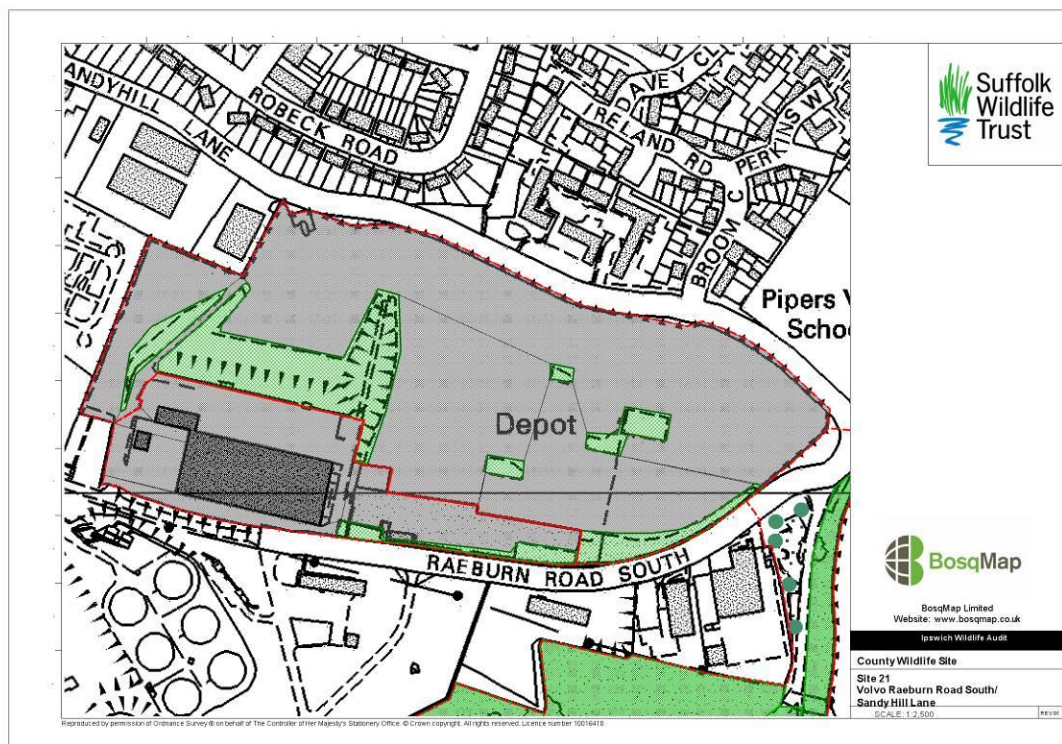


Site name: **Site reference 21 - Volvo Raeburn Road South/Sandy Hill Lane**

IBC ref: W21/IP058
Site status: County Wildlife Site
Grid ref: TM 17640 42080
Area: 6.31 hectares
Date: 4 September 2012
Recorder: M Wright
Weather conditions: Clear skies, calm, hot and sunny
Ranking: 4
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



Concrete hard standing and ruderal plants over looking the Orwell Bridge



Excellent scrub habitat on the steepest slopes of the site



Overgrown scrub islands



Excellent scrub habitat either side of the road looking north east



Part of the skip storage site showing scrub and ruderals colonising the area

Habitat type(s):

Scrub

Subsidiary habitats:

-

Site description:

The site is situated to the west of Pipers Vale and north of Anglian Water's sewage plant. Formerly known as the 'Volvo' site where cars were parked, this large area is now semi-derelict and is entirely of hard standing with a few buildings. Most of the site is leased to Haughley Motors for storing Indian blocks and slabs. Another area is leased to Cooks Waste Kare for storing skips.

Ruderals and scrub are colonizing the cracks in all of areas the hard standing and former grass verges, with the most dominant species being narrow-leaved ragwort and buddleia. There are two small and one very large area of scrub. On the perimeter of the site there were some bramble patches.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Slow worm and common lizard

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

House sparrow

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Song thrush, linnet, slow worm and common lizard

Connectivity:

The large area of scrub is an important link in the wildlife corridor that skirts southeast Ipswich.

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the main scrub area is excellent.

Flora:

The composition of all the scrub habitats was similar, the scrub was thick and tall in places, and the species mixture formed a good mosaic of species. The plants recorded are as follows American Willowherb, black horehound, bramble, broom, buddleia, common nettle, common poppy, corn sowthistle, dittander (nationally scarce), dog rose, elder, evening primrose, field bindweed, field maple, hedge bindweed, hedge mustard, great lettuce, great willowherb, hawthorn, mallow, mouse-eared hawkweed, mullein, oak, narrow-leaved ragwort, nettle, ribwort plantain, perforate St. John's wort, sallow, silver birch, smooth hawksbeard, smooth sow-thistle, spear thistle, sycamore, weld, wild parsnip, white poplar, yarrow, Yorkshire fog,

Avifauna:

There was one BAP and Birds of Conservation Concern red listed species seen, which was house sparrow. Other observations included blackbird, blue tit, chiffchaff, collared dove, common whitethroat, greenfinch, magpie, wood pigeon and wren.

Invertebrates:

Observations of butterflies included comma, large white, small tortoiseshell, small white, red admiral and speckled wood.

Herpetofauna:

No species were seen during the site visit. However the habitat is suitable for slow worm and common lizard.

Mammals:

Rabbit was the only species seen but it is likely that muntjac deer and fox may inhabit and pass through the site.

Comments and recommendations:

Should development proceed on this site, it is highly recommended that a corridor for wildlife is created through the site by incorporating existing scrub areas, to help retain the current ecological network in this part of Ipswich. The main sloping scrub area is excellent habitat for a wide range of wildlife through all seasons and creation of grassy areas would improve the quality of edge habitat still further.

A reptile survey should be undertaken and no clearance of vegetation should take place until the presence of reptiles is properly assessed and mitigated, in order to ensure compliance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

