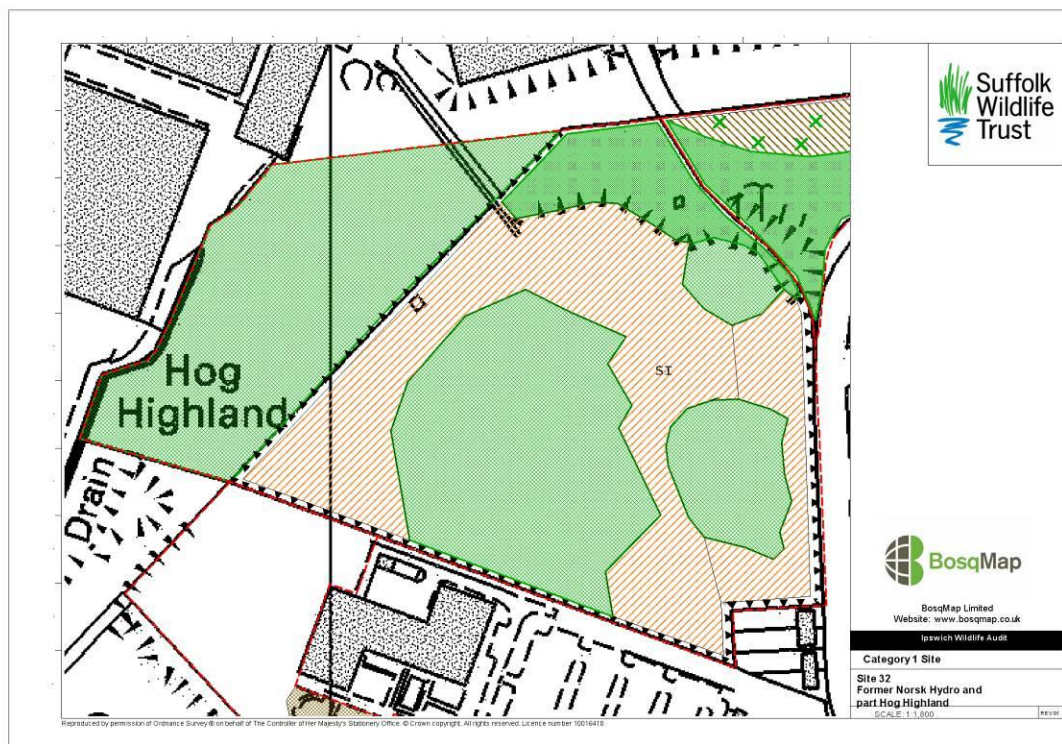


Site name: **Site reference 32 – Former Norsk Hydro & Part Hog Highland**

IBC ref: IP143/W67
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 17085 42503
Area: 6.18 hectares
Date: 31 August 2012
Recorder: M Wright
Weather conditions: Dry, bright sunny, 50% cloud, fresh westerly wind
Ranking: 3
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



View westward across acid grassland to Hog Highland



Gorse and birch scrub looking westward

Habitat type(s):

Acid grassland, birch and gorse scrub, mixed species scrub, woodland.

Subsidiary habitats:

-

Site description:

This site has been abandoned for many years and is situated on high ground, adjacent to Sandy Hill Lane and overlooks Cliff Reach. Due to sandy soils the site is being colonized slowly and gives the distinct impression of being heathland. Bare ground, lichens, moss and common bent dominate the grassland. Large areas are a mosaic of gorse and broom with silver birch. In some areas silver birch is dominant. A small woodland links to the woodland in site 122 (Sandy Hill Lane). Almost a third of the site could not be surveyed due to a very high fence, much of this terrain sloped down into the dockland. This area was very good for wildlife being dominated by scrub, silver birch and oak.

Protected Species:

-

Protected species potential:

Bats, grass snake, slow worm and common lizard

BAP habitats present:

Lowland acid grassland

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Bats, dunnoek, yellowhammer, linnet, grass snake, slow worm and common lizard

Connectivity:

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

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the site is excellent due to the mosaic and species diversity of the scrub areas in conjunction with the grassland and bare ground areas.

Flora:

The whole site is in a mosaic of broom, gorse, silver birch, bare soil, lichens and the grassland areas are dominated by common bent. Other species include biting stonecrop, birds-foot trefoil, black knapweed, broad-leaved dock, Canadian fleabane, cats ear, cocksfoot, common centaury, dittander (nationally scarce), evening primrose, haresfoot clover, hawthorn, hop trefoil, horse radish, mouse-ear hawkweed, mullein, narrow-leaved ragwort, oxeye daisy, perforate St. John's wort, smooth sow-thistle, spear thistle, ragwort, red clover, ribwort plantain, rosebay, tansy, valerian, white clover, wood small weed, wild parsnip and yarrow. Non native species such as pampas grass and buddleia are present.

Avifauna:

There were not many observations made due to the timing of the survey, however the following birds were recorded blackbird, carrion crow, green woodpecker, chiffchaff, robin, long-tailed tit, blue tit, great tit and wood pigeon. The site has the potential to support a wider range of species, including the BAP bird species listed above. A breeding bird survey is recommended.

Invertebrates:

Observations of butterflies included small white, red admiral and speckled wood. The following dragonflies observed migrant hawkers and common darters.

Other species include meadow grasshopper, common field grasshopper and a very good colony of wasp spiders. There were also lots of ants' nests and solitary wasps nesting in the sandy ground. The aculeate hymenoptera can include a number of rare species and this should be investigated further.

Herpetofauna:

No species were seen during the site visit, however grass snake, slowworm and common lizard are highly likely to occur and a reptile survey is considered essential if this site is to be affected by development.

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:

This site represents valuable acid grassland habitat, which unfortunately is succumbing to birch scrub in places. Consideration should be given to retaining this habitat and managing it to limit scrub invasion. Consideration should be given to whether this site meets County Wildlife Site (CWS) value, so we recommend that it is reviewed by the CWS panel.

