Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*) Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*) and Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*), an Essex Red Listed (scarce) species characteristic of ancient woodland. In contrast to this, the secondary block to the east side has a canopy dominated by Maple (*Acer campestre*), with interspersed Pedunculate Oak and Hornbeam trees. Although the ground flora is dominated by Cow Parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), there are patches of Bluebell and Wood Anemone has managed to establish several metres into the wood.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a), HCr2(a), SCr15

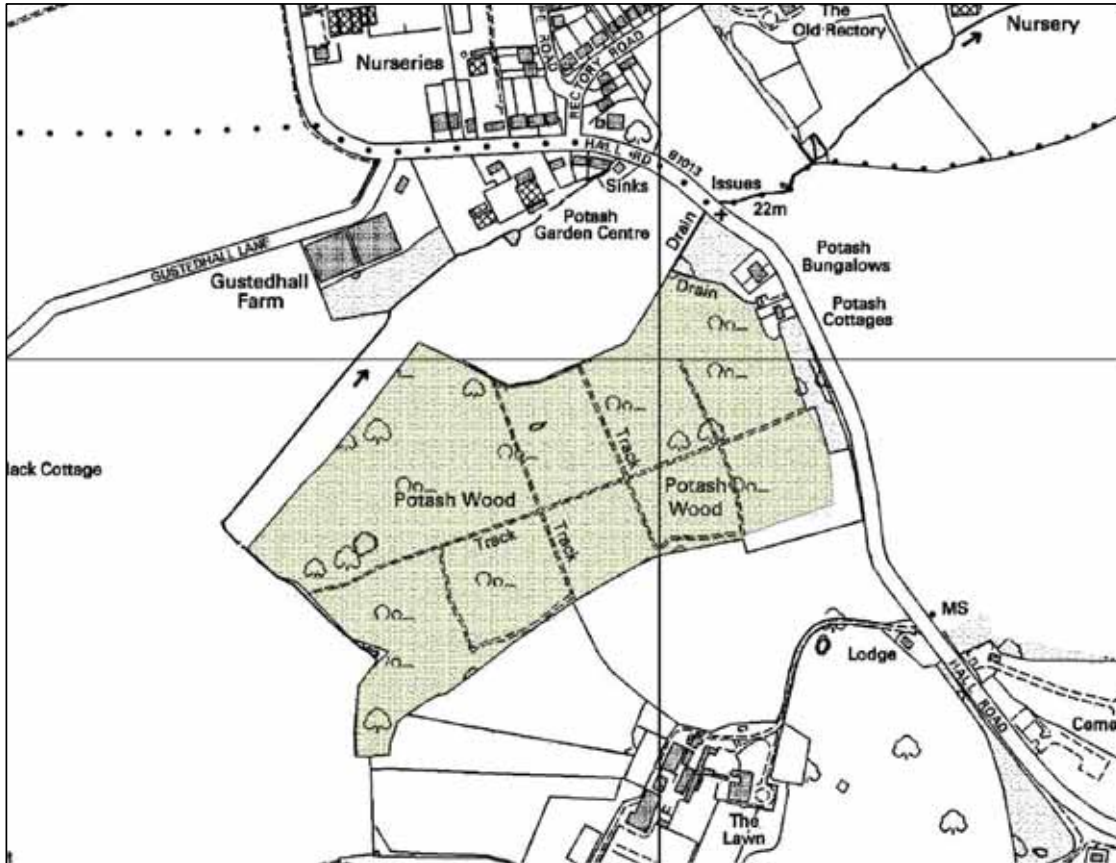
Condition and Threats: Proximity to nearby housing, and the many, well used paths throughout the wood has increased the pressure on the woodland. However, there are no apparent threats to the woods structural integrity.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R22. Potash Wood



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R22. Potash Wood (13.8 ha) TQ 849909

The coppice within Potash Wood is mainly Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), with some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) under Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards. This ancient wood is used for shooting, and ground flora species that have been recorded are limited.

Selection criteria: HCr1(a)

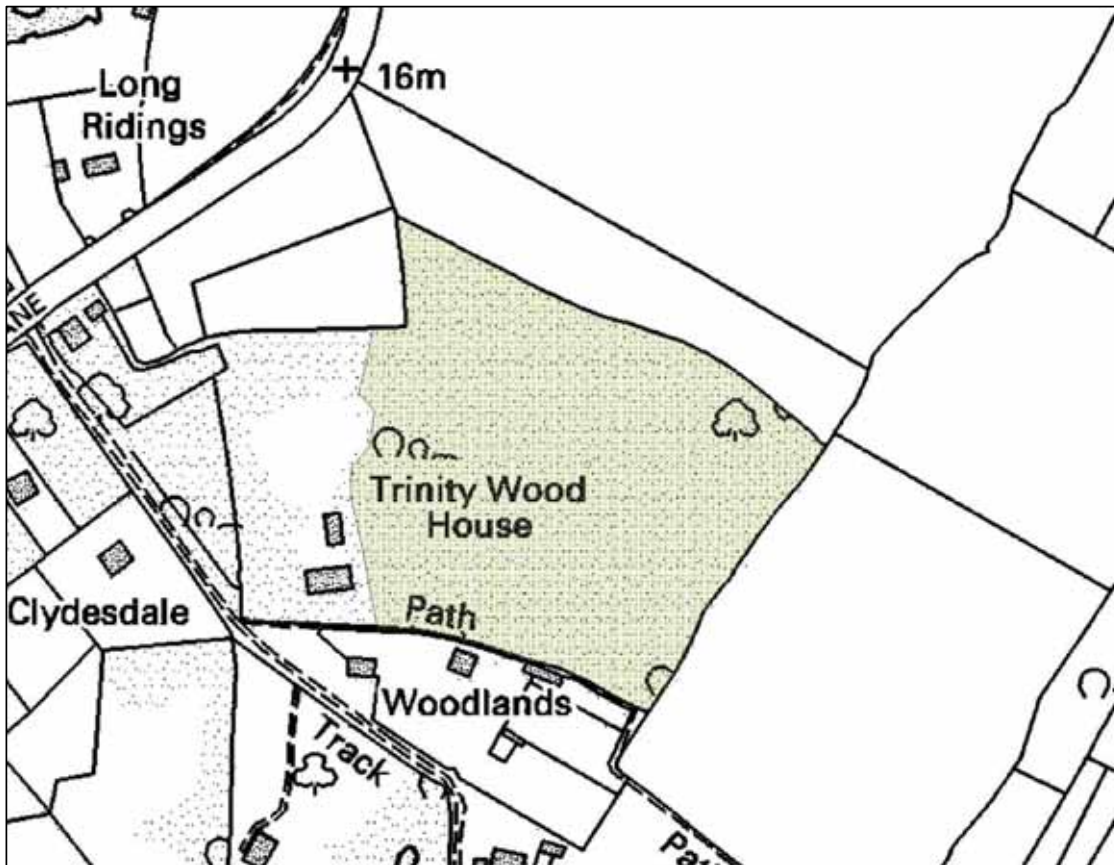
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R23. Trinity Wood



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R23. Trinity Wood (3.3 ha) TQ 856937

Trinity Wood comprises Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) but few Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards. Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) are abundant within the ground flora, with frequent patches of Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*). Other species recorded in a generally limited species rich flora include Common Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum pratense*) and Wood Melick (*Melica uniflora*).

Selection criteria: HCr1(a)

Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R24. Magnolia Nature Reserve and Fields



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R24. Magnolia Nature Reserve and Fields (29.2 ha) TQ 860927

This site comprises grazed pastures, rough unmanaged grassland, scrub and maturing woodland. Much of the site is managed by Hawkwell Parish Council as a nature reserve. The three pastures to the north-west are closely cropped and display a species-rich flora that includes Pale Flax (*Linum bienne*), Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acer*) and Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*) amongst a sward of Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) and Crested Dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*).

To the south-east stretches a series of fields with thick hedges, grassland and sedge/rush beds and woodland of Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) and Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*). Areas of open rough grassland support species such as Black Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Spiny Restharrow (*Ononis spinosa*) and Red Bartsia (*Odontites vernus*).

Much of the value of this area lies in its considerable extent and variety of habitats. Many scarce Essex plants have been recorded from these fields, including Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), Kidney Vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*), Fairy Flax (*Linum catharticum*), Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*) and Yellow-wort (*Blackstonia perfoliata*). To the southern end of the site, woodland habitat continues. Marginal vegetation by the long linear pond on the western edge includes Bog Stitchwort (*Stellaria uliginosa*) and Water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*).

A large population of Great Crested Newts is present on the site, considered to be the largest in Essex, along with similarly high numbers of Smooth Newts as well as Common Frog. The site also supports populations of Common Lizard and Grass Snake.