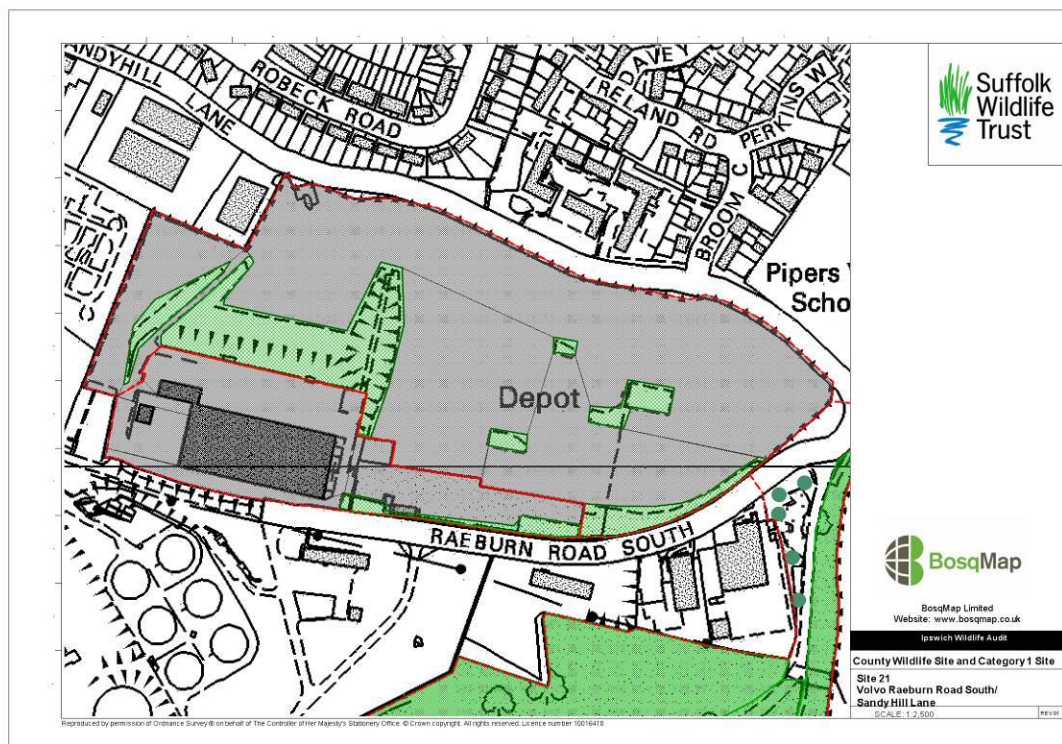
When the site was used for car storage by Volvo, the hard standing area was sectioned by grass verges, which were either rabbit-grazed or regularly cut by mechanical means. All the grass areas supported good populations of bee orchids; several thousand individual plants were noted in 1991. However, at the time of this survey all these grass verges have now entirely scrubbed over making them unsuitable to support orchids or a grassland sward.

Due to the change in its floristic value we strongly recommend that the site is referred to the CWS panel for further assessment.

Site name: **Site reference 21 - Volvo Raeburn Road South/Sandy Hill Lane**

IBC ref: W21/IP058
Site status: County Wildlife Site
Grid ref: TM 17640 42080
Area: 6.31 hectares
Date: 4 September 2012
Recorder: M Wright
Weather conditions: Clear skies, calm, hot and sunny
Ranking: 4
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



Concrete hard standing and ruderal plants over looking the Orwell Bridge



Excellent scrub habitat on the steepest slopes of the site



Overgrown scrub islands



Excellent scrub habitat either side of the road looking north east



Part of the skip storage site showing scrub and ruderals colonising the area

Habitat type(s):

Scrub

Subsidiary habitats:

-

Site description:

The site is situated to the west of Pipers Vale and north of Anglian Water's sewage plant. Formerly known as the 'Volvo' site where cars were parked, this large area is now semi-derelict and is entirely of hard standing with a few buildings. Most of the site is leased to Haughley Motors for storing Indian blocks and slabs. Another area is leased to Cooks Waste Kare for storing skips.

Ruderals and scrub are colonizing the cracks in all of areas the hard standing and former grass verges, with the most dominant species being narrow-leaved ragwort and buddleia. There are two small and one very large area of scrub. On the perimeter of the site there were some bramble patches.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Slow worm and common lizard

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

House sparrow

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Song thrush, linnet, slow worm and common lizard

Connectivity:

The large area of scrub is an important link in the wildlife corridor that skirts southeast Ipswich.

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the main scrub area is excellent.

Flora:

The composition of all the scrub habitats was similar, the scrub was thick and tall in places, and the species mixture formed a good mosaic of species. The plants recorded are as follows American Willowherb, black horehound, bramble, broom, buddleia, common nettle, common poppy, corn sowthistle, dittander (nationally scarce), dog rose, elder, evening primrose, field bindweed, field maple, hedge bindweed, hedge mustard, great lettuce, great willowherb, hawthorn, mallow, mouse-eared hawkweed, mullein, oak, narrow-leaved ragwort, nettle, ribwort plantain, perforate St. John's wort, sallow, silver birch, smooth hawksbeard, smooth sow-thistle, spear thistle, sycamore, weld, wild parsnip, white poplar, yarrow, Yorkshire fog,

Avifauna:

There was one BAP and Birds of Conservation Concern red listed species seen, which was house sparrow. Other observations included blackbird, blue tit, chiffchaff, collared dove, common whitethroat, greenfinch, magpie, wood pigeon and wren.

Invertebrates:

Observations of butterflies included comma, large white, small tortoiseshell, small white, red admiral and speckled wood.

Herpetofauna:

No species were seen during the site visit. However the habitat is suitable for slow worm and common lizard.

Mammals:

Rabbit was the only species seen but it is likely that muntjac deer and fox may inhabit and pass through the site.

Comments and recommendations:

Should development proceed on this site, it is highly recommended that a corridor for wildlife is created through the site by incorporating existing scrub areas, to help retain the current ecological network in this part of Ipswich. The main sloping scrub area is excellent habitat for a wide range of wildlife through all seasons and creation of grassy areas would improve the quality of edge habitat still further.

A reptile survey should be undertaken and no clearance of vegetation should take place until the presence of reptiles is properly assessed and mitigated, in order to ensure compliance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

