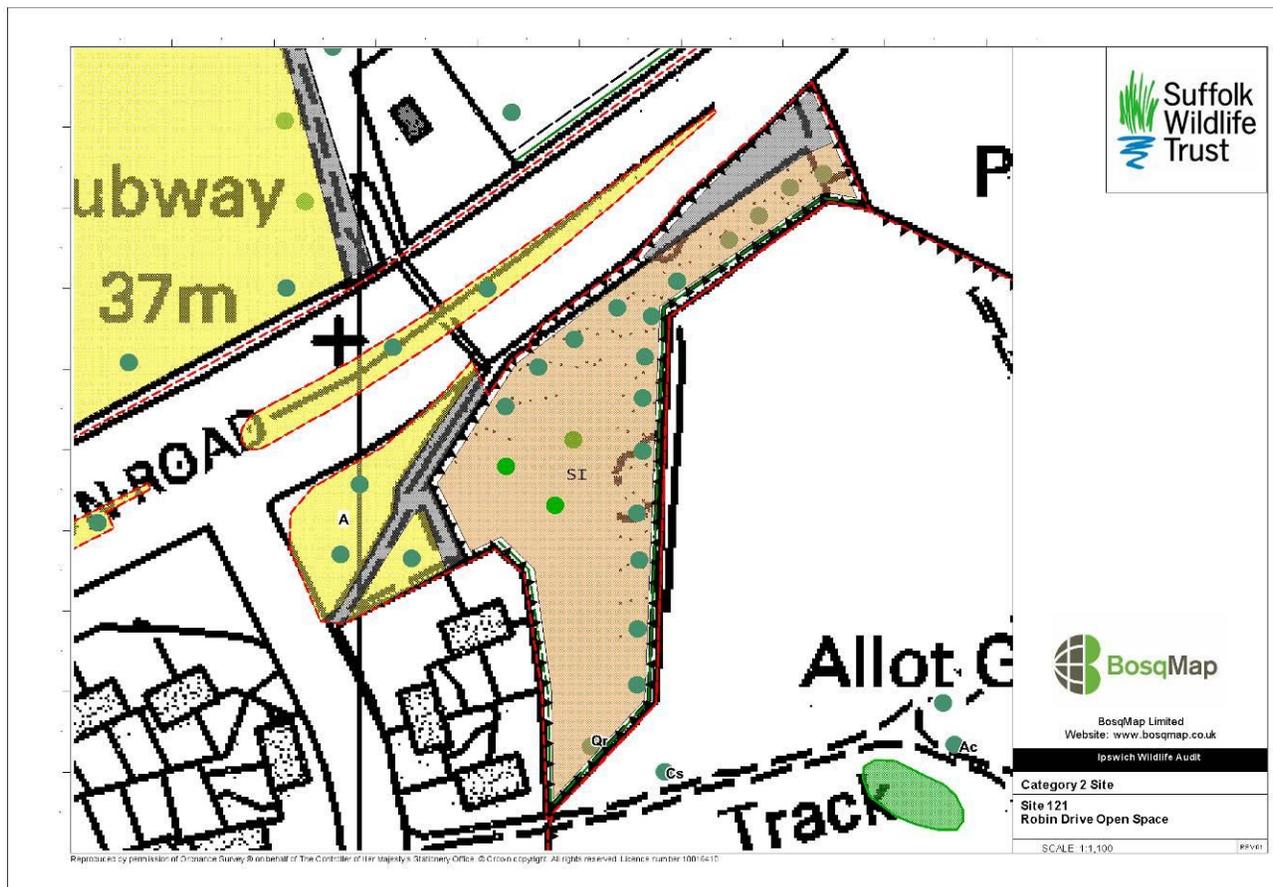


**Site name** **Site reference 121 – Robin Drive Open Space**

**IBC Ref:** New  
**Site status:** No wildlife designation  
**Grid ref:** TM 14052 43691  
**Area:** 0.75 hectares  
**Date:** 5 April 2013  
**Recorder:** A Looser  
**Weather conditions:** Cold and overcast, 5°C  
**Ranking:** 4  
**Biodiversity value:** Medium

**Map:**



**Photos:**



Looking towards London Road

**Habitat type(s):**

Semi-improved neutral grassland

**Subsidiary habitats:**

Scattered trees, species rich hedgerow

**Site description:**

This site is a small triangle of land just south of the London Road and part of its boundary is with the London Road Allotments. The majority of the site is rough, semi-improved grassland with scattered trees but the boundary with the allotments is a species rich hedge. There is also a small section of hedge along the boundary with the houses.