Selection criteria: HCr6 (b), HCr10, HCr11, SCr1, SCr3, SCr5, SCr15

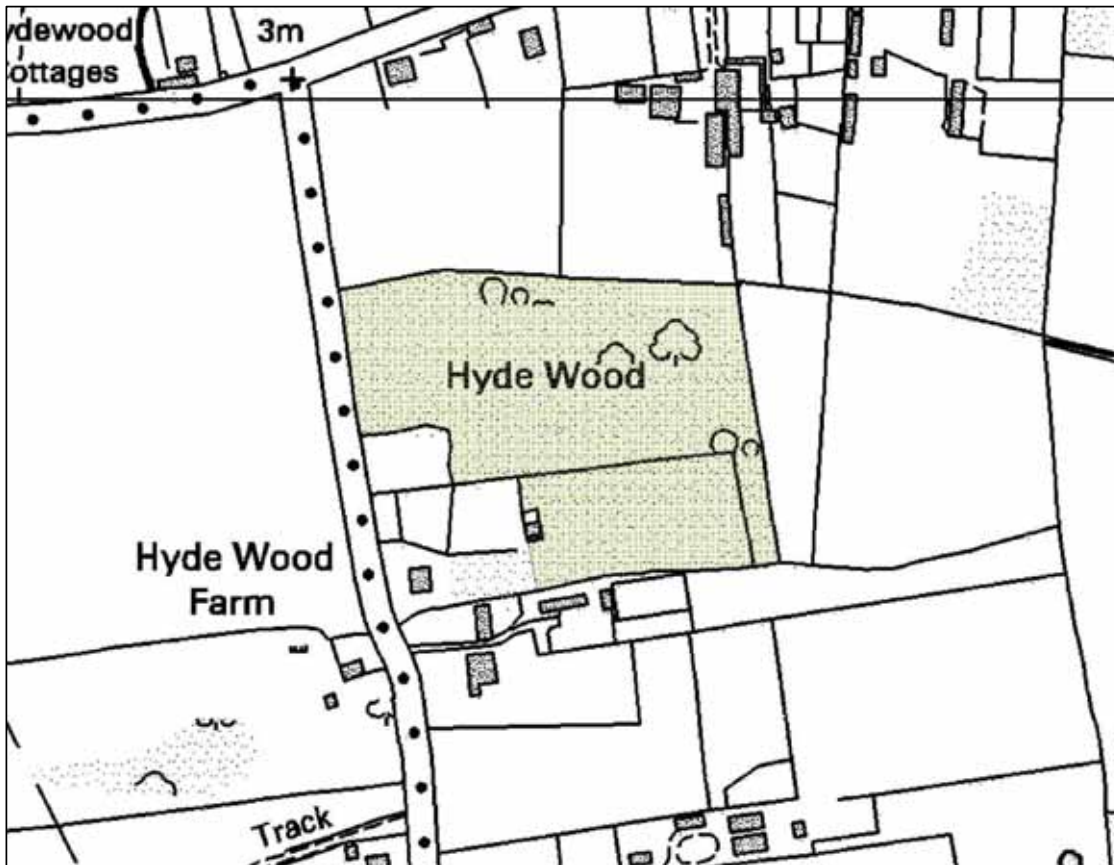
Condition and Threats: Sandwiched between Hockley and Hawkwell, the close proximity to these two urban areas puts a great deal of pressure on the habitat, and the continuing survival of species sensitive to changes in habitat structure. It provides a valuable area for wildlife, and recreation. The main threat to the grassland flora is scrub encroachment.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Meadows

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R25. Hyde Wood



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R25. Hyde Wood (2.9 ha) TQ 877938

This small ancient wood, isolated on the plain east of Ashingdon, has much Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with scattered Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Field Maple (*Acer campestre*). Recorded flora of note includes Spurge Laurel (*Daphne laureola*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*).

Selection criteria: HCr1(a)

Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R26. Doggetts Pond



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R26. Doggetts Pond (7.0 ha) TQ 878915

These former gravel pits have developed a good general wildlife interest. The site comprises a large pond with associated beds of Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Lesser Bulrush (*T. angustifolia*) and Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*). Other marginal species include Trifid Bur-marigold (*Bidens tripartita*), Cyperus Sedge (*Carex pseudocyperus*), Bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*) and Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*). Patches of scattered and dense Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Willow (*Salix* sp.) and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) are found around the peripheral areas of the site. These attract numerous birds and insect species. Birds of interest include Reed and Sedge Warblers, Lesser Whitethroat, Yellow Wagtail and breeding Little Grebe. Both Water Vole and Great Crested Newt have been recorded from this site. Limited invertebrate recording has identified the presence of a range of Nationally Scarce species including the hoverfly *Neoscia interrupta* and the solitary bees *Lasioglossum pauxillum* and *Nomada flavopicta*.

Selection criteria: HCr6 (b), HCr22, HCr26, SCr1, SCR3, SCr10, SCR14

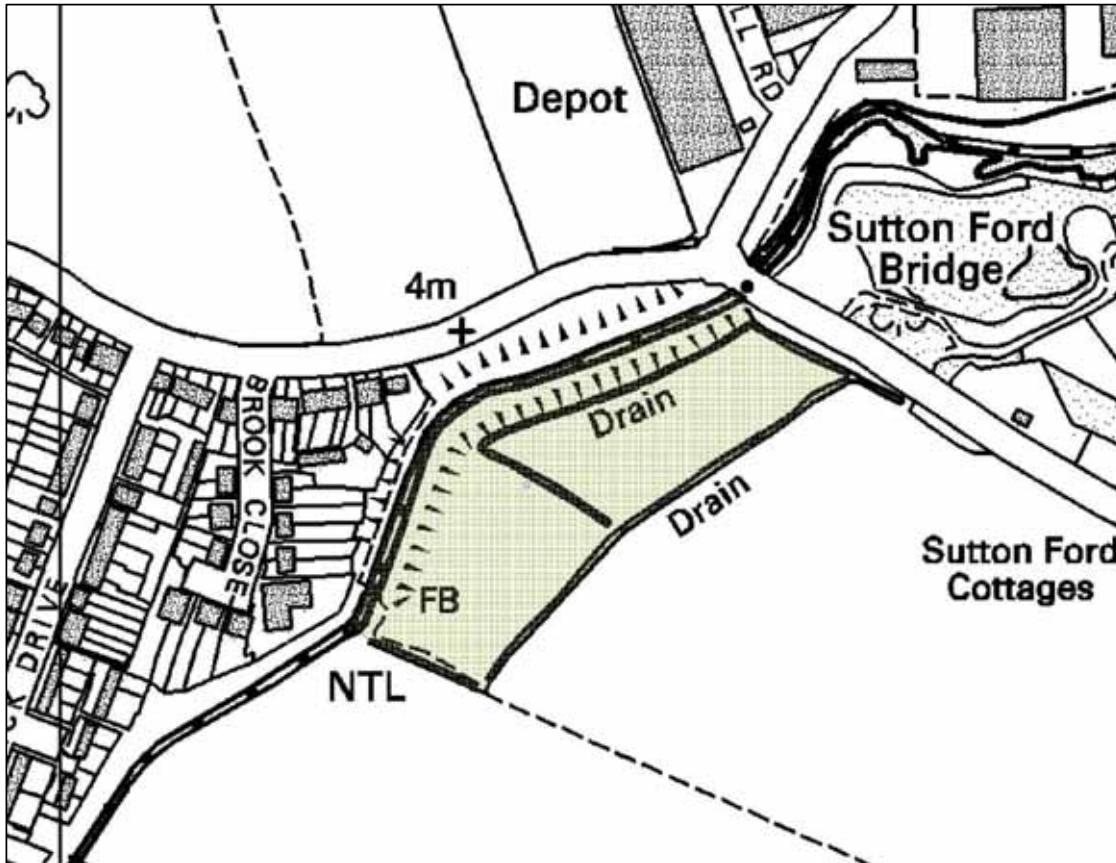
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this site, although the established use of the pits for angling does limit the potential of the site as a wildlife habitat.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Reedbeds

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R27. Sutton Ford Bridge Pasture



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R27. Sutton Ford Bridge Pasture (2.0 ha) TQ 882895

This small section of remnant grazing marsh and associated seawall has a very rich flora, indicative of its antiquity and lack of improvement. Notable (Essex Red List) species include Pepper Saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), Subterranean Clover (*Trifolium subterraneum*), Slender Hare's-ear (*Bupleurum tenuissimum*), Spiny Rest-harrow (*Ononis spinosa*), Divided Sedge (*Carex divisa*), Stiff Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia rupestris*) and Spreading Meadow-grass (*Poa humilis*).

A large number of nationally and locally rare and scarce invertebrate species have been recorded including the horse fly *Haematopota grandis*, the robberfly *Machimus cingulatus*, the beetles *Hypera ononidis* and *Longitarsus brunneus* and the solitary bees *Andrena fulvago*, *Lasioglossum pauxillum*, *Sphecodes niger* and *Sphecodes rubicundus*. An invertebrate survey carried out in 2005 produced a Species Quality Index of 9.6. There is also a population of Common Lizards on the site.

Selection criteria: HCr16, SCr13, SCr14, SCr15

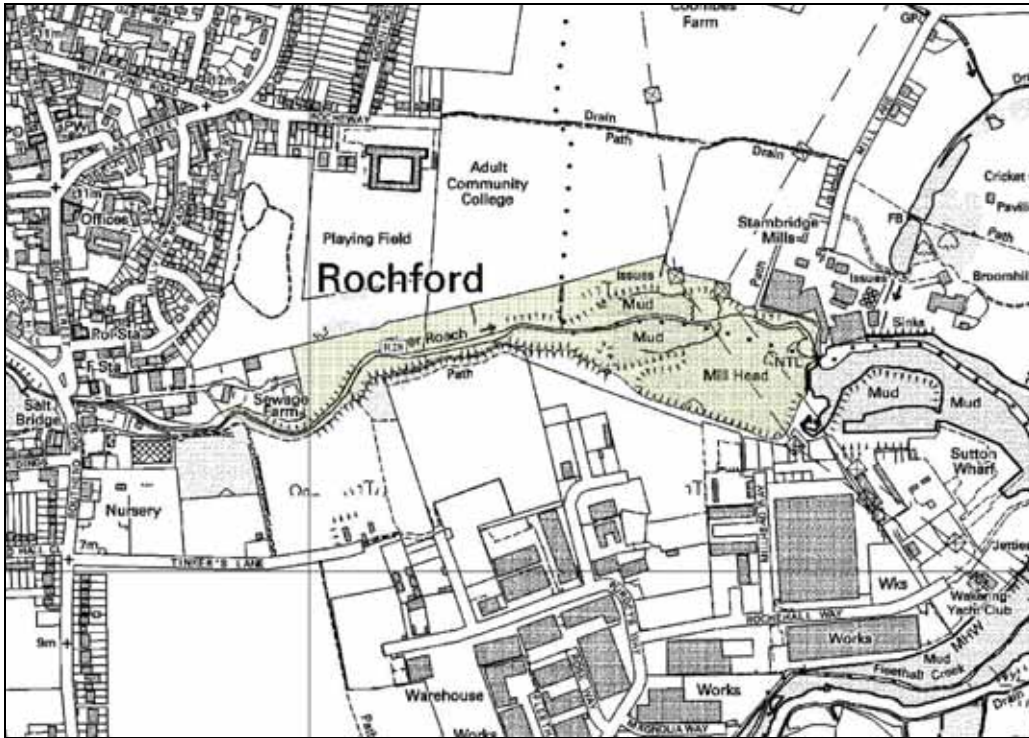
Condition and Threats: The site is likely to be disrupted by a scheme to improve the river crossing and adjacent junction. This scheme may also jeopardise the current horse grazing regime that has maintained the site in its current condition.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R28. River Roach at Rochford



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R28. River Roach at Rochford (8.1) TQ883903

This mosaic of coastal and brownfield habitats supports a diversity of plant species and is likely to hold a diverse invertebrate fauna. The river at this point is bounded by low seawalls and broadens to the east with an expanse of middle saltmarsh vegetation dominated by Sea Purslane (*Atriplex portulacoides*). In the western half of the site there are stands of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*) beside the river.