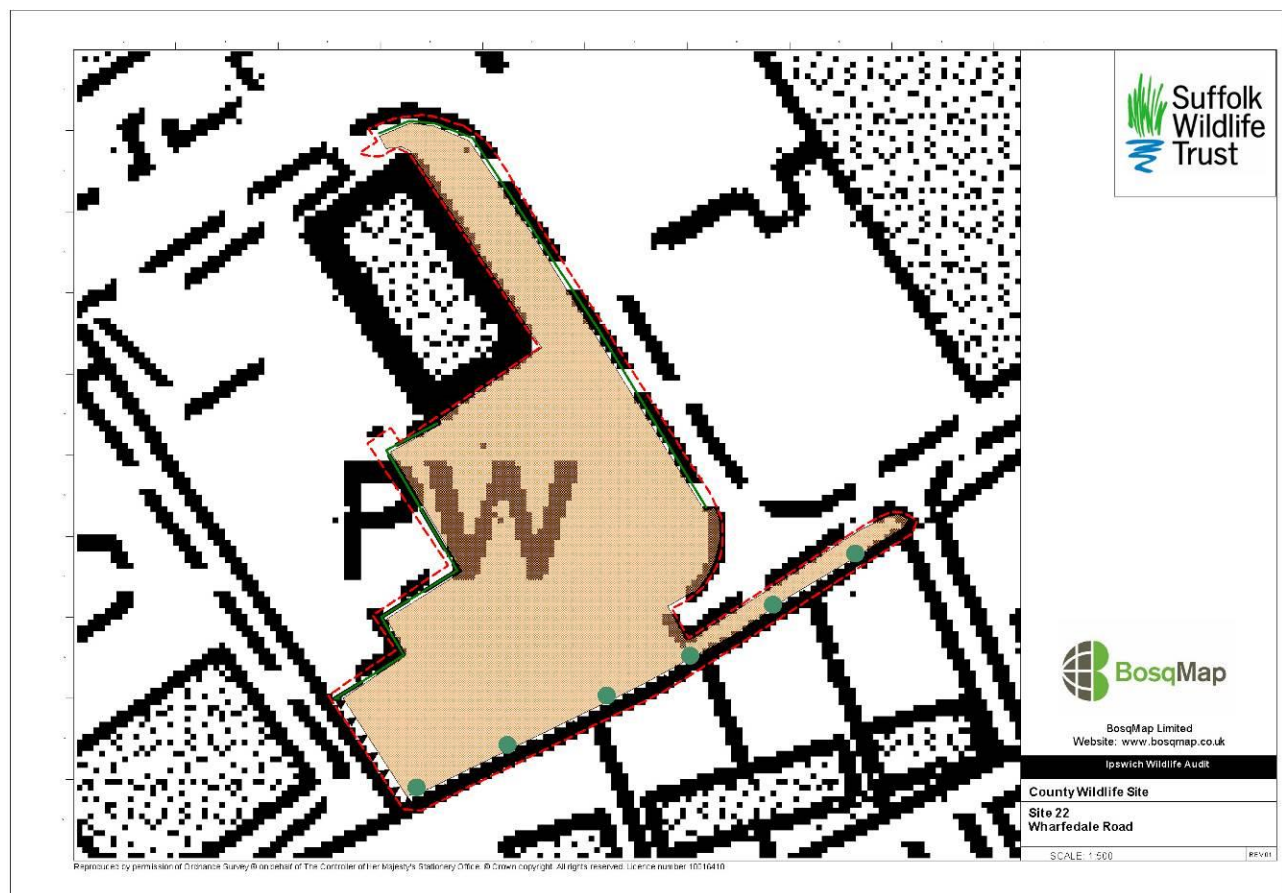
When the site was used for car storage by Volvo, the hard standing area was sectioned by grass verges, which were either rabbit-grazed or regularly cut by mechanical means. All the grass areas supported good populations of bee orchids; several thousand individual plants were noted in 1991. However, at the time of this survey all these grass verges have now entirely scrubbed over making them unsuitable to support orchids or a grassland sward.

Due to the change in its floristic value we strongly recommend that the site is referred to the CWS panel for further assessment.

Site name: **Site reference 22 - Wharfedale Road CWS**

IBC ref: W22
Site status: County Wildlife Site
Grid ref: TM 15521 46486
Area: 0.18 hectares
Date: 3 August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, sunny, 22° C, slight breeze
Ranking: 2
Biodiversity value: High

Map:



Photos:



View south-eastwards across site



View north-eastwards

Habitat type(s):

Species-rich grassland with a chalky boulder clay influence

Subsidiary habitats:

Boundary hedges

Site description:

The site lies on the corner of Knightsdale Road and Wharfedale Road. Development to the south resulted in the site being halved in size and the construction of a Christian meeting room in the north-western quarter has resulted in the site being further reduced in size. In 2010 the boundaries were re-mapped by the County Wildlife Site Panel to reflect the current situation. However, the church now owns and manages the remainder of site for nature conservation. Species rich grassland represents the principal wildlife interest, but there are recently planted hedges around much of the site which complement it.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Slow worm

BAP habitats present:

Lowland meadows

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Slow worm, hedgehog

Connectivity:

Connectivity is poor as the site is surrounded by roads, housing and industrial buildings.

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity is good for this habitat type. The sward is cut twice a year (August and late autumn), but at the time of the visit the northern margin had been left, thus providing some remaining habitat for butterflies, bees and other invertebrates.

Flora:

The site had been cut in the week prior to the visit, but as the cutting had not yet been raked off and by also surveying the margins the following species were recorded: pyramidal orchid, wild carrot, wild parsnip, hop trefoil, ribwort plantain, bristly ox-tongue, black medick, red clover, ox-eye daisy, black knapweed, yarrow, self heal, hairy tare, creeping cinquefoil, hoary ragwort, narrow-leaved ragwort, perforate St John's-wort, field scabious, rough hawkbit, field bindweed, spear thistle, mouse-ear-hawkweed, Yorkshire fog, cocksfoot, false oat grass with false brome and horsetails on the northern uncut bank. No bee orchids were seen, but it was reported that they had been seen in 2012.

New hedges have been planted with guelder rose, hazel, hawthorn and cherry. Some ornamental trees have been planted inside the hedge near the boundary with the car park. There is the occasional wild rose growing on the boundaries which have self-sown.

Avifauna:

No birds were recorded but this was an unsuitable time of year for surveying this group. The hedgerows will support roosting, nesting and foraging garden birds.

Invertebrates:

The site provides good habitat for invertebrates. Butterflies and moths: common blue, meadow brown, small skipper and six-spot burnet were recorded. Red-tailed bumblebees were abundant as were grasshoppers. The invertebrate list would undoubtedly be greater if the visit could have taken place prior to the sward being cut.

Herpetofauna:

There are historical records of slow worms for this site, but no recent records. It is possible that they still persist at this location, in conjunction with neighbouring gardens where suitable habitat may exist.

Mammals:

Due to its isolation, few mammals are likely to be associated with this site. There is a possibility that hedgehogs may visit, but this is dependent upon the boundary fences being permeable to the movement of this species. Similarly, foxes may pass through this area.

Comments and recommendations:

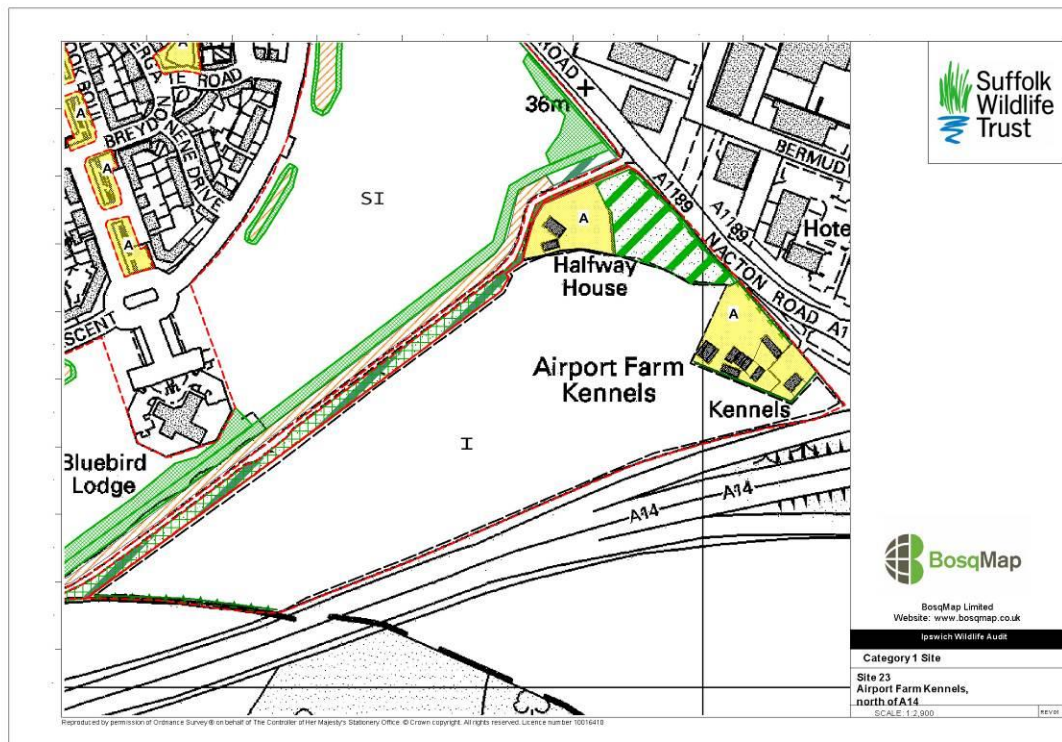
The site had just been cut and it was reported that the cuttings would be removed the following week. A later cut takes place in the autumn. This management regime is ideal for maintaining the floristic interest. It was noted that a rough margin had been left along the eastern boundary and the vegetation was much ranker here. It is recommended that the next cut is closer to this boundary to encourage a more flower-rich sward and preventing a thatch from developing.

