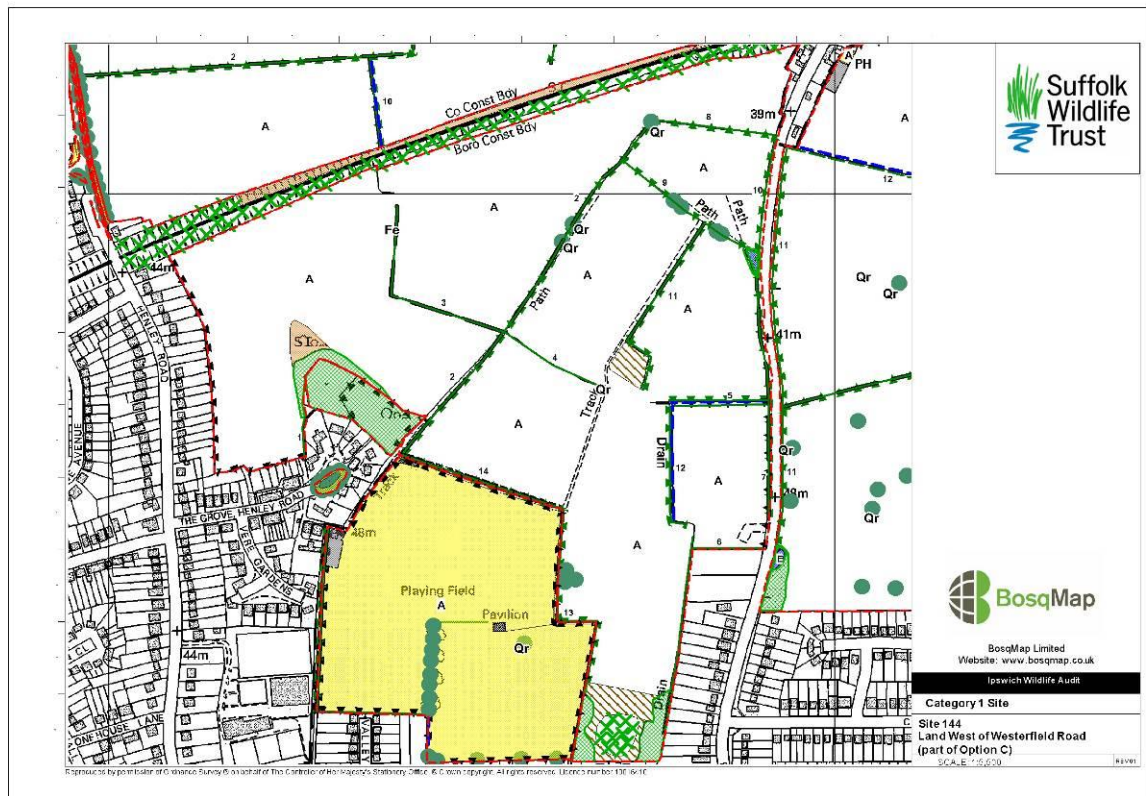


Site name: **Site reference 144 - Land west of Westerfield Road**

IBC ref: IP181
Site status: No Wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 16598 46795
Area: 42.09 hectares
Date: 7 August 2012
Recorder: M Wright & S Bullion
Weather conditions: Mostly cloudy, some sunny periods, rain showers heavy at times, cool south-westerly breeze
Ranking: 4 (subject to further surveys)
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



View looking southwest along footpath and hedgerow number 2



Ruderal habitat with tall elms behind



Tall ruderal and scrub habitat in the south-east of the site



Scrubbed up pond on eastern boundary

Habitat Type(s):

Arable land and field margins, hedgerows, semi-improved grassland, ponds

Subsidiary habitats:

Subsidiary habitats include deadwood, holes and splits in the mature trees.

Site Description:

The site lies west of Westerfield Road, east of the Henley Road. Ipswich School playing fields (Site 146) lie in the south-western corner and the remaining south and south-eastern boundary borders residential rear gardens. The Ipswich to Lowestoft/Felixstowe railway line forms the northern perimeter. The land was almost all arable and divided by species rich hedgerows with mature trees. A small square-shaped area of tall ruderal plants lies centrally, bordered on two sides by tall elms. A larger area of mixed tall ruderal and scrub habitat lies in the south-eastern corner. An overgrown pond is situated on the eastern boundary.

Protected species:

Slow worm, common lizard

Protected species potential:

Various bats

BAP habitats present:

Ancient species-rich hedgerows, Eutrophic standing water (pond)

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Bats, slow worm, common lizard, bullfinch, grey partridge, turtle dove, song thrush, linnet, yellowhammer and brown hare.

Connectivity:

The railway embankment and species rich bushy hedgerows provide excellent linkage to the wider countryside and through all the northern sites.

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the hedgerows was very good despite the headlands being narrow and species poor.

Flora:

The flora found within all the headlands and verges associated with the hedges were similar and species poor; this was due to the paucity and quality of the field margins, consequently the species have been compiled as one list.

Plants included annual meadow grass, black horehound, bristly oxtongue, broad-leaved dock, catsear, cleavers, common mouse-ear, common poppy, cock's foot, corn sowthistle, creeping bent, creeping cinquefoil, creeping thistle, curled dock, cut-leaved cranesbill, daisy, false oat grass, field bindweed, field horsetail, field pansy, great willowherb, hedge bindweed, hedge mustard, hemlock, herb bennet, herb robert, hogweed, ivy, knotgrass, lord's and ladies, mugwort, nettle, perennial ryegrass, prickly oxtongue, prickly sow-thistle, ragwort, red campion, redleg, ribwort plantain, scarlet pimpernel, scentless mayweed, spear thistle, teasel, traveller's joy, wall barley, white bryony, white campion, white clover, wild radish, yarrow and Yorkshire fog,

The species present in each hedgerow are shown in the table below.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Mature oak		*		*	*		*	*	*		*		*	*
Oak		*								*				
Ash	*	*	*		*	*	*		*				*	*
Field maple		*	*	*		*	*	*			*	*	*	*
Hawthorn	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*			*
Blackthorn	*	*		*	*			*	*		*	*	*	*
Hazel	*	*	*								*			
Bird cherry		*												
Crab apple		*												
Sycamore							*			*				
Elm		*	*		*		*	*		*	*		*	*
Dogwood		*	*				*				*			*
Elder	*	*	*			*	*			*	*	*		*
Travellers' Joy		*	*				*							*
Wild rose	*	*	*			*		*	*		*			
Bramble	*	*					*				*		*	
Honeysuckle														

Ivy	*	*			*		*							*
Aspen					*		*							
Pine						*	*							
Snowberry						*	*							
Prunus spp								*						*
Poplar spp							*					*	*	

Avifauna:

The well developed hedgerows and mature trees are excellent habitat and would support a much greater number of species than the observations listed.

