

Visitor survey

for

Orwell Country Park

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Visitor survey

for

Orwell Country Park

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Non-technical summary

Orwell Country Park is located on the south-eastern edge of Ipswich straddling the A14, and extends to approximately 100ha. The park itself lies next to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area ('the SPA') - see map at Appendix 1. It has car parks at Bridge Wood and Pipers Vale and is accessed from a number of entrances (predominantly pedestrian) adjacent to and within neighbouring housing estates, whilst the main entrance is from Nacton Road, close to the A14.

There are different components to the park including Piper's Vale, Brazier's Wood (an Ancient Woodland) and Bridge Wood (Ancient Woodland, which includes important veteran trees). Pipers Vale contains important areas of acid grassland and lowland heath habitats. The ex-airport meadow provides habitat for Skylarks and large populations of reptiles. The site is shown in Figure 01.

A proposal to extend Orwell Country Park into Pond Hall Farm was included in the 1997 Ipswich Local Plan but it has not been implemented to date. The land at Pond Hall Farm is in Ipswich Borough Council's ownership and is currently being farmed with the tenancy due for renewal in September 2015. The Council is proposing to extend Orwell Country Park as part of a range of measures to address growth pressures faced by the town and wishes to explore its impacts on the SPA.

In November 2014 the Council approved a draft Core Strategy Review and draft Site Allocations Plan for formal public consultation. The Proposed Submission Site Allocations Plan proposes Pond Hall Farm (site IP149) as an extension to the Country Park along with management measures to address visitor impacts on the SPA (policy SP8 of the Proposed Submission Site Allocations and Policies (Incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) DPD). The policy proposes further assessment of the viability of a visitor centre and its potential impact on the SPA.

The objective of the project is to assess potential impact on the SPA of the country park extension, by carrying out extensive visitor survey work during the winter-spring season of 2014-2015. This season is considered the most appropriate because the winter is when bird disturbance is most harmful to the SPA. The context of the survey being in March, and with no special promotion or events taking place, means that the results are appropriate to this time of year. A summer survey, with an event or Council promotion of visiting, would have resulted in different results not related to winter bird usage.

Visitor survey

Visitor surveys were carried out on most days in the period 11th March to 31st March 2015. A surveyor, positioned at various points and times of day, asked a set questions of visitors. The questionnaire locations, at entry points to the park and by the estuary shore, and times of day were varied so that there was a spread of coverage to ensure that visitors with regular habits would not be accidentally omitted from the survey. The surveyor also counted the number of cars in one of the two car parks, walked to the shore to count visitors there, then walked to the other of the two car parks to count the cars there to see if there was a relationship between car park counts and visitors at the shore. Existing reports about bird use of the estuary were also scrutinised.

One hundred and fifty-one visitor surveys were completed, which was 60% of those approached by the surveyors. Each survey was for each 'group' of visitors, e.g. a single person or group of people walking together. Around 16.4 people entered per hour of the survey, or about 197 people per day. Most people visited multiple places within the Country Park during each visit. On average, people visited 3.4 out of the five named places within the park on their visit. Bridge Wood and the shore were each visited by around two-thirds of visitors. Most visitors were adults below retirement age, with retired people and children visiting disproportionately less than their representation within the population. Visitors were overwhelmingly white, with other ethnic groups visiting much less than their representation within the population.

Around 40% of visitors visited at varying times of day, with regular visits by others throughout the day but biased towards the morning. Most people said that they did not time their visit in relation to the tide. Most visitors are regular visitors. Thirty-eight percent visit every day, mostly for dog walking or walking. Over three-quarters of visitors visit at least once per week, and only 7% visit less than once per month. Two-thirds of people said that they spent 1- 2 hours in the Country Park each time they visited. Eighteen percent said that they stayed less than one hour.

About two-thirds of people came for dog walking off-lead with a further 12% claiming they walked with dogs on leads all the time, and about one-third of people came for a walk without dogs. All other activity categories were minor in comparison. Very few had a pushchair or wheelchair, which may have reflected the steep and unsurfaced paths within the park. Most activities were therefore undertaken by physically fit people. Almost everyone had come from home rather than being on holiday.

Dog walking was the most common reason for visiting, followed by 'close to home' and 'woodland'. Slightly less than one-third of people cited 'estuary views' and 'the shoreline' as reasons why they chose to visit that day. The same proportion of people cited 'familiar with the site' and 'good choice of routes / places to walk' as their reason to visit.

Most visitors live within a few kilometres of the Country Park. There is a concentration of visitors living close to the Country Park in Gainsborough and in the Park Home site adjacent to Bridge Wood. Other visitors predominantly live within an area defined by the A1214 and A1189 Nacton Road, within and around the main part of Ipswich. Few visitors live outside this area. There is a general tendency for visitors with dogs to travel from a wider area, compared to those without dogs. Those that travel the greater distance to the Country Park, with dogs, pass near a number of other Ipswich Borough parks on their journey.

There was a more-or-less even split of those coming to the Country Park by car or on foot. Slightly over half the visitors said that they came by car, and slightly under half said that they came on foot. People that walk to the Country Park visited 2.5 times more frequently than those who drove there. There was no clear relationship visible in the data from the number of cars in either car park to the number of people counted almost simultaneously at the shore. This suggests that counting parked cars would not be an accurate substitute for an estimate of the number of people visiting the shore at that time.

The vast majority of visitors claimed awareness that the site was important for nature conservation, with just 7% admitting a lack of awareness. Three quarters of visitors thought that 'most people' would respect temporary closures of shoreline paths, although one quarter of respondents thought that most people wouldn't respect closures.

The greatest response to being asked what would improve their visit was for more dog bins. The second most popular improvement desired was for 'no change', despite this not actually being an improvement. It may have been a way of expressing a worry about change, with undefined change often perceived as harmful. Other desired improvements included site management resourcing issues such as litter bins and wardening. Interestingly, built developments such as toilets, playground, visitor centre and café were little mentioned as desirable improvements.

One-fifth of visitors never visited other similar sites. The two most popular alternative destinations were Christchurch Park, a formal town centre park, and Holywells Park, which has a combination of formal and informal features. Around one-third of people mentioned one or both of these places. Holywells Park is less than one mile in a straight line distance from Pipers Vale, and so it could be easy for some visitors to walk to Holywells Park and to Piper's Vale from nearby residential areas. Landseer Park, situated in between Piper's Vale and Holywells Park, was also a popular alternative destination presumably again for those making short journeys to a park.

Visitors were asked whether, if access was available through the farmland at Pond Hall Farm, they would be more or less likely to use the river shore or if would it make no difference. This question was hypothetical and if visitors had not thought previously about the issue they may have not been able to give detailed thought before answering. It is thought that the results of this may be unreliable, as it was a complex question in terms of behaviour and geography, visitors had not been pre-warned to give it any thought, and the precise wording of the question may have led visitors towards a 'more likely' answer. There was an equal split between those who thought the access through Pond Hall Farm would make no difference to their shore visiting, and those who said that they would be more likely to visit the shore. Less than 10% of people said that they would visit the shore less often if there was access through Pond Hall Farm. The two most popular options to make Pond Hall Farm more attractive were 'new paths' and 'dogs off leads area'. A 'dogs off leads' area is one where dogs may be let off leads but remain more-or-less within sight of the owner and fenced so that the dog cannot run away. Attractive landscaping, mentioned by around 25% of visitors (35 people) was the third most popular choice.

Overwhelmingly, visitors agreed with a question that they would be likely to use a sheltered route through Pond Hall Farm in winter instead of the shore. This appears to be inconsistent with answers to the earlier question on whether access through Pond Hall Farm would change the frequency of visits to the shore. The 'sheltered route' question was clear and unambiguous, with a proposal which was easy to understand and therefore easier for visitors to give a realistic answer. It is considered that the visitor agreement that they would use a sheltered route across Pond Hall is a more reliable indicator of likely future behaviour than the previous question about frequency of visits through Pond Hall Farm to the shore.

Bird use of the estuary

The disturbance to birds on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries was studied in detail in 2007 on behalf of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit. The report shows how disturbance affects birds and how the disturbance at Orwell Country Park affects bird numbers. Bridge Wood was one of the three parts of the estuaries with the highest levels of all activities recorded with an average of 9.7 potentially disturbing events per hour, peaking at 12.7 events per hour. Shore-based activities were highest at Nacton, Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze (adjacent to Pond Hall Farm). Potentially disturbing events were defined as something moving into and out of the birds' field of view which might cause them to move away or cease feeding. Walkers, walkers with dogs, and joggers were the most common events. The frequencies of disturbance arising from the events was highest at Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze, being significantly above the average for the estuaries. Few birds were present at Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze compared to the areas of lower visitor activity. These sites had the highest levels of disturbance in the two estuaries. Paths along the shore which are shielded by woodland discharge visitors onto the estuary shore, and it was suggested that this sudden appearance of visitors caused surprise and was an important factor in the response of the birds. Opening of Orwell Country Park in the mid 1990s was attributed to a recent (at the time of the study) large increase in visitors to Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze and a consequent pronounced decline in numbers of birds. However, the estuary adjacent to Piper's Vale supported the highest density of feeding birds on the estuary and is the only part of the estuary where there is no access to the shore.

The distribution of birds within the Orwell Estuary was monitored by Suffolk Wildlife Trust over fourteen years, on contract to Harwich Haven Authority. A recent Suffolk Wildlife Trust report describes the results of this monitoring up to winter 2013/14. The population trends since 1999/2000 of most waterbirds in the estuary were in line with national trends, although pintail, widgeon, oystercatcher and grey plover declined faster than national trends. There were strong declines in redshank from the north shores of the Orwell Estuary and parts of the Stour Estuary.

Overall, changes from 1999/2000 to 2013/14 are varied with gains and losses of birds adjacent to Bridge Wood. There were no clear changes in shelduck, widgeon, black-tailed godwit, curlew and redshank, but there were increases in brent geese, pintail, and oystercatcher. There were decreases in ringed plover, grey plover, lapwing, dunlin and turnstone. Redshank was chosen for detailed study due to its strong consistent decline in the estuaries and nationally. Redshank had declined both in areas of higher disturbance and lower disturbance. For example, a decline of 20-40% was recorded at Orwell Country Park, but there was a decline of 40-60% immediately downstream in areas of lower disturbance at Alnesbourne and Nacton. It is therefore difficult to attribute decline to localised disturbance. Other declines occurred on other parts of the estuary where there was little disturbance.