The fields to the north of the river are divided into four sections by drainage ditches. The westernmost has been land filled in the past, bottles and other debris being exposed on the riverbank in places. As a result this block is higher than those to the east and supports very different vegetation with abundant Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*) and Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), frequent Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*) and occasional Musk Mallow (*Malva moschata*). The now rare arable weeds Cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*) and Corn Marigold (*Chrysanthemum segetum*) are also present, presumably as the result of introduced seed.

The three eastern fields are relict grazing marsh, overgrazed by horses and apparently species-poor as a result. The exposed substrates in the seawall banks together with the abundant nectar sources of the western field and the saltmarsh suggest that the site has good potential for invertebrates. The Red Data Book horsefly *Atylotus latistriatus* has been recorded.

Selection criteria: HCr10, HCr20, HCr21

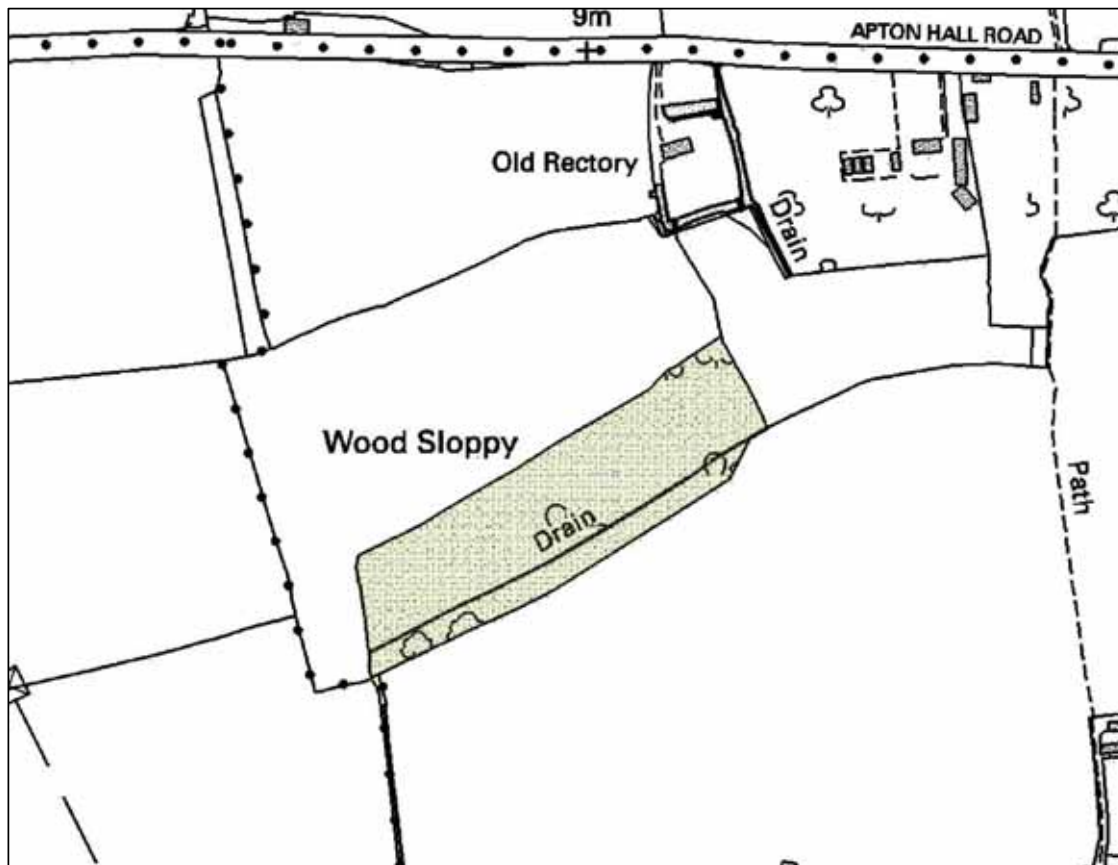
Condition and Threats: The ownership and long term management of the northern fields is unknown at present and existing management is not ideal for the habitats present.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Coastal Saltmarsh, Intertidal Mudflats

Date of selection: October 2007

Date of last revision: n/a

R29. Wood Sloppy



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R29. Wood Sloppy (2.2 ha) TQ 885924

This small wood has a canopy of Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) over Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*). Although not necessarily ancient, the southern boundary strip is certainly very old. As a result the ground flora is diverse with Moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina*), Spurge Laurel (*Daphne laureola*), Butcher's Broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*) and Grass Vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*) having been recorded.

Selection criteria: HCr2(b)

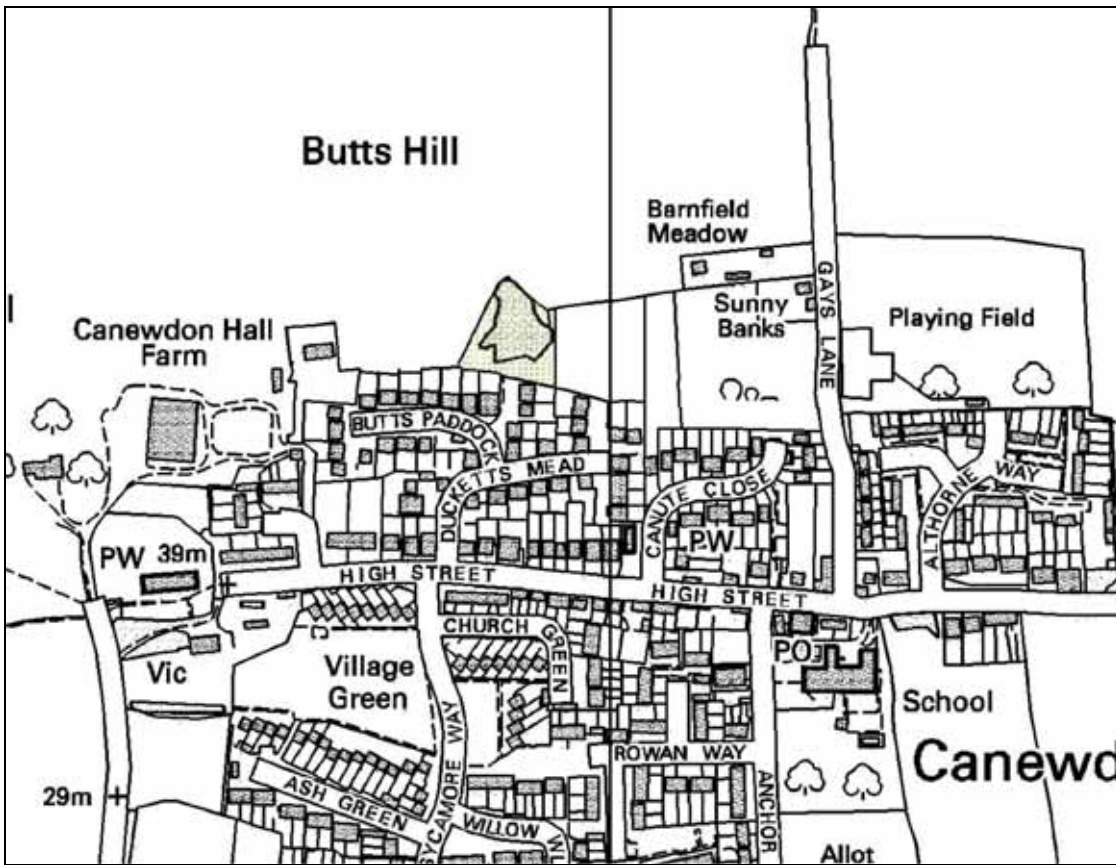
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this wood.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: None

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R30. Butts Hill Pond



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R30. Butts Hill Pond (0.3ha) TQ 899947

The focus of this site, an Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Conservation Area, is a small pond surrounded by scrub and rough grassland. The pond supports populations of Great Crested and Smooth Newts, Common Frog and Common Toad together with Common Lizard and Grass Snake.

Marginal vegetation includes Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*), Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*) and Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*) with willow (*Salix* sp.) and other scrub around the majority of the pond's perimeter. The grassland is unremarkable, but does contain Black Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*) and Ox-eye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*).

Selection criteria: SCr3, SCr5

Condition and Threats: The site is managed for conservation under the guidance of the Essex Wildlife Trust.