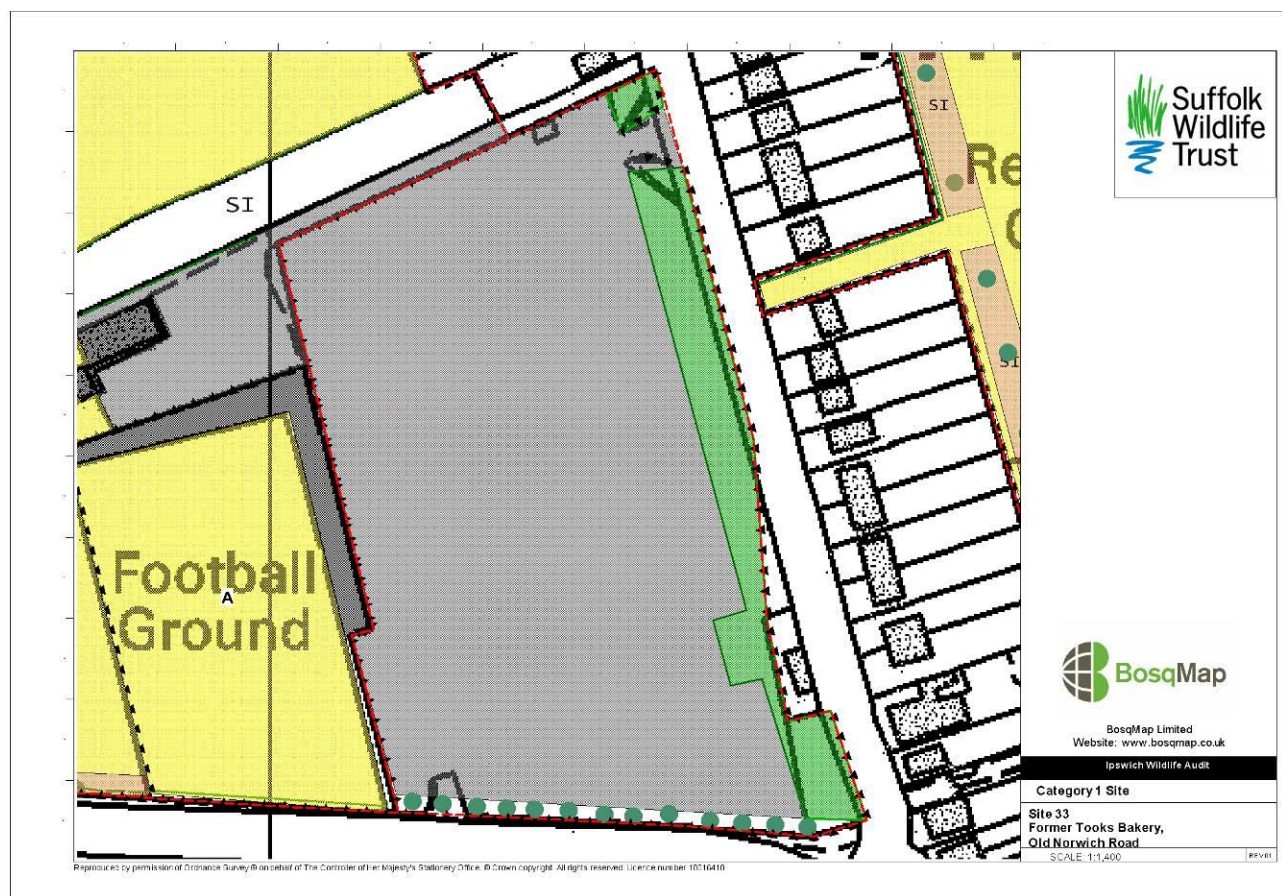
Before any development is consented on this site a reptile survey must be carried out, due to the high likelihood that they will be present. No clearance of vegetation should take place until the presence of reptiles is properly assessed and mitigated, in order to ensure compliance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

A breeding bird survey and an invertebrate survey to include ground nesting hymenoptera is recommended to assess the value of this habitat for this group.

Site name: **Site reference 33 - Former Took's Bakery, Old Norwich Road**

IBC ref: UC005/IP05
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 14089 47281
Area: 2.79 hectares
Date: 16 August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, sunshine with cloud, 22° C, slight breeze
Ranking: 6
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



View from northern boundary looking southwards

Habitat type(s):

Trees and bushes on site margins

Subsidiary habitats:

Crevices between concreted areas

Site description:

This former industrial site lies on the corner of the Old Norwich Road and A1156. All the buildings have now been demolished leaving the concrete foundations in situ, but plants are now colonising the cracks in the concrete. The site is surrounded by a metal fence apart from the entrance which is blocked by heaped-up rubble. Earlier landscape planting still remains along the road frontages.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

-

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

-

Connectivity:

Connectivity is poor. The site is bordered by roads to the south and east and playing fields to the west and north. Apart from a very small linear area of rough grassland and a hedge to the north, beyond the track to the sports fields, the site is completely isolated.

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity is poor. The site is dominated by areas of hardstanding.

Flora:

Flowering plants and scrub are colonising the cracks in the concrete, as well as being present beneath planting along the road margins. The species are typical of common scrubby invasive species, such as buddleia, elder, bramble and birch seedlings. Many of the flowering plants are also common ruderals reflecting the local seed source: wild carrot, ragwort, yarrow, prickly ox-tongue, Canadian fleabane, prickly lettuce, hairy willowherb, rosebay willowherb, wall barley, spear thistle, creeping thistle, mugwort, common mallow, ribwort plantain, black horehound, teasel and Yorkshire fog.

A row of tall poplar trees lines the Bury Road frontage. Cherry trees have been planted in a landscaping strip along the Old Norwich Road frontage.

Avifauna:

No birds were recorded but this was an unsuitable time of year for surveying this group. This site provides little habitat for this group.

Invertebrates:

A small white butterfly was seen taking nectar, but overall this site provides poor habitat for this group.

Herpetofauna:

Slow worms and toads have been recorded to the north, but currently the site is not suitable for this group. If it remains undeveloped for a number of years, then the continuing development of plant growth will result in this site becoming suitable for species such as slow worm as the combination of foraging and basking areas improves.

Mammals:

The site is unsuitable for this group.