**Protected species:**

.-

**Protected species potential:**

-

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

-

**BAP species known:**

-

**BAP species potential:**

Hedgehog

**Connectivity:**

The site generally has fairly poor connectivity as there is a busy road to the north of it. However it is adjacent to Aster road allotments (site 54) and close to a number of other sites including Chantry Park (Site 74 & Site 8) and London Road Tree Belt (Site 102). This increases the value of the site as it is part of a wider block of habitat.

**Structural diversity:**

The site has fairly poor structural diversity with only semi-natural grassland and trees. The hedgerow at the rear of the back gardens and along the edge of the London Road allotments does provide some good structural diversity.

**Flora:**

The majority of the site is semi-improved neutral grassland. Species in this include rye grass, Yorkshire fog and cock's foot with ribwort plantain, yarrow, cow parsley, daffodils, dandelion, nettles, germander speedwell, hoary ragwort, greater plantain and creeping buttercup.

The hedgerow bordering the back gardens consists of laurel, privet, ash, bramble, rose, elder, hawthorn and beech. Along the boundary with the allotments there is a relatively species rich hedgerow, although most of it is the allotment side. Species in this hedge include blackthorn, bramble, holly, silver birch, field maple, oak, hawthorn, elder and elm. The standard trees are mainly chestnut with silver birch and alder. There are also three leylandii trees which have been recently planted in the centre of the site.

**Avifauna:**

The hedgerow provides good foraging, nesting and roosting habitat for a range of common bird species and magpie, blue tit, great tit, robin and collared dove were all seen during the visit.

**Invertebrates:**

The weather conditions were poor for recording this group and none were observed. However there are some nectar sources available for butterflies so there are likely to be a range of common species throughout the year. The rough grassland will provide good overwintering habitat for this group.

**Herpetofauna:**

The habitat is suitable for this group and as grass snakes have been reported on the adjacent allotments there could be a small population present.

**Mammals:**

Common species of mammal such as grey squirrel may occasionally use the site. The longer grass and hedgerow also provides good habitat for small mammals such as mice and voles. Hedgehog may be present but the presence of a busy road to the north presents a serious issue for this species.

**Comments and recommendations:**

Future management of the grassland should be on rotation to ensure there is always a rough grassland resource.

**Site name:** **Site reference 122 - Sandy Hill Lane Scrub**

**IBC ref:** New  
**Site status:** No wildlife designation  
**Grid ref:** TM 17257 42610  
**Area:** 0.99 hectares  
**Date:** 31 August 2012  
**Recorder:** M Wright  
**Weather conditions:** Dry, bright sunny, 50% cloud cover, fresh westerly wind  
**Ranking:** 4  
**Biodiversity value:** Medium

**Map:**



**Photos:**



A view of the open area with scrub behind the scrub and woodland tree belt

**Habitat type(s):**

Woodland edge, scrub and tall bracken and herb areas

**Subsidiary habitats:**

-

**Site description:**

The site is a small triangular area of predominately thick impenetrable scrub with a woodland edge adjacent to Sandy Hill Lane. There are some open areas which are dominated by bracken and bramble. The site is a very good wildlife area, in particular for breeding birds and invertebrates. Apart from fly tipping on Sandy Hill Lane it is a secluded site.

**Protected species:**

-

**Protected species potential:**

Slow worm and common lizard

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

-

**BAP species known:**

-

**BAP species potential:**

Song thrush, turtle dove, dunnoek, hedgehog, slow worm and common lizard

**Connectivity:**

The site is an integral and an important part of the wildlife corridor that skirts southern Ipswich.

**Structural diversity:**

The structural diversity is good due to the different age class of trees, the variety of shrubs and the open areas of bracken and tall herbs.

**Flora:**

The woodland edge contained blackthorn, bramble, dog rose, dog wood, elder, field maple, mountain ash, hazel, oak and sycamore. Some of the trees were clad in ivy. Additional plants associated with the scrub and open areas included black horehound, bracken, great lettuce, great willowherb, hedge bindweed, hemlock, mallow, nettle, willow and silver birch.