Population change in Ipswich

The population of Ipswich grew by 16,326 people from 2001 to 2011 to a total of 133,400 people (2011 census) in 58,700 households. In the same period, 6,903 dwellings were built (Ipswich Core Strategy, Policy CS7, table 4). This equates to one new dwelling built for every 2.37 people increase in population. Table 4 of CS7 also says that a further 546 dwellings were built from 2011 – 2014, which makes a total of 7,449 dwellings constructed in the period 2001 – 2014 and a total number of dwellings of 59,246 by the end of 2014. The mid-year population estimate for 2013 was 134,693 people.

The proposed submission Core Strategy and proposed submission Site Allocation Local Plan documents together allocate sites for 1,929 dwellings to be built in Ipswich by 2031, plus a further 3,500 dwellings at Ipswich Garden Suburb, of which 2,700 dwellings are expected by 2031.

Figure 28 shows the area from within which visitors walked to Orwell Country Park, and the area of Ipswich from within which visitors drove to Orwell Country Park. The outer suburbs of Ipswich did not supply any

visitors to the Country Park, with visitors arising from the more central areas. The few visitors who came from Suffolk Coastal District, to the east of Ipswich Borough, are excluded from this discussion of population change within Ipswich Borough.

Of the 1,929 homes in allocated sites, none are within the distance within which people walk to Orwell Country Park, 1,386 are within the distance within which people drive to Orwell Country Park, and the remainder are further than the distance from within which people from Ipswich Borough visited. There would also be 1,800 windfall site dwellings within the plan period, in locations currently not known and to be identified by developers. If these follow the broad pattern of allocated sites, about 75% (1,350 dwellings) would be within driving distance of Orwell Country Park, and the remainder would be further than the distance from within which people from Ipswich Borough visited. None would be within walking distance.

Change in visitors to Orwell Country Park resulting from Ipswich Local Plan

Through mapping postcodes, it is estimated that visitors travelled from an area encompassing 75% of the built-up parts of Ipswich by area. This percentage of the total number of dwellings in the Borough suggests that the catchment of visitors during the survey period is of around 45,000 homes. An increase of 1,386 homes in allocated sites and approximately 1,350 windfall site homes, or 2,773 homes in all, is an increase of 6% in homes in the visitor catchment. It is considered that each new home is equally likely to generate as many visits to the Country Park as would each existing home, with a 'visit' meaning one person or a group of people from that home.

During the survey, half the visitors surveyed lived in the area from which people drove to the Country Park. An increase of 6% in this proportion of those visitors would be an increase in 3% of total visitors from Ipswich Borough, bearing in mind that the number of people walking to the Country Park would be unlikely to change because there are no allocations within walking distance. The possibility of visits to the country park from occupants of new dwellings beyond the area within which most people who were surveyed live should not however be ruled out.

Change in visitors to Orwell Country Park resulting from Ipswich Local Plan in combination with Suffolk Coastal Local Plan

The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan includes its *Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Issues and Options Consultation Document December 2014* which was consulted upon from December 2014 – February 2015. There are no sites above 0.25ha thought to be suitable for development in the part of Suffolk Coastal District nearest Orwell Country Park, i.e. Kesgrave, Foxhall, Rushmere St Andrew and Nacton, each with an indicative allocation of zero new dwellings. Adastral Park at Martlesham is the major growth location identified by Suffolk Coastal District Council through its adopted Core Strategy. This lies outside the distance within which most people who were surveyed travelled to Orwell Country Park.

Subject to there being no development allocations in these locations, it is estimated that there would be no changes in winter visitor numbers from allocations in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and therefore no in-combination effect at Orwell Country Park from that plan. However, any windfall housing development may increase usage. It should be noted that these Suffolk Coastal locations are outside the 'walking' catchment but within the 'driving' catchment, albeit outside of the area from which most visitors travelled.

The Local Plan also includes the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan. Issues and Options consultation was undertaken on the Area Action Plan from December 2014 to February 2015. The Area Action Plan proposes a minimum of 850 units within the plan area, which also lies outside the distance within which most people who were surveyed travelled to Orwell Country Park.

The possibility of visits to the country park from occupants of new dwellings beyond the area within which most people who were surveyed live should not however be ruled out.

Typical countryside walk lengths

Other visitor surveys show that visitors to a multitude of countryside sites across England like to walk, alone or with a dog, average distances of at least 2km and up to 4.8km. At Orwell Country Park, there are no routes of such length at Piper's Vale alone or at Bridge Wood alone. Inevitably to provide the walk length that visitors desire, the shore is used as there is no other option.

Local plan conclusions and recommendations

There is conflicting evidence whether or not Orwell Country Park is currently having a likely significant effect upon Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA. The 2007 report for the AONB Unit suggests that the Country Park could be having an adverse affect upon the integrity of the SPA. However, these findings were not supported by a later 2014 study, which looked at changes in bird numbers from 1999/2000 to 2013/14 in the Stour and Orwell Estuaries (section 4.2). This later study found that for the estuary adjacent to Orwell Country Park there were no clear changes in shelduck, wigeon, black-tailed godwit, curlew and redshank numbers, and there were increases in brent geese, pintail, and oystercatcher. There were decreases in numbers of ringed plover, grey plover, lapwing, dunlin and turnstone. Generally the level of disturbance to any species was related to its occurrence, with more widespread species disturbed more often. Increases in some species adjacent to Orwell Country Park indicates that the levels of disturbance may not be sufficient to disturb those species.

Likely significant effect at Orwell Country Park (Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA) of the Ipswich Local Plan

The predicted 3% increase in visitors resulting from allocated sites and windfall sites could potentially increase the disturbance to birds within the SPA, based on a linear relationship between visitor quantity, number of disturbance events and impact on birds. However, there is currently uncertainty about the current impact of visitors on birds, and it is possible that no harm would be caused. The uncertainty means that it is not possible to ascertain that there would be no likely significant effect or an adverse impact upon the integrity of the SPA resulting from the increased development in the absence of mitigation measures.

Recommendations to reduce possible visitor impacts – policy for use of Country Park

The identification in this study of the predominant current use of the Country Park as a local facility for short-stay (up to two hours) recreation, rather than it being a visitor destination, is crucial to policy for its future.

It is assumed that those visitors who prefer to visit countryside sites with built facilities such as toilets, café and/or visitor centre did not visit the Country Park during the survey, because those facilities are currently absent. The questionnaire results showed that just two visitors desired a café, two visitors desired a visitor centre and six visitors desired toilets to be provided, providing evidence consistent with that assumption. If those built facilities were to be provided, additional visitors may be attracted to the Country Park and visit the shore thus causing additional disturbance to birds. To be viable, any commercial element such as a café would need to attract a significant number of people from wider distances;

If built facilities such as toilets, café and / or visitor centre were to be proposed, a further assessment would be needed of the increase in visitors and potential consequent increase in disturbance to birds prior to that proposal being taken forward.

Extension to include Pond Hall Farm

An extension to the Country Park to include Pond Hall Farm would have significant benefits to the SPA as well as to visitors. It is recommended that the extension would include a hedgerow / woodland belt to be planted on land alongside the shore, provided this is compatible with habitat and landscape diversity. This would provide a visual barrier between birds on the estuary and people on Pond Hall Farm. An attractive design with features mentioned by visitors as improvements or features is needed that would attract them to Pond Hall Farm.

Paths within Pond Hall Farm could connect Piper's Vale and Bridge Wood, inland of the new shoreline woodland, and designed to make circular walk options of at least 2 – 3 km in length from entry points without the need to visit the shore. Paths should be surfaced to be suitable for pushchair and wheelchair use, of sufficient width for groups of visitors to pass each other easily, and maintained in good condition. A fenced 'dogs off lead' area where dogs may run off a lead and not disturb other visitors or wildlife outside that area would also encourage dogs to be kept on a lead elsewhere in the Country Park.

Good connections from entry points under the Orwell Bridge and from Bridge Wood would offer a strong steer to guide visitors to Pond Hall Farm rather than being automatically guided to the shore as at present.

It is considered that the Pond Hall Farm extension would attract some visitors from the shore to enjoy their visit away from the shore. In particular, dog walkers, and walkers, would benefit from and use the longer

walks and shelter from the wind in winter when the SPA is most vulnerable to disturbance. Although it is not possible to quantify a prediction of visitor use of the extension, it is considered that the visitor use of Pond Hall Farm, attracted from the shore, could be at least as much or more than the increase in number of people likely to visit as a result of the residential development described in the Ipswich Local Plan. The response to one question, suggesting that visitors overall would be more likely to visit the shore if there were access through Pond Hall Farm, is anomalous. Taking into account all the answers provided to the questionnaire and incorporating the design features as discussed above, it is predicted that the extension would reduce visits to the shore and disturbance to birds.

The Pond Hall Farm buildings are currently in agricultural use. With conversion of the farmland to Country Park, new uses may need to be found. Holiday accommodation, or other uses which would encourage or be likely to increase visitor recreation by the shore, are not likely to be consistent with reducing disturbance to the SPA, and therefore effects on the SPA will need to be assessed in relation to any potential new uses considered.

Habitats Regulations conclusions for Ipswich Local Plan in relation to Orwell Country Park

The Country Park extension as proposed and as described here (with no Visitor Centre) would be sufficient to enable a conclusion that the proposed site allocation IP149 Pond Hall Farm would not have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA in relation to Orwell Country Park. In fact, the proposed allocation would divert some visitors from the shore and reduce any disturbance which might be currently occurring.

This visitor survey also confirms that the Local Plan as a whole would have no adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA with reference to Orwell Country Park, subject to the extension and management measures being put in place. The increase in visitors from the proposed allocations, alone or in combination with Suffolk Coastal District's proposed site allocations in the area, would more than be absorbed into the extension into Pond Hall Farm and reduce existing disturbance which may be occurring, provided the appropriate management measures are put in place.

This report does not consider effects of the Local Plan elsewhere than Orwell Country Park.

Site management conclusions and recommendations

There is currently insufficient evidence to show that temporary voluntary closures are required to reduce or avoid adverse affects to the SPA. However, temporary voluntary closures as part of a monitoring exercise would be of benefit in assessing the bird use of the SPA in relation to Orwell Country Park visitors. Further monitoring would be of benefit to provide a better and more up to date understanding of bird disturbance issues. These are more relevant to Country Park management than to the Ipswich Local Plan.

Bird numbers should be compared over a longer timescale than the 2014 Suffolk Wildlife Trust report did, especially if good comparative data were available for a run of years pre-Country Park establishment in 1995. This would help elucidate if the Country Park opening did cause a loss of birds in the estuary adjacent to the Country Park and if overall bird numbers in the estuary were affected. The 2007 disturbance report should be repeated twice, once to identify current levels of actual disturbance to birds, and again after Pond Hall Farm extension is established. This can quantify disturbance events and help with an assessment of impacts upon the SPA when considered with the bird monitoring data collected by Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Temporary voluntary closures, e.g. for one period of Monday to Friday in winter, would be a useful method of monitoring the rate at which birds return with the reduced disturbance, and also help understand the true rate of respect for voluntary closure. It would be reasonable to test this once there is a suitable alternative at Pond Hall Farm for visitors to use.