A large, non native shrub on the northern boundary is showing signs of drought stress and die-back. It is recommended that this is cut back and this will also make future mowing in this area easier.

Site name: **Site reference - 23 Airport Farm Kennels**

IBC ref: UC269/IP1
Site status: No wildlife designations
Grid ref: TM 19830 41180
Area: 7.82 hectares
Date: 25 July 2012
Recorder: M Wright
Weather conditions: Clear skies, hot and sunny
Ranking: 4
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



Looking west: A14 hedge on the left and the airport road tree belt in the background



Looking north-east: halfway house, kennels and mature oaks adjacent to the Nacton Road

Habitat type(s):

Hedgerows, species poor grassland, semi- improved grass verge adjacent to the slip road, individual trees.

Subsidiary habitat:

-

Site description:

This wedge of land lies between the disused airport perimeter road and the A14 trunk road. The land was recently in arable production but is now rough, species poor grassland. On the north-western boundary lies the airport road tree belt, adjacent to the Nacton Road (A1189) there is a belt of mature oak trees with a thick scrub hedge

and along the A14 perimeter there are lengths of Corsican pine and a broad, mixed species hedge. Running diagonally through the rough grassland there is a broad mixed hedgerow with oaks.

Also within the site is Halfway House, Airport Farm kennels and various associated outbuildings.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Grass snake, slow worm and common lizard

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

Starling, house sparrow and linnet

BAP species known:

Yellowhammer, skylark

BAP species potential:

Bats, hedgehog, slow worm, grass snake, common lizard, bullfinch and song thrush

Connectivity:

This site in conjunction with the Airport road tree belt is part of a very important wildlife corridor linking to the Orwell estuary and its hinterland. Associated habitats include the southern part of the former airfield, Orwell Country Park including Braziers Wood and Piper's Vale County Wildlife Site (CWS). Beyond the A14 is Bridge Wood and Pond Hall Farm and the estuary itself.

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the hedges and scrub areas associated with the mature trees is good but could be easily improved still further to benefit wildlife.

Flora:

Plants include birdsfoot trefoil, black horehound, black medick, bracken, bristly oxtongue, broad-leaved dock, catsear, common centaury, common nettle, common poppy, common ragwort, common sorrel, common storks-bill, creeping thistle, dandelion, dittander (nationally scarce), evening primrose, goatsbeard, great lettuce, great mullein, groundsel, field bindweed, hairy tare, haresfoot clover, hedge bindweed, hedge mustard, hemlock, hogweed, hop trefoil, houndstongue, lady's bedstraw, lesser stitchwort, mallow, mugwort, musk thistle, perforate St. John's wort, red campion, red clover, ribwort plantain, rosebay, rough sow-thistle, scarlet pimpernel, self heal, sheep's sorrel, smooth hawksbeard, smooth sow-thistle, spear thistle, viper's bugloss, weld, wild parsnip, wild radish, white campion, white clover and yarrow.

Trees and shrubs include ash, blackthorn, bramble, broom, cherry, Corsican pine, elder, field maple, gorse, hawthorn, hazel, ivy, mature oak, sycamore and white poplar.

Avifauna:

There were three BAP and Birds of Conservation Concern red listed species observed, which were starling, house sparrow and linnet; other observations included carrion crow, wood pigeon, collared dove, blue tit, great tit, goldfinch, chaffinch, robin, wren, blackbird and whitethroat.

The site also supports a rookery.

Invertebrates:

Observations of butterflies included purple hairstreak, small white, large white, Essex skipper, small skipper, small copper, gatekeeper, meadow brown, ringlet and red admiral.

Herpetofauna:

No species were seen during the site visit; however grass snake, slow worm and common lizard are likely to occur.

Mammals:

There were no species seen during the site visit, however the habitat is likely to support small mammals such as short-tailed field vole and is also likely to be used by muntjac and fox. Hedgehogs have been recorded nearby in 1992 and the habitat is suitable for foraging opportunities for them.

Comments and recommendations:

It is recommended that all the mature oaks and hedges be retained for their wildlife value and for their important role in connecting wildlife corridors.