**Avifauna:**

Few observations were made due to the sub-optimal timing of the survey, however the following were recorded: blackbird, carrion crow, jay, kestrel (three), robin and wood pigeon.

**Invertebrates:**

The site is potentially good for invertebrates; only the following were observed meadow brown, red admiral, small white and speckled wood. Stag beetle has been recorded on Landseer Road.

**Herpetofauna:**

No species were seen during the site visit, however slow worm and common lizard may occur in less shaded areas.

**Mammals:**

None seen but the site may support small mammals and hedgehog, as well as common species such as grey squirrel and rabbit.

**Comments and recommendations:**

Although, the site is small, it is potentially very good for wildlife and is certainly a very important part of the wildlife corridor that skirts southern Ipswich.

It is recommended that all the trees and bushes are retained and the woodland edge is planted up, where necessary, with native, thorny and berry producing shrubs. This will improve the habitat immensely and prevent fly tipping. Ideally, behind the tree belt, a mowing regime ought to be implemented in the autumn to maintain the mosaic of scrub and more open areas.

It is also recommended that breeding bird and reptile surveys should be carried out in the spring and summer of 2014.



Photos:



Looking north along site



An ichneumon wasp probably *Amblyteles armatorius*

**Habitat type(s):**

Amenity grassland

**Subsidiary habitats:**

Scattered trees  
Species poor hedgerow  
Semi-improved grassland

**Site description:**

This site is a small recreation ground along Sherrington Road opposite Broom Hill Park. It is dominated by amenity grassland with scattered trees around the edges. There are areas of long grass around the edges of the site and a short section of recently planted species poor hedgerow along the eastern boundary. There is a small play area at the northern end of the park. It is fenced all round.

**Protected species:**

.-

**Protected species potential:**

Reptiles (common lizard, slow worm and grass snake)

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

-

**BAP species known:**

-

**BAP species potential:**

Reptiles  
Hedgehogs

**Connectivity:**

The site is part of a cluster of sites which are only separated by roads, which together provide good connectivity for a range of wildlife. This includes Broom Hill Park (Site 67), Westwood Avenue Open Space (Site 137) and Valley Road Wood and Amenity Area (Site 136).

**Structural diversity:**

The site has reasonable structural diversity with amenity grass, long grass, hedgerows and scattered trees.

**Flora:**

The majority of the site consists of amenity grassland which is dominated by rye grass with dandelion, clover, yarrow, ribwort plantain, rough hawkbit and mallow.

The areas of longer grass around the edges of the site are more species diverse with rye, cocksfoot, meadow foxtail, Yorkshire fog, wall barley and smaller cats tail with yarrow, ragwort, ribwort plantain, field bindweed, honesty, spear thistle, creeping cinquefoil, mallow, greater plantain, nettle, broad leafed dock, purple dead nettle, black knapweed, mugwort and dittander (a nationally scarce species).

The short section of hedgerow was species poor and dominated by hawthorn with dog rose and bramble.

The scattered trees are a mixture of silver birch, scots pine, sycamore, cherry, elder, poplar, ash, field maple, walnut, oak, bramble and broom.

**Avifauna:**

This site provides good foraging, nesting and roosting habitat for a range of common bird species although only magpie and blue tit were seen during the visit.

**Invertebrates:**

This site provides a decent range of nectar sources for butterflies and moths so it is likely to be a reasonable site for them. A number of common butterfly species were seen during the visit including meadow brown, small white, green veined white and common blue. There are also a number of records of white letter hairstreak in the area which is a BAP species. The habitat is also suitable for a wide range of bees and wasps and an ichneumon wasp (probably *Amblyteles armatorius*) was seen during the visit. There could be stag beetles present if there is any subterranean dead wood on site.

**Herpetofauna:**

This site does have some suitable habitat for reptiles. There are records of grass snake very close to the site and it is close to other areas which provide suitable habitat. A local resident reported having seen both grass snake and slow worm on site in the last couple of years. Whilst this is unconfirmed it seems a likely record.

**Mammals:**

Common species of mammal such as grey squirrel are likely to live permanently on site. The range of habitats also provides some cover for small mammals such as mice, voles and shrews. The habitat is suitable for hedgehogs and there are old records of them in the area so they are likely to be present. The resident also reported having found and rescued a sick hedgehog from the site. Again this seems a reasonable record.