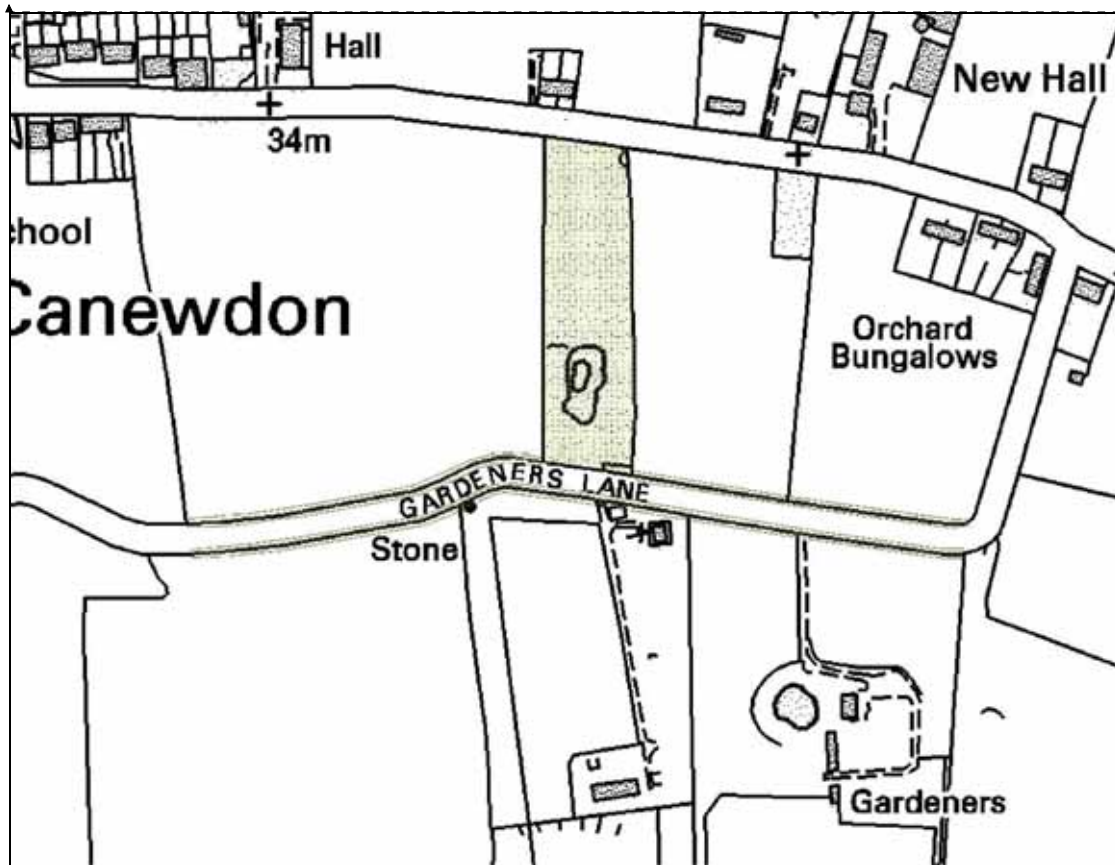
UK BAP Priority Habitats: None

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

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R31. The Finches



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R31. The Finches (1.3 ha) TQ 905944

The Finches comprises young English Elm (*Ulmus procera*) woodland with dense Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) scrub, scattered grassland and a central pond. The site supports a good range of common grassland and woodland plants including Agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*) and Meadow Foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*).

The pond's marginal vegetation includes Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*), Greater Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*) with Rigid Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) amongst a dense covering of the invasive, alien Water Fern (*Azolla filiculoides*). Swamp Stonecrop (*Crassula helmsii*), another invasive alien water plant, is also present.

The most significant feature of the site is its population of Glow-worms, considered to be the second largest in Essex and it is for this that the site is designated, including the adjacent road verges on Gardeners Lane.

Selection criteria: SCr14

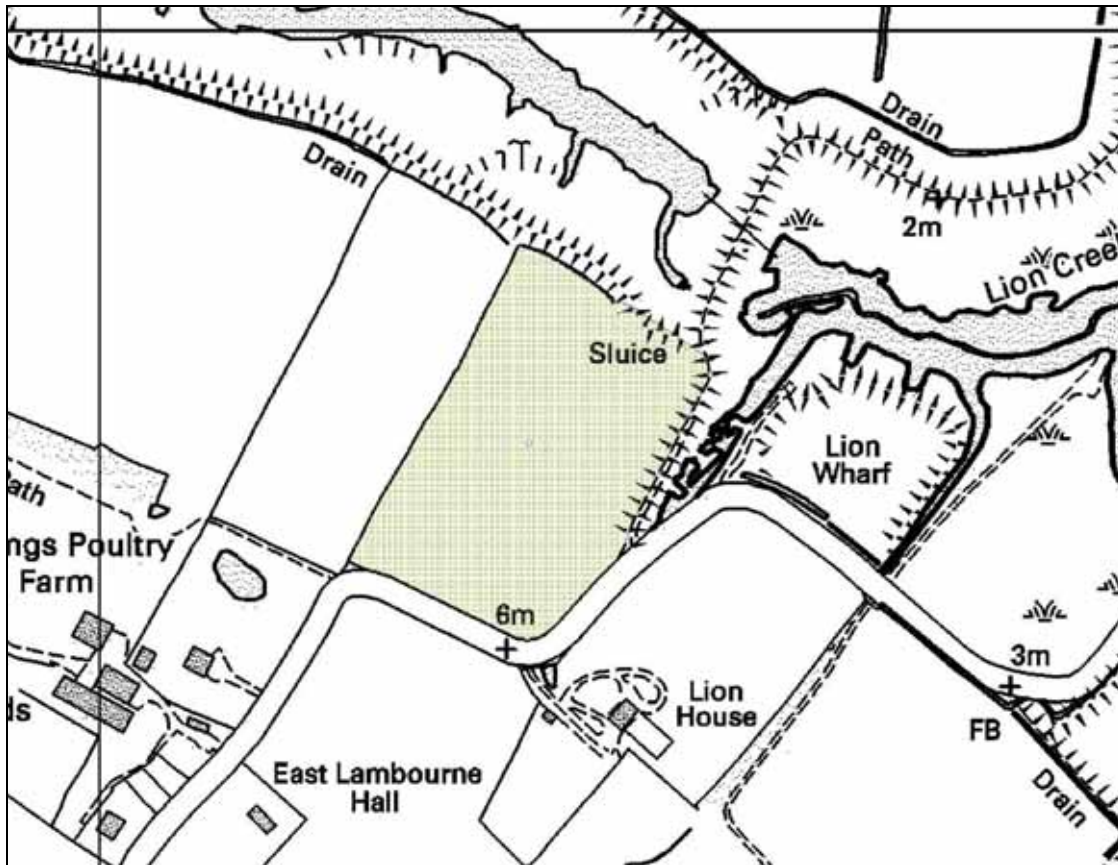
Condition and Threats: This site is managed by local people for conservation, but the adjacent road verges are vulnerable.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: None

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R32. Lion Creek Meadow



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R32. Lion Creek Meadow (3.1 ha) TQ 922 947

This grassland is located adjacent to Lion Creek, which forms part of the River Crouch SSSI. A wide variety of grasses are found, including Sweet Vernal Grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), Crested Dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*) and Yellow Oat-grass (*Trisetum flavescens*). The herb flora includes Meadow Vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), Grass Vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*), Meadow Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) and Lesser Stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*). The ditch bordering the sea wall has a stand of Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*) and supports the Essex Red List Scarce Emerald damselfly. The meadow is good complimentary habitat to the coastal SSSI, providing valuable invertebrate habitat for groups such as butterflies and grasshoppers.

Selection criteria: HCr11, SCr14

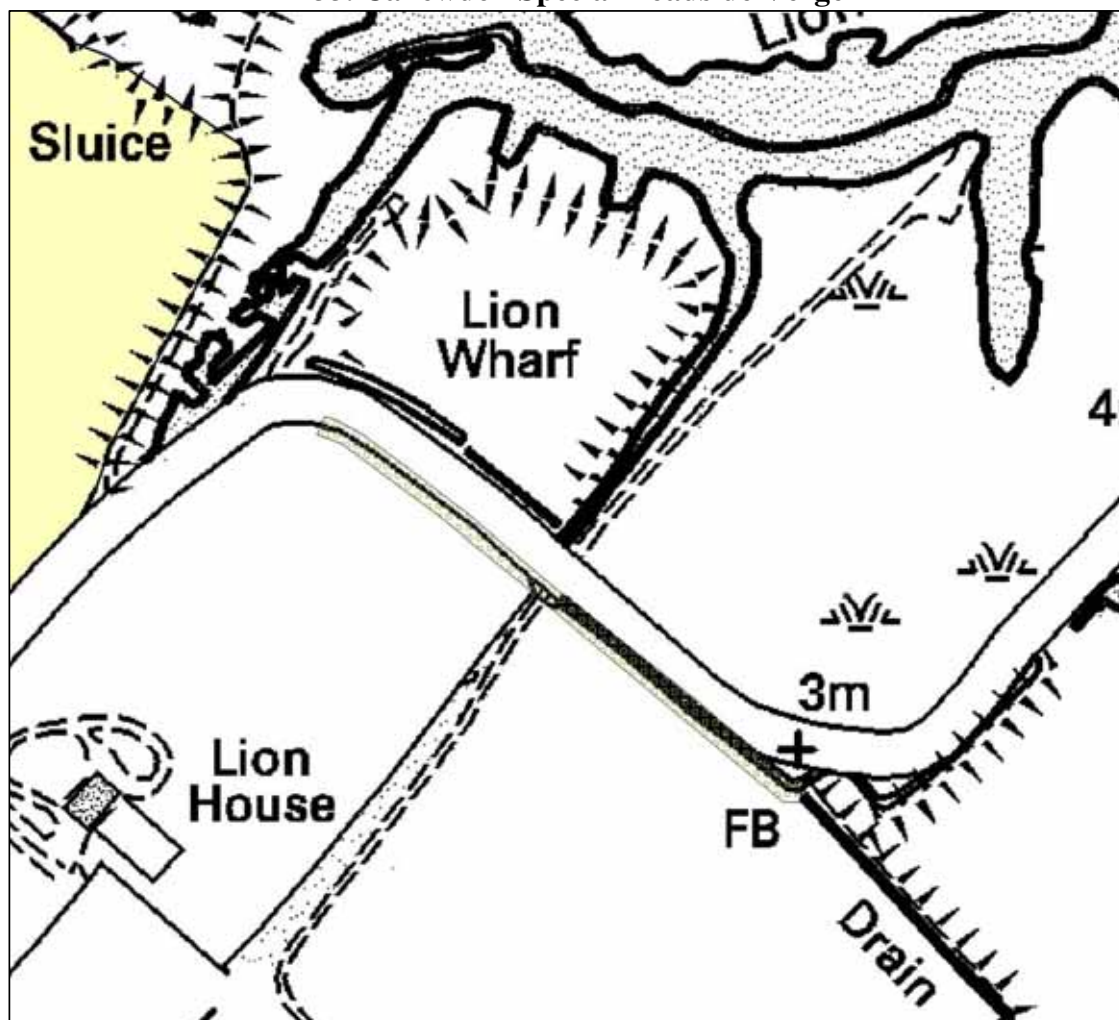
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this grassland