Observations included chiffchaff, chaffinch, carrion crow and blackbird.

Invertebrates:

Given the quality of the hedgerows the site will support a wide variety of invertebrates.

Observations included small white, speckled wood, comma, red admiral and ringlet

Herpetofauna:

Slow worm and common lizard have been recorded in 2008 within areas of suitable habitat (hedgerows, tall ruderal vegetation, rough grassland, scrub, around field margins and along the railway embankment) Entec Environmental Statement (2009).

Slow worms have been observed by neighbouring residents in the south-eastern ruderal area (Lockington pers. comm).

There is a great crested newt record from 178 Henley Road dated from 1997; adjacent to the south-west boundary, but no further details are available. The pond on the eastern edge of the site is heavily shaded and silted up and unlikely to support great crested newts.

Mammals:

A rabbit was seen and there was evidence around the site of rabbit grazing. The habitat is ideal for small mammals such as short-tailed field vole. Badger, fox and muntjac could also use the area. Brown hare is also likely to occur.

Comments and Recommendations:

Further, detailed surveys will be required to fully assess the wildlife value of this large area of farmland. This should encompass birds, herpetofauna and invertebrates and the surveys should be undertaken at the optimum season, depending on the group being investigated.

It is recommended that all the ancient oaks, mature trees and hedges be retained for their wildlife value and for their important role in connecting wildlife corridors. In addition, any future development should ensure that retained hedgerows and tree belts remain unlit, to ensure they remain as functional commuting routes for bats.

It is highly recommended that through all the northern compartments permanent wildlife corridors are established both from east to west and north to south. This could be done using existing railway embankments and the hedgerow/tree belts. Selected sections could be widened on either side of the hedgerow/tree belts by planting a variety of native shrub species and planting up any gaps. More oaks should be planted and allowed to grow to maturity. It is essential that margins should be left on either side to allow for a grass and herb edge to develop. The pond should be restored as a wildlife feature and new ponds created where they will be connected to the linear habitat. Such areas would become rich in wildlife and become linear nature reserves that should be maintained through a long-term management plan.

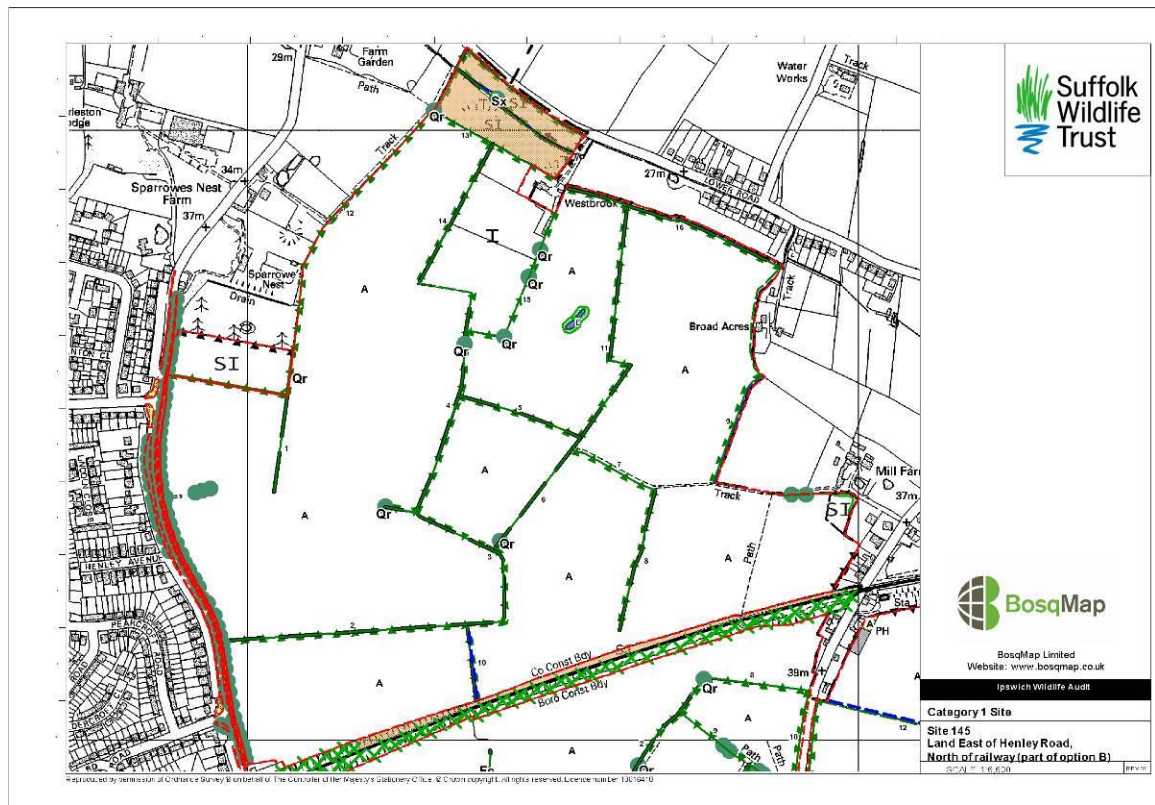
References:

Entec (2009) North Ipswich Development Environmental Statement.

Site name: **Site reference 145 - Land to east of Henley Road, north of railway line**

IBC ref: IP180
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 16383 47484
Area: 75.69 hectares
Date: 7 August 2012
Recorder: M Wright & S Bullion
Weather conditions: Mostly cloudy, some sunny periods, rain showers heavy at times, cool south-westerly breeze 20°C
Ranking: 4 (subject to further surveys)
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



View looking north down hedgerow number 3



View looking east down hedgerow number 5



Semi-improved meadows in north of site



In-field pond surrounded by scrub



Southern boundary



Railway margin

Habitat type(s):

Arable land and field margins, hedgerows, semi-improved grassland, ponds, watercourse

Subsidiary habitats:

Standing and fallen deadwood, holes and splits in the mature trees.

Site description:

This very large site lies on the northern edge of Ipswich. Much of the western boundary is the Henley Road, although the north-western corner lies behind existing properties. The site lies to the west of Westerfield Road, but this boundary is defined by hedgerows and tracks. Its southern boundary is the Ipswich-Lowestoft/Felixstowe railway line and the northern boundary is on or just south of Lower Road, Westerfield.

The majority of the land is arable farmland, intersected by large hedgerows with mature/veteran trees. Many of these can be classified as species-rich and high wildlife value. In the north of the site are two areas of semi-improved grassland, used for horse grazing, surrounded by thick hedgerows. A pond, linking to a narrow watercourse lies between these two meadows. Another pond lies centrally within an arable field, but is heavily shaded by scrub.