**Comments and recommendations:**

Increasing the area of long grass would improve the biodiversity of this site. This should be mown on rotation so there is always a long grass resource.



**Photos:**



Good boundary hedgerows



Large ash tree on western boundary

**Habitat type(s):**

Boundary hedgerows and trees, short mown grass, cultivated areas

**Subsidiary habitats:**

Small ponds on individual plots.

**Site description:**

This allotment is situated towards the northern edge of Ipswich, surrounded by roads and housing. It was set up in 1917 and the boundary hedgerows are thought to date from this time. Occupancy of plots is high, but there is a good variety of fruit bushes and trees as well as regularly cultivated areas. Apart from the eastern boundary, there are mature hedgerows around the perimeter of the site.

**Protected species:**

-

**Protected species potential:**

-

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

-

**BAP species known:**

Toad (seen by allotment holders)

**BAP species potential:**

Stag beetle

**Connectivity:**

The allotment is surrounded by housing so is relatively isolated from other semi-natural habitats.

**Structural diversity:**

The majority of the allotments are well maintained and cultivated. The hedges provide good structural diversity around the boundaries as well as the scattered fruit trees.

**Flora:**

Common species are present within uncultivated plots, such as nettle, fat hen, yarrow, wall barley, cock's foot, false oat grass. There are a good variety of fruit trees across the site, including apple, pear, plum and walnut. A large horse chestnut is present on the northern edge. The northern hedge is largely intact with only a few gaps, with hawthorn, *Prunus* species, elder and large amounts of ivy. The western hedge is largely hawthorn with some mature trees, including a large ash and a sycamore. The southern hedge is largely composed of holly, with small amounts of elm, field maple, *Prunus* species, bramble and a Buddleia.

**Avifauna:**

The boundaries of the site offer good foraging and nesting opportunities for a range of locally common birds. Woodpeckers, both green and greater spotted, used to be seen but are no longer present. An owl box has been erected on the horse chestnut tree.

**Invertebrates:**

Adult stag beetles are frequently seen in the local area and it is highly likely that the boundaries of the site contain subterranean deadwood supporting their larvae. At the time of the visit there were numerous large and small white butterflies flying, as well as red admiral and speckled wood butterflies. Bumble bees were seen in good numbers on globe artichoke and runner bean flowers.

**Herpetofauna:**

Toads are occasionally seen by plot holders but frogs are common and they spawn in the small individual ponds. Smooth newts are also present. Reptiles are not known to be present.

**Mammals:**

Foxes are known to be present, but hedgehogs have not been seen for 3-4 years.

**Comments and recommendations:**

During the visit attention was drawn by a plot holder to the large ash (see photograph) on the western boundary, due to concern about a damaged limb. Other than this the tree appeared healthy.



**Photos:**



Looking south across site

**Habitat type(s):**

Amenity grassland

**Subsidiary habitats:**

Scrub

Species poor hedgerow

**Site description:**

This site is a small recreation ground situated along Sidegate Lane. The site is short mown amenity grassland with scrub along the western boundary, with a species poor gappy hedgerow along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries bordering the back gardens. The site is fenced all around

**Protected species:**

-

**Protected species potential:**

-

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

-

**BAP species known:**

-

### **BAP species potential:**

-

### **Connectivity:**

The site has very poor connectivity as it is surrounded by roads and residential housing. The nearest sites are Humber Doucy Lane field (site 150) and Northgate and Colchester Road allotments (sites 112 and 80).

### **Structural diversity:**

The site has fairly poor structural diversity with mainly amenity grassland, although the hedgerow and scrub provides some structural diversity.

### **Flora:**

The majority of the site is short mown amenity grassland. Species in this include rye grass with greater plantain, dandelion, daisy, clover and yarrow. In the areas around the edges which are left slightly longer there is also ribwort plantain, creeping thistle, spear thistle, garlic mustard, cow parsley, nettle, hogweed, oxeye daisy, red dead nettle, honesty and doves foot cranesbill.

The scrub along the western boundary was dominated by bramble with sycamore, elder, field maple, ash, blackthorn, hawthorn and elm. The hedgerow was dominated by leylandii with silver birch, clematis, hawthorn, elder and a weeping willow tree.