UK BAP Priority Habitats: None

Date of selection: October 2007

Date of last revision: n/a

R33. Canewdon Special Roadside Verge



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R33. Canewdon Special Roadside Verge (0.2 ha, 210 metres approx) TQ 924947 to TQ 925945

This verge was originally identified on the strength of its population of the Essex Emerald Moth, which is now extinct in the UK. However, the verge retains typical saltmarsh vegetation on either side of a tidal ditch, including an extensive colony of Sea Wormwood (*Seriphidium maritimum*). This saltmarsh grades into coastal grassland beyond the tide's influence.

Selection criteria: HCr17, HCr28

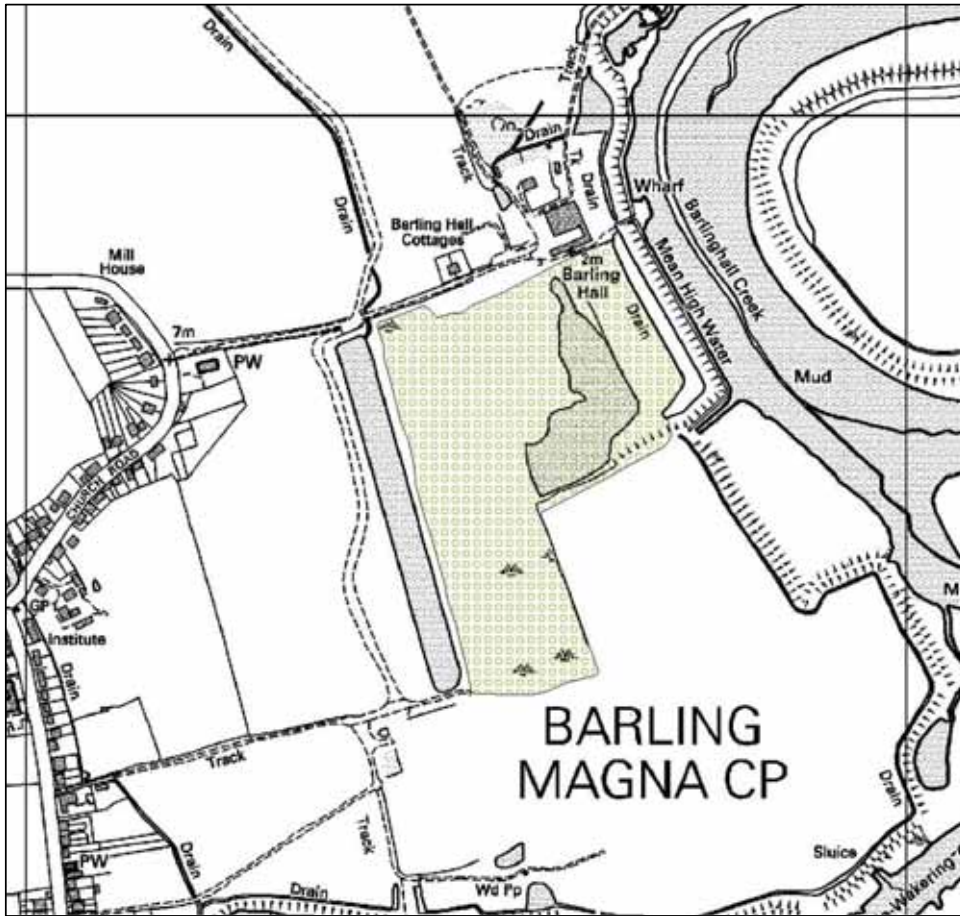
Condition and Threats: The threats to road verges are illustrated by the deposition of road plantings within the Crouch and Roach SSSI on the opposite side of the road. The verge is also likely to be cut in an inappropriate manner.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Coastal Saltmarsh

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R34. Barling Pits



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R34. Barling Pits (10.1 ha) TQ935896

This site is made up of former sand and gravel workings that are still operational, but no longer directly for extraction. The site has an artificially raised water level, which has created extensive reedbeds, lagoons and other pools amongst willow scrub, some of which is now dead through flooding. Some higher parts of the site have varied scrub and tall ruderal vegetation, the latter where there has been recent physical disturbance.

The larger lagoon to the east is used by wading birds and supports marginal vegetation made up of saltmarsh species such as Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*). Southern Marsh Orchids (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*) were formerly recorded in a damp ditch at the southern end of the site, but now appear to have gone.

Pochard, a nationally rare breeding species of duck, has bred on the site, as have Reed Bunting, a national priority BAP species.

The site supports an important invertebrate population due, in part, to the topography and substrate present. Recorded Essex Red Listed species include Hairy Dragonfly (*Brachytron pratense*), the spider *Zodarion italicum*, the solitary bees *Andrena florea*, *A. fulvago*, *A. labialis*, *Sphecodes longulus*, *S. reticulatus*, *Nomada fucata* and the solitary wasp *Passaloecus clypealis*, amongst many others.

Selection criteria: HCr20, HCr21, SCr11, SCr14.

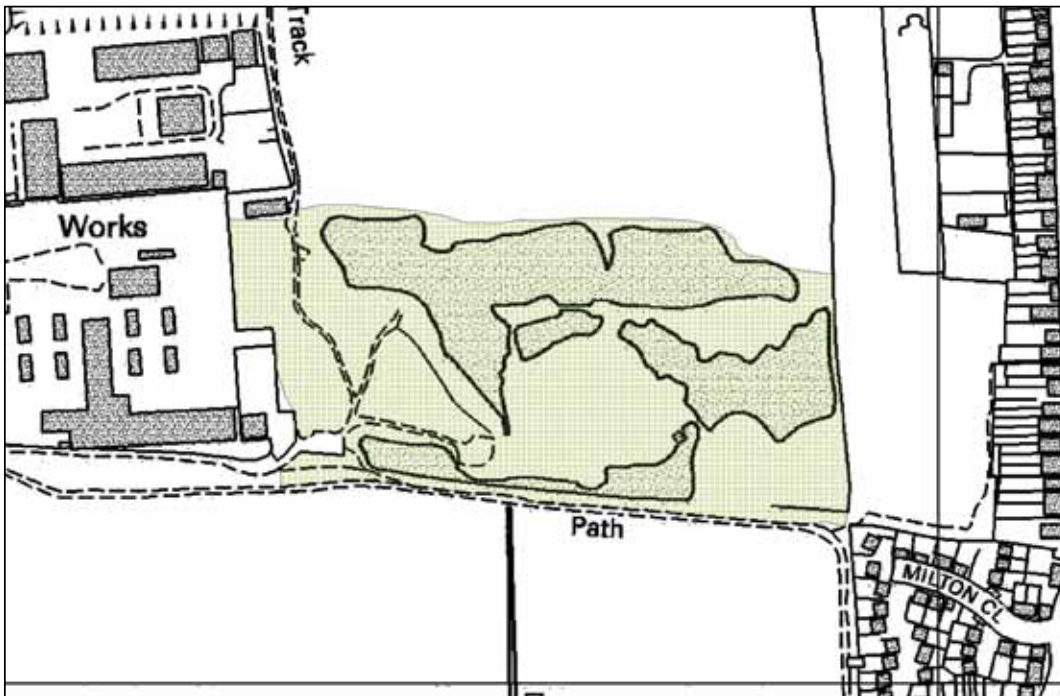
Condition and Threats: The site is part of an active aggregate and landfill complex and is likely to be vulnerable to changes in operational requirements.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Reedbeds

Date of selection: October 2007

Date of last revision: n/a

R35. Star Lane Pits



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R35. Star Lane Pits (6.9 ha) TQ 937873

These former clay pits with overlying sands and gravel form an interesting mosaic of scrub, rough grassland and aquatic habitats. The scrub is mainly Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and Grey Willow (*Salix cinerea*) with some Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and Wild Clematis (*Clematis vitalba*). Areas of open rough grassland exhibit a variety of herb species including Black Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Narrow-leaved Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus glaber*), Hairy St John's-wort (*Hypericum hirsutum*), Red Bartsia (*Odontites vernus*) and Wild carrot (*Daucus carota*). The Essex Red List species Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*) is also present.

The lakes, stocked with fish, have beds of Bulrush (*Typha* spp.) and Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), which, in turn, support Reed and Sedge Warblers. Of interest is the small free floating liverwort, *Riccia fluitans*. The rare Essex water-plant Hemlock Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*) has also been recorded. This diverse and variable grass and scrub habitat accompanied by deep and shallow water provides a good habitat for aquatic invertebrates, including dragonflies and damselflies.

The site's invertebrate community includes a large number of nationally significant and Essex Red list species including the spider *Zilla diodia*, the bees *Nomada fucata*, *Odynerus melanocephalus* (newly made a national BAP species), *Andrena tibialis* and *Sphecodes spinulosus*, and the wasp *Ancistrocerus parietum*. It is the only recent site in Essex for the Nationally Scarce bee fly *Bombylius discolor*.