The arable field margins contain common species, but the flora becomes more species-rich where it borders the railway line. The south-facing slopes of the railway line contain a good variety of neutral grassland plant species and will support a good invertebrate assemblage.

Protected species:

Slow worm and common lizard (from LDA Design report 2011), overflying bats (3 species from LDA Design report 2011) Further protected species information available on request.

Protected species potential:

Bats (roosting), slow worm and common lizard.

BAP habitats present:

Ancient species-rich hedgerows, Eutrophic standing water (pond)

BAP species seen:

House sparrow, song thrush, bullfinch

BAP species known:

Slow worm and common lizard, starling (from LDA Design report 2011), bats (from LDA Design report 2011)

BAP species potential:

Turtle dove, skylark, grey partridge, linnet, yellowhammer, brown hare, harvest mouse and hedgehog

Connectivity:

The railway embankment and species rich hedgerows and trees provide excellent linkage across the site and the wider landscape. The watercourse on the northern edge of the site is also an important feature.

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the hedgerows and trees is very good and represents the main feature in the landscape. With the exception of the field margin along the southern boundary, these margins are generally structurally poor and if their quality was improved, this would further contribute to the ecological value of the hedgerows. The two semi-improved grassland meadows have quite good structural diversity, which is complemented by the surrounding hedgerows.

Flora:

With the exception of the margin adjacent to the railway line, the flora found within all the headlands and margins associated with the hedges were species-poor and broadly similar across the site. As a consequence the species have been compiled as one list.

Herbaceous plants: black horehound, black medick, black knapweed, bristly oxtongue, broad-leaved dock, curled dock, cat's ear, chicory, cleavers, common fleabane, common mouse-ear, common poppy, corn sowthistle, creeping cinquefoil, creeping thistle, cut-leaved cranesbill, daisy, field bindweed, field horsetail, field scabious, field pansy, goat's beard, great mullein, great willowherb, hedge bindweed, hedge mustard, hemlock, herb bennett, herb robert, hogweed, ivy, knotgrass, lord's and ladies, meadow vetchling, mugwort, nettle, ox-eye daisy, perforate St. John's wort, prickly lettuce, prickly oxtongue, prickly sow-thistle, ragwort, red campion, redshank, ribwort plantain, rough chervil, scarlet pimpernel, scentless mayweed, self heal, spear thistle, teasel, traveller's joy, weld, white bryony, white campion, white clover, white dead-nettle, wild radish, yarrow. The patch of rough grassland in the SE corner included tansy amongst the other common species.

Grasses: annual meadow grass, smooth meadow grass, barren brome, cock's foot, creeping bent, false oat grass, perennial rye-grass, soft brome, wall barley, Yorkshire fog. Bracken was also present in some of the field margins.

The northern railway margin (south facing) had a higher density of herbaceous species, including wild carrot, wild parsnip, ox-eye daisy, black knapweed, tufted vetch, field scabious, common mouse-ear, perforate St John's wort, ribwort plantain, yarrow, occasional ragwort and also frequent common bent. There was also scattered scrub (gorse, blackthorn, elder, oak).

The semi-improved paddocks in the north contained the following species: black knapweed, ribwort plantain, bird's foot trefoil, meadowsweet, self heal, betony, creeping cinquefoil, yarrow, common mouse-ear, hedge mustard, hedge bindweed, broad-leaved dock, creeping buttercup, creeping thistle, spear thistle, smaller cat's tail, creeping bent, Yorkshire fog.

All the hedgerows are of good wildlife value. They comprise of a wide variety of species, the hedges are broad, tall and bushy and are frequently thickets of vegetation. Many of the trees within the hedges are large especially the ash and oaks plus there are some notable coppiced field maple stools. In addition, throughout the network of hedgerows there are a number of ancient oaks.

The species present in each hedgerow are shown in the table below.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Mature oak	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*			*	*		*	*
Oak		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	
Ash		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	
Aspen																
Field maple	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		
Hawthorn	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Blackthorn	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*
Hazel		*		*	*			*		*				*		*
White poplar																
Poplar sp.																
Sycamore		*														
Elm		*	*	*				*		*					*	*
Dogwood	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*					*
Elder	*	*	*	*	*	*			*		*	*			*	*
Crab apple			*		*									*	*	*
Spindle											*					
Bird cherry		*														
Cherry plum	*	*														
Sallow/willow						*										*
Wild rose	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		
Bramble	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*			*
Honeysuckle		*	*													
Ivy		*		*		*										
Travellers joy				*				*								

Avifauna:

The well developed hedgerows and mature trees are excellent habitat and would support a much greater number of species than the observations listed. There were three BAP species (house sparrow, song thrush and bullfinch). Other observations included stock dove, blackbird, blue tit, carrion crow, chaffinch, chiffchaff, collared dove, great tit, green woodpecker, goldfinch, magpie, pheasant, robin, rook, sparrowhawk, whitethroat, wood pigeon and wren. Yellowhammer is likely to be present.

Observations of birds feeding over the site were swallow and swift (Suffolk character species). A later visit on 25th October recorded jay, redwing and fieldfare feeding on hedgerow berries.

Invertebrates:

Given the quality of the hedgerows the site will be supporting a wide variety of invertebrates.

The weather conditions were not conducive for invertebrate survey, however the following butterflies were observed: meadow brown, ringlet, gatekeeper, small skipper, small white, large white and speckled wood. The grassland/scrub mosaic of the railway corridor will support a good range of invertebrates.

Herpetofauna:

A slow worm was seen on adjacent Site 147 on the morning of this visit, so they are highly likely to be on site within the field margins. Slow worm and common lizard have been recorded along the railway corridor (LDA Design 2011).

The pond within the arable field is highly unlikely to support great crested newts due to its heavy shading and isolation. It is unknown whether the pond within the paddocks contains fish, which are detrimental to great crested newts, but as it is stream-fed, there is a possibility that fish are naturally present. Other off-site ponds could support great crested newts but these were not assessed. There is a great crested newt record from 178 Henley Road dating from 1997 adjacent to the south-west boundary, but no further details are available.

Mammals:

Rabbit and evidence of moles was seen but as the site is predominantly arable brown hare is also likely to occur. Common mammals such as short-tailed field vole, grey squirrel, fox and muntjac deer will use the area and it is possible that hedgehog and harvest mouse may also be present. Three species of bat were recorded foraging on site by LDA Design (2011): Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and noctule. Other species are likely to be present due to the presence of very large, mature and veteran trees on site. Other protected species information available on request.

Comments and recommendations:

The majority of this site is arable, but the hedgerows, hedgerow trees, railway margins, grassland, ponds and watercourse are all of ecological interest and should be retained within any future development proposals.

Further, detailed surveys will be required to fully assess the wildlife value of this large area of farmland. This should encompass birds, herpetofauna and invertebrates and the surveys should be undertaken at the optimum season, depending on the group being investigated.