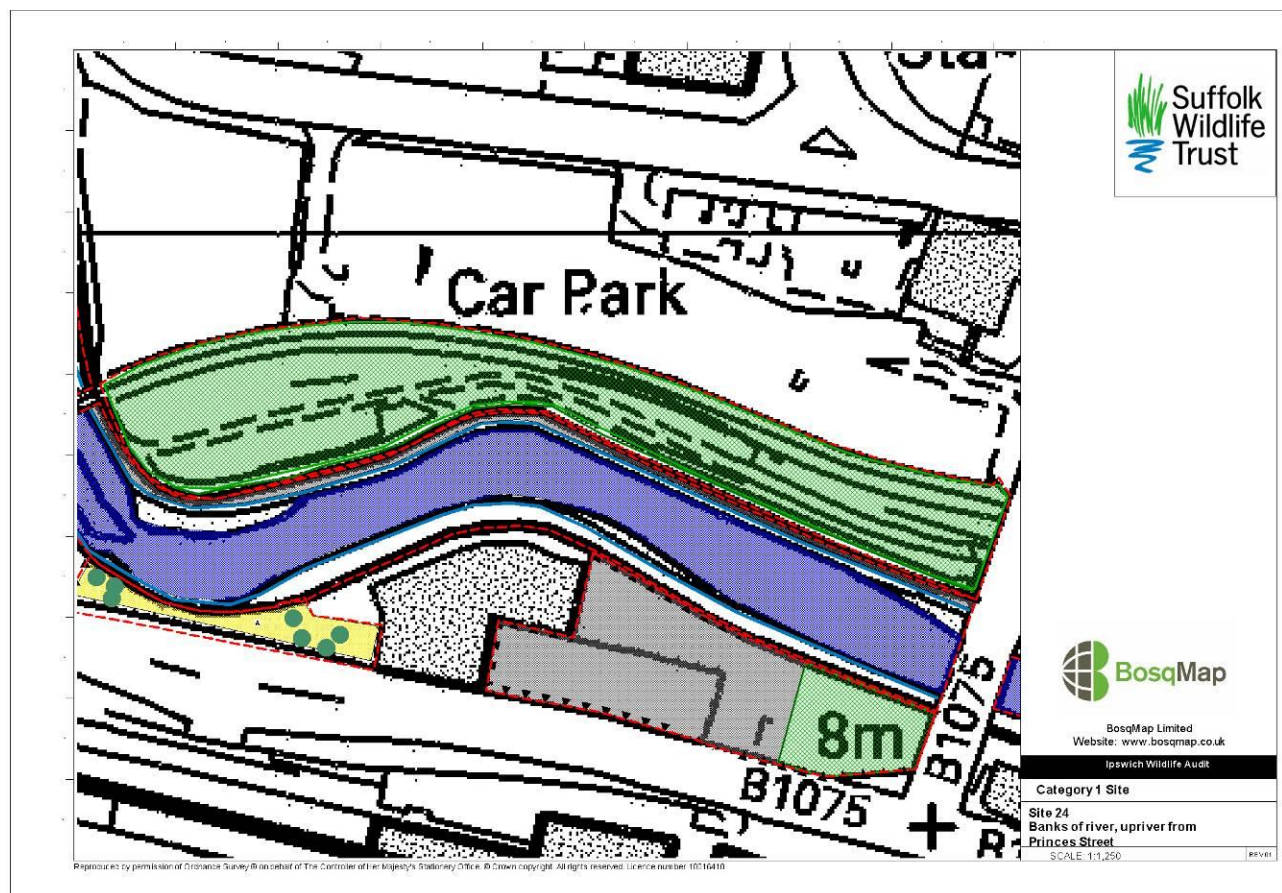
A reptile survey should be undertaken and no clearance of vegetation should take place until the presence of reptiles is properly assessed and mitigated, in order to ensure compliance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

The wildlife value of the Airport perimeter track tree belt could be enhanced still further if a margin was left to allow a tall grass and herb edge to develop. This would also allow the tree belt to develop more scrub and improve the quality of the existing hedge. Likewise, the diagonal hedge and tree belt could be enhanced if a headland was left on either side to allow a grass and herb edge to develop.

Site name: **Site reference 24 - Banks of river, upriver of Princes Street**

IBC ref: UC089/IP083
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 15620 43951
Area: 0.76 hectares
Date: 7 September 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, clear and still, 29°C
Ranking: 4
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



Scrub with railway tracks just visible and signs of substance abuse

Habitat type(s):

Scrub belt

Subsidiary habitats:

-

Site description:

This linear site is former railway sidings, located on the northern bank of the River Gipping. A public footpath separates the site from the river itself. Beyond the northern boundary of the site is a public car park. The site is scrubbed up with trees, scrub and colonising species such as buddleia and bramble, but the tracks are still visible in places.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Slow worm, grass snake and otter

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Slow worm, grass snake, otter and red-tailed carder bee

Connectivity:

The location of the site next to the river means that connectivity is very good.

Structural diversity:

There is good structural diversity which complements the additional planting along the public river path.

Flora:

Scrub and tree species include sycamore, silver birch, field maple, dog rose, bramble, with buddleia, and old man's beard. There is very little ground flora on the northern edge, but more light reaches the southern edge so there is greater diversity, with bracken, tansy and perforate St John's-wort. There is new planting along the river path with field maple, hazel and hawthorn.

Avifauna:

No birds were recorded during the visit but the time of year was unsuitable for recording this group. However, the site provides excellent roosting, nesting and foraging habitat for a range of bird species.

Invertebrates:

Stands of buddleia, rose and bramble provide excellent nectar sources for a range of invertebrates, including hover flies, bees and butterflies. Small white, large white, small tortoiseshell, red admiral and comma butterflies were recorded, making this a good site for butterflies. There is a nearby record for red-tailed carder bee.

Herpetofauna:

Although the canopy is quite closed in places, the site may provide foraging and hibernating habitat for reptiles such as slow worm and grass snake, particularly due to the close proximity of the river corridor which also may provide suitable habitat.

Mammals:

The site will support locally common mammals, such as fox. There is a record of otter very close to the site (2012), and this site could provide shelter for them to rest up during the day.

Comments and recommendations:

If the site is to be cleared of vegetation a reptile survey should be undertaken first and appropriate mitigation implemented if they are present on site. The possibility that otters could use the habitat as lying-up areas should also be investigated by further surveys. A scrubby boundary should be maintained along the southern edge, adjacent to the river path, to ensure that some biodiversity is retained in this locality and to complement the ecology of the river corridor.

In two locations it was apparent that people are accessing the scrub, with large piles of bottles and other debris.

Site name: **Site reference 25 - Builders Yard, Vermont Crescent**

IBC ref: UC148/IP
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 17016 45287
Area: 0.2 hectares
Date: 26 October 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Cold, cloudy 8°C
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



View along road frontage



Yard to rear

Habitat type(s):

-

Subsidiary habitats:

Mature trees, ivy covering trees and fence, narrow ornamental border

Site description:

The majority of the site is occupied by buildings, hard standing and areas used for storage of materials. A linear strip along the south-western edge was planted up with ornamental plants such as rosemary and lavender, but this was overgrown and young saplings of ash, oak and sycamore had colonised this border. There are several mature trees on site including two large sycamores and a silver birch.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Bats (various species)

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Bats (various species)

Connectivity:

Connectivity is extremely poor. The site is surrounded by housing.

Structural diversity:

Extremely poor. The trees provide the principal habitat on this site.

Flora:

There are two large sycamore trees and a silver birch, plus a pine. Leylandii is present along the southern edge. The rest of the species on site are ornamental species in narrow borders.

Avifauna:

The survey was undertaken outside of the season for recording this group, but there are limited opportunities for birds on this site. The trees and ivy may provide limited habitat.

Invertebrates:

There is little habitat on site currently suitable for this group, primarily the ornamental border and trees.

Herpetofauna:

There is little habitat on site currently suitable for this group, although the building material may provide hibernation opportunities for frogs, toad and newts. It is extremely unlikely that great crested newts are present as they are not known to occur in this part of Ipswich.

Mammals:

The ivy covered sycamore tree could provide roosting opportunities for bats such as pipistrelle. The building in the north-east corner has a pan-tile roof and this also may allow access for roosting bats under the tiles.

A grey squirrel was seen, but there is unlikely to be any other mammal species present other than brown rat.

Comments and recommendations:

The site is of low wildlife value, but consideration must be given to the possibility that bats may use the ivy clad sycamore near the centre of the site as a roost, or any holes in the larger sycamore to the eastern edge, or under the pan-tiles of the north-east building. Although this is probably low risk and consequently a detailed bat survey is not recommended, a precautionary approach should still be taken with regard to felling these large trees, or during removal of the pan-tiles from the building. This means felling the trees in sections and lowering them carefully to the ground, avoiding cutting through rot holes. Pan-tiles should be removed by hand. If any sign of bats is detected the work must stop immediately and a licensed bat worker contacted without delay, to ensure compliance with the legislation.