Selection criteria: HCr6(b), HCr22, HCr26

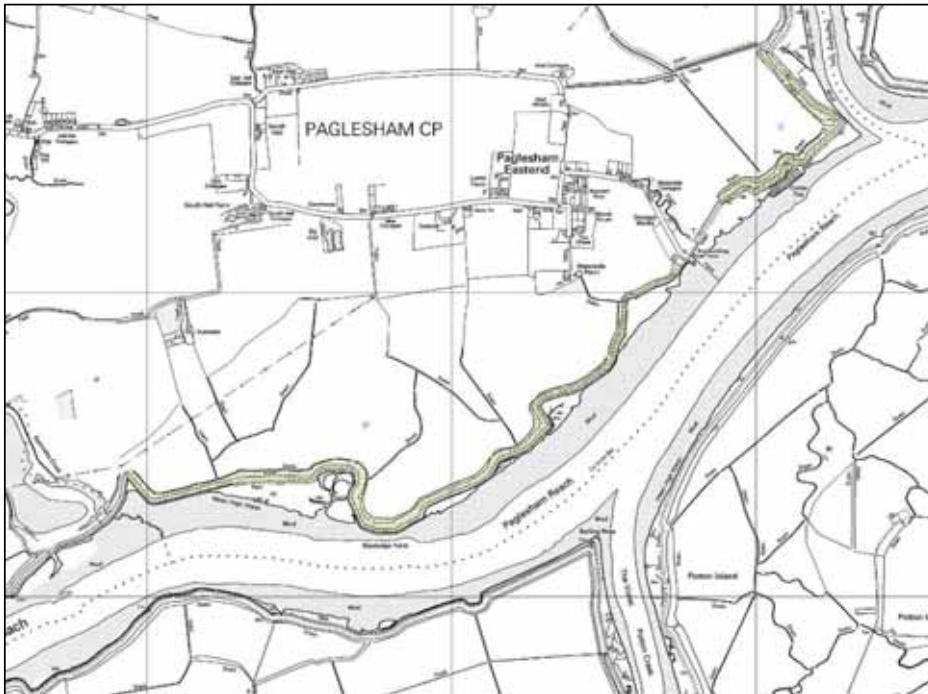
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this site, although its management is unlikely to consider the needs of the important invertebrates and plants highlighted above.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Reedbeds

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R36. Paglesham Seawall



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R36. Paglesham Seawall (12.3 ha) TQ 945917

The western section of the seawall displays a particularly rich, characteristic seawall flora. Several interesting species have been recorded including Sea Clover (*Trifolium squamosum*), Slender Hare's-ear (*Bupleurum tenuissimum*), Stiff Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia rupestris*), Saltmarsh Rush (*Juncus gerardii*), Sea Barley (*Hordeum marinum*), Lesser Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia marina*) and Sea Hard-grass (*Parapholis strigosa*). The site includes the borrowdyke, which has stands of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*), adding to the diversity of habitats present.

To the east of Paglesham Eastend, extensive swamp communities have developed within and alongside the borrowdykes. Distinct stands of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*), occasional Lesser Bulrush (*Typha angustifolia*) and associated scattered scrub, all contribute to provide a diverse habitat for wildlife. These bands of habitat inside the sea wall compliment the saltmarsh habitat of the estuarine SSSI. In addition the borrowdyke habitat also supports a Water Vole population. Water Voles are a national and Essex BAP species, which have markedly declined in recent decades due to loss of habitat and predation by Mink. The most stable populations are generally found in coastal borrowdyke and drain habitats.

Selection criteria: HCr10, HCr22, SCr10

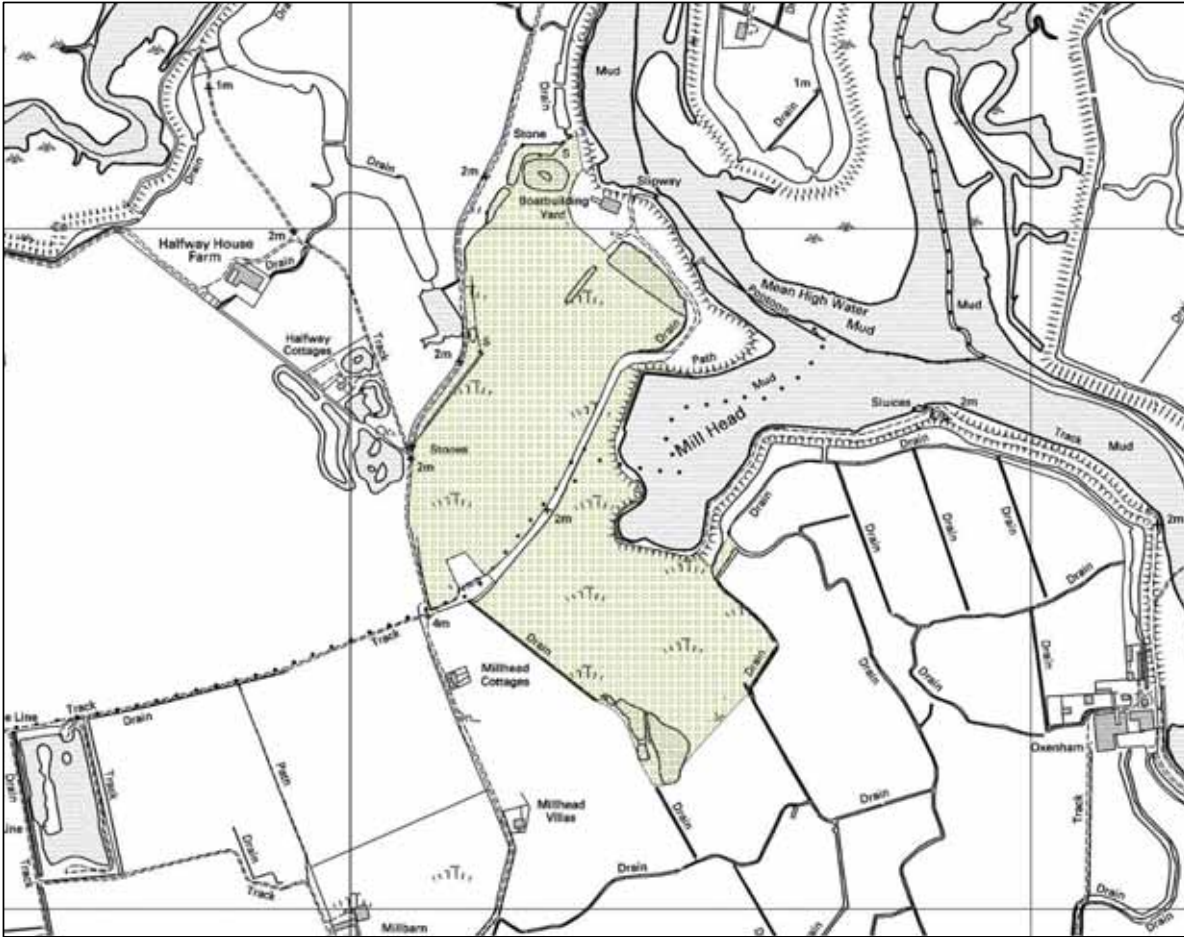
Condition and Threats: There are no apparent threats to this habitat. However, arable fields do border the site, such that possible threats exist from contamination of the ditches and drains by chemical applications to crops.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: None

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R37. Wakering Landfill Site



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R37. Wakering Landfill Site (24.0 hectares) TQ953886

This landfill site was closed in 2001 and has since developed coastal grassland and flower-rich grassland communities. It is divided into two sections separated by the access track of the Wakering Boatyard.

The northern section was the last to be completed and so contains a more open sward with a greater proportion of flowering species. The sward is dominated by Common Couch (*Elytrigia repens*) with Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Soft Brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*) frequent in some areas. The Nationally Scarce Sea Barley (*Hordeum marinum*) is locally dominant in places that have been subjected to more recent disturbance. Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) is abundant with dry grassland species including Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*) and Hop Trefoil (*Trifolium campestre*).

The southern section has a more established sward dominated by Sea Couch (*Elytrigia atherica*) and False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), but with other species including Timothy (*Phleum pratense*), Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*) and Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*). Herbs include Common Vetch (*Vicia sativa*), Meadow Vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), Salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*), Smooth Tare (*Vicia tetrasperma*) and Cut-leaved Crane's-bill (*Geranium dissectum*). The Nationally Scarce Sea Clover (*Trifolium squamosum*) and Pale Flax (*Linum bienne*), both on the Essex Red List, also occur along the more open path margins.

A scattering of scrub occurs on the most established areas, around the margins of the northern section and over the southern half of the southern section. Breeding bird species include Skylark and Common

Whitethroat. It is likely that the site supports a diverse invertebrate population, but no survey work has been carried out.

At the southern end of the site are some pools dominated by Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) with Lesser Bulrush (*Typha angustifolia*). Scrub and Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) beds occupy their margins.