Should development take place on this site, a master plan should include permanent wildlife corridors both from east to west and north to south. The basis of this should be the existing railway embankments, the hedgerow/tree belts and the watercourse to the north. Selected sections should be widened on either side of the hedgerow/tree belt by planting a variety of native species and planting up any gaps, to form copses. It is also essential that broad margins are left on either side of the hedgerows to allow a grass and herb edge to develop. Any future development should ensure that retained

hedgerows remain unlit, to ensure they remain as functional commuting routes for bats.

Wherever possible, ponds should be restored as wildlife features and new ponds created where they will be connected to the linear habitat. Such areas would become rich in wildlife and should be managed in accordance with an ecological management plan.

References:

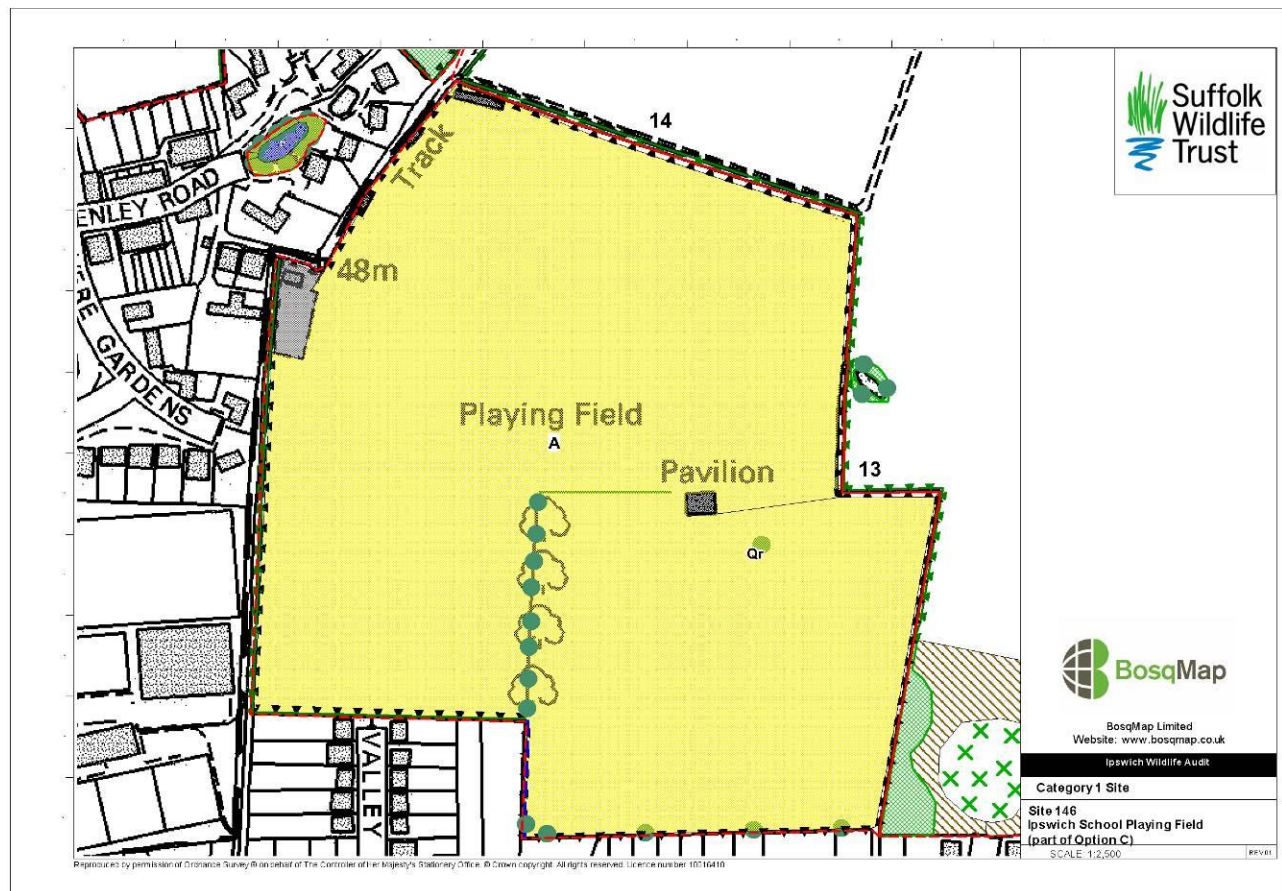
LDA Design (2011) Henley Gate, North Ipswich. Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.

Site name

Site reference 146 - Ipswich School Playing Field

IBC ref: IP185
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 16460 46430
Area: 11.97 hectares
Date: 31 August 2012
Recorder: A Looser & S Bullion
Weather conditions: Warm with sunny intervals 23°C
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



Playing field looking west



Western boundary looking south

Habitat type(s):

Amenity grassland

Subsidiary habitats:

Hedgerows and hedgerow trees, individual trees

Site description:

This large playing field is to the north of Valley Road (accessed off the Henley Road) and is dominated by short mown amenity grassland. Along the western, northern and north-eastern boundaries, beyond the perimeter fence, are tall, thick hedgerows with mature trees. In the south-eastern corner the site abuts an area of scrub. There is also a short section of hedgerow along the south-western boundary, adjacent to rear gardens. There is a line of poplar trees and a short species-poor hedgerow near the pavilion building, as well as a solitary oak tree near the eastern boundary. There are several sheds used as storage for equipment scattered around the site. There is a small area near the western boundary which is hardstanding and is used as a car park.

Protected species:

Bats (boundaries only) (TLP report)

Protected species potential:

-

BAP habitats present:

Ancient species-rich hedgerow (adjacent to site boundaries)

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

Bats (boundaries only) (TLP report), dunnoek (TLP report)

BAP species potential:

Song thrush, stag beetle

Connectivity:

The site is well connected to the hedgerow network that links to the wider countryside. The south-eastern boundary abuts scrub and tall ruderal habitat.

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity is poor and within the site the hedgerows and trees provide the only structural diversity on the site. The structural diversity of the off-site boundary hedgerows is good.

Flora:

The majority of the site is short mown amenity grassland, dominated by a thick grass sward with typical herbaceous species including white clover, daisy, yarrow, dandelion, mouse ear, greater plantain, self heal, black knapweed, ground ivy, ribwort plantain and creeping thistle.

Around the northern and eastern edges of the site, are tall, thick hedgerows containing ash, field maple, oak, dogwood, plum, hawthorn, clematis, bramble, blackthorn, elder, sycamore and cherry. As they are

located outside of the playing field boundary fence these are described in greater detail within the report for Site 144. The western hedge contains hazel, dogwood, elm, field maple, hawthorn, ash and oak (including mature trees of oak and ash) and is associated with a dry ditch.