Site name: **Site reference 27 - Co-op Depot, Felixstowe Road**

IBC ref: UC010/IP010
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 18460 43650
Area: 6.67 hectares
Date: 24 August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Cool, cloudy 20°C
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



Area used for car sales



Former railway sidings

Habitat type(s):

Ruderal species colonising areas of hardstanding/gravel

Subsidiary habitats:

-

Site description:

Most of this site is currently in retail/employment use. The majority of the site is occupied by buildings and hardstanding/gravel areas. However, in the north-west section of the site an area which was formerly old railway sidings and used more recently for car sales is now being colonised by ruderal vegetation.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Common lizard and slow worm adjacent to railway line

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Common lizard and slow worm

Connectivity:

The site lies to the south of the Ipswich – Felixstowe railway line, so there is good connectivity to other local sites, such as the St Clements Hospital Grounds (48) and Golf Course (130).

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity is poor, apart from the limited strip adjacent to the railway corridor.

Flora:

The old railway sidings are developing a good range of species: Wild carrot, black medick, Canadian fleabane, mugwort, ribwort plantain, perforate St-John's wort, yarrow, wild parsnip, bird's-foot trefoil, white mellilot, hare's-foot clover, white clover, buck's-horn plantain, dittander (Nationally Scarce) as well as garden escapes, such as goldenrod, evening primrose and buddleia. Scrub is developing to the rear of the site with hazel, dogwood, hawthorn, wild rose, willow and bramble being recorded. An interesting find was quaking grass associated with the old railway sidings, but this may result from an imported seed-source. Behind the BT building were two medium-sized sweet chestnut trees.

Avifauna:

The site visit took place at a sub-optimal time of year for this group, but there is little habitat available for this group. No birds were recorded during the visit.

Invertebrates:

Ruderal flowers provide a good nectar source in this otherwise highly urban site, so red admiral and common blue butterflies were recorded, as well as much activity from grasshoppers and bumblebees being noted in the north-west of the site.

Herpetofauna:

Suitable habitat for common lizard and slow worm is developing adjacent to the railway line in the north-west sector of the site.

Mammals:

There little habitat on site currently suitable for this group.

Comments and recommendations:

We strongly recommend that a reptile survey is undertaken for the habitats associated with the north-western sector of the site, particularly adjacent to the railway line. No clearance of vegetation should take place until the findings of this survey are available and appropriate mitigation has been implemented as required. The surveyor was met on this part of the site by a member of the Co-operative Society's surveying staff and it was explained to him that reptiles were highly likely to be present and that they are legally protected.

Site name: **Site reference 28 - Elton Park Industrial Estate (Developed Area)**

IBC ref: UC062/IP059
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 14190 44720
Area: 5.46 hectares
Date: 7 September 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, clear and still, 22°C rising
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



Cleared area in south-west corner



Western section of site



Hedgerow in centre of site



Small ruderal area in centre of site

Habitat type(s):

Hedge with trees

Subsidiary habitats:

Ruderal vegetation, particularly adjacent to the railway line.

Site description:

This area lies to the south of the River Gipping and west of the main Ipswich to Stowmarket rail line. The south-western section of the site has been recently demolished and cleared and the rest of the western half is in the process of being demolished. Buildings and hardstanding occupy most of the remainder of the site with the exception of a small area in the centre. A hawthorn hedge encloses a square of low ruderal vegetation on three sides. Several sycamore trees are associated with the hedge, particularly on the eastern section. This small, sheltered spot was surprisingly rich in butterflies and other invertebrates, who were taking advantage of the various nectar sources. The railway line margins

also included a strip of rough vegetation.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Possibly grass snake – see comments under herpetofauna

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Stag beetle, possibly grass snake – see comments under herpetofauna

Connectivity:

The railway line corridor along the eastern margin provides some connectivity.

Structural diversity:

There is very little semi-natural habitat within the site, but the hedge, trees and adjoining ruderal vegetation in the centre of the site do provide reasonable structural diversity within this small area.

Flora:

The central hedge is dominated by hawthorn with several mature sycamores. Ivy and bramble are also present.

Various ruderal species were associated with the hedge and sheltered central habitat: cat's-ear, black medick, creeping cinquefoil, perforate St John's-wort, dittander (Nationally Scarce), black horehound, yarrow, ribwort plantain, mugwort, great mullein, hare's foot clover, common poppy.

Avifauna:

The time of year was unsuitable for recording this group. There is little opportunity for this group although birds may nest in the central hedgerow and trees.

Invertebrates:

The small area of ruderal flowering species supports a surprising number of invertebrates. During the short visit the following butterflies were recorded: small copper, comma, large white, small white, as well as a 'day-flying' moth (snout). Bees and garden spider were also noted. Some fallen wood provides useful deadwood and it is possible that this part of the site supports larval stag beetles.

Herpetofauna:

Reptiles are known to occur along the railway corridors and along the River Gipping, so the likelihood of this group on site is high within the narrow strip adjoining the railway line. Whilst on site it was reported to us that a large snake had been seen basking under the hedgerow in the centre of the site. No

evidence was seen during the visit, but it is possible that this could have been a grass snake. However, this is a very mobile species, so this may have been a single incidence as the majority of the site is unsuitable for this group.

Mammals:

Rabbit were recorded within the central rough area. Fox may be present also.

Comments and recommendations:

The central hedgerow enclosing the sheltered ruderal area does provide some habitat within this site. If development proceeds and this area cannot be retained, clearance of the site must avoid the bird nesting season, unless it can be demonstrated no birds are using this area for nesting.