A car park charge may result in drivers parking in residential streets and use pedestrian entrances to avoid a car park charge. The multitude of entry points means that it is impractical to charge people on entry and there is little merit in pursuing the idea.

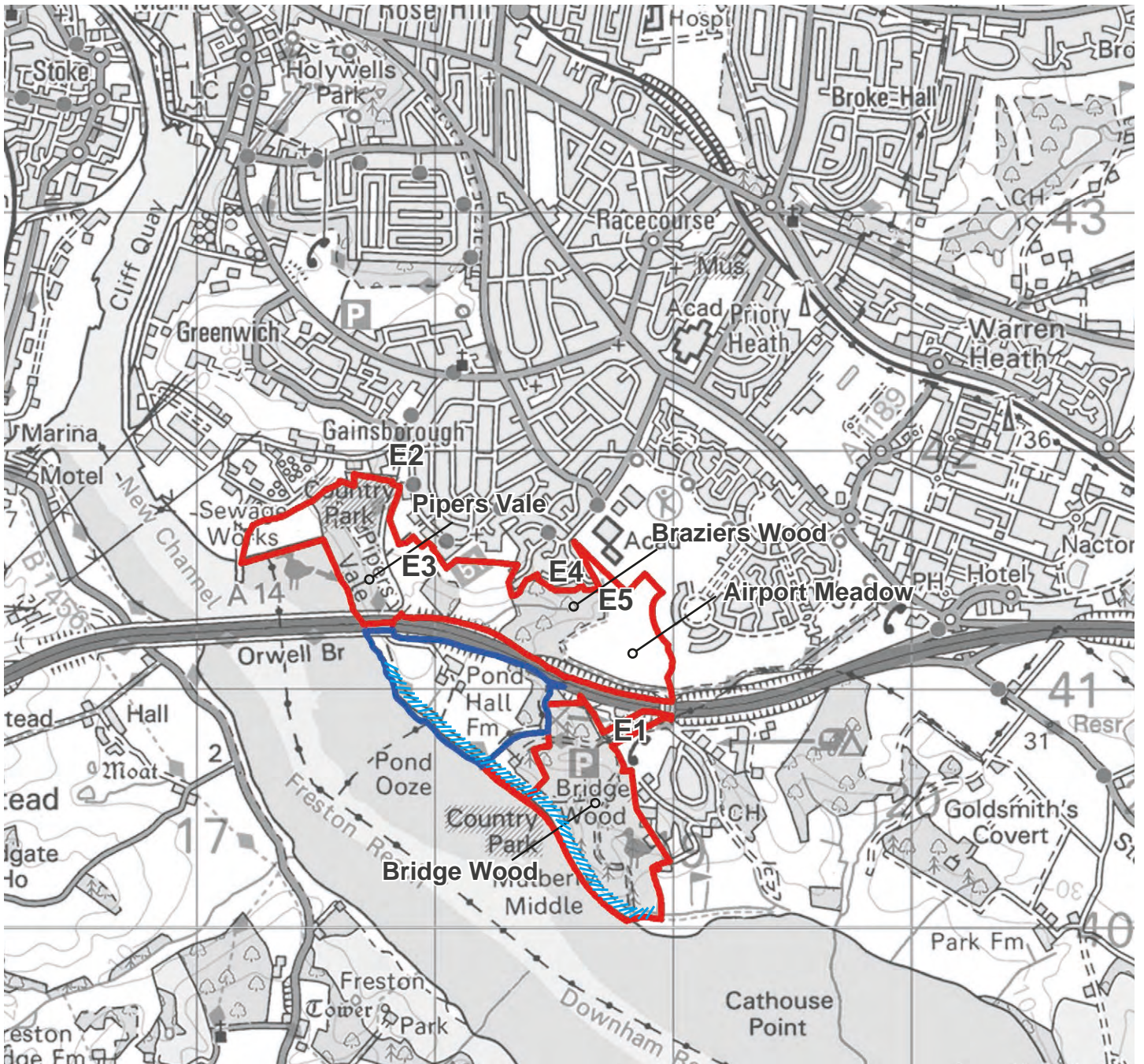
1 Introduction

1.1 Orwell Country Park location and context

- 1.1.1 Orwell Country Park was established in 1995. It is located on the south-eastern edge of Ipswich straddling the A14, and extends to approximately 80ha. The park itself lies next to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area ('the SPA') - see map at Appendix 1. It currently benefits from little in the way of visitor management measures, facilities or promotional activity. It has car parks at Bridge Wood and Pipers Vale and is accessed from a number of entrances (predominantly pedestrian) adjacent to and within neighbouring housing estates, whilst the main entrance is on Nacton Road, close to the A14.
- 1.1.2 There are different components to the park including Piper's Vale, Brazier's Wood (an Ancient Woodland) and Bridge Wood (Ancient Woodland, which includes important veteran trees). Bridge Wood is outside the Ipswich Borough boundary and within Suffolk Coastal District. Pipers Vale contains important areas of acid grassland and lowland heath habitats and meadowland associated with the former airport, which provides habitat for Skylarks and large populations of reptiles. Parts of the Country Park, Bridge Wood and Pipers Vale have been declared as separate Local Nature Reserves and much of the Country Park is also designated as County Wildlife Site. The Orwell Estuary SSSI is part of Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA).
- 1.1.3 The site is shown in Figure 01.
- 1.1.4 A proposal to extend Orwell Country Park into Pond Hall Farm was included in the 1997 Ipswich Local Plan but has not been implemented to date. The land at Pond Hall Farm is in Ipswich Borough Council's ownership and is currently being farmed with the tenancy shortly due for renewal.
- 1.1.5 Pond Hall Farm also offers good potential historical, landscape and habitat interest. The land extends to 24.7ha with a Grade II listed farmhouse building. In the Middle Ages it was part of the 'Manor de Alnesbourne et ponds' held by the prior of the nearby Alnesbourne Priory.
- 1.1.6 Hedgerow and field trees on the Pond Hall Farm land link strongly to past management of the site. There are a few near veteran trees and significant stumps of high value and some magnificent old deadwood. This contributes strongly to sense of place, biodiversity and landscape. It offers attractive views of the estuary and the Orwell Bridge.
- 1.1.7 The Ipswich Wildlife Audit Update 2012-13 included a survey of the site (site reference 98) and ranked its biodiversity value as 4 – 'No designation but clearly of value due to size, connectivity, species diversity, potential for BAP and protected species and locally common BAP and protected species.' The recommendations of the audit included: 'The proximity of the farm to other wildlife sites means that this land has very high potential for biodiversity enhancement as well as enjoyment by the local community.'
- 1.1.8 The Council is proposing to extend Orwell Country Park as part of a range of measures to address growth pressures faced by the town and wishes to explore its impacts on the SPA.
- 1.1.9 Orwell Country Park is promoted in a low-key manner by the Borough Council. There are a small number of sentences about the park on the 'Parks and Open Spaces' part of the Borough Council's website at <https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/content/orwell-country-park> (accessed on 28th April 2015) but there is no map of the site or information on how to get there. Car parking is poorly signed after one turns off Nacton Road, for example, and on-site noticeboards (Figure 02) give no information on site area such as maps or footpath routes. It is conjectured that the Country Park is intended for use by regular repeat visitors who are sufficiently familiar with the site to not require basic information.

1.2 Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan

- 1.2.1 The Ipswich Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) was adopted in December 2011. It sets out a growth strategy for the Borough of Ipswich, which would increase the population of the town by approximately 25% between 2001 and 2027. At the 2011 Census,



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Key

- Orwell Country Park
- Proposed Extension to Orwell Country Park - Pond Hall Farm
- The 'shore'

- E Entrances used for visitor survey
- E1 Bridge Wood car park
- E2 Piper's Vale car park
- E3 Morland Road
- E4 Platters Close
- E5 Braziers Wood Road

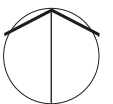
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Location

Figure 1

Scale: 1:25,000

July 2015





Entrance sign at Bridge Wood car park - traditional style



Entrance sign at Bridge Wood car park - space for inserting info sheets is under-used



Circular walk directional information is hidden by one of the three entrance signs



Entrance sign at Bridge Wood car park. Information about the Country Park is dominated by information about the wider area.

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Bridge Wood entrance information to visitors

Figure 2

July 2015



the Borough's population was 133,400 (up from 117,400 in 2001) but the town of Ipswich extends beyond the Borough Council's tightly drawn boundary.

1.2.2 An Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the adopted 2011 Core Strategy was undertaken by the Landscape Partnership in accordance with the Habitat Regulations. The AA undertaken in September 2009 and subsequently updated to check plan modifications in 2011 could not conclude that there would be no significant effects on the SPA, in combination with growth also proposed in the adjacent district of Suffolk Coastal. The main issue is recreational disturbance to overwintering birds feeding on the mudflats of the SPA at low tide. The AA therefore set out a range of mitigation measures which need to be put in place before the end of the plan period, including management improvements to Bridge Wood, management improvements to European sites across the Suffolk Coast and Heaths, and a new Country Park.

1.2.3 The mitigation measures recommended for the adopted Core Strategy proposed by the 2009 Appropriate Assessment included management measures to reduce visitor disturbance at Bridge Wood, which lies outside (but adjacent to) the Borough boundary but is within the Council's ownership. Measures included:

- Provide a path network that includes a destination point away from the estuary, with all-weather seating and a children's play facility. This will provide good visitor experiences and mean that some existing visitors and future visitors will not feel a need to visit the estuary shore;
- Remove the estuary shore from the possibilities of a circular walk, so people who prefer a circular walk will choose to use woodland walks instead;
- Better integration of Bridge Wood with Piper's Vale, improving footpath links (including signage) on a path north of the A14 so dog walkers can have a long walk away from the estuary.
- Increased wardening on site, possibly with a warden's hut or visitor centre, so that Country Park staff can interact with visitors and encourage appropriate behaviour;
- Improved interpretation materials, including signage and leaflets, to help visitors understand the impacts they cause and how they can reduce their impacts;
- Consider using signage to create a psychological barrier to dogs ('all dogs on leads beyond here because...') possibly with a symbolic gateway feature;
- Creation of a 'coast path', with an easy walking surface, which moves away from the shore at certain points and reduces visibility of people to birds.

1.2.4 The adopted Core Strategy reflected the AA's advice through policy CS16 Green Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation, which included the commitment to: 'd. work with partners to prepare and implement management plans for green spaces, including visitor management plans for key parts of European sites within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB to be completed by 2015, and a plan for Orwell Country Park that will result in reduced impact upon birds in the Orwell Estuary'.