Bisecting the southern part of the site there is a line of poplar trees. East of the pavilion there is also a short, tightly managed hedge composed mainly of hawthorn and field maple. The south-western boundary hedge is species-poor containing hawthorn and holly, also with a dry ditch.

Avifauna:

No birds were observed during the visit. However the boundary hedgerows provide excellent foraging, feeding and nesting opportunities for a variety of common bird species.

Invertebrates:

No butterflies were seen during the visit. Bees may forage on the low growing flowers on and around the field, particularly clover and bramble. There is highly likely to be underground deadwood associated with the boundary hedgerows, which will support larval stag beetles.

Herpetofauna:

The short mown habitat is unsuitable for this group, but they may be present around the boundary habitat.

Mammals:

Bats may commute along the boundary hedgerows, to access habitats within the wider network of the surrounding area. Five common pipistrelles were recorded (brief recordings-not foraging) during surveys undertaken by the Landscape Partnership in 2008, all were associated with the boundaries of the site.

Common species of mammal, such as grey squirrel, are likely to be present. Small mammals such as mice, voles and shrews may be present in small numbers along the hedgerow. The boundary hedges provide suitable habitat for hedgehogs and the playing fields can provide good foraging, but it is likely in this case that the perimeter fence will restrict access.

Comments and recommendations:

Any development should retain the perimeter hedgerows. These hedges should not form the natural boundary of gardens as they are likely to be cut back or cleared.

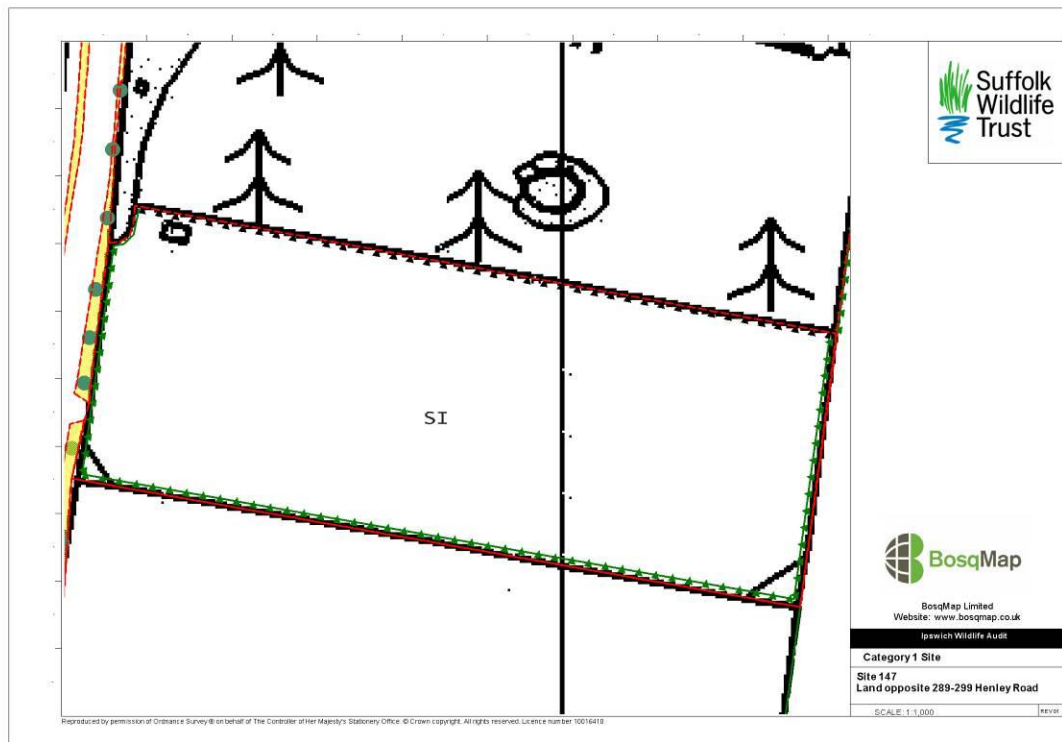
References

The Landscape Partnership (TLP) (2009) Development North of Valley Road Environmental Statement

Site name: **Site reference 147 – Land opposite 289-299 Henley Road**

IBC ref: IP186
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 15970 47620
Area: 1.47 hectares
Date: 7 August 2012
Recorder: M Wright
Weather conditions: Cloudy, rain showers - heavy at times, cool south-westerly breeze 15°C
Ranking: 4
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



View towards Henley Road along southern boundary with mature trees, scrub and rank grass

Habitat type(s):

Mature oaks, scrub and rank grassland

Subsidiary habitats:

Holes and splits in the mature trees.

Site description:

The site is primarily poor semi improved grassland the structure of which is likely to be good for small mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Within the grassland regeneration by oaks, bramble and hawthorn is occurring. On the southern edge there are a number of mature oaks in the hedgerow and on the northern perimeter non-native trees have been planted, which are now very tall. A mixture of trees is to be found on the eastern and western boundaries. Bramble scrub is developing in areas adjacent to the trees.

There were several earth spoil and rubbish heaps on site in addition to several portable cabins and various builders' equipment.

Protected species:

Slow worm

Protected species potential:

Bats, common lizard, great crested newt

BAP habitats present:

Ancient species-rich hedgerow

BAP species seen:

Slow worm

BAP species potential:

Various bats, song thrush, house sparrow, toad, hedgehog

Connectivity:

The boundary features link to the hedgerow network via a north-south corridor extending from the eastern edge of the site.

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the rank grassland, scrub and mature trees is good.

Flora:

The flora is typical of rough, unmanaged grassland:

Plants included rosebay willowherb, black medick, broad-leaved dock, common cudweed, common fleabane, common mouse-ear, cock's foot, creeping bent, creeping cinquefoil, creeping thistle, daisy, false oat grass, field bindweed, field pansy, germander speedwell, goat's beard, great mullein, hedge bindweed, hemlock, herb Bennet, herb Robert, hogweed, ivy, lord's and ladies, meadow buttercup, nettle, oxeye daisy, perennial ryegrass, perforate St John's wort, prickly oxtongue, prickly sow-thistle, ragwort, ribwort plantain, scarlet pimpernel, self heal, spear thistle, teasel, wall barley, weld, white bryony, white campion, white clover, Yorkshire fog,

The southern and eastern boundaries are thought to represent ancient species-rich hedgerows with their mature oaks (protected by a Tree Preservation Order). Other woody species included blackthorn, bramble, wild rose, elder, field maple, hawthorn, elm. Sycamore was also noted as well as silver birch, silver fir, sycamore and willow.

Avifauna:

The mature trees and bramble scrub that is developing adjacent to the wooded boundary will support a much greater number of species than the observations listed. Species recorded at the time of the short visit are blue tit, chiffchaff, coal tit, collared dove, goldfinch, magpie, wood pigeon and wren.