### **Avifauna:**

This site provides limited habitat for a range of common bird species and only blackbird, collared dove, magpie and great tit were observed during the visit. The scrub along the western boundary is likely to be used as nesting sites by a range of common bird species.

### **Invertebrates:**

No butterflies were observed during the visit but there are limited nectar opportunities so it is unlikely to be a good site for butterflies. Species such as bramble will attract a small number of common butterflies during the year.

### **Herpetofauna:**

The habitat is unsuitable for this group.

### **Mammals:**

Common species of mammal such as grey squirrel are likely to use the site. However the site is isolated and provides no cover for small mammals such as mice and voles. The site does provide good foraging habitat for hedgehogs, however the fence surrounding the site is too secure to allow hedgehogs to move into and out of the site.

### **Comments and recommendations:**

Allowing some areas of longer grass, particularly near the scrub will provide more foraging opportunities for birds.

If hedgehog is recorded in the area at a future date, then consideration should be given to making several small access hole in the perimeter fence to provide additional habitat for this species.



**Photos:**



View southwards across site with Site 128 (Spring Road Allotments Wood) in distance



Short mown grass in north of site and mature sycamore



South facing bank left as wildlife area



Slow worm photographed on site



Dead hedgehog eaten by fox (possibly as carrion)

**Habitat type(s):**

Species-poor rough grassland, bramble banks, short mown grass, cultivated areas

**Subsidiary habitats:**

Spring, mature trees

**Site description:**

This allotment lies to the north of Spring Road, adjacent to the Ipswich-Felixstowe railway line. The land slopes uphill from the road and the soil conditions reflect this, with sandy drier areas towards the

tope of the slope and damper areas at the bottom. A spring emerges near the base of the hillside. The plots are all well cultivated lower down the slope, but higher up there are areas where a line of bramble has been allowed to grow. A south-facing bank has also been left as a wildlife area. The top strip of the allotment currently contains short mown grass with a very large sycamore, but this may become cultivated in future.

**Protected species:**

Slow worm (2012)

**Protected species potential:**

-

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

Slow worm

Hedgehog

**BAP species known:**

Slow worm (2012)

Stag beetle (reported by plot holder and recorded in adjacent garden (1998))

Toad (reported by plot holder)

**BAP species potential:**

**Connectivity:**

The wide, scrub covered bank of the Ipswich-Felixstowe railway line is adjacent to the eastern edge of the site beyond which is the wildlife habitat of the former Convent Site on Woodbridge Road (86), so connectivity is excellent.

**Structural diversity:**

The combination of rough grassland, bramble areas and fruit trees provide good structural diversity, particularly on the upper slopes.

**Flora:**

Typical species are present in fallow plots wall barley, rye grass, ribwort plantain, yarrow, common cat's ear, fennel, mallow and marjoram. Dittander (nationally scarce) was also recorded. A belt of bramble, with wild rose and occasional sycamore, ash and broom runs across the top of the slope, behind which is an area of short mown grass and a large sycamore tree. Blackthorn scrub is present in the north-eastern corner adjacent to the railway line.

**Avifauna:**

Great tit was recorded but the site is likely to support a wide range of birds, although it was a suboptimal time of year for surveying this group. A sparrowhawk was seen flying over the field during the visit. Bird nest boxes have been placed on trees and on individual plots. Nightingales used to be heard in the scrub adjacent to the railway embankment, but not in recent years. A kestrel was seen sitting on an allotment shed in 2008 by a plot holder.

**Invertebrates:**

Considerable numbers of small white butterfly were seen as well as large white and painted lady

butterflies. Red admiral, comma, peacock and gatekeeper butterflies are also reported. Stag beetle larvae are likely to be present where there is subterranean dead wood and adult stag beetles are seen on site.

### **Herpetofauna:**

Slow worms are known to occur throughout the site and several animals were seen in different parts of the site during the site visit. As a result, there is likely to be a very large population of slow worm on the allotments assisted by the proximity of the site to habitats associated with the railway line. Common lizards were seen by a plot holder a long time in the past, but not in recent years, although they may still be present. Frogs, toad and smooth newts are also reported to be seen in various water troughs.