1.2.5 The AA also places a requirement on the Council as follows 'Mitigation across European sites within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB requires a programme of

- identifying key sites where visitor pressure is currently, or close to, causing harm
- identifying the origin of visitors to those identified key sites
- writing and implementing a visitor management plan for key sites without such a plan, or revising existing plans, to reduce visitor impact. Reduction in visitor impact might mean changes to visitor infrastructure (e.g. car parks, paths), new or revised interpretation, wardening, provision of alternative recreation opportunities in less sensitive locations, etc, bylaws, identification of parts of sites where recreation will not be encouraged, etc.
- A monitoring programme, to determine visitor numbers and allow the impact of the visitor numbers to be identified, throughout time.'

Core Strategy Review November 2014

- 1.2.6 The Core Strategy is currently subject to full review extending its timescale to 2031 and a Site Allocations and Policies (Incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) development plan document ('the Site Allocations plan') is also being prepared.
- 1.2.7 The Appropriate Assessment of the Draft Core Strategy and Policies DPD Focused Review (January 2014) identified Orwell Country Park as a possible 'access point' to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA, visitors to which may cause disturbance to bird species within the SPA which may be exacerbated by new housing development within Ipswich Borough. However, it also identified 'a plan for Orwell Country Park that will result in a reduced impact upon birds in the Orwell Estuary' as part of the mitigation for these effects, as proposed through policy CS16. Alongside this the Appropriate Assessment notes that further details including a new visitors centre were provided in the Draft Site Allocations and Policies (Incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) DPD (January 2014).
- 1.2.8 The Proposed Submission Core Strategy Review (November 2014) retains clause d. of policy CS16 and extends clause g. (now relabelled h.) to commit to 'working with partners to ensure the provision of a new country park and visitor centre within the Ipswich Garden Suburb, and an extension to Orwell Country Park and possible provision of a visitor facility there subject to assessing its impacts on the Special Protection Area'. These clauses were included to reflect recommendations in the Habitats Regulations Assessment which accompanied the Core Strategy Review.
- 1.2.9 The requirements relating to monitoring are carried forward into the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy Review.
- 1.2.10 In conclusion, based on the successive AA reports:
- 'Doing nothing' at Orwell Country Park / Bridge Wood would be unlikely to satisfy the requirements of the 2009 and 2014 Appropriate Assessments;
 - Facilities / management measures should be based on the principles listed above, but options for future management of the site need to be considered;
 - Due to the range of measures required and the requirement for monitoring, a management plan would seem to be important/necessary in co-ordinating the implementation of the various measures;
 - Monitoring should be integral to the management of the country park to ensure that the mitigation measures are effective and to alter management if not.
- 1.2.11 The Council needs to be satisfied that the measures to be put in place will mitigate the potential impacts identified in the Appropriate Assessment. If no measures are to be put in place, the Council would need to be satisfied that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA (contrary to the current conclusions of the Appropriate Assessment). These conclusions can be best reached through agreement with Natural England.

Site Allocations and Policies (incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) development plan document

- 1.2.12 A draft Site Allocations plan published for informal consultation in January 2014 proposed an extension to Orwell Country Park on land owned by the Council adjacent to the SPA and Bridge Wood at Pond Hall Farm. This proposed a visitor centre to manage usage of the site and draw visitors away from the foreshore (see policy DM44 and site proposal IP149).
- 1.2.13 Policy DM44 did not contain details regarding the nature, type, location or extent of development at the Country Park other than 'country park and visitor centre'. It was noted within DM44 that the provision of a visitor centre was in response to the Appropriate Assessment of the adopted Core Strategy (referred to above) stating that Pond Hall Farm offers the ideal opportunity to provide a visitor centre, raise awareness of the potential impacts of disturbance on over-wintering birds on the estuary and draw visitors away from the foreshore.

- 1.2.14 The Appropriate Assessment of the draft Site Allocations plan identifies that there are issues related to disturbance of the SPA (based on a 2007 study) due mostly to walkers, with or without dogs, and joggers. The reasons for disturbance are cited as easy access from Orwell Country Park combined with a large residential population nearby. This Appropriate Assessment concluded that there are potential negative effects resulting from the visitor centre due to increased recreational disturbance, increased bait digging and increased pollution. However, it proposed design features to result in no adverse impact as follows:
- Visitor centre and car park is set in the north of the site and screened from the estuary;
 - Visitor centre is attractive and welcoming, to attract visitors from other parts of the estuary (reducing disturbance elsewhere) and providing a good visitor experience without visitors necessarily having to visit the estuary shore;
 - Car park is attractively designed and its pricing policy does not encourage use of other car parks (e.g. at Bridge Wood) nor encourage winter use;
 - The grassland or other habitat to be created near to the estuary edge is not physically suitable for noisy play such as football or Frisbee;
 - Extensive seating areas, and a catering concession if economically viable, to be set in the north of the site so that visitors may relax away from the estuary if they wish;
 - Play areas, for a range of play activities and ages, are set in the north of the site and screened from the estuary;
 - Displays within the visitor centre and outside, and ranger walks, provide information about bird disturbance and promote sustainable usage.
- 1.2.15 Natural England raised 'significant concerns' over the proposed IP149 allocation in their response to the consultation on the Draft Site Allocations plan January 2014. However, at a subsequent meeting they have suggested that further detail is needed as to how the facility/measures would be designed and managed and consideration should be given to whether this should be only an extension to the country park or whether the visitor centre should also be provided. This report only considers the potential impacts that may arise from an extension to the country park.
- 1.2.16 The planning authority is required to 'have regard' to any representations made by Natural England as the 'appropriate nature conservation body'.
- 1.2.17 The latest version of the IP149 allocation for the Proposed Submission Site Allocations Plan (November 2014), proposes the Pond Hall Farm site as an extension to the Country Park along with management measures to address visitor impacts on the SPA (policy SP8 of the Proposed Submission Site Allocations and Policies (Incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) DPD). The policy proposes further assessment of the viability of a visitor centre and its potential impact on the SPA. Reflecting these changes to the policy and proposed allocation, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Proposed Submission Site Allocations plan concludes that 'policy SP8 will in itself therefore not result in any likely significant effect upon any European site.'

1.3 Description of the Project

- 1.3.1 In order to implement both adopted and revised Core Strategy policy CS16 and proposed policy SP8 of the Site Allocations Plan, the Council needed to commission this study to gather information to inform visitor management plans.
- 1.3.2 The study has two parts as outlined above:
- An assessment of the current site pressures and mitigation measures required, including recommendations on site management for Orwell Country Park;
 - An assessment of the impact on the SPA of extending Orwell Country Park into the Pond Hall Farm land.
- 1.3.3 The Council will expect that the project will meet the mitigation requirements of the Appropriate Assessment, as far as these relate to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA, in terms of 'identifying

key sites where visitor pressure is currently, or close to, causing harm' and 'identifying the origin of visitors to those identified key sites', and should also set the baseline for future monitoring in this respect, as far as this relates to Orwell Country Park.

1.4 Acknowledgements

Report contributors

- 1.4.1 This report was written by Nick Sibbett CEnv MCIEEM CMLI, with assistance from the surveyors and data analysts below.
- 1.4.2 Visitor surveys were carried out by Stuart Pryke, Assistant Ecologist, and Alex Jackson, temporary Visitor Surveyor, of The Landscape Partnership. Nick Aldus analysed visitor data using Excel, and Amanda Bainbridge carried out GIS analyses.
- 1.4.3 The report was reviewed by Dr Jo Parmenter, CEnv MCIEEM MIEMA, Director of the Landscape Partnership.
- 1.4.4 John Brien of Harwich Haven Authority kindly gave permission for the 2014 bird report, commissioned by HHA, to be used in this study.

Client

- 1.4.5 The Landscape Partnership was commissioned by Ipswich Borough Council's Planning Policy team in March 2015. The client representative is Sarah Barker, Senior Planner (Policy), email sarah.barker@ipswich.gov.uk. Assistance was also received from other members of staff, including Andrea McMillan (Senior Planner, Policy), Matt Berry (Wildlife Team Leader) and Park Ranger staff.

1.5 Objectives of this report

- 1.5.1 The objectives of the project are to assess potential impact on the SPA of the country park extension, by carrying out extensive visitor survey work during the winter-spring season of 2014-2015. This season is considered the most appropriate because this is when bird disturbance is most harmful.
- 1.5.2 The visitor survey work would provide information on the following:
- Visitor numbers to the different parts of Orwell Country Park now, by 2031 without the country park extension and by 2031 with the country park extension (taking into account expected housing growth in Ipswich and neighbouring areas);
 - The types of activity undertaken by visitors (reason for visiting and why here, not elsewhere?);
 - The geographical and temporal spread of access, mode of travel to the park and distance travelled, areas of the Country Park and Pond Hall Farm visited, access points used, frequency of visits, length of stay;
 - Awareness of and attitude towards the nature conservation interest of the area among visitors;
 - Identify areas within Orwell Country Park where visitor numbers may be posing a threat to achieving the conservation objectives for the SPA, and sites/areas where access could increase without posing a risk to achievement of the conservation objectives;
 - Assess the likely future trend in relation to elements 1-5, assuming no change to the extent or management of Orwell Country Park and with the extension to the country park;
 - Identify measures which could be established to reduce or avoid disturbance impacts and recommend which measures might be implemented, including measures for the land at the proposed extension of Orwell Country Park at Pond Hall Farm;
 - Obtain information about visitor perceptions and whether they would be prepared to pay, and how much, for specified additional facilities (to be agreed);

- Obtain a clear understanding of what visitors like about Orwell Country Park and what could make it better in their view. Specifically, if an inland route was on offer, would it be used in winter as an alternative to walking by the edge of the estuary?
- Test potential visitor management methods (e.g. if there were more information, would it / how would it change visitor behaviour?);
- Test the potential impact and visitor opinions of introducing cycling within the country park.

1.5.3 The Council will expect that the survey work will meet the mitigation requirements of the Appropriate Assessment, as far as these relate to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA, in terms of 'identifying key sites where visitor pressure is currently, or close to, causing harm' and 'identifying the origin of visitors to those identified key sites', and should also set the baseline for future monitoring in this respect.