Invertebrates:

The weather conditions were not conducive for invertebrates to be on the wing, however the following butterflies were observed: meadow brown, ringlet, gatekeeper, small skipper and small white as well as dark bush-cricket.

Herpetofauna:

The habitat is suitable for reptiles and amphibians and there was one observation of a slow worm during the survey. Given that there is a pond adjacent to the site it is highly likely that amphibians are using the site in the terrestrial phase of their life cycle. Further surveys are therefore required for reptiles and amphibians.

Mammals:

A rabbit was the only species seen and other common species such as fox, grey squirrel and muntjac deer are highly likely to be present. The habitat is ideal for common small mammals such as short-tailed field vole. The combination of rough

grassland and bramble is ideal for hedgehogs which may nest and forage within this area. There are records of badger to the north (see report for Site 145), these may also forage within this area.

The mature oak trees on the southern and eastern boundaries contain splits and cracks suitable as roosting opportunities for bats. A bat survey (including an emergence survey) is therefore recommended.

Comments and recommendations:

It is recommended that all the ancient oaks and hedgerow features be retained for their wildlife value and for their important contribution to the local ecological network.

We strongly recommend that a reptile survey should be undertaken at a suitable time of year, such as spring or late summer/early autumn. Surveys outside of these times are unsuitable either because reptiles are in hibernation or sub-optimal due to increased summer temperatures. Certainly, 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).

We recommend that an ecological assessment of the pond to the north (off-site) is undertaken to assess whether it is likely to support great crested newts (Habitat Suitability Index (HSI)). Depending on the outcome of this assessment a specific great crested newt survey may be required.

We recommend that a bat survey focusing on the mature oak trees is undertaken, due to the high potential for roosting bats in this location. Any future development should ensure that retained hedgerows remain unlit, to ensure they remain as functional commuting routes for bats.

Photos:



View looking eastwards down hedgerow number 2



View looking eastwards down hedgerow number 3



View looking north down track hedgerow number 4



View northwards towards farm buildings, showing paddocks and large oak trees



Holes in mature oak trees that have the potential to support roosting bats



Pond on western boundary



Mature oak trees within arable fields. Taken in north of site looking south.

Habitat type(s):

Arable, hedgerows, pond, poor semi-improved grassland used as horse paddock and rough pasture, broadleaf woodland

Subsidiary habitat:

Mature oak trees, deadwood, holes and splits in the mature trees. Old barns

Site description:

The site lies east of Westerfield Road and the Felixstowe to Ipswich railway line forms the eastern and northern perimeter of the site. The land was almost all arable but with several horse paddocks south of the Redhouse Farm buildings. The northern paddock was being grazed by horses at the time of the visit, with roped off areas subdividing the plot. The southernmost field contained a rough grass sward. There are a number of brick and flint outbuildings associated with the farmhouse, as well as gardens, manège, tennis court and a small deciduous woodland to the north of the farm complex. Separating the arable fields were species rich hedgerows and a notably large number of in-field mature oaks (subject to Tree Preservation Order). These features are of high wildlife value and are a relic from a time when parts of the site were parkland (<http://www.old-maps.co.uk/maps.html>).

A pond lies on the western edge of the site, adjacent to the Westerfield Road. There was standing water present at the time of the visit but its margins were heavily scrubbed up, so it was over-shaded. There is a scrubbed up area denoting the location of a pond adjacent to hedgerow 13 which may contain seasonal water.

Protected species:

-

Protected species potential:

Various species of bats, slow worm and common lizard

BAP habitats present:

Ancient species rich hedgerows,
Eutrophic standing water (pond)

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

Skylark, yellowhammer, dunnock, song thrush (FPCR 2005)

BAP species potential:

Bats, slow worm, common lizard, turtle dove, skylark, bullfinch, grey partridge, song thrush, linnet, yellowhammer, brown hare and stag beetle

Connectivity:

The railway embankment and species rich bushy hedgerows provide excellent linkage to the wider countryside and throughout all the northern sites.

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the hedgerows was very good despite the headlands being narrow and species poor. The woodland added diversity to this area, although its ground flora was impoverished and the understory was poor. The areas used for horse grazing were species-poor grassland, but this too added diversity to the otherwise arable landscape.

Flora:

The mature trees and hedgerows were the best wildlife habitats and features on the site. The headlands were all narrow and consequently the floristic and wildlife importance of these areas was poor. Observations included black horehound, black knapweed, bristly oxtongue, broad-leaved dock, bugloss, burdock, cock's foot, creeping thistle, common nettle, common poppy, dandelion, field scabious, false fox sedge, false wood brome, field speedwell, great lettuce, giant scabious *Cephalaria gigantea* (rare), great willowherb, ground ivy, hedge bindweed, hemlock, meadow buttercup, nipplewort, ragwort, redshank, scentless mayweed, prickly sowthistle, scarlet pimpernel, smooth sowthistle, spear thistle, toad rush, weld, yarrow and Yorkshire fog.

The paddocks were species poor and were largely ryegrass and creeping buttercup, with occasional Yorkshire fog and patches of nettle and creeping thistle. A line of mature oak trees runs through the northern horse paddock. However, the FPCR (2005) report notes occasional pignut, which is a species typical of old meadows and parkland. The survey was undertaken too late to observe this species, so a further spring visit would be advisable to fully assess the habitat quality of the grassland.

The hedge subdividing the paddocks contained some very large, mature trees including oak and an ash.

The pond had no floating or submerged vegetation, but there was an area of reed mace. It was surrounded by elm, rose, elder and bramble scrub.

The woodland area comprised mature oaks, tall sycamore and ash. Some of the trees were clad in ivy and there was a sparse and poor understory of suckering sycamore, hawthorn and elder. The ground flora was also very poor and was dominated by nettle, there was also straw on the ground for the pheasants.

On the eastern edge of the wood there was a hedge, consisting of elm, hawthorn, ivy and mature oak, sycamore and ash. The northern edge of the wood was devoid of a hedge, with only a few elder remaining.

The trees and shrubs of hedgerows 1 and 6 were all on the railway embankment side of the fence.

The species present in each hedgerow is shown in the table below:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Mature/ veteran oak	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*		*
Oak	*		*	*		*						*	
Red Oak			*										
Ash		*		*	*	*	*	*	*			*	
Mountain Ash			*			*							
Sallow			*									*	*
Field maple		*	*	*		*	*	*			*	*	*
Hawthorn	*	*		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
Blackthorn	*		*			*					*	*	
Hornbeam			*										
Hazel				*									
Poplar sp/Aspen			*										
Wayfaring Tree			*										
Beech			*										
Lime				*									
Sycamore		*		*	*	*	*			*		*	*
Elm					*						*	*	*
Crab apple										*			
Sweet Chestnut	*		*			*							
Horse Chestnut				*									
Dogwood		*				*							*
Elder	*		*		*	*			*		*		*
Larch	*		*			*							
Laurel sp.			*										
Leylandi	*		*			*				*	*		
Corsican Pine			*										
Scots Pine			*					*					
Travellers' Joy	*					*					*		
Wild rose	*		*	*		*					*	*	*
Bramble	*		*	*					*	*	*		
Ivy			*	*	*								

Avifauna:

The well developed hedgerows and mature trees are of excellent habitat value and would support a much greater number of species than the observations listed.