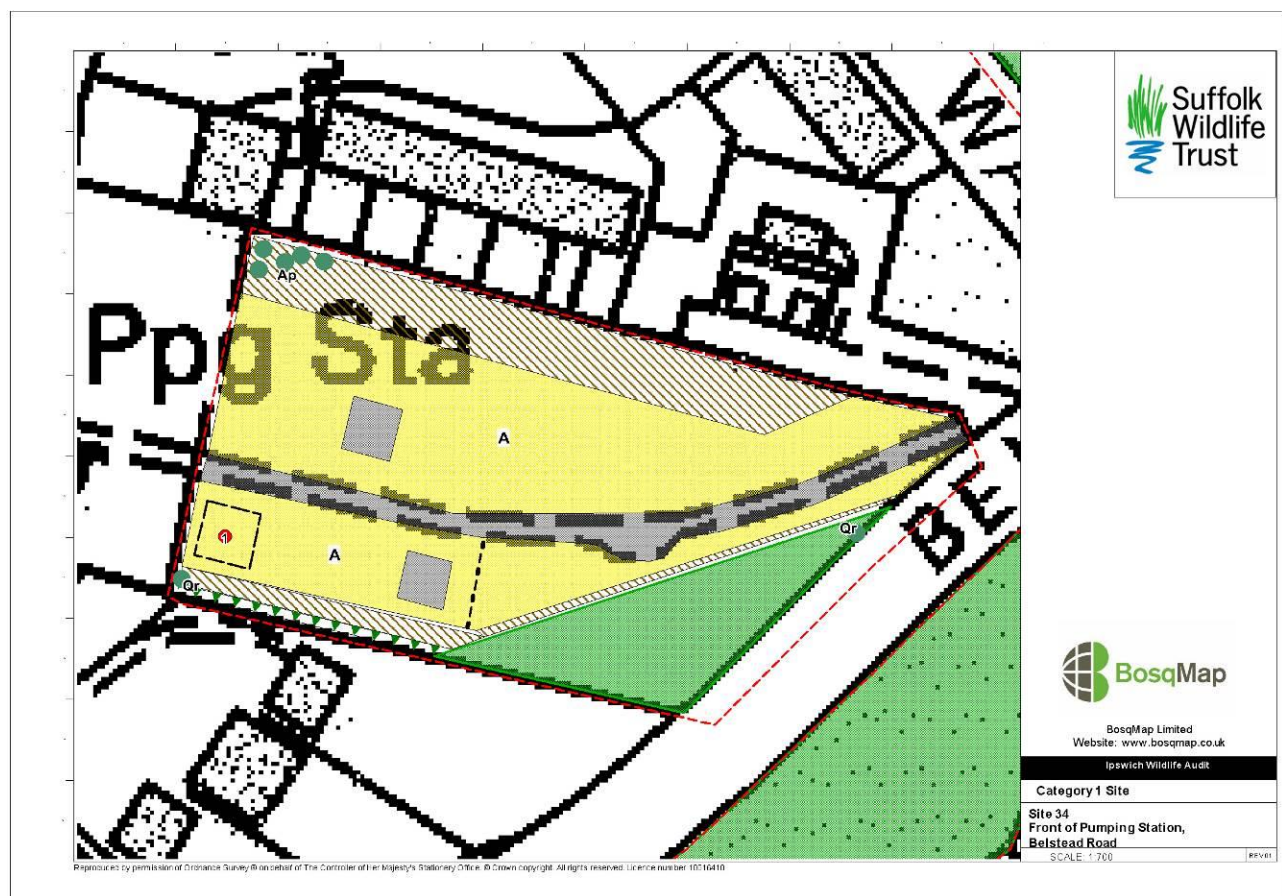
Comments and recommendations:

This site was surveyed from the boundaries only. Due to the presence of the metal fence the only access point was across the rubble at the front entrance. However, this rubble appeared to contain pieces of broken asbestos cement sheeting so this area was avoided. The site is currently of low wildlife value, but if it remains undeveloped for some years it will be colonised by various species, including possibly reptiles.

Site name: **Site reference 34 - Front of Pumping Station, Belstead Road**

IBC ref: UC209/IP121
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 14600 42230
Area: 0.6 hectares
Date: 7 September 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Cool, clear and still, 16°C but rising
Ranking: 4 (higher if bats roosting on site)
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



View westwards on access track



Woodpecker holes in oak adjacent to road



View eastwards showing wooded margin

Habitat type(s):

Woodland, short mown grass, nettle and bramble scrub

Subsidiary habitats:

Mature oak trees with standing deadwood

Site description:

This small site lies to the east of an Anglian Water pumping station within their site compound. Most is primarily short mown grass but along the southern and eastern edges there is mixed broadleaf woodland. Mature oaks are notable on the eastern edge. A group of sycamores are situated in the north-western corner. The northern edge of the site is left unmown and is dominated by nettles and some bramble. Three fenced off compounds were present within the grassland, used for site operation and storage. Target Note 1 relates to a temporary storage area.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Bat species

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Bat species, stag beetle

Connectivity:

The site is bordered by Belstead Road to the east and housing to the north and south, with the Anglian Water pumping station to the west. However, Belstead Road is bordered by a thick, linear tree belt (Belstead Road Tree Belt) and the woodland on this site provides additional habitat of this type, thus providing local connectivity either side of the road. Also linked to this site is the Poorhill Shelterbelt.

Structural diversity:

Most of the site is short mown, but woodland on the southern and eastern edges provides good structural diversity. A large mature oak with woodpecker holes was showing signs of die-back and provides excellent standing deadwood.

Flora:

Within the grassland are common species such as rye grass, red and white clovers, ribwort plantain, black medick, yarrow, creeping buttercup, creeping thistle, creeping cinquefoil, cat's ear. Within one of the compounds the grass was unmown and additional species were noted (hop trefoil, bristly oxtongue and Yorkshire fog). On the unknown northern edge is nettle, bramble, hedge bindweed, cock's foot and false oat grass.

The woodland contained mature oaks, sycamore, holly, with blackthorn scrub, suckering elm, and some bramble with a ground layer of ivy. Towards the south-western corner the woodland narrows to becoming a hedgeline, but this was quite diverse with elm, field maple, elder, sycamore, dogwood and

hazel.

Avifauna:

The time of year was unsuitable for recording this group, but the woodland provides roosting, nesting and foraging habitat for a range of locally common species. Blue tit, great tit, blackbird, robin and wood pigeon were recorded within the site. Woodpeckers have been nesting within the mature oak on the eastern edge.

Invertebrates:

The woodland edge provides the best opportunities for this group. Only a large white butterfly was seen flying, but this may be due to the cool temperatures early in the morning. Other species are likely to be present as well as a range of other groups associated with woodland habitat. The woodland habitat is highly likely to contain subterranean deadwood and support larval stag beetles, which are often seen in this part of Ipswich. The nearest documented record is within 100m (Wigmore Close) but dates from 1995.

Herpetofauna:

The short mown grass is unsuitable for this group. The woodland along the southern and eastern boundaries is likely to be too shaded for reptiles, although may provide habitat for toads.

Mammals:

The mature trees, particularly on the eastern edge, may provide roosting opportunities for bats, within splits, cracks and peeling bark. There are a number of records of bats in the area (4 records within 500 metres). A large oak in this location contained a number of woodpecker holes which can also support roosting bats. The site may support hedgehog, although this is dependent upon access through the fence. Common small mammal species will be present within the woodland and grey squirrels were seen here.

Comments and recommendations:

The woodland is of ecological importance and should be retained in any development proposal. If any mature trees are to be felled then a bat survey is required. Consideration must be given in the design of any development to limiting light spillage away from boundary trees. Clearance of any woodland should also take into consideration the likely presence of stag beetle.

Site name: **Site reference 35 - JJ Wilson, White Elm Street**

IBC ref: UC069/IP066
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 17410 43900
Area: 0.22 hectares
Date: 24 August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Cool, cloudy 20°C
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



Coppiced woodland area in south-east corner

Habitat type(s):

Small area of scrub (recently coppiced)

Subsidiary habitats:

-

Site description:

The majority of the site is occupied by brick buildings dating from approximately 1974. A small area of scrub is present in the south-eastern part of the plot. This had been recently coppiced and all brash removed and the site owner explained that this is undertaken on an annual basis to reduce unsociable activities taking place. The land to the north of White Elm Street is also owned by this company, but is of very low wildlife value, consisting of tarmac, pea shingle and a small triangle of short mown grass. A public footpath runs alongside the eastern edge of the site.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

-

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Stag Beetle

Connectivity:

Connectivity is extremely poor. The site is surrounded by roads, although there are some mature trees along the eastern boundary.