### **Mammals:**

The habitat will support a range of small mammals such as mice, voles and shrews. There was much evidence of foxes, particularly at the top of the site where there was considerable amount of scat. A fox hole (earth) was seen on site. A dead hedgehog, with only the spines remaining was seen in this area. Foxes are unlikely to be able to predate a mature, healthy hedgehog, so cause of death is not conclusive and it is more likely to have been eaten by foxes as carrion. Muntjac deer are known to be present. Bats have been seen by an allotment holder and they may forage along the scrubby woodland edge bordering the railway line.

### **Comments and recommendations:**

This large allotment provides a valuable wildlife resource and its location next to the railway line means that there is excellent connectivity to other sites of wildlife value.



**Photos:**



View eastwards across site towards railway line

**Habitat type(s):**

Species-poor rough grassland on fallow plots, short mown grass paths, cultivated areas

**Subsidiary habitats:**

Ponds on individual plots, hazel scrub on individual plot, sown wildflower areas in plots

**Site description:**

This allotment lies to the north of Spring Road Allotments Wood (128). The plots are managed organically and are well cultivated, with few lying fallow. Scattered fruit trees occur across the site but there are no large trees within the site itself. There are quite a number of individual wildlife ponds and many of the plots have areas planted with nectar-rich flowers.

**Protected species:**

Slow worm (2012)

**Protected species potential:**

-

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

**BAP species known:**

Slow worm (2012)  
Stag beetle (reported by plot holder)

**BAP species potential:**

Toad, hedgehog

**Connectivity:**

The wide, scrub covered bank of the Ipswich-Felixstowe railway line is adjacent to the eastern edge of the site and a block of woodland along the southern margin, so connectivity is excellent.

**Structural diversity:**

The combination of rough grassland, planted flower rich areas and fruit trees provides good structural diversity.

**Flora:**

Typical species are present in fallow plots such as hedge bindweed, red campion, redshank, Yorkshire fog, false oat grass. Fat hen and sun spurge are present on dry sunny soil and near the railway line a wetter area included horsetails, male fern and a species of rush could be seen beyond.

The amount of wild flower sowing within the site was notable, with marjoram, foxglove, tansy and borage to name a few. Buddleia is also present. One wildlife pond included marshmallow, valerian and marsh marigold, with hart's tongue fern and male fern in shaded areas close to the wood.

A large, ancient ash is present in the south-west corner in an area where there has been some hazel planting.

**Avifauna:**

The site is likely to support a wide range of birds, although it was a suboptimal time of year for surveying this group. Common species such as crow, magpie, wood pigeon were seen and a blackcap heard. Green woodpeckers are seen by allotment holders as well as a sparrowhawk (seen later that day over Spring Road Field 1).

**Invertebrates:**

There were numerous butterflies and considerable numbers of small white were seen, as well as gatekeeper, meadow brown, peacock, red admiral and small tortoiseshell. The sown wild flowers will provide an excellent nectar source for bees as well. Stag beetle larvae are likely to be present in subterranean dead wood along the southern margin of the site.

**Herpetofauna:**

Slow worms are known to occur on the site (2012 record) and are reported to be throughout the site. The proximity of the site to habitats associated with the railway line is the likely reason for their presence. Frogs and smooth newts are also reported to be numerous, but toads are not seen, nor are common lizard or grass snake.

**Mammals:**

The habitat will support a range of small mammals such as mice, voles and shrews. Foxes are seen and although muntjac deer have not been reported they are highly likely to be present. The site provides excellent foraging and hibernation habitat for the declining populations of hedgehog which used to be

seen in the area, but not recently. Bats are highly likely to forage along the woodland edge on the southern margins.

**Comments and recommendations:**

This allotment provides an important area for wildlife and its location north of the Spring Road Woodland and adjacent to the railway line means that it has excellent connectivity to other sites of wildlife value.



**Photos:**



Woodland interior



View from allotments (site 127)

**Habitat type(s):**

Broadleaf woodland

**Subsidiary habitats:**

-

**Site description:**

This site is a small, linear area of secondary woodland on a steep slope located just north of Finbars Walk. Its northern edge borders Spring Road 2 allotments (Site 127) with the scrub and tree covered banks of the railway line representing the eastern boundary.

**Protected species:**

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**Protected species potential:**

-

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

-

**BAP species known:**

-

**BAP species potential:**

Stag beetle

**Connectivity:**

The site has excellent connectivity as it is adjacent to Spring Road 2 allotments (site 127) and is also connected by the railway line to other nearby sites including Spring Road 1 allotments (site 126) Former Convent, Woodbridge Road (site 86). It is also close to Alexandra Park (site 51) and Spring Road tree belt (site 129).