1.6 Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA

1.6.1 The Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA is adjacent to Orwell Country Park.

1.6.2 The Stour and Orwell estuaries straddle the eastern part of the Essex/Suffolk border in eastern England. The SPA is coincident with Cattawade Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Orwell Estuary SSSI and Stour Estuary SSSI. The estuaries include extensive mud-flats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. The mud-flats hold *Enteromorpha*, *Zostera* and *Salicornia* spp. The site also includes areas of low-lying grazing marsh at Shotley Marshes on the south side of the Orwell and at Cattawade Marshes at the head of the Stour. Trimley Marshes on the north side of the Orwell includes several shallow freshwater pools, as well as areas of grazing marsh, and is managed as a nature reserve by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. In summer, the site supports important numbers of breeding avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, while in winter it holds major concentrations of waterbirds, especially geese, ducks and waders. The geese also feed, and some waders roost, in surrounding areas of agricultural land outside the SPA. The site has close ecological links with the Hamford Water and Mid-Essex Coast SPAs, lying to the south on the same coast.

1.6.3 The SPA citation is in Appendix 2 and the Conservation Objectives for the SPA are in Appendix 3.

1.7 Reporting standards

1.7.1 This report was prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Professional Guidance Series No. 9 'Ecological Report Writing' and its Code of Professional Conduct.

1.7.2 This report was written in compliance with British Standard 42020:2013 'Biodiversity — Code of practice for planning and development'.

2 Methodology

2.1 Visitor survey methodology

2.1.1 Visitor surveys were carried out from 11th March to 31st March 2015. Surveys were carried out on most days during that period and the total number of days on which surveys took place was 18. The survey consisted of a surveyor, positioned at various points and times of day, asking set questions of visitors and recording their answers on a paper form. The surveyor locations, at entry points to the park and by the estuary shore, and times of day were varied so that there was a spread of coverage to ensure that visitors with specific regular habits would not be accidentally omitted from the survey.

Survey locations

2.1.2 Survey locations were primarily entrances to the Country Park, namely at

- the Bridge Wood car park entrance
- the Piper's Vale car park entrance
- pedestrian entrance by Platter's Close
- pedestrian entrance by Morland Road
- pedestrian entrance by Braziers Wood Road

2.1.3 A further survey location was at the estuary shore to capture information about visitors at that point.

Survey timing

2.1.4 At each survey point, the survey was carried out for 1 – 2 hours at a range of times throughout the day, also taking the tide into account so that a range of tidal states were present during the survey. This was to ensure visitors who, for example, regularly visited at only one time of day, would have a good likelihood of being included in the survey. Sixteen hours of survey were carried out at the three main locations (Bridge Wood, Piper's Vale, shore) and a minimum of ten hours survey was carried out at the remainder of the locations.

2.1.5 The times of each survey are shown in Appendix 4.

School holidays

2.1.6 The final days of the survey, Monday 30th and Tuesday 31st March, were school holidays and so allowed the difference between term time and holidays to be tested.

Questionnaire design

2.1.7 The questionnaire which was used to survey visitors is included in Appendix 5. The questionnaire was agreed with the client representative before the survey began. Questions covered a range of topics relating to the objectives for the survey.

Car park point counts

2.1.8 A further survey was carried out, which involved more-or-less simultaneously counting cars in each car park and the number of visitors present at the shore. In practice, the surveyor counted the number of cars in one of the two car parks, walked to the shore to count visitors there, then walked to the other of the two car parks to count the cars there. The entire survey took around half an hour.

Limitations to survey

2.1.9 Heavy continuous rain was forecast for the day of the survey on Sunday 29th March 2015. This was predicted to reduce the number of visitors to the Park. The surveyor had no shelter at the survey points and so surveyor welfare would have been compromised. This survey was therefore postponed until Tuesday 31st March 2015, which did have the benefit of adding a second day of school holidays into the survey.

- 2.1.10 The survey did not test visitors who came in the late autumn or mid-winter period of November to February, when wintering bird numbers on the mudflats are at their peak. It is unknown how visitor numbers and behaviour during the winter period is different to that in March, but many visitors did say that they visited all year round. The survey limitation is therefore thought to be reduced by this all-year-round behaviour, although visitors who came in winter but not March would not have been recorded.

2.2 Background data search methodology

- 2.2.1 Two types of data were sought for the use of the estuary by birds, especially wintering birds on mudflats.

Bird disturbance

- 2.2.2 Disturbance to birds on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries was studied in detail in 2007 on behalf of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit. The report of this study (Ravenscroft, Vonk, Parker and Wright 2007¹) was obtained and is summarised later in this report. It provides very good information on the levels of disturbance to birds on the estuary at Orwell Country Park and elsewhere.

Bird distribution within estuary

- 2.2.3 The distribution of birds within the Orwell Estuary has been monitored by Suffolk Wildlife Trust over fifteen years, on contract to Harwich Haven Authority. A recent Suffolk Wildlife Trust report² describing the results of this monitoring was obtained and is summarised later in this report.

2.3 Geographic Information Systems postcode methodology

- 2.3.1 The Royal Mail postcode database for Ipswich and the surrounds was obtained from Royal Mail, to individual postcode level. Thirty thousand postcodes were obtained together with a coordinate for the centre point of the postcode, in text format. Each postcode contains around 15 addresses, so the resolution of the data was to groups of 15 addresses rather than to individual house scale. This was appropriate, as visitors were asked for their postcode but not house number.

- 2.3.2 Postcodes of visitors were entered into ArcView and plotted in the coordinates provided in the Royal Mail database. Most, but not all visitors gave valid postcodes, but some postcodes were given to primary level (e.g. IP3) only and others were not found on the database. One hundred and six valid postcodes from Ipswich and the surrounding area were obtained which were used for the analyses. From this we could identify the location and distances travelled by visitors surveyed.

- 2.3.3 Postcodes not used for the analysis are given in table 1 below.

Table 1. Postcodes supplied by visitors not used in the analyses

Postcode	Reason for not including in GIS plots
Postcodes located in Canvey Island (Essex), Great Horksley (Essex), East Bergholt (Essex), Bradfield (Essex), Bacton near Stowmarket (Suffolk) and Watford (Hertfordshire)	At such distance that the records would not be relevant to the Local Plan proposed development.
IP1 – given once by visitors	The postcode includes central Ipswich to the north and west Borough boundary and it is too large for plotting with any accuracy

¹ Ravenscroft, Vonk, Parker and Wright (2007) *Disturbance to waterbirds wintering in the Stour-Orwell Estuaries SPA*. A report from Wildside Ecology to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit.

² Ravenscroft / SWT Trading Ltd (August 2014) *Ornithological monitoring of the Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area: winters 1999/2000 to 2013/2014*.

Postcode	Reason for not including in GIS plots
IP2 – given three times by visitors	The postcode includes the Borough mostly west of river Orwell / Gipping and it is too large for plotting with any accuracy
IP3 – given 6 times by visitors	The postcode includes south-east Ipswich and it is too large for plotting with any accuracy
IP3 8 – given once by visitors	The postcode mostly includes land north of Nacton Road, from University Campus Suffolk to Trinity Park
IP4 – given 3 times by visitors	The postcode includes north and north-east Ipswich and it is too large for plotting with any accuracy
IP10 given once by visitors	The postcodes includes parishes south west of Ipswich (Nacton, Bucklesham, Foxhall, Kirton) and it is too large for plotting with any accuracy
IP4 4DX, OP3 9PD, IP3 1US, IP4 49G, IPR 8LD	Postcodes do not exist. It is possible that some may have been incorrectly written down by surveyors.
Postcode not given	Several visitors did not give their postcode

2.3.4 Methodology for each analysis is described below in the relevant section.

2.4 Other visitor studies

2.4.1 Other visitor studies were examined, especially those which show how far countryside visitors tend to walk in a single visit. These are referenced in the Results section below.

3 Visitor survey results

3.1 Visitor numbers

3.1.1 This section describes the visitor numbers to the different parts of Orwell Country Park as identified by the survey, during March and at a time when there were no events being promoted in the Park. One hundred and fifty one questionnaires were fully or partly completed, with around 33% of visitors declining to be interviewed. The surveyors sometimes met people who had been interviewed at an earlier date in the survey, and these 'repeat' visitors were not resurveyed. Table 2 below shows the number of visitors (individuals or groups of visitors walking together) who declined to be interviewed and the number of people repeatedly seen by the surveyor and not resurveyed.

3.1.2 The quantity of visitor survey was consistent with other visitor surveys (e.g. those referenced in Section 4.4) and is thought to be representative of the situation at the time of the survey. The number of visitors who were encountered by the surveyor more than once is good evidence that the survey effort was appropriate.

Table 2. Visitors (individuals or groups) who were not interviewed

Day	Date	Number of visitors who declined the survey	Number of visitors previously interviewed and subsequently encountered/not re-interviewed
Wednesday	11/03/2015	3	0
Thursday	12/03/2015	8	0
Friday	13/03/2015	6	0
Saturday	14/03/2015	7	0
Sunday	15/03/2015	6	1
Monday	16/03/2015	6	1
Wednesday	18/03/2015	7	5
Thursday	19/03/2015		
Friday	20/03/2015	5	6
Saturday	21/03/2015	8	3
Sunday	22/03/2015	5	7
Tuesday	24/03/2015		
Wednesday	25/03/2015		
Thursday	26/03/2015		
Friday	27/03/2015	4	8
Saturday	28/03/2015	8	3
Monday	30/03/2015	1	5
Tuesday	31/03/2015	5	5
		79	44

3.1.3 For the fourteen out of eighteen days on which data is available, 79 people declined to be interviewed and 44 people had previously been surveyed. No records were kept of those who

declined to be interviewed and it is possible that some visitors were approached more than once during the survey period and consistently declined, so there may be an element of double-counting in the data for those who declined. Scaled up to the 18 days, this is around 100 people/groups declining out of 250 approached by the surveyor (excluding those previously surveyed). In other words, 60% of those approached did engage in the survey.

Total visitors

- 3.1.4 The total number of visitors was not established by the survey, as sample points were surveyed consecutively rather than all points surveyed simultaneously. At the busier locations, especially the two car parks and at the shore, whilst visitors were being surveyed other visitors passed the surveyor and were not counted or surveyed. At other points, visitors were infrequent and all were spoken to. The methodology did not therefore result in a total number of visitors.
- 3.1.5 Table 3 below gives the number of people surveyed at each point, i.e. taking into account the number of people in each group of visitors, not just the number of questionnaires. Around 40% of visitors declined to be surveyed and an uplift is added to account for this in table 3 below.