Selection criteria: HCr13, HCr20, HCr22, SCr15

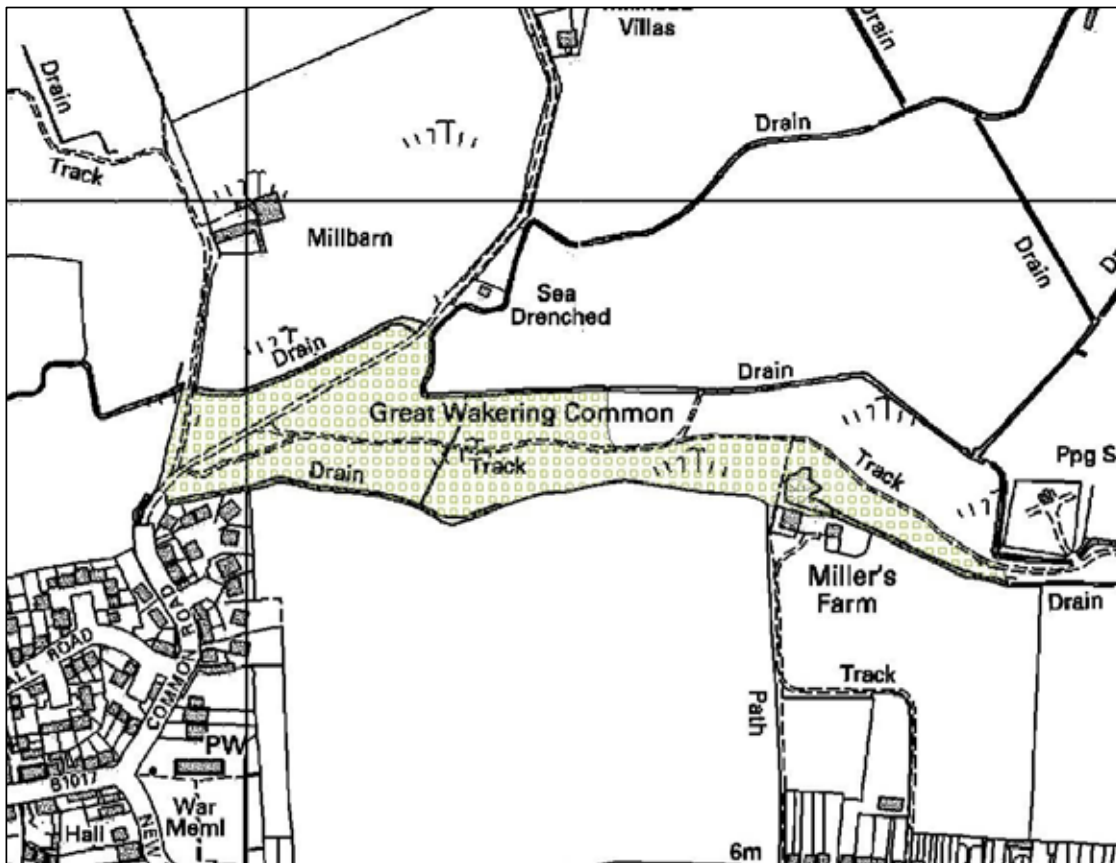
Condition and Threats: The future use and management of the site is unknown. The current condition of the site is good, but a lack of appropriate management will lead to a decline in the quality of the grassland and invasion by scrub.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Reedbeds

Date of selection: October 2007

Date of last revision: n/a

R38. Great Waking Common



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R38. Great Waking Common (4.5 ha) TQ 954878

Great Waking Common provides a wide range of habitats, with a consequently diverse flora and fauna. A wide variety of grasses and herbs include Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*) and Grass Vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*) amongst a sward of Sea Couch (*Elytrigia pycnantha*), Creeping Bent-grass (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*).

Millers Pond, to the south side of the common, contains a significant quantity of the Essex Red Listed Mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*) and the margins support Pink Water-speedwell (*Veronica catenata*) (also Essex Red Listed), Wild Celery (*Apium graveolens*) and extensive stands of Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritima*). The pond is known to support Smooth and Great Crested Newts, Common Toad and Common Frog and Grass Snakes also inhabit the common.

The boundary ditches provide important brackish aquatic habitat for species such as the Essex Red Listed Divided Sedge (*Carex divisa*) and Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) with breeding Reed and Cetti's Warblers in recent years. A reasonable number of dragonflies and damselflies have been recorded on the site including Scarce Emerald Damselfly breeding on Millers Pond. Further habitat is provided by boundary hedges and scrub scattered throughout the common.

Selection criteria: HCr6, HCr13, SCr3, SCr14, SCr15

Condition and Threats: This site has already been adversely affected by inappropriate tree planting and poor grassland management. The potentially invasive Parrot's Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) is becoming established in Millers Pond

UK BAP Priority Habitats: None

Date of selection: 1993

Date of last revision: October 2007

R39. Wallasea Island Managed Realignment



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R39. Wallasea Island Managed Realignment (90.3 ha) TQ964946

This site comprises the intertidal habitat created by realignment of the seawall in 2005. The majority of the realignment site is made up of mudflats, already utilised by a wide range of wading birds and wildfowl. Within the mudflats are lagoon areas that retain water at low tide and a number of islands suitable for roosting and breeding birds.

Approximately 23 hectares of saltmarsh habitat have also been created, although the colonisation of plant species is limited to glassworts (*Salicornia* and *Sarcocornia* spp.), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Annual Sea-blite (*Suaeda maritima*) and Lesser Sea-Spurrey (*Spergularia marina*) at present, with Grass-leaved Orache (*Atriplex littoralis*) at the limit of tidal influence.

Inside the seawall the new borrowdyke is flooded at high tide via a sluice and as a result its shallow banks are also developing saltmarsh vegetation. This is currently dominated by Sea Aster with Saltmarsh Rush (*Juncus gerardii*), Common Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia maritima*) and small stands of Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*).

Selection criteria: HCr28, HCr30

Condition and Threats:

As this site constitutes mitigation for adverse developmental effects elsewhere on the coast, it should be secure from development pressures. It has also been designed to cope with and compensate for predicted environmental and climatic changes that are threatening other sections of coastline.

UK BAP Priority Habitats: Coastal Saltmarsh, Intertidal Mudflats

Date of selection: October 2007

Date of last revision: n/a

N.b. The map given above should be considered provisional, as the habitat features of the site are not available on any published maps as yet.

APPENDIX 3
CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Respondent: Dr Tim Gardiner [8456]

Received: 08/10/07

W30 Finches EWT Nature Conservation Area has a large population of Glow-worms (*Lampyrus noctiluca*), a scarce beetle of unimproved grassland in Essex. The colony at Finches is one of the largest in Essex and in Rochford. Glow-worms are particularly susceptible to habitat change and are unable to move between sites easily making their remaining habitats extremely valuable. In view of the presence of Glow-worms (which are rare in the Rochford District) I would ask the Council to consider keeping the reserve on the list of Local Wildlife Sites and to remove it from the proposed deletions.

Response: The information regarding Glow-worms is very valuable and is sufficient reason to retain this site on the SCr14 selection criteria.

Respondent: Essex Amphibian & Reptile Group (Chair Raymond Cranfield) [8464]

Received: 12/10/07

FW1 Butts Hill Pond EWT Nature Conservation Area (0.3 ha) TQ899947

The EARG would like to point out that the following species are present on this site - Crested Newts, Smooth newts, Common Frog, Common Toad, grass snake, slowworm, viviparous lizard

The presence of these species would in our view require further survey to establish whether this key amphibian and reptile site meets the criteria

The EARG would like to see this site flagged up for further survey work

Response: This information is very valuable and qualifies the site for inclusion under site selection criteria SCr2 and SCr4.

Respondent: Essex Amphibian & Reptile Group (Chair Raymond Cranfield) [8464]

Received: 12/10/07

Rayleigh Mount - The EARG would like to flag up this site as a key amphibian site in the town of Rayleigh. Crested Newts have been recorded confirming a 17 year old record. Plus Smooth newts and common frogs - considering the location of this site it should be considered further in this review as a potential future LWS

Response: This information is important, but is considered insufficient to warrant inclusion of the site within the LoWS network. The site will be added to the list of sites worthy of further investigation pending a district wide review of amphibian populations.

Respondent: Essex Amphibian & Reptile Group (Chair Raymond Cranfield) [8464]

Received: 12/10/07

M3 Magnolia Nature Reserve and Fields TQ860927

Within its citation the following should be added

The site holds the largest known population of crested and smooth newts in Essex and definitely in Rochford. The population forms a large metapopulation with the

Anglian Water Flood Reservoir to the East (large rectangle on Map) and several old Tudor ponds (400 years+) at the Rouncefall. The presence of both frog and toad (National BAP)

An exceptional population of slowworms, lizards and grass snakes (all National BAP priority species) exist within the site making this area one of the key sites for Herpetofauna in Rochford

Response: The site description will be altered to reflect these statements, although quantitative data would be more useful.

Respondent: Mrs Gill Plackett [8002]

Received: 16/10/07

W30 Finches supports a colony of glow worms, I thought that this species was nationally scarce.

Response: The species is not Nationally Scarce and does not feature on the Essex Red Data List, but the presence of a significantly large population does warrant the site's inclusion as noted above.

Respondent: The National Trust Rayleigh Mount Local Committee (Mr M Stone) [8468]

Received: 12/10/07

I write to you as chair of the Rayleigh Mount Committee to request that the property be included in the consultation document of important wildlife sites in the Rochford District Council area.

Our 5 acre site supports an abundance of birds, mammals and amphibians that would benefit from the support of the local authority.

I would be very willing to supply full details of species if this would help.

Response: It is not believed that the diversity of species or significance of any species is of sufficient standard to merit the inclusion of this site when assessed on a District basis, but as noted above, the site will be flagged for future attention.

Respondent: Hockley Parish Council (Mr P Stanley) [7340]

Received: 23/10/07

Dear Sirs

With regard to the above, I welcome the additional land being (R7) acquired by Hockley Marsh (Brandy Hole Marsh extension), many walkers are put at risk of being stranded on the existing footpaths no. 8 and 9 Hullbridge which run across this Marsh due to coastal erosion. We hope that this path can now be diverted onto the edge of this new land to facilitate this much needed safe alternative route and allow the old path to be extinguished and removed. This would allow recreational activities ie. walks to commence in a safe and healthy manner, give less disturbance to birds and remove a danger to existing users of the old path. If the new path was created it would require little work except for the occasional clearance as most of the area proposed is already clear and would only require little seasonal clearance work.

If the new area of additional land is adopted, I hope that some consideration can be given to this proposal.

Many thanks.

Councillor Brian Hazlewood
Chairman of Footpath Committee
Hockley Parish Council

Response: Not relevant to this review.