Structural diversity:

Extremely poor. The rectangle of scrub is the only semi-natural habitat on site, but this had been coppiced to leave no vegetation.

Flora:

The rectangle of scrub contains stumps of sycamore and ash, with ivy, bramble, nettle, black horehound and hedge bindweed as a field layer. On the northern edge there was yew and bracken. Japanese knotweed was observed to be growing within this area.

Avifauna:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group.

Invertebrates:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group with the exception of stag beetle larvae if there is any underground deadwood.

Herpetofauna:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group.

Mammals:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group.

Comments and recommendations:

Japanese knotweed is an ornamental plant which has escaped from cultivated to be a serious pest of urban and countryside areas. It spreads via its rhizomes and only a tiny fragment can result in a new plant. It is an offence to plant or cause Japanese knotweed to spread in the wild under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and all waste containing Japanese knotweed comes under the control of Part II of the Environmental Protection Act (1990). It is therefore important that if this site is cleared by machinery, safeguards are put in place to prevent spread of this plant. Useful guidance is provided by the Environment Agency website:

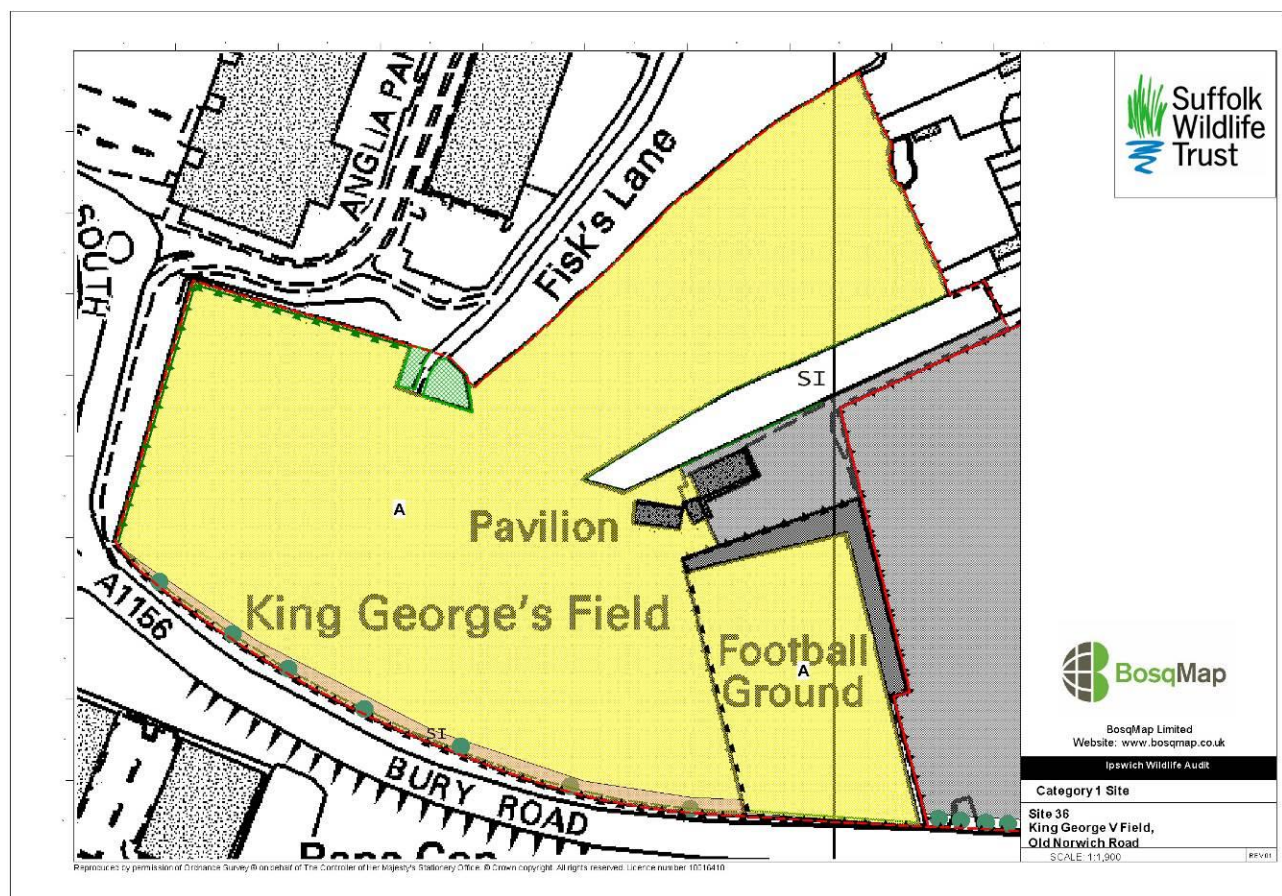
Reference: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/Knotweed_CoP.pdf

Accessed 03/08/12.

Site name: **Site reference 36 - King George V Playing Field, Old Norwich Road**

IBC ref: UC033/IP032
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 13850 47290
Area: 6.77 hectares
Date: 16 August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, sunshine with cloud, 22° C, slight breeze
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



View westwards across site

Habitat type(s):

Trees and hedgerows, short mown grassland, rough grassland

Subsidiary habitats:

Rough margins

Site description:

These playing fields lie to the north of the A1156 Bury Road, but are accessed from the Old Norwich Road via a track that runs along the north side of the adjacent Site 33. The dominant habitat is short-mown amenity grassland, consistent with its use as playing field. Species-poor hedgerows border the northern edges of the site. A linear strip of species-poor rough grassland also lies to the north of the pavilion, with a hedgerow on its northern edge.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Slow worm on margins

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

Hedgehog

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Toad, slow worm

Connectivity:

There is some connectivity to other areas of semi-natural habitat via Fisk's Lane to the north. Otherwise, the site is surrounded by roads, housing and an industrial site.

Structural diversity:

With the exception of the hedgerows, structural diversity is poor.

Flora:

Along the playing field margins where the grass has been left unmown, the flora is more interesting, with wild carrot, black knapweed, smooth hawk's-beard, yarrow, cat's ear, bird's-foot trefoil, hop trefoil, ox-eye daisy, red clover, creeping cinquefoil, corn sow thistle. Grasses were dominated by rye-grass from amenity sowing, but also Yorkshire fog and interestingly a small patch of meadow barley on the southern edge, which is normally found on old meadows and pastures.

The linear strip of rough grassland north of the pavilion was dominated by grasses, with occasional herbs. These included self heal, bristly ox-tongue, black medick, bird's-foot-trefoil, ribwort plantain, field bindweed, dandelion, black knapweed, creeping buttercup, with cock's foot, Yorkshire fog and common bent.