Table 3. Numbers of people surveyed / entering at each survey location

Entrance to park	Hours of survey	Total people surveyed	People per hour surveyed	People entering per hour (those surveyed plus additional 40% uplift for people declining to answer)
Bridge Wood car park	16	76	4.75	6.65
Piper's Vale car park	16	38	2.375	3.33
Platter's Close	11	7	0.63	0.88
Morland Road	10.5	20	1.9	2.66
Braziers Wood Road	10.5	22	2.09	2.92
			total	16.44

- 3.1.6 The March survey revealed that approximately 16.4 people per hour entered the park. For a period of entry between 7am and 7pm, i.e. 12 hours of daylight, around 197 people entered the park each day. The number of visitors in summer is much higher (personal observation) but numbers might or might not be different in mid-winter.
- 3.1.7 Bridge Wood car park was the most-used access point, with double the usage compared to the Piper's Vale car park which was the second most-used access point. Pedestrian entrances were used variably, with Brazier's Wood Road entrance almost as well used as Piper's Vale car park, with lesser use from other pedestrian entrances. The Platter's Close entrance is close to Brazier's Wood Road entrance, and it is possible that residents choose Brazier's Wood Road entrance as it has better connections to the Airport Meadow which is easier to walk in compared to the steep slopes accessible from Platter's Close. The Morland Close entrance may be used by local residents who otherwise may have used the Piper's Vale entrance as a pedestrian entrance.

Parts of the Country Park visited

- 3.1.8 This question was addressed in Question 10. One hundred and twenty four questionnaires were received which gave answers to this question.
- 3.1.9 Most people who were interviewed (80%) visited multiple locations within the Country Park during each visit. On average, people visited 3.4 out of the five named locations within the park on their visit. Bridge Wood and the shore were each visited by around two-thirds of visitors, Pipers Vale and Braziers Wood were each visited by around half the visitors, and Airport Meadow was visited by around 40% of visitors. The breakdown of visitors to these places are shown in Figure 03.
- 3.1.10 Seventy people visited two or fewer locations, whereas 54 people visited 3 or more locations, with 27 visitors visiting five locations. Of the people who only visited one location, most of those solely visited Bridge Wood, with Piper's Vale and Brazier's Wood being the other sites visited by people who only went to one location. This is not surprising, as these are the entrances to the Country Park.
- 3.1.11 Of the 60 visitors who visited Piper's Vale, just fifteen (25%) didn't visit the shore; a few also visited Brazier's Wood but most visited nowhere else in the park. This number of visitors was dwarfed by the 45 visitors to Piper's Vale (75%) who also visited the shore and possibly elsewhere in the Country Park. This shows that Piper's Vale alone may not be big enough to satisfy visitors' recreational requirements.
- 3.1.12 Of the 81 visitors to Bridge Wood, just 10 did not visit the shore, and those 10 visitors rarely left Bridge Wood, with one visitor visiting all other parts of the Country Park except the shore. The remaining 71 visitors to Bridge Wood all visited the shore, suggesting that Bridge Wood alone may not be big enough, or offer a sufficient variety of walks, to satisfy visitors' recreational requirements.

Age of visitors

- 3.1.13 Most visitors were adults below retirement age, with slightly more people in the 41-65 age group compared to the 18 – 40 age group. People of retirement age (over 65) made up 14% of visitors, and only 7% of visitors were children. These figures vary from the Ipswich demography; 65.7% of Ipswich Borough residents are aged 16 – 65 and 8.6% of Gainsborough ward's residents are children³.
- 3.1.14 Figure 04 shows the demographic groups surveyed.

Ethnic background

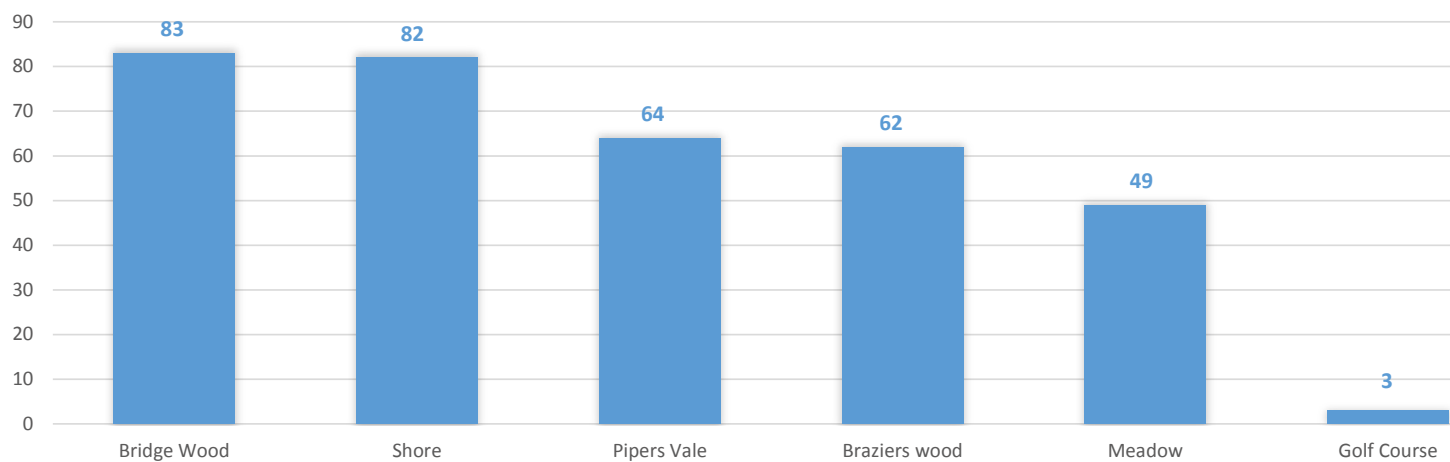
- 3.1.15 The visitors to Orwell Country Park were overwhelmingly white British, with 94% of visitors identifying themselves as being of that ethnic origin. The next largest group was non British / non-Irish white ethnic background, with just 1% or less of other ethnic groups represented. By contrast, the white British group make up 83% of the population of Ipswich with mixed or other ethnic groups making up 17% of the population³. For Gainsborough Ward, within which the Country Park is situated, the white British group makes up 89% of the population with 11% from other ethnic groups (www.suffolkbobservatory.info, accessed on 30 April 2015).
- 3.1.16 Figure 05 shows the ethnic background of visitors.

Time of day of visit

- 3.1.17 Visitors were asked at what time of day they usually visit. Around 40% of visitors visited at varying times of day, with 60% of people saying that they regularly visited at a certain time. Regular visits were biased slightly towards morning visits, with 25% of all visitors regularly visiting in the three hour period between 9am and midday. After midday, the five hour period from midday to 5pm saw a further 25% of all visitors. This finding is consistent with a question about tides, where most people (Figure 06) said that they did not time their visit in relation to the tide.
- 3.1.18 The distribution of visit times is shown in Figure 07.

³ Ipswich Borough Council (2014) *State of Ipswich Annual Monitoring Report*.

Q10. VISIT ORIGIN AND/OR DESTINATION



E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension Impact Study

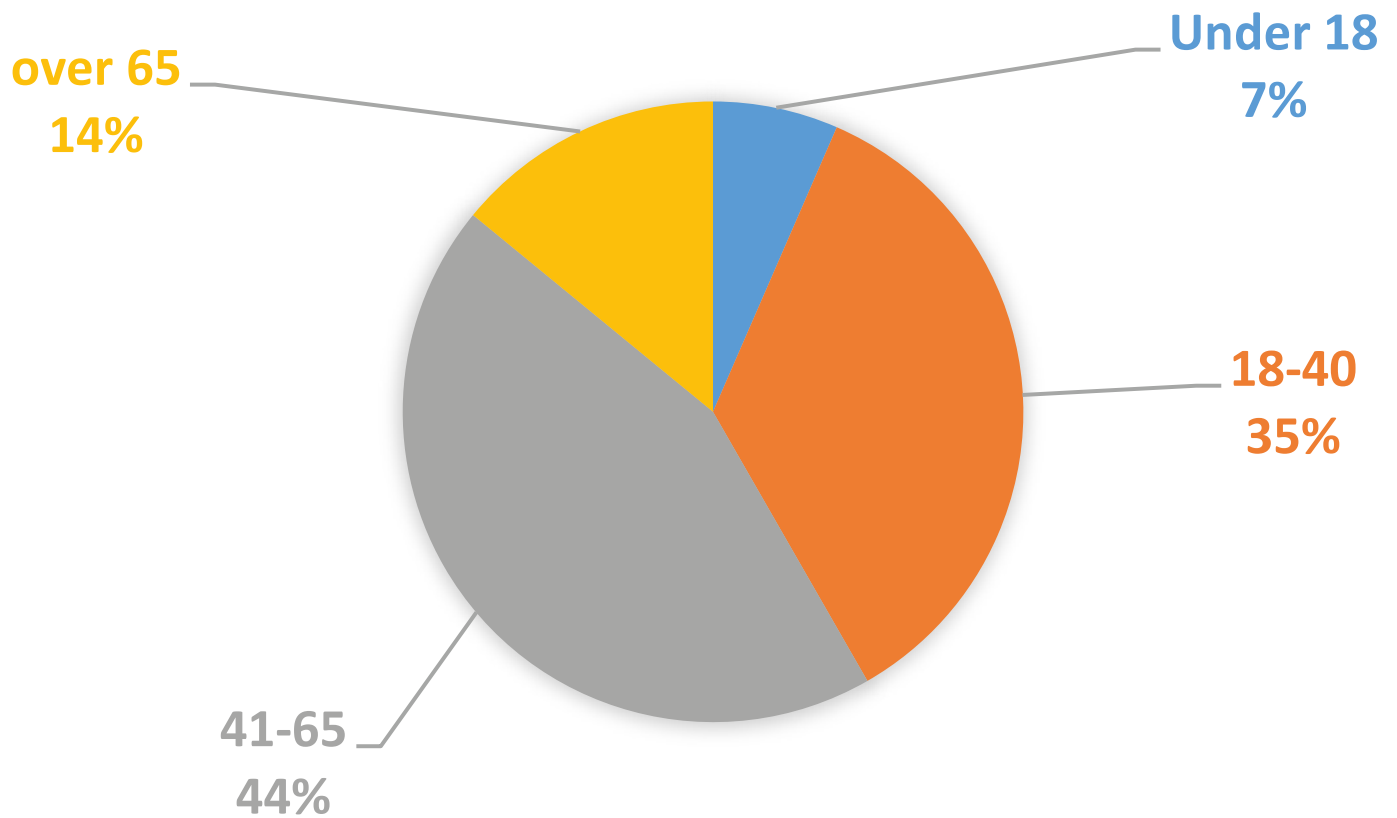
Visits to places within the Country Park -
number of responses from 151 visitors