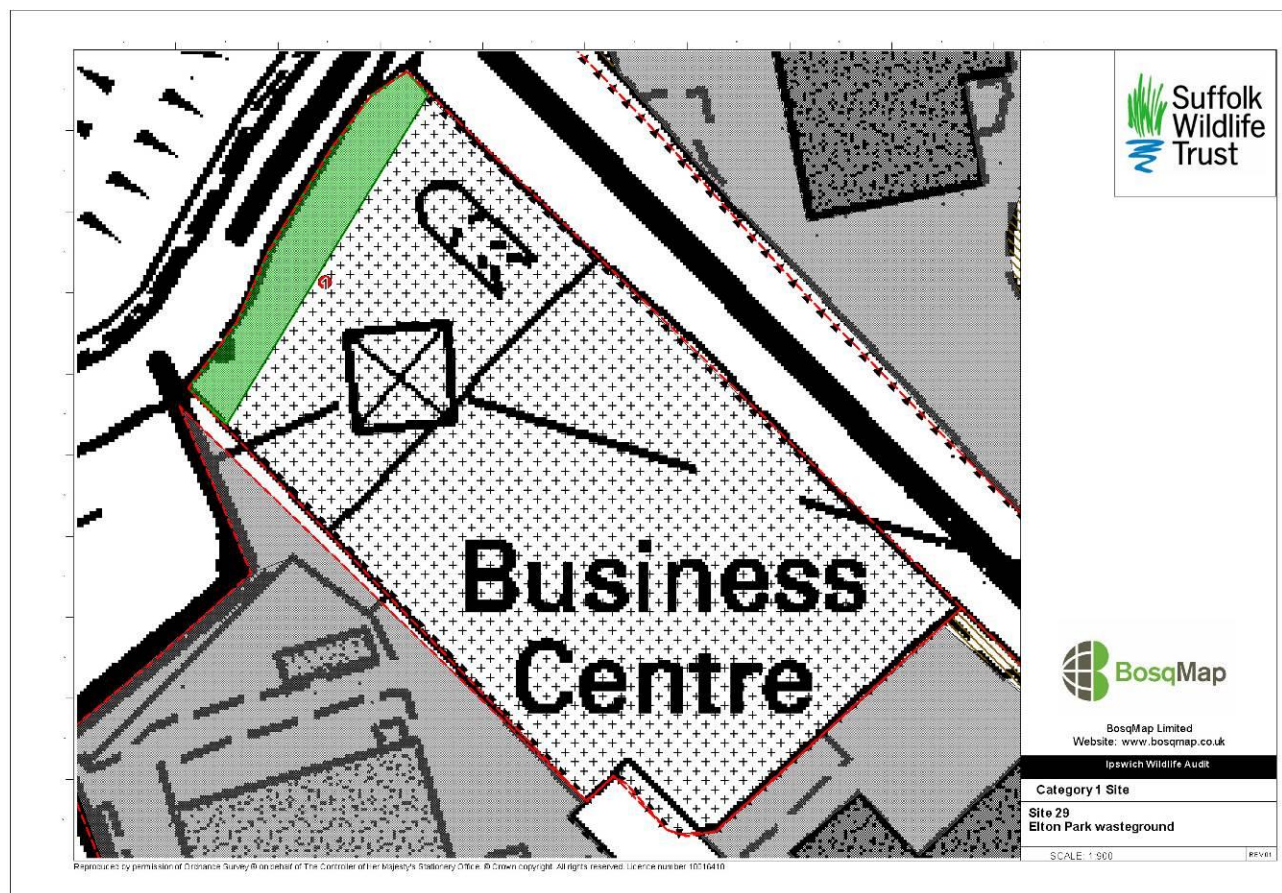
Particular care should also be taken if the hedgerows and trees are to be removed to avoid impacts of stag beetle larvae. These could occupy areas of subterranean dead wood so would be affected at the stage of stump removal. A watching brief using a suitably skilled ecologist is advisable during any tree and hedgerow removal.

If any semi-natural habitat associated with the railway margins is to be impacted upon during site clearance then mitigation for reptiles will be required.

Site name: **Site reference 29 - Elton Park Wasteground**

IBC ref: W60
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 14340 44840
Area: 1.16 hectares
Date: 7 September 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, clear and still, 20°C
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



View northwards towards river

Habitat type(s):

Tree belt

Subsidiary habitats:

Ruderal vegetation, particularly adjacent to the railway line.

Site description:

This area lies south of the River Gipping and west of the main Ipswich to Stowmarket rail line. It appears that most of the site has been cleared of vegetation sometime in the past, but ruderal species are now re-colonising. A chain-link fence prevented access to the site, but it could be viewed from the southern boundary. A belt of trees marks the position of the river corridor and a pylon occupies the north-western sector.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Slow worm, common lizard and grass snake

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Slow worm, common lizard and grass snake

Connectivity:

The location of the site next to the river and railway corridor means that connectivity is very good.

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity is poor as would be expected from a recently cleared site. It improves closer to the railway line and river.

Flora:

A number of early colonising species were recorded: rosebay willowherb, Canadian fleabane, great mullein, creeping cinquefoil, nettle, yarrow, perforate St Johns-wort, bramble, buddleia, prickly oxtongue, dittander (nationally scarce) ragwort, black medick, buckthorn plantain, ribwort plantain, mellilot spp, creeping thistle.

Adjacent to the riverbank willow, oak and alder were visible. There was also a stand of the non-native giant hogweed (Target Note 1).

Avifauna:

The time of year was unsuitable for recording this group. Apart from the river corridor there is little opportunity for this group.

Invertebrates:

The range of ruderal and invasive species supports a number of common invertebrates such as large white butterfly.

Herpetofauna:

Reptiles are known to occur along the river and railway corridors, so the likelihood of this group on site is high. The habitat adjacent to the railway appears suitable for reptiles so it is thought that the site may support up to three species of reptile.

Mammals:

The site will support locally common mammals, such as fox. Otter may be associated with the river corridor.

Comments and recommendations:

If the site is to be cleared of vegetation a reptile survey should be undertaken first and appropriate mitigation implemented if they are present on site.

A buffer strip should be maintained along the northern edge, adjacent to the river, to ensure that some biodiversity is retained in this locality and to complement the ecology of the river corridor. Similarly, a buffer strip should ideally be put in place adjacent to the railway corridor to maintain ecological connectivity.

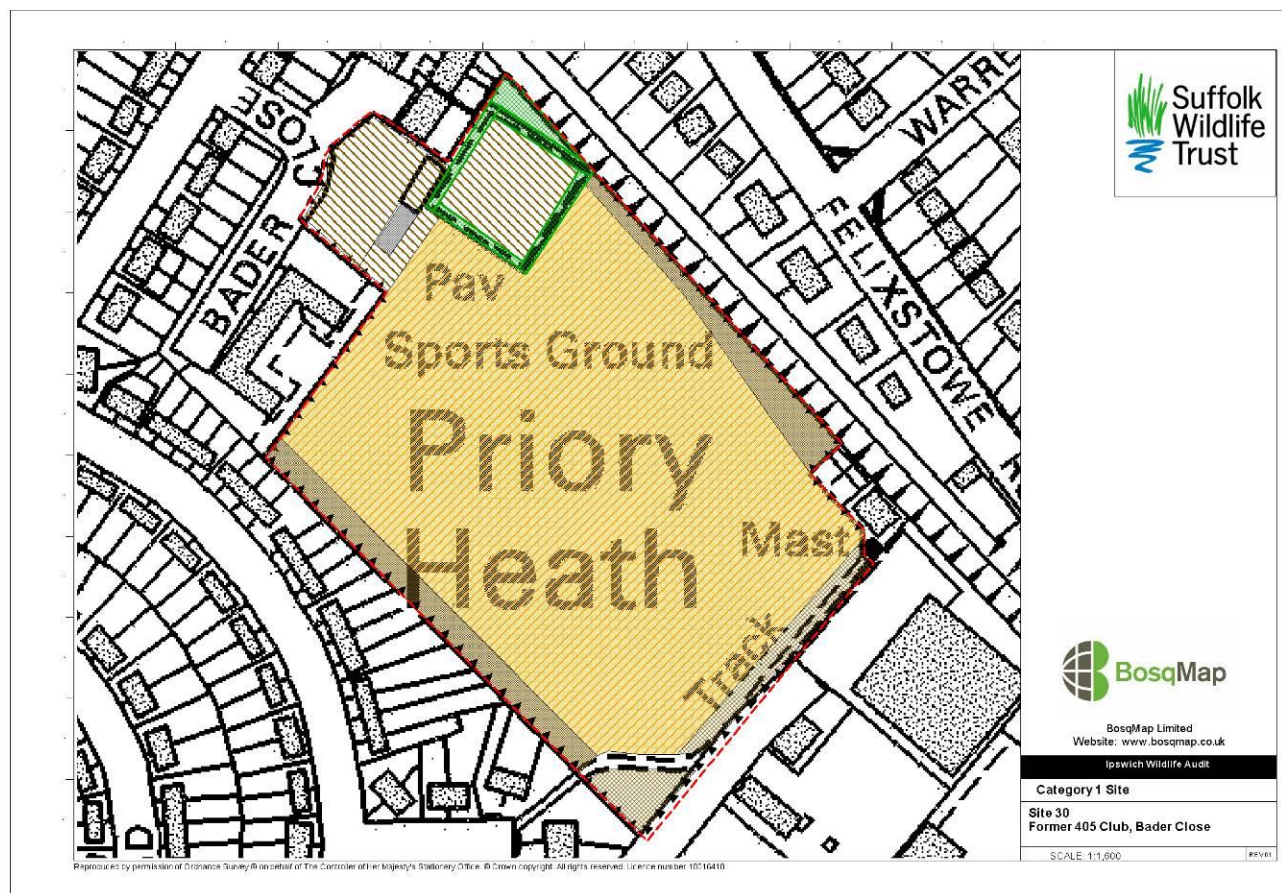
Giant hogweed, a non-native invasive species, is visible in the north-western section of the site (Target