The hedgerows along the northern boundary and north of the rough strip of grassland were species-poor, with hawthorn, field maple, blackthorn and elder and occasional bramble. Planted trees occurred along the north-western and northern boundaries, with ash, field maple, hawthorn and a single walnut. Suckering elm, a hazel and a guelder rose grow close to the point where Fisk's Lane terminates at its southern end.

Avifauna:

No birds were recorded but this was an unsuitable time of year for surveying this group. The trees hedgerows do provide good nesting and foraging opportunities for this group.

Invertebrates:

The hedgerows and adjacent rough margins do provide some habitat for this group. Red-tailed bumble bees were observed foraging on flowers where they had not been close mown. A brimstone butterfly was seen within Fisk's Lane, close to the northern edge.

Herpetofauna:

Slow worms and toads have been observed on the A14 margins and associated hedgerows in 2007, but much of the site is not suitable for this group. The hedgerows and their margins and the narrow strip of rough grassland in the northern section may provide some habitat, so they may be present on site in low numbers. If the site were to fall into disuse, then the ensuing development of rough grassland on formerly mown areas would result in suitable habitat quickly developing which could be colonised from nearby populations.

Mammals:

Hedgehog droppings were recorded at a number of locations within the site. The combination of hedgerows, rough margins and amenity grassland provides good habitat for this animal. Various species of small mammals are also likely to be associated with the hedgerows. The desktop survey also identified a number of badger records in the area.

Comments and recommendations:

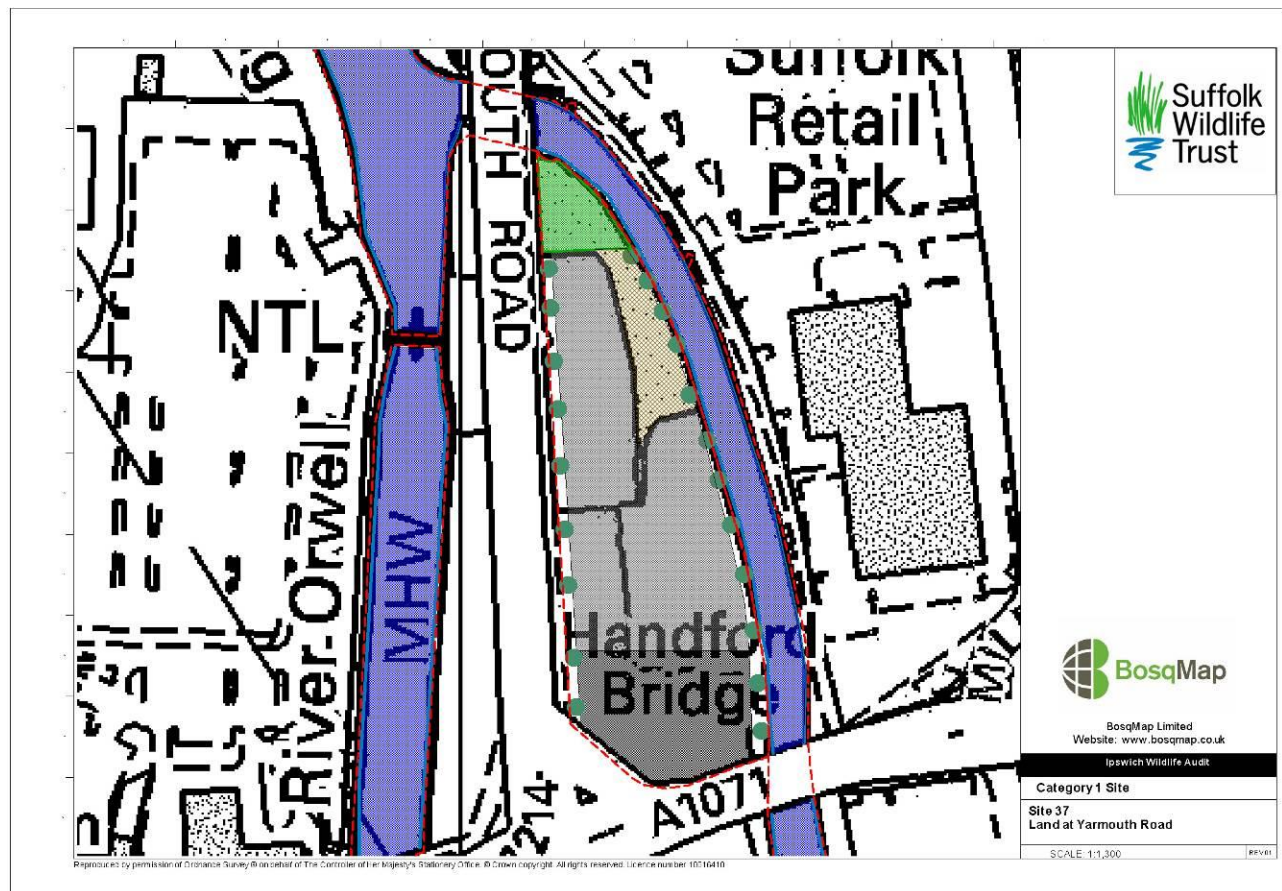
Maps indicate there is a pond adjacent to the north-eastern edge, but this is no longer present and is now filled with rubble. Its former location is indicated by a mature willow tree.

Fisk's Lane is a historic lane connecting to the similarly ancient Whitton Lane, to the north. Both are important wildlife corridors and will provide good habitat for birds and invertebrates. Any future development on this site should protect and buffer the habitats associated with Fisk's Lane. Open space provision would be best located adjacent to the northern boundary, linking to Fisk's Lane.

Site name: **Site reference 37 - Land at Yarmouth Road**

IBC ref: UC080/IP076
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 15052 44679
Area: 0.78 hectares
Date: 7 September 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, clear and still, 26°C
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



Looking north into area contaminated with Japanese knotweed



Woodland in northern corner, view towards river

Habitat type(s):

Woodland belt along river corridor

Subsidiary habitats:

Scrub and ruderal vegetation

Site description:

The site lies between the Yarmouth Road and the River Gipping County Wildlife Site. Construction of a public house is currently taking place and when on site we were advised that there is also a forthcoming proposal for a small hotel. The wooded habitat along the river corridor is protected from development behind Herras fencing. A further block of habitat was also fenced off, but this was to facilitate treatment of Japanese knotweed and to deal with contamination issues (asbestos). At the most northerly part of the site a wooded area lies outside of the current development zone.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

-

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

-

Connectivity:

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

Structural diversity:

There is some structural diversity along the river corridor, but this could be improved by selective felling and new planting of native species such as hawthorn, dogwood and hazel.

Flora:

Most of the site is under construction, but there are some fenced off areas which include buddleia and ruderal species such as evening primrose, rosebay willowherb and mallow. The trees along the river corridor are dominated by sycamore, many ivy covered, with occasional hawthorn and willow. There is little ground flora, with nettle, ivy, bramble and hedge bindweed forming the dominant species.