Figure 3

July 2015



AGE



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Ages of visitors

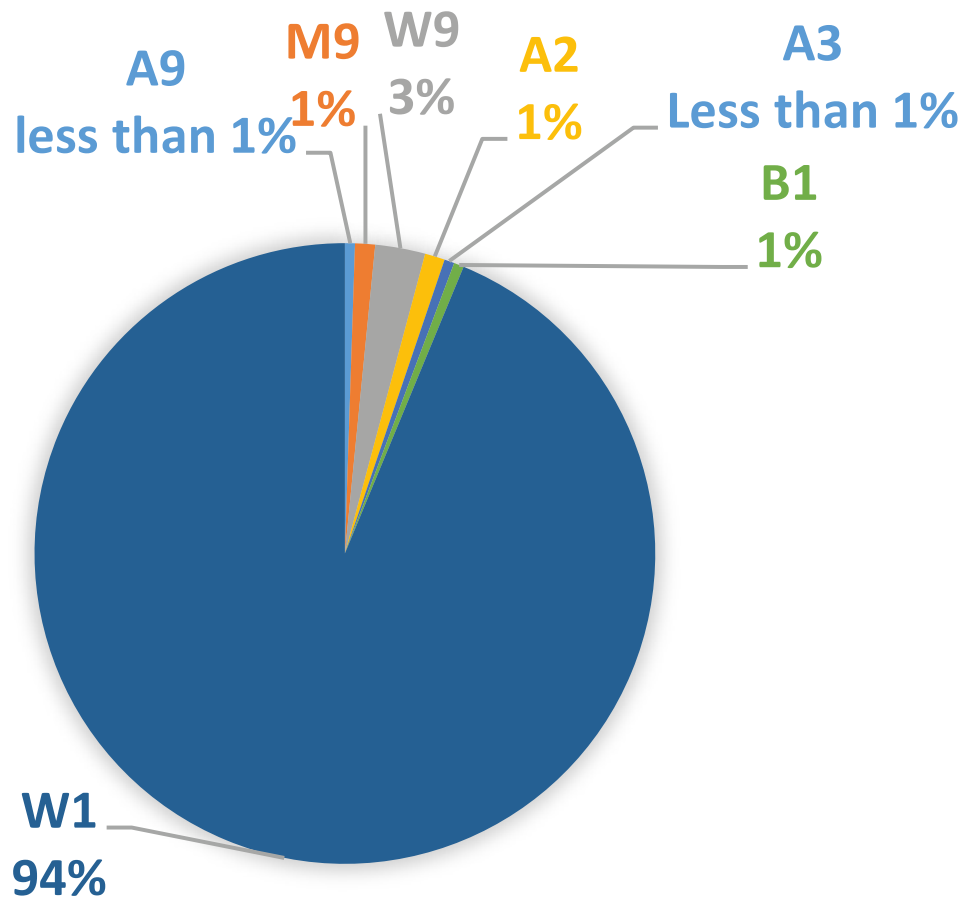
Figure 4

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SELF DEFINED ETHNICITY



Key

- A2 Pakistani
- A3 Bangladeshi
- A9 Other (not Indian, Pakistani, Bangladesh) Asian ethnic background
- B1 Caribbean
- M9 Other mixed ethnic background
- W1 White British
- W9 Other (not British or Irish) white ethnic background

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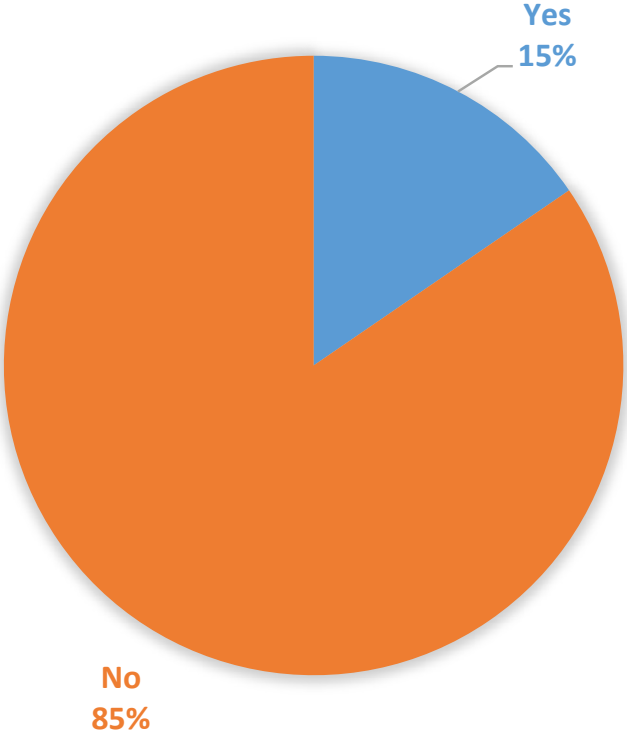
Ethnic background of visitors

Figure 5

July 2015



Q5. VISITS TIMED WITH HIGH TIDE



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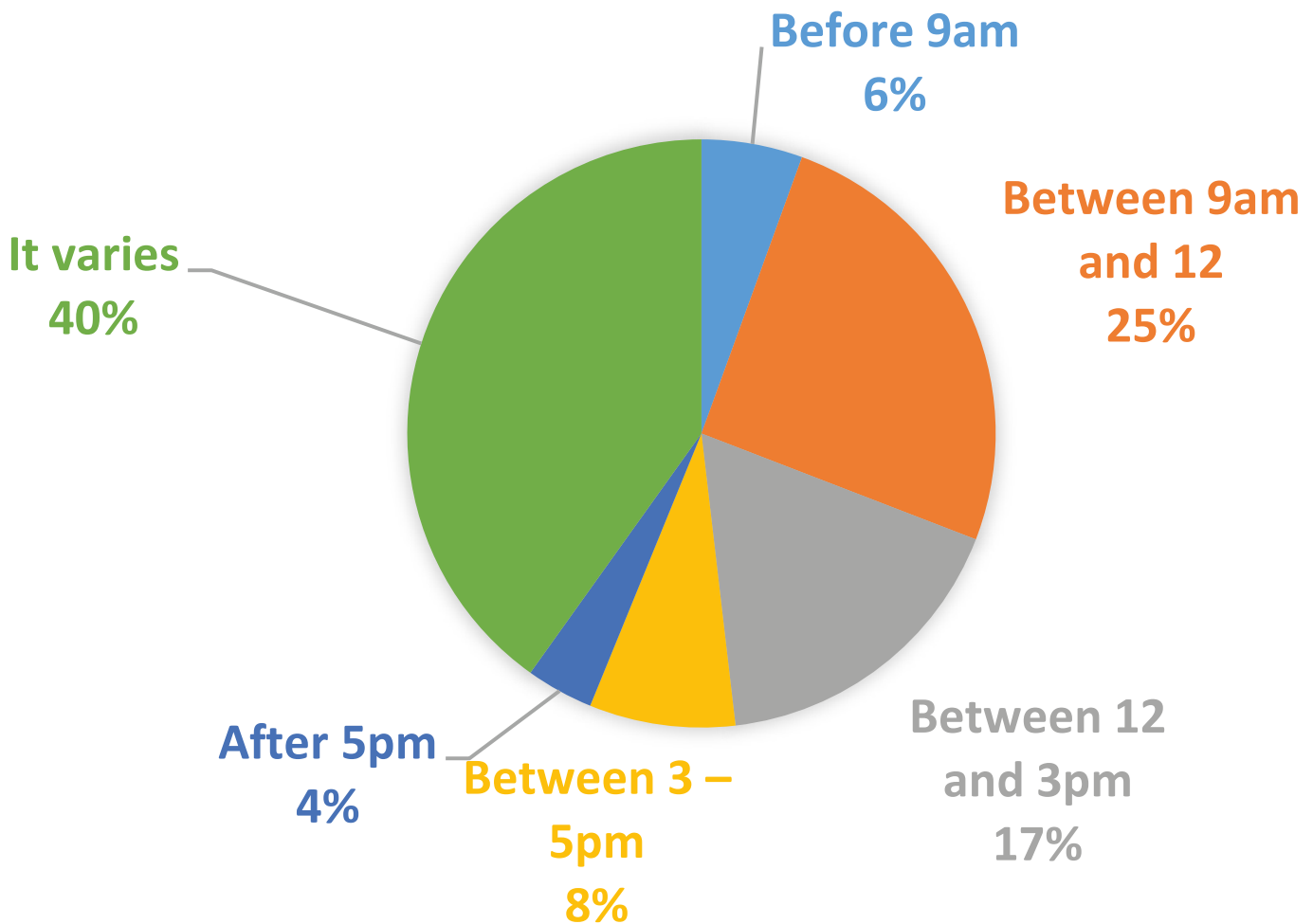
Visits timed in relation to tides

Figure 6

July 2015



Q4. TIME OF VISIT



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Time of day of regular visits

Figure 7

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Frequency of visit

- 3.1.19 Most visitors to the site visit on a regular basis. Thirty-eight percent visit every day, mostly for dog walking or walking. Over three-quarters of visitors visit at least once per week, and only 7% visit less than once per month. This was consistent with anecdotal information from the surveyors, who reported seeing some visitors a number of times.
- 3.1.20 Visit frequencies are shown in Figure 08.

Duration of visit

- 3.1.21 Two-thirds of people said that they spent 1- 2 hours in the Country Park each time they visited. Eighteen percent said that they stayed less than one hour. Only 2% of people said that they stayed over three hours. The duration of each visit is summarised in Figure 09.

3.2 The types of activity undertaken by visitors***Activities undertaken***

- 3.2.1 The activities undertaken by visitors were identified by Question 1 of the questionnaire. People were able to give multiple answers to the questions, and so the percentages do not add up to 100%.
- 3.2.2 About two-thirds of people walked dogs off-lead (64.9%), and chose to come to this site for this reason. A further 12% walked with dogs on leads all the time, making a total of around three-quarters (76.9%) of visitors coming to walk dogs. Most of the remaining visitors (23.1%) came for a walk without dogs. All other activity categories were minor in comparison with walking, with bird/nature watching mentioned by about 15% of people, and jogging or 'outing with children' (presumably involving 'walking') carried out by 7 – 8% of people. Bait digging, cycling, playing, and 'other' were carried out by very few people. Numbers do not add up to 100% because some people gave multiple answers, and for example a few said they came for 'dog walking' and 'walking [without dog]' suggesting that sometimes they brought a dog and sometimes did not.
- 3.2.3 Out of the 151 groups of people interviewed, just 4 had a pushchair and 3 had a wheelchair with them. This may be a reflection of the steep and unsurfaced paths within the park which make it difficult to use pushchairs and wheelchairs. This is likely to be a low proportion of the available population using wheelchairs or pushchairs. Most activities were therefore undertaken by physically fit people.
- 3.2.4 The breakdown of visitor activity data is given in Figure 10.