Observations included blackbird, buzzard (3), carrion crow, chaffinch, chiffchaff, jay, kestrel, magpie, pheasant, robin, long-tailed tits, rook, wood pigeon and wren. Swallows were observed feeding over the site.

The FPCR (2005) report noted the following BAP species: skylark, yellowhammer, dunnock, song thrush. We therefore strongly recommend that a breeding bird survey that conforms to BTO survey methodology is undertaken to fully assess the breeding bird assemblage, particularly for farmland birds.

Invertebrates:

Given the quality of the hedgerows the site will be supporting a wide variety of invertebrates. Observations of butterflies included comma, red admiral, small white, large white and speckled wood. Three species of dragonfly were recorded, common darter, migrant hawk and ruddy darter.

The mature and veteran trees on site increase the likelihood of underground deadwood, which may support stag beetle larvae.

Herpetofauna:

No species were seen during the site visit, however slow worm and common lizard are likely to occur, particularly along the railway line and along the field margins. Areas of the paddocks with a taller sward may support slow worm.

Great crested newts have been recorded at the Millennium Cemetery located to the east of this site. Much of the terrestrial habitat within 500m of the cemetery pond is unsuitable for this species, but they are likely to use the railway corridor and hedgerow network for dispersal. All the waterbodies on site should be surveyed for great crested newts, although shading means they are currently sub-optimal for this species.

Mammals:

The site has a very high potential for roosting bats, due to the very high number of mature and veteran trees both in the hedgerows and in-field. Most of these trees are pedunculate oak, but there is also a very large ash tree with numerous woodpecker holes in the paddock and large pine trees west of the farm buildings. Mature plane trees are also present. These trees provide numerous opportunities for roosting bats through splits, cracks, peeling bark and woodpecker holes. The old agricultural buildings may also support roosting bats.

Rabbit and rat were seen and a freshly shot fox was also found. As the site is predominantly arable brown hare is likely to occur.

Comments and recommendations:

It is recommended that all the ancient oaks, mature trees and hedges be retained for their wildlife value and for their important role in connecting wildlife corridors. Consideration should be given to restoring parkland in suitable parts of the site where there are the greatest concentrations of veteran oaks. Additional specimen oaks should be planted to ensure variation in age structure and continuity of this species.

We recommend that a bat survey focusing on the mature oak trees and old agricultural buildings is undertaken, due to the high potential for roosting bats in this location. Any future development should ensure that retained hedgerows remain unlit, to ensure they remain as functional commuting routes for bats.

We recommend that the water bodies are surveyed for great crested newt at the appropriate time of year.

We recommend that a breeding bird survey is undertaken at the appropriate time of year.

We recommend that a spring plant survey should be undertaken of the grassland in the paddocks, to fully assess their ecological value.

It is highly recommended that through all the northern compartments permanent wildlife corridors are established both from east to west and north to south. This could be done using the existing railway embankments and the hedgerow/tree belts. Selected sections should to be widened on either side of the hedgerow/tree belts by planting a variety of native shrub species to create linked copses and also by planting up any gaps. It is essential that grassy margins should be left on either side of the retained hedgerows to further enhance their wildlife value.

The pond requires clearance of scrub, particularly from the eastern and south-eastern margins to reduce shading and to allow light to reach the water surface. It would benefit from de-silting in the late-autumn. A second pond shown in the FPCR report as open water is also scrubbed up and requires scrub removal and de-silting.

A management plan should be drawn up for all these retained wildlife habitats.

References

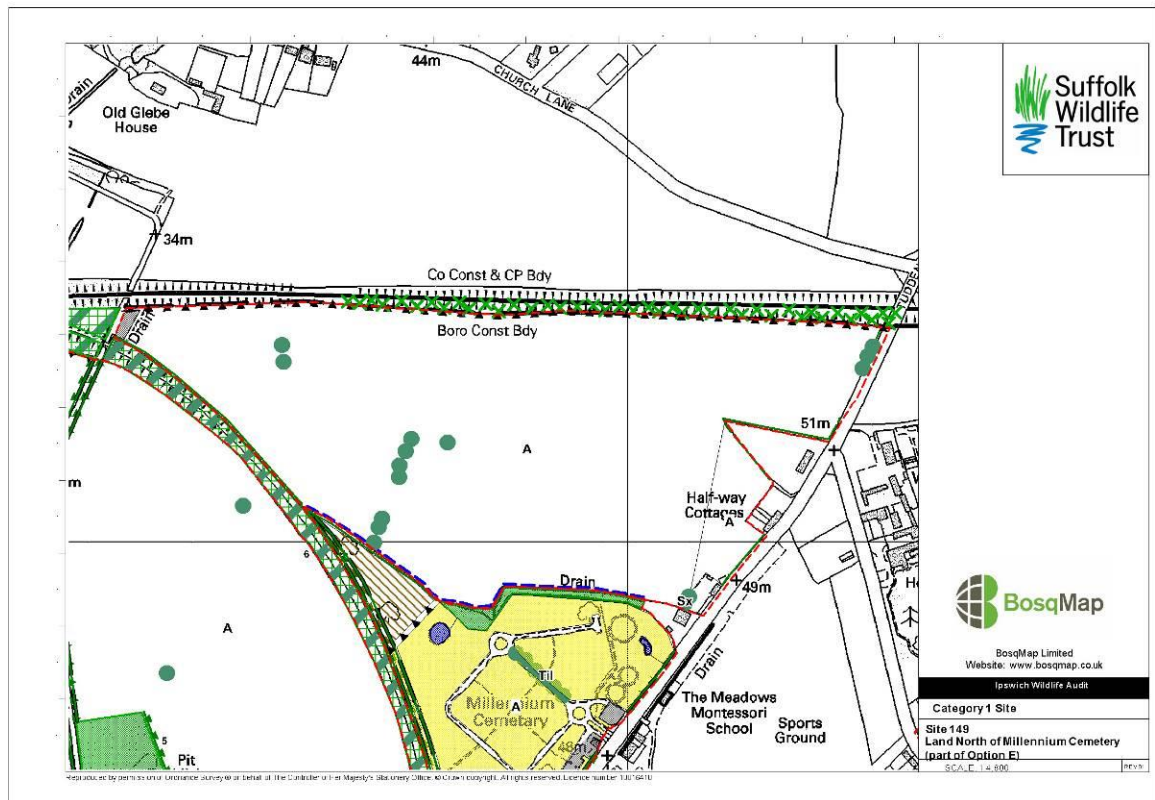
FPCR. (January 2005) David Wilson Estates. Land North of Ipswich. Ecological Appraisal.