**Structural diversity:**

The site has reasonable structural diversity for this habitat type, as secondary woodland with some shrub layer.

**Flora:**

The site is dominated by sycamore and holly with elm, dogwood, oak, ash, laurel and elder also present.

The ground flora was very poor with only cow parsley, cleavers and ivy.

**Avifauna:**

This site provides good foraging, roosting and nesting opportunities for a range of common bird species but only blackbird, collared dove, magpie and robin were observed during the visit. Tawny owls have been seen in the wood.

**Invertebrates**

Several speckled wood butterflies were observed during the visit but there are limited nectar opportunities so it is unlikely to be a good site for butterflies. Stag beetles could be present if there are areas of subterranean dead wood.

**Herpetofauna:**

The habitat is largely unsuitable for this group, although it may provide hibernation opportunities for amphibians occurring on the adjacent allotments, such as toad and possibly slow worm.

**Mammals:**

Common species of mammal such as grey squirrel are likely to use the site. The site also provides some cover for small mammals such as mice and voles. The woodland edge will provide good foraging opportunities for species such as pipistrelle and the trees themselves may provide limited roosting potential.

**Comments and recommendations:**

Thinning some of the sycamore trees will let more light in and this could be undertaken by coppicing.. This will improve the shrub layer and ground flora and improve the habitat for insects, birds and mammals. Some cut wood could be piled within the wood to form habitat piles.

There was evidence of drug-taking activities in the wood.



**Photos:**



Northern edge of site



Dry grassland bank

**Habitat type(s):**

Broadleaf woodland, dry grassland

**Subsidiary habitats:**

-

**Site description:**

This site is a small thin strip of primarily broadleaf woodland along Spring Road. It slopes steeply uphill towards Oakstead Close. There is a small strip of amenity grassland along part of the north-eastern edge of the woodland. There is a dry grassy bank about half way along the site which divides the two sections of woodland. The western section has more mature trees with a less well developed shrub layer.

**Protected species:**

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**Protected species potential:**

Bats

**BAP habitats present:**

-

**BAP species seen:**

-

**BAP species known:**

-

**BAP species potential:**

Bats

Stag beetles

Hedgehog

**Connectivity:**

The site is surrounded by roads and residential housing, so connectivity is poor. However, it is close to a cluster of other sites including the Former Convent Woodbridge Road (Site 86), Spring Road 1 Allotments (Site 126) Spring Road 2 Allotments (Site 127) and Spring Road Allotments Wood (Site 128).

**Structural diversity:**

The site has reasonable structural diversity as it is secondary woodland with some shrub layer, in what is otherwise a built-up area.

**Flora:**

The majority of the site is woodland. The area to the east of the grassy bank contains a mixture of sycamore, holly, elder, laurel, yew, bramble, hazel, lime, *prunus* spp, hawthorn, beech, ivy, pine and ornamental trees.

The area to the west of the grass bank was more mature woodland dominated by sweet chestnut, sycamore, beech and snowberry with very little understorey. There is a small patch of Japanese knotweed west of the grassland, beyond a set of steps (target note).

The ground flora was very poor with only cow parsley, nettle and ivy.

The dry grass bank was dominated by buck's horn plantain and mouse ear hawkweed with sorrel, daisy, dandelion and bristly ox tongue. The grass was too short mown to identify most of the grasses but wall barley was noted. It is likely that this grassland is acidic in nature, but it was heavily mown and therefore difficult to assess.

The small strip of amenity grassland contained the usual species including rye grass with clover, yarrow, dandelion and buck's horn plantain.

#### **Avifauna:**

This site provides good foraging, roosting and nesting opportunities for a range of common bird species.

#### **Invertebrates**

The dead wood on site will provide habitat for a range of common invertebrates. There are likely to be stag beetles present in any areas of subterranean dead wood.

#### **Herpetofauna:**

The habitat is unsuitable for this group.

#### **Mammals:**

Common species of mammal such as grey squirrel are likely to use the site. The site also provides some cover for small mammals such as mice and voles. Hedgehogs are known to occur in this area and the woodland will provide valuable cover. Bats may use this linear feature for foraging and the mature trees could provide roosting opportunities.