Respondent: Mr Julian Kaye [8477]

Received: 31/10/07

I object to the removal of for example Finches (Canewdon) (note - not an EWT site). I would suggest that the criteria are not sufficiently local to take into account sites that have intrinsic borough value such as Finches (PLUS the related verge), Rayleigh Mount, and even Butts Pond and The Paddock? Essentially, they may NOT be nationally/regionally wildlife important, but locally they are AND offer green corridors, community 'open space' and social enjoyment, etc. Lack of survey specific data (e.g. Butts Pond) should not necessarily result in withdrawal (Also has good population of lizards).

Response: Sites are assessed against criteria produced on a county basis to reflect the level of importance suggested in national guidance on such sites, i.e. they should be sites of county importance. In exceptional circumstances amenity value can be used to support the selection of marginal sites, but is not a criterion in itself. The use of the word 'Local' in the name of these sites can be misleading, as it implies a lower level of importance than should be the case. It could be argued that the sites mentioned are of no more than 'parish' importance for their habitat, although the provision of species data can raise this level of importance, and has done for two of the sites mentioned.

It is noted that, despite past confusion, the site is not now recognised as an Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Conservation Area.

Respondent: Mr Julian Kaye [8477]

Received: 31/10/07

I welcome the addition of further wildlife sites.

Respondent: Mr Julian Kaye [8477]

Received: 31/10/07

I support the fact that sites are being expanded through addition

Respondent: Mr Julian Kaye [8477]

Received: 31/10/07

I hope that of those sites without appropriate survey data, these are prioritised for visits to establish their importance. See also previous objections re exclusion of Gardiners Lane road verge (important for glowworms), and Rayleigh Mount, etc

Response: Priorities for future assessment lie with Rochford District Council, but will inevitably be limited by available resources. Survey information from any source will always be welcomed and will be recognised in future reviews.

Respondent: Mr Julian Kaye [8477]

Received: 31/10/07

I noted with interest the following passage from the documents: 'The new criteria presented here apply to the following districts/boroughs/unitary authorities: Chelmsford, Basildon and Castle Point. The remaining authority sites have been identified using the old guidelines'.

So do the guidelines (i.e. criteria) apply for Rochford and our 'wildlife sites'?

I also look forward to having the opportunity to see the 'fuller report detailing the methodologies and processes that have been followed...', etc, to see what new survey data or lack of data has been applied.

Response: The document in question was not the version of the criteria intended to be included within the consultation material and, as a result, I appreciate the confusion. The statement in its proper context highlights that at that time (2004) the criteria had only been applied to those named districts. The criteria have been developed to be applicable throughout Essex and to offer a degree of consistency, although variations between districts are recognised.

Respondent: Mr & Mrs Buffett [8479]

Received: 31/10/07

I am a resident of Canewdon, I live opposite Finches.

This is a very special place to me and a lot of other people. Not only for it's peacefulness, but for the wildlife contained. There seems such a diversity of plant, animals habitat for such a small area. The glow worms are of particular interest to people in the village (my sons enjoy counting them and sending a report via e mail to some web site) and feel very proud we have them on our doorstep. Not a common sight, in such numbers as we have (long may it continue and grow, or do I mean glow!).

Anyway I am not sure of the implications of any change in status, but I do know that it is something we should hold very dear within this district and have as tight restrictions and security for its future as possible. May I add that the wildlife trust do a splendid job of maintaining it, the paths are almost always accessible.

Many thanks
Marion Buffett

Response: See responses above

Respondent: Essex Wildlife Trust Rochford & Southend Area (Mr Jobson) [4975]

Received: 31/10/07

Herewith Comments from the Rochford and Southend Local Group of the Essex Wildlife Trust to the initial draft report form EECOS regarding designation of Local Wildlife Sites.

We would first like to welcome the addition of significant new sites in the District such as the intertidal zone of the River Roach above Stambridge Mills and the new sites at Barling both of which were overdue for recognition. We would comment that the saltmarsh/freshwater transition zone reedbed of the River Roach Site does extend slightly more upriver than appears on the identification map . We would suggest extension to a point adjacent to the westernmost boundary of the Sewage farm rather than the easternmost. One committee member has actually seen kingfisher flighting along this stretch on 2 occasions. This boundary till ends lower than the traditional local marker of freshwater transition which was marked by what was known historically as the "Salt Bridge" now the bridge adjacent to

the Horse and Groom Public House

We recognise that it has been difficult for EECOS to make multiple survey visits to sites and thus seasonal flora and fauna present on certain sites may not have been apparent to them. We would however like to draw two sites to your attention.

In particular we are concerned at the suggested delisting of the Finches Nature Conservation area in Canewdon . This site provides habitat for the 2nd largest population of the Glowworm (*Lampyrus noctiluca*) in Essex . This species whilst not Essex Red Data Book is nevertheless locally scarce. The only larger population recorded recently in Essex is at One Tree Hill in Langdon Hills Country Park. The Finches Glowworm population has been regularly surveyed each summer by the Essex Glowworm Survey organised by Dr Tim Gardiner of Writtle Agricultural College from whom population data can be requested. The core of the population is to be found in the Finches Nature Area but the largest display areas for the females are usually on the verges of Gardiners Lane Canewdon extending approximately 200 yards in either direction on both north and southern verges. Proper management of these verges is therefore important for sustaining this population. The glow-worms are a well known local sight and of considerable public interest locally.

We would also like to record that The Great Crested Newt has been noted by Mr Julian Kaye (Essex Wildlife Trust warden of Lower Raypits and Lion Creek Reserves) during pond dipping at Finches wildlife area. We are aware that presence of a BAP species does not in and of itself qualify the site for inclusion as an LWS but would suggest that its presence goes towards its inclusion.

Finches also possesses an area of marginal bog to the north side of the large central pond which during the summer is home to a large invertebrate population .

We note the addition of a field adjacent to Hullbridge Rd Rayleigh to the LWS list as an example of unimproved grassland and would like to add another site of unimproved Grassland some 300 yds. further north where last year members of the EWT Local Group Committee photographed approximately 200-300 flower spikes of green winged Orchid during their Spring Flowering on an approx 1/3 acre field fronting Hullbridge road Grid Reference TQ 806 938 (Full Reference 5806 16 193855).

We would also remind Rochford District Council that even sites that *sensu strictu* may not qualify under the various criteria on a national scale may have considerable intrinsic value on a district scale for instance Rayleigh Mount , we would also like to see a commitment to resurvey of the soon to be expanded Cherry Orchard Country Park in the future. We accept that it may already benefit from stronger protection in law than that afforded a LWS but feel that a blanket statement that it is unlikely to qualify at all in the future somewhat harsh given the new habitat creation and wildlife initiatives being put in place by Patrick Mckenna and team at the Rochford District Council themselves.

It is undoubtedly the case that time and economics have limited the number of sites that EECOS could have surveyed for this report . Since, as is mentioned in their report, most new species identification at new sites will be by amateur groups such as Southend Natural History Society and Essex Field Club it is imperative that a regular system of review allowing submission of findings from such people be established to allow addition of new sites as they are identified. This is already an intention stated by the Rochford District Council. We would suggest that there should be an annual opportunity for addition to the Local Wildlife Sites list on the

grounds that small habitat areas, which these generally are, with small fragile populations of species may well disappear within the timeframe of larger 3 or 5 year plans often beloved of local plan developers.

We would further suggest that a mechanism for reporting LWS candidate sites to the District Council is established between the LWS reviews. This should be in an electronic format available for Public Access and easy checking by Planning Officers. The aim of such a list would be to provide an information resource concerning sites that might benefit from further ecological assessment, should an attempt be made to secure planning approval over such a site before it can be formally added to the list of Local Wildlife Sites. This will be of particular importance if such LWS reviews are to be less frequent than annually.

With Kind regards

I.C Jobson
Planning Representative (Rochford and Southend Local Group)
Essex Wildlife Trust

Response: Re. R28 River Roach at Rochford – Advice noted and site extended upriver.

Re. R31 The Finches – As noted above, this site will now be included, together with the road verges as suggested.

Re. Hullbridge Road – I believe that we have included the Green-winged Orchid site in question, as shown in a plan provided by Roger Payne. We will attempt to clarify this before the final report is issued.

Re. Cherry Orchard Country Park – point taken, but it cannot be seen as a priority for resurvey in the near future. I am sure that, in time, the habitats will mature into a significant mosaic of benefit to a wide range of wildlife.

Further points are directed to Rochford District Council

Additional consultation responses received by EECOS

From Peter Harvey, Essex Field Club

I have come across details given to me a year or so back by Peter Hammond about a long saline borrowdyle past Great Wakering (near and north of Oxenham) where he told me he had found the UKBAP ground beetle *Anisodactylus poeciloides* in large numbers, and described loads of *Lotus glaber* as being present (and therefore probably also has *Bombus sylvarum* and *humilis*). This borrowdyke apparently stretches in an arc from approx. TQ962883 to TQ955885. I think it must be outside the nearby SSSI areas, so should definitely be included as a LWS with adjacent vegetation.

Response: This borrowdyke is within the Foulness SSSI

From Charlie Williams, Natural England

Thanks for sending the results of EECOS' recent review of LoWS in Rochford District to Natural England for comment. I don't deal with Rochford District myself but have copied your summary to my colleagues Neil Fuller and Jonathan Bustard, who do. At the moment they don't have additional comments on particular LoWS or potential LoWS in the district. Therefore, based on the information provided, Natural England is satisfied with your review of the district's LoWS using the current LoWS selection criteria for Essex. We'll be happy to give our opinion on the inclusion or exclusion of particular sites if EWSP require this later.

From Will Akast, Environment Agency

Thanks very much for consulting us on the results of the recent Rochford Local Wildlife Sites review.

I have no comments to add relating to any particular site other than to say that this up to date information will be invaluable to the Environment Agency in planning our own flood risk management maintenance work, providing biodiversity advice to applications for a range of Agency consents and in responding to planning applications.