At the northern corner of the site, there is a stand of ivy covered sycamore with occasional hawthorn and elder and an ivy-dominated ground layer. This is proposed to be retained in the current development proposals, however it should be noted that a few individual, young, plants of Japanese knotweed were noted within this area (see comments and recommendations).

Avifauna:

The survey took place at a sub-optimal time of year for recording this group. The margins of the site provide some roosting and foraging habitat.

Invertebrates:

Stands of buddleia and other flowering species currently provide excellent nectar sources for a range of invertebrates, including hover flies, bees and butterflies. In the latter group, comma, large white and red admiral were recorded. The hornet mimic hoverfly *Volucella zonaria* was also recorded nectaring. This is a migratory species that has become recently more common in the south-east of England.

Herpetofauna:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group.

Mammals:

The river margins provide some habitat for this group.

Comments and recommendations:

Structural diversity along the river corridor could be improved by selective felling and new planting of native species such as hawthorn, dogwood and hazel.

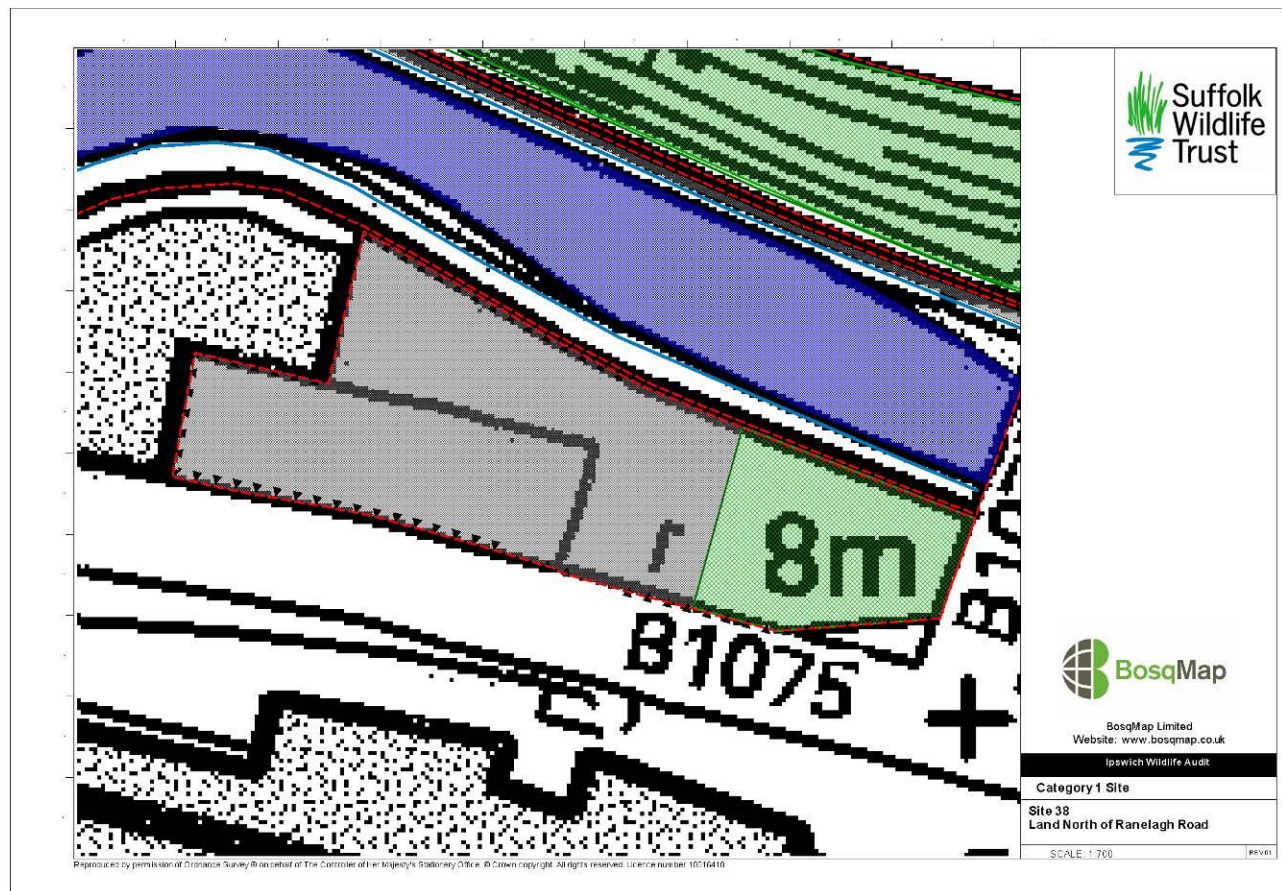
Japanese knotweed is an ornamental plant which has escaped from cultivated to be a serious pest of urban and countryside areas. It spreads via its rhizomes and only a tiny fragment can result in a new plant. It is an offence to plant or cause Japanese knotweed to spread in the wild under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and all waste containing Japanese knotweed comes under the control of Part II of the Environmental Protection Act (1990). It is therefore important that if this site is cleared by machinery, safeguards are put in place to prevent spread of this plant. Useful guidance is provided by the Environment Agency website:

Reference: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/Knotweed_CoP.pdf
Accessed 03/08/12.

Site name: **Site reference 38 - Land North of Ranelagh Road**

IPC ref: UC086/IP081
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 15670 43877
Area: 0.36 hectares
Date: 11 October 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Cool but sunny, 15°C
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



Area of Japanese knotweed



Area of scrub in south east viewed from bridge

Habitat type(s):

Scrub

Subsidiary habitats:

Ruderal vegetation on car park margins

Site description:

This site is located on the northern side of Ranelagh Road, opposite the Railway Station. To the north is the River Gipping. The south-western section of the site is car park, as is the central and north-western section. The east of the site is thick scrub. A large tree stump remains within the car park (Target Note 1).

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Otter

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Red-Tailed Carder Bee

Connectivity:

The location of this site next to the River Gipping means that connectivity is good. The small block scrub provides habitat diversity adjacent to the shorter vegetation of the river banks.

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity of the scrub habitat is quite good, but this is only a small part of the site. Elsewhere on the site structural diversity is poor.

Flora:

The scrub comprises a mixture of medium sized sycamore trees, wild rose, elder, oak, dogwood and prunus species. Within this area was also buddleia, bramble, ivy, nettle, wild hops and a dense stand of Japanese knotweed.

The remainder of the site is hardstanding, but ruderal species have colonised the margins of the central car park (used for railway staff parking). Herbaceous species included dittander (Nationally Scarce), buckshorn and ribwort plantain, mallow, horseradish, yarrow, mugwort, Canadian fleabane, annual wall-rocket, greater celandine. Grasses recorded were Yorkshire fog, ryegrass and cock's foot. Shrubby species in the form of rose, buddleia and sumac were also present.

Avifauna:

The time of year was unsuitable for recording this group. The scrub has an abundance of rose hips and ivy berries, which will provide a valuable autumn/winter food source for birds. The scrub will also be used by roosting and nesting birds.