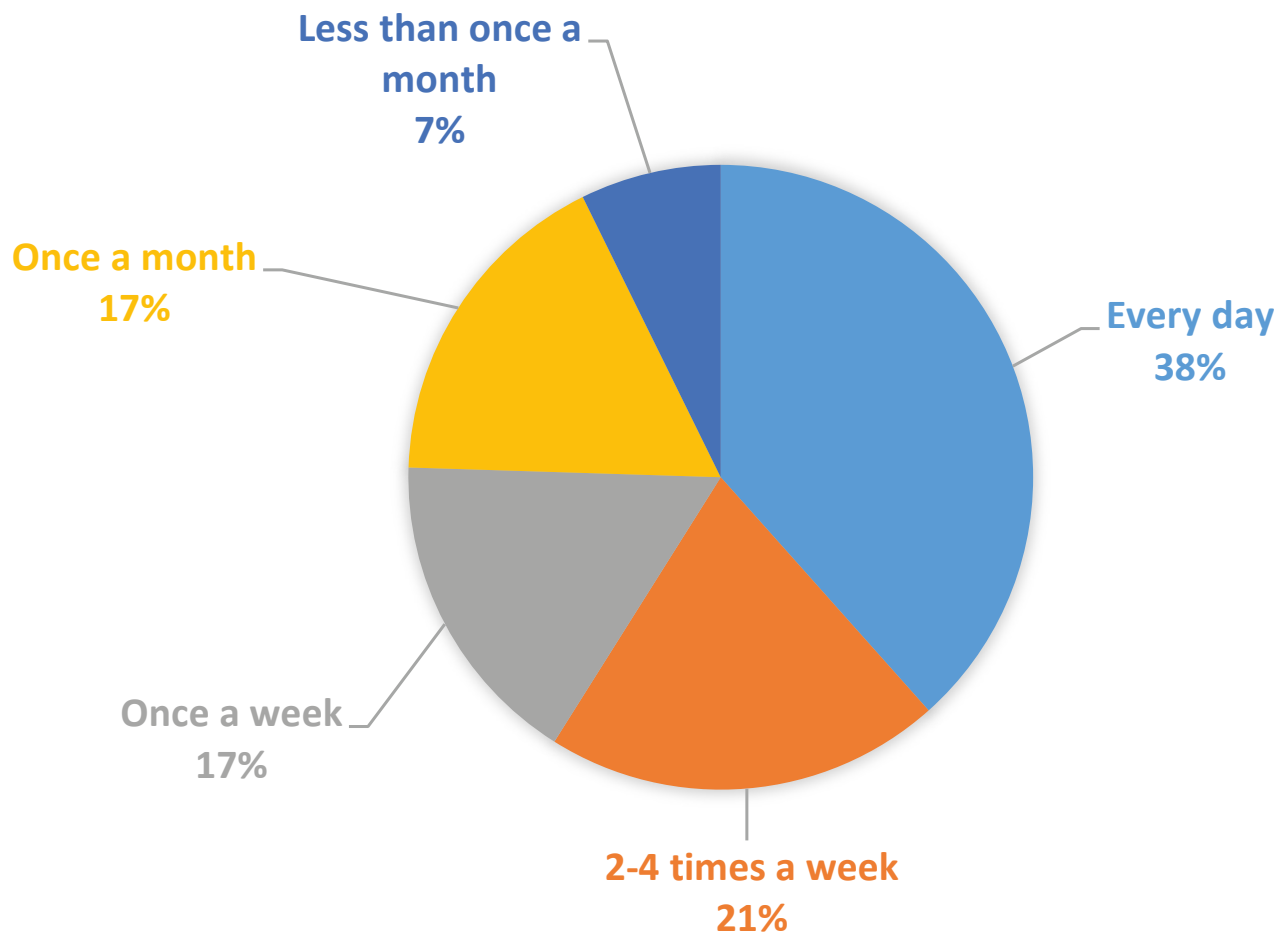
Local greenspace use or holiday visit?

- 3.2.5 Just 2% of people stated that they were on holiday, with the vast majority saying they had come from home. This suggests the primary use of the site at this time of year (March) and with current low levels of promotional activity is for local greenspace rather than as a 'visitor attraction' to which people might travel a significant distance to visit.
- 3.2.6 Figure 11 shows the data of origin as a pie chart.

Reasons for visiting

- 3.2.7 Visitors were asked in Question 11 why they chose to come to Orwell Country Park for their visit, rather than visit other places. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the dominant activity was dog walking, the most common reason was that it was 'a good area to take the dog for a walk', cited by around half the visitors interviewed. The second most popular reason was that it was 'close to home' followed closely by 'woodland' both with around 40% of responses.
- 3.2.8 Slightly less than one-third of people cited 'estuary views' and 'the shoreline' as reasons why they chose to visit that day. The same proportion of people cited 'familiar with the site' and 'good choice of routes / places to walk' as their reason to visit.
- 3.2.9 Other reasons given for the choice to visit the site were in the minority, with free parking and ease of parking perhaps not appearing significant because many people walked to the park.

Q7. FREQUENCY OF VISIT



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Frequency of visiting (all visitors)

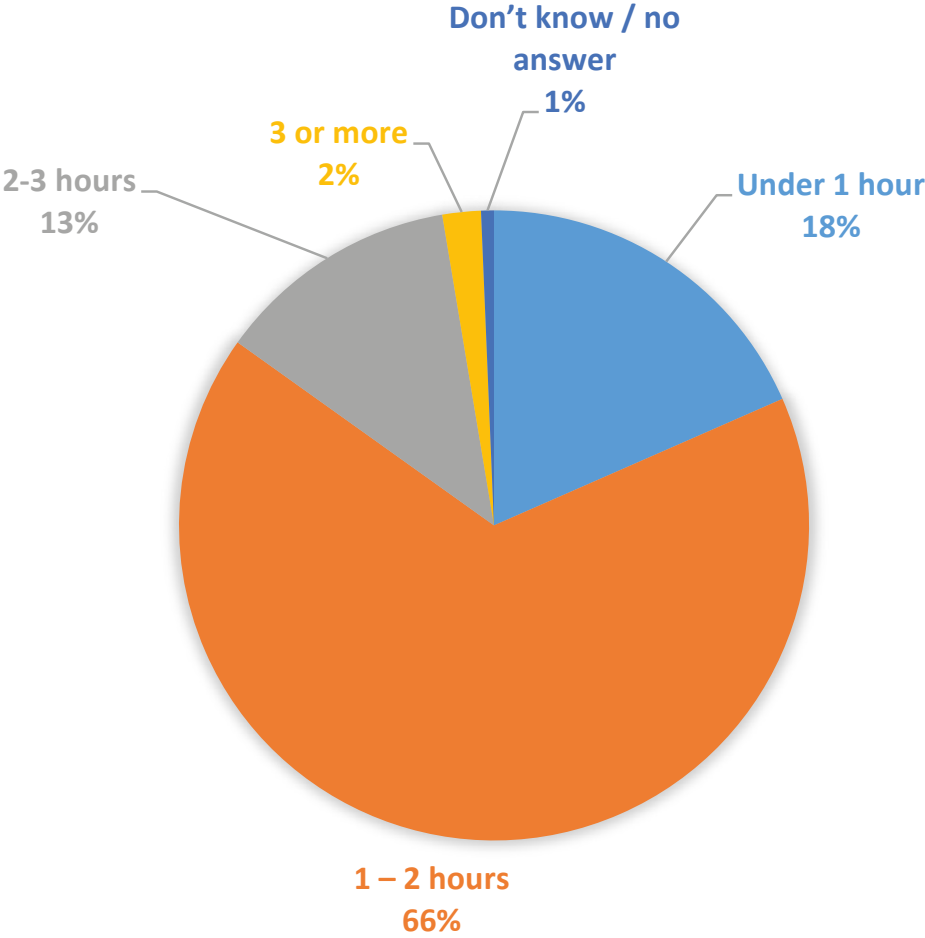
Figure 8

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Q2. DURATION OF 'NORMAL' VISIT



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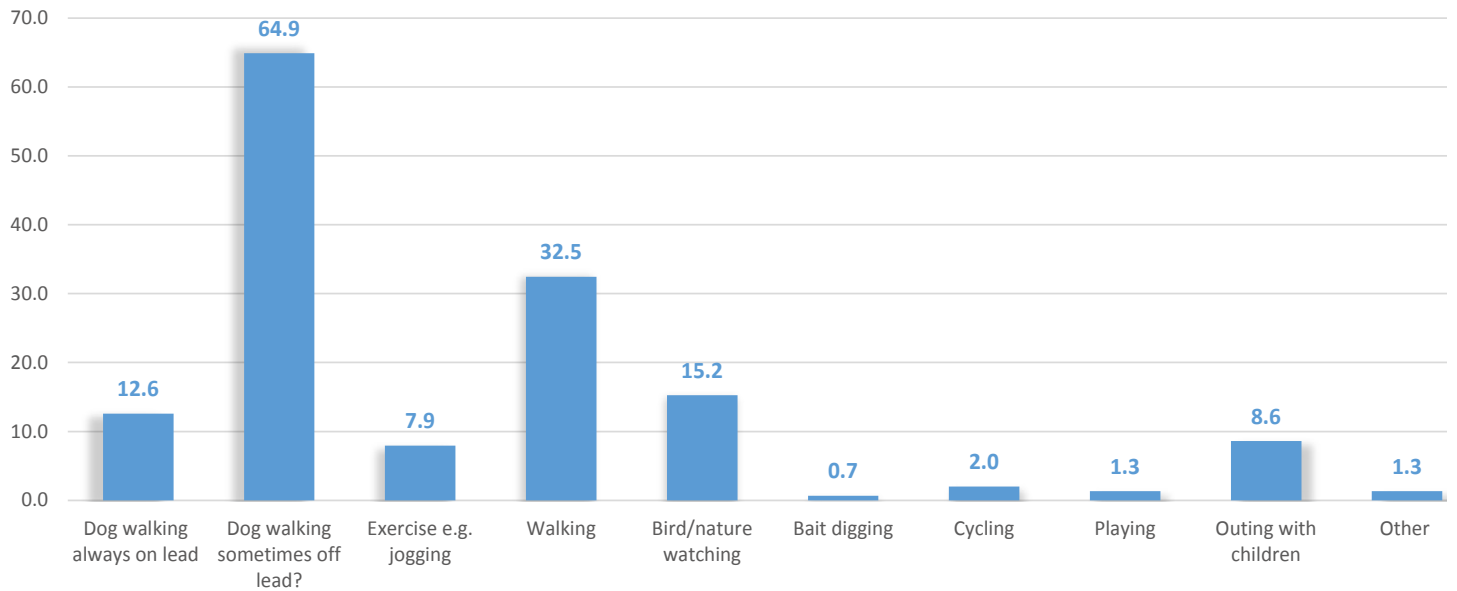
Duration of visit

Figure 9