#### **Comments and recommendations:**

The original area shown on the boundary map provided should be extended to encompass an additional section of the tree belt at the western end. This area is functionally part of the existing tree belt.

When any of the ornamental trees are cut down these should be replaced with native species.

Japanese knotweed is present within the site, on the other side of a pathway to the west of the dry bank (target note). There was a lot of litter in certain parts of this site, possibly indicating drug-taking activities.



**Photos:**



Golf green with associated rough areas and scattered trees



View southwards along boundary adjacent to railway line



Mature oak on eastern boundary

**Habitat type(s):**

Acid grassland, semi-natural broadleaf woodland, mixed woodland strip, scattered trees

**Subsidiary habitats:**

Fallen deadwood

**Site description:**

This golf course is located at the southern end of the St Clements Hospital grounds. The fairways, tees and greens occupy most of the site, so there are limited areas of semi-natural ‘rough’ between the different ‘holes’. However, it is notable that the site is acid grassland, with both short mown and longer grass areas with scattered trees. There is a narrow strip of mixed woodland bordering the railway line and along part of the western edge, with a more substantive block of semi-natural broadleaf woodland adjacent to the central part of the eastern boundary. These trees may be planted in origin but sufficient time has elapsed for a semi-natural appearance to have developed. The southern part of this site is now part of the Hospice and fenced off, so this section was not surveyed. The golf course won The English Golf Environmental Award in 2009.

**Protected species:**

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**Protected species potential:**

Common lizard and slow worm

Bats

**BAP habitats present:**

Lowland acid grassland

**BAP species seen:**

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**BAP species known:**

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**BAP species potential:**

Common lizard and slow worm

Bats

Stag beetle

Hedgehog

**Connectivity:**

The railway line runs along its south western boundary which provides a good corridor for a range of wildlife.

**Structural diversity:**

Structural diversity is limited as the majority of the site is short grassland and scattered trees. However, the sections of woodland around the margins help increase structural diversity. An increase in scrub habitat would improve this.

**Flora:**

The majority of the site is short-mown dry acid grassland, although there are patches of 'rough' away from the fairways. Grasses in the longer areas include a dominance of common bent with Yorkshire fog, meadow fescue, cocksfoot and sweet vernal grass. Sheep's sorrel is present indicating acid soils.

The mixed woodland included bramble, cherry, viburnum, pine, sweet chestnut, silver birch, hazel, aspen, holly, oak, gorse and bracken. The broad leaved woodland included some mature/veteran oak trees along the eastern boundary. Other species recorded were cherry, hawthorn, rowan, hazel, holly, bramble, sycamore, elm and elder. The ground flora was dominated by nettle and ivy although male fern and foxglove was present.

The scattered trees included a mixture of pine, larch, eucalyptus, rowan, silver birch, oak, sweet chestnut and a hybrid black poplar with mistletoe.

**Avifauna:**

The site visit took place at a sub-optimal time for recording this group. The site provides some foraging, nesting and roosting habitat for common bird species in the woodland areas and magpie and carrion crow were seen during the visit.

**Invertebrates:**

Acid grassland can support specialised groups of invertebrates, including burrowing members of the hymenoptera. The areas of longer grass and the woodland strips provide some habitat for common invertebrates such as spiders, crickets and grasshoppers. Dead tree stumps were seen around the edges of the site which provide good subterranean dead wood habitat for stag beetles.

**Herpetofauna:**

There are several records of reptiles, particularly slow worms along the railway line and so they are likely to be present in the areas of longer grass, particularly along the south western boundary. There are several piles of grass cuttings and wood chips around the edges of the site which provide good

additional habitat for reptiles.

**Mammals:**

Common species of mammal such as grey squirrel are likely to permanently occupy the site. The woodland areas provide good habitat for small mammals such as mice and voles. Bats are likely to use the railway line as a corridor and several of the trees have the potential to be bat roosts. The habitat is suitable for foraging for hedgehogs so they could be present and the bramble in the woodland areas provides some nesting opportunities.

**Comments and recommendations:**

Due to the nature of the site there are limited options for enhancement. Small areas of native scrub species could be introduced to improve structural diversity and provide nesting habitat for birds and a nectar source for invertebrates.

The boundary needs to be amended on the southern edge to reflect that the Hospice now own the woodland in this area and it is no longer part of the golf course.