Invertebrates:

The scrub will support a range of species typical of this habitat. Red-Tailed Carder Bee has been recorded close to the site in 2009.

Herpetofauna:

Reptiles are unlikely to be present on this site as the habitat is largely unsuitable for this group. However, the rough banks of the river are highly likely to support species such as slow worm, so there is a risk that reptiles may be present along the river boundary of the site. Particular care therefore needs to be taken during site clearance to avoid any impact upon the river corridor and its species.

Mammals:

Otters have been recorded on the waste ground between the River Gipping and the station car park in 2012. Therefore there is the potential for an otter holt on site.

Comments and recommendations:

The river corridor must be buffered from any future development proposals and semi-natural habitat should be retained wherever possible adjacent to the river. If the scrub is to be cleared a survey to establish the likely presence of otter must take place, in addition any future clearance must take place outside of the bird nesting season (March-July).

Japanese knotweed is an ornamental plant which has escaped from cultivated to be a serious pest of urban and countryside areas. It spreads via its rhizomes and only a tiny fragment can result in a new plant. It is an offence to plant or cause Japanese knotweed to spread in the wild under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and all waste containing Japanese knotweed comes under the control of Part II of the Environmental Protection Act (1990). It is therefore important that if this site is

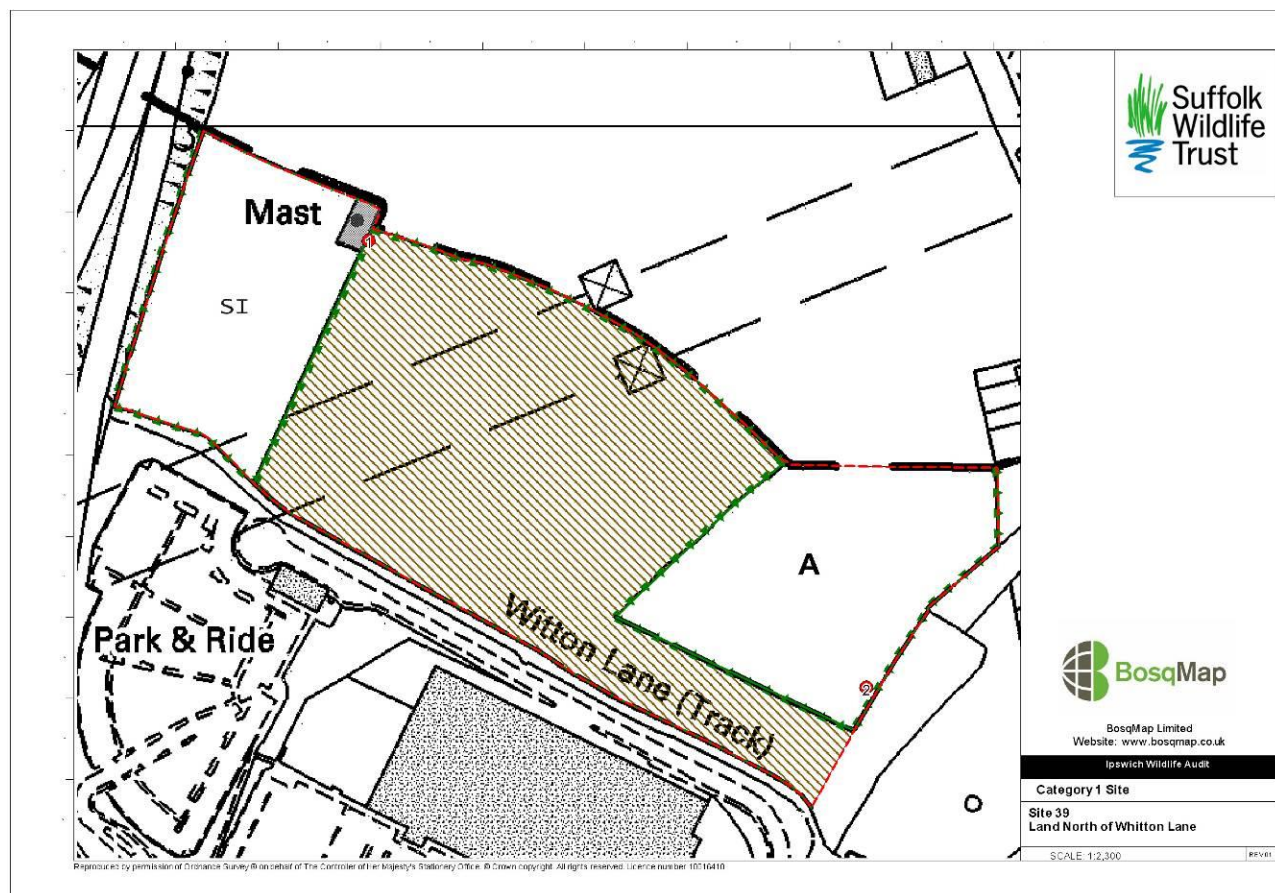
cleared by machinery, safeguards are put in place to prevent spread of this plant. Useful guidance is provided by the Environment Agency website:

Reference: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/Knotweed_CoP.pdf
Accessed 12/10/12

Site name: **Site reference 39 - Land north of Whitton Lane**

IBC ref: UC257/IP140
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 13730 47820
Area: 6.92 hectares
Date: 16 August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, sunshine with cloud, 22° C, slight breeze
Ranking: 4
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



View southwards along the line of tall elms



View westwards along Whitton Lane (southern boundary)



View eastwards inside southern boundary showing mature hedgerows and fallow arable field

Habitat type(s):

Trees and hedgerows, paddock, arable land.

Subsidiary habitats:

Standing and fallen deadwood.

Site description:

The site lies directly to the north of Whitton Lane, beyond which is the retail park and the former park and ride. The banks of the A14 slip road of Junction 53 forms the western boundary, with arable fields to the north. The western section is a horse-grazed paddock, whilst the bulk of the remainder is arable land. The central arable field, which also forms part of a narrow field on the south-eastern edge, has not been farmed this year and has been colonised by ruderal species. The north-eastern field had been recently ploughed. The most interesting features on this site are the hedgerows and mature trees. There is a large, veteran elm directly east of the mobile phone mast, with evidence of another fallen elm hulk close by. Many of these boundary features are predominantly elm and whilst some are displaying die-back, the tree belt which runs south of the mobile phone mast is unusual in that it is composed of mainly tall elms. The central hedge, which turns in a right angle to run closely parallel to Whitton Lane, can be described as ancient and species-rich. On the eastern boundary is a fine mature oak.

Protected species:

Slow worm

Protected species potential:

Bats

BAP habitats present:

Ancient species-rich hedgerows

BAP species seen:

Hedgehog

BAP species known:

Slow worm, toad

BAP species potential:

Bats

Connectivity:

Whitton Lane is a historic lane connecting to the similarly ancient Fisk's Lane, to the north. Both are important wildlife corridors and will provide good habitat for birds and invertebrates. The A14 margin is also an important wildlife corridor.