Note 1).

Site name: **Site reference 30 - Former 405 Club, Bader Close**

IBC ref: UC068/IP065
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 19520 42610
Area: 3.22 hectares
Date: 27 August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Cool, cloudy, recent thundery shower, 16°C
Ranking: 3
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



Adjacent to Bader Close



Main area of site with developing heather

Habitat type(s):

Rough grassland/heathland

Subsidiary habitats:

Scrub, ruderal vegetation

Site description:

The site lies to the east of Bader Close within an area indicated as 'Priory Heath' on OS maps. Its most recent land-use has been as playing fields and associated sports facilities, but formerly it would have been part of the Ipswich heaths. The site can be considered as three areas.

- 1) The former playing field forms the bulk of the site. It is unknown how long this area has been unmanaged, but re-colonisation by heather suggests the habitats are reverting to heathland, particularly around the margins. With sufficient time the majority of this area is likely to revert to heathland.
- 2) The former bowls quadrangle at the north corner of the site is largely surrounded by scrub and contains rough grassland and ruderal species, with occasional heather plants.
- 3) Immediately adjacent to Bader Close near the site of the former clubhouse the habitats are more disturbed. The tiled ground floor of the clubhouse is still present, although the rest of the building has been removed.

Protected species:

Common lizard

Protected species potential:

Slow worm

BAP habitats present:

Lowland heathland

BAP species seen:

Common lizard

BAP species known:

Skylark

BAP species potential:

Slow worm, hedgehog

Connectivity:

As this site is bordered by railway line to the north, there is connectivity to other grassland and heathland sites adjacent to the railway in both directions.

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity is good, with a mixture of both short and tall grasses and herbs merging into boundary scrub.

Flora:

There are three main areas within which the flora is distinctive: the large playing field forming the bulk of the site; the former bowls square and the area associated with the former clubhouse.

In the former playing field the plant species are typical of a grassland habitat developing on acidic, free-draining soils. The sward is grass-dominated with common bent and red fescue being the most frequent grasses, but with also Yorkshire fog, rough meadow-grass, crested dog's-tail, cock's foot, yellow oat grass, false oat grass, wall barley, sheep's fescue and smaller cat's tail.

Heather (both common ling and small patches of bell heather) is present, particular around the margins of the site. Gorse and broom are present on the northern boundary, with bracken forming a dense stand on both the northern and southern boundaries. Other plant species include sheep sorrel, bird's foot, common mouse-ear, ribwort plantain, yarrow, mouse-ear hawkweed, autumn hawkbit, perforate St John's wort, with occasional rosebay willowherb, prickly lettuce, ragwort and wall lettuce. There is a small amount of rose, blackthorn and bramble colonising the site. The south eastern corner is dominated by non-native sumac.

The former bowls square is surrounded by a mixture of blackthorn, Cotoneaster, rose and sumac. The flora within the square is broadly similar to the former playing field, but there are more ruderal species. Creeping and spear thistles are more abundant; with goat's beard and hairy tare with as additional species. A few small patches of ling heather are present.

The small western section of the site has been more recently disturbed, probably during demolition of the clubhouse building. Grasses are sparse and more ruderal species dominate: red clover, yarrow, mugwort, ribwort plantain, ragwort, black medick, Canadian fleabane, great willowherb, hogweed, spear thistle, Yorkshire fog, false oat grass and cock's foot are all present. Non-native species include pampas grass and golden rod, with buddleia dominating the north-west corner next to Bader Close.

Avifauna:

This was an unsuitable time of year for surveying this group, but the site provides good habitat for foraging and possibly for ground nesting species. A charm of goldfinches was recorded foraging within the site. Skylark, a ground nesting BAP species, was recorded in 2008.

Invertebrates:

Large, rough grassland sites such as this support a wide range of invertebrates. Grasshoppers were abundant at the time of the visit. It was cool for recording butterflies, but meadow brown butterflies were seen and other species of butterfly are highly likely to be present. Ant hills are developing in the grassland sward, indicative of lack of disturbance.

Herpetofauna:

The habitat is excellent for reptiles and two common lizards were observed during the walkover survey. Suffolk Biological Records Centre records indicate they were also recorded in 2010. It is highly likely that slow worm is also present. The proximity of the railway line provides good continuity with other known reptile sites nearby and it is expected that this site also supports a high population of reptiles.

Mammals:

The rough grassland habitat combined with scrub may support species such as hedgehog and various small mammals.

Comments and recommendations:

This site is of wildlife interest and represents a valuable ecological resource within the town. Further surveys should be undertaken at the appropriate time of year concentrating on reptiles, breeding birds and invertebrates. Due to the known presence of reptiles on this site, no clearance of vegetation should take place until the presence of reptiles is properly assessed and mitigated, in order to ensure compliance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended). In the absence of these more detailed surveys it is not possible to fully evaluate the biodiversity value of this site. However, the bulk of the area, shown as dry heath/acid grassland mosaic on the map is likely to represent the area of greatest importance. The contribution that the railway line makes to habitat connectivity should also be taken into consideration in any future development proposals, so that any retained habitat should remain connected to this feature.

If the site remains undeveloped, in time it will revert to heathland and this would contribute to the remaining heathland resource of the district. This transition could be hastened by appropriate management.