<http://www.old-maps.co.uk/maps.html> Accessed 31st October 2012. 1905 map of Redhouse Park.

Site name: **Site reference 149 – Land North of Millennium Cemetery**

IBC ref: IP183
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 17869 47131
Area: 21.96 hectares
Date: 29 August 2012
Recorder: M Wright & Simone Bullion
Weather conditions: Overcast and cloudy with a few sunny periods, rising to 21°C
Ranking: 5 (arable land only) 4 including boundary features
Biodiversity value: Low- medium

Map:



Photos:



Looking north-west: bushy hedge, narrow headland dominated by bracken and rank grass



In-field mature oaks



Dry pond on southern boundary

Habitat type(s):

Hedgerows, field margins, sown rough grassland

Subsidiary habitats:

Mature trees with deadwood, holes and splits

Site description:

This large arable field is bordered by railway line to the north and south west. On the south-eastern boundary lies the Millennium Cemetery. The Tuddenham Road and associated properties form the eastern boundary. Within the arable field there are ten mature oak trees and an area of rough grassland. There are also varying lengths of mature bushy hedges, rank grass and rabbit grazed swards on the perimeter of the site.

In the south eastern corner is an area of tall, rank grassland that appeared to have been sown. As this is recently seeded grassland (it is not shown in the 2000 and 2009 surveys) it is displayed as 'arable' on the above map.

Protected species:

Common pipistrelle (TLP 2009). Further information about protected species available on request.

Protected species potential:

Slow worm, common lizard and great crested newt

BAP habitats present:

Ancient species rich hedgerow

BAP species seen:

Dunnock

BAP species known:

Yellowhammer, dunnock, skylark, linnet, song thrush (TLP 2009)

BAP species potential:

Other bat species, slow worm, common lizard, toad, bullfinch, song thrush, turtle dove, brown hare, hedgehog and stag beetle

Connectivity:

The railway embankments and adjacent bushy hedgerows provide excellent linkage to the wider countryside and through the ecological network of the northern sites.

Structural diversity:

The site is almost entirely arable, so structural diversity in this area is poor. However, the hedgerows and field margins add important structural value to this site.

Flora:

The tall bushy hedge on the southern boundary between the Millennium Cemetery wooded boundary and adjacent to the railway line contained ash, bramble, elder, blackthorn, elm hazel, field maple and sycamore. The ground flora was dominated by bracken and rank grassland, other plants included broad-leaved dock, burdock, cocksfoot, great willowherb, hogweed, nettle, ragwort, spear thistle, tufted hair grass, white bryony and Yorkshire fog. The boundary with the cemetery was thickly wooded large oaks, field maple, hawthorn, poplar, elder, elm, including standing dead elm.

Much of the northern railway embankment was clear of scrub and trees, however, where hedges and tree cover occurred the following species were found: ash, blackthorn, bramble, broom, elder, field maple, hawthorn, oak, silver birch, sycamore and turkey oak. All these trees and shrubs were on the railway embankment side of the perimeter fence.

There was a narrow margin adjacent to the arable field. The ground flora, much of which was on the embankment, included black horehound, bristly oxtongue, bugloss, burdock, Canadian fleabane, common bent, common century, corn sowthistle, creeping thistle, field bindweed, field scabious, hogweed, mallow, mouse-ear, mugwort, nettle, perforate St. John's wort, prickly sowthistle, ragwort, rough chervil, scentless mayweed, smooth hawkweed, spear thistle, weld, white campion, white deadnettle, wild parsnip and yarrow.

The triangular area of rough grassland in the south-eastern corner (marked as 'arable' on the map) was species-poor and included tall grasses (false oat grass, timothy) and other grasses (Yorkshire fog, rough meadow grass, cocksfoot and a small amount of fescue sp.). Herbaceous species were limited (bristly oxtongue, creeping thistle, spear thistle, broad-leaved dock, smooth hawkweed, ribwort plantain, self heal).

The hedge along the north-eastern boundary, adjacent to the Tuddenham Road, is gappy, with field maple, oak and elm. There are also mixed hedgerows to the rear of the gardens.

Avifauna:

Observations included carrion crow, chaffinch, chiffchaff, dunnoek (BAP species), great tit, jackdaw, red-legged partridge, rook, wood pigeon and wren. Swallows were feeding over the site. Earlier surveys by The Landscape Partnership revealed additional species (see above), but as this was not a full breeding bird survey it is recommended that a breeding bird survey that conforms to the BTO methodology is undertaken.

Invertebrates:

The invertebrate interest is confined to the site boundaries. Butterflies included large white, meadow brown, red admiral, speckled wood and large white. Dragonfly species included brown hawker, common darter, ruddy darter, migrant hawker and willow emerald (rare). Stag beetle may be associated with subterranean deadwood in the southern margins.

Herpetofauna:

No species were seen during the site visit; however it is likely that slow worm and common lizard occur around the site boundaries. There is an undocumented record of slow worm from the Millennium Cemetery to the south.

Great crested newts are recorded in pond on the Millennium Cemetery to the south and have also been seen at The Spinney on Tuddenham Road in 2012. Regularly ploughed arable land is unsuitable habitat for this species, but it is highly likely that this species is utilising the southern site margins during their terrestrial phase.

Mammals:

Rabbits were seen and there was much evidence of rabbits associated with the hedgerows and railway embankments. Evidence of fox was noted in the form of scats and badger is known in the area. Small mammals are also likely to be using the wooded margins and brown hare is also likely to occur. There is an old record for hedgehog on the Tuddenham Road (1995) and there is an undocumented report of this species for this location in 2012.

Two common pipistrelle bats were recorded on 4th August 2008 (TLP 2009) commuting along the southern tree belt.

Comments and recommendations:

The mature trees and boundary hedges have the greatest wildlife interest on this site and these should be retained both for their wildlife value and for their important role in connectivity across the wider landscape. Various species such as bats, great crested newts, reptiles, hedgehogs and stag beetles are either known or likely to be associated with these boundary features. These features should be buffered and protected from any future development proposal, including preventing light spillage into these dark corridors. However, should they be impacted upon then further surveys will be required for bats, reptiles and great crested newts.

It is recommended that a breeding bird survey is undertaken at the appropriate time of year.

References:

North Ipswich Corridor (Westerfield) Natural Resources and Wildlife Sites October 2000. SWT Trading Ltd.

Ipswich School: Tuddenham Road Sports Facility. Detailed Ecological Assessment (2009). The Landscape Partnership.