Structural diversity:

The hedgerows and trees provide good structural diversity, but elsewhere on the site structural diversity is poor.

Flora:

The horse paddock was quite species poor and contained locally common species such as creeping thistle, spear thistle, hogweed, common cat's ear, ribwort plantain, greater plantain, ragwort, dandelion, red and white clovers, smooth tare, perforate St John's wort, cut leaved crane's-bill, Canadian fleabane, yarrow, hop trefoil, Yorkshire fog, false oat grass. The presence of sheeps' fescue and common cudweed indicated that the soils are light and free-draining. The northern boundary of the paddock is dominated by bramble. The eastern elm hedge is remarkable for the size of the mature elms.

The arable field left fallow has been colonized by ruderal species such as spear thistle, creeping thistle, ragwort, creeping buttercup, common cat's ear, beaked hawksbeard, prickly ox-tongue, Canadian fleabane, blue fleabane, white and red clovers, dandelion, bird's foot trefoil, hop trefoil, rough chervil, scarlet pimpernel, wild radish, common poppy, field pansy, white campion, prickly lettuce, nettle, false oat grass, cock's foot, rat's-tail fescue. Part of the field had been topped, but other parts left rank. The northern boundary of this field is predominantly elm, but showing significant signs of die-back.

Other hedgerows are also interesting, with the Whitton Lane boundary containing predominantly hawthorn, with elder, rose, field maple, elm, blackthorn with clematis, white bryony and ivy in places. Further west it becomes almost predominantly elm. This hedgerow is regularly managed until the paddock, where it has been allowed to grow unchecked. Here the elm has grown tall and leggy and is showing signs of die-back in places. The hedgerow dividing the fallow arable field from the recently ploughed field can be described as ancient and species rich, with the section running parallel to Whitton Lane containing a good range of woody species in a short section: elm, blackthorn, hawthorn, field maple, hazel, rose, ash, elder. A very large oak tree is situated on the eastern boundary.

Avifauna:

The survey took place at a sub-optimal time of year for this group. However, a charm of goldfinches

was seen foraging in the paddock and over the fallow arable field. Jackdaws were plentiful. The thicker hedgerows do provide good nesting and foraging opportunities for birds. There is an old record (1994) of corn bunting and barn owl have been recorded in the fields to the north (2009). Bird surveys undertaken in 2007 and 2009 by SWT Trading Ltd for Ashfield Land recorded a varied assemblage of farmland birds throughout this area.

Invertebrates:

The fallow arable field supported a good range of invertebrates with numerous grasshoppers. A red admiral butterfly was seen along the tall elm hedge.

Herpetofauna:

Slow worms and toads have been recorded on the A14 margins and associated hedgerows in 2007, but much of the site is not suitable for this group. The hedgerows and their margins and the narrow strip of rough grassland in the northern section may provide some habitat, so they may be present on site in low numbers. If the site were to fall into disuse, then the ensuing development of rough grassland on formerly mown areas would result in suitable habitat quickly developing which could be colonised from nearby populations.

Mammals:

Hedgehog droppings were recorded on the fallow arable field. The combination of hedgerows, rough margins, paddock and fallow arable land provides good habitat for this animal. Various species of small mammals are also likely to be associated with the hedgerows. Fox and deer are likely to be present. Evidence of badgers is known to occur to the north of the site. Whitton Lane corridor and the other hedgerows provide good commuting routes for bats and the larger trees may provide roosting sites.

Comments and recommendations:

The hedgerows and mature trees represent the features of greatest wildlife value. These should be protected and buffered from any future development proposals. Whitton Lane is likely to be an historic lane and provides a sheltered habitat for invertebrates and birds. The large elms on site are particularly notable as an unusual feature.

Further surveys of this site will be required to establish a more complete and up-to date understanding of the wildlife interest, including for birds and reptiles.

Site name: Site reference 40 - Part former Volvo site, Raeburn Road South

IBC ref: UC113/IP99
Site status: No wildlife designations
Grid ref: TM 17517 41996
Area: 1.85 hectares
Date: 3 September 2012
Recorder: M Wright
Weather conditions: Calm conditions, clear skies, hot and sunny
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



Most of the site is of hard standing, debris and buildings, the scrub belt on the left of the picture is not part of the site



Raeburn Road verge bramble and perimeter trees

Habitat type(s):

Bramble scrub and rough grassland on Raeburn Road verge.

Subsidiary habitats:

-

Site description:

Access to the former Volvo site is via Sandy Hill Lane and Raeburn Road South. Almost the whole of the site comprised derelict hard standing and boarded up buildings. It appeared that at least one building was operational and there were a number trucks being either cleaned or loading up. The habitats on site consisted of ruderal and pioneer shrubs and trees that were colonizing the cracks and joints in the hard standing. Fencing, gates and some buildings were unkempt and overrun by vegetation. A fenced off area to the east of the buildings is also of hard standing that is being colonised by ruderals and young shrubs, planted trees were on the perimeter of this site. Only part of the verge has been colonised, in the main by bramble and is of good wildlife value.

Protected Species:

-

Protected species potential:

Slow worm and common lizard

BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

House sparrow, slow worm and common lizard

Connectivity:

The site is a weak link in the wildlife corridor that skirts southeast Ipswich. However this could be improved in the event of any site development.

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity is very poor, apart from along the road verge.

Flora:

Plants included black horehound, bramble, bristly oxtongue, broom, buddleia, Canadian fleabane, dittander (nationally scarce), great lettuce, hedge mustard, herb Robert, horse radish, gorse, great Mullein, hollyhock, mallow, mugwort, oxeye daisy, narrow-leaved ragwort, pampas grass, perforate St. John's wort, reed, rosebay willowherb, nettle, willow, smooth sowthistle, tufted hair grass, wild carrot and wild parsnip. Trees and shrubs planted on the boundary of the site included blackthorn, bramble, hawthorn, oak, weeping willow, willow, silver birch, Scot's pine and sycamore.

Avifauna:

Observations included carrion crow, common whitethroat, chiffchaff, magpie, robin, and wood pigeon. House sparrows were observed during surveys of the site to the north (Site 21) and could also be present on this site.

Invertebrates:

The following butterfly species were seen large white, red admiral, small tortoiseshell, small white and speckled wood; other species of invertebrate noted were migrant hawk and common darter.

Herpetofauna:

No species were seen during the site visit, however slow worm and common lizard may occur around the margins.

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:

This site is of low conservation value, however this could improve if linear scrub and herb areas were created around the site and to connect to adjacent wildlife areas.

The connectivity of this site could be improved considerably in the event of any development. By creating a wide scrub hedge for the length of the frontage of this site along Raeburn Road (only part of this verge has a good quality scrub edge) and by connecting to remaining scrub areas of the former Volvo site.

Before any development commences on this site it recommended that a reptile survey should be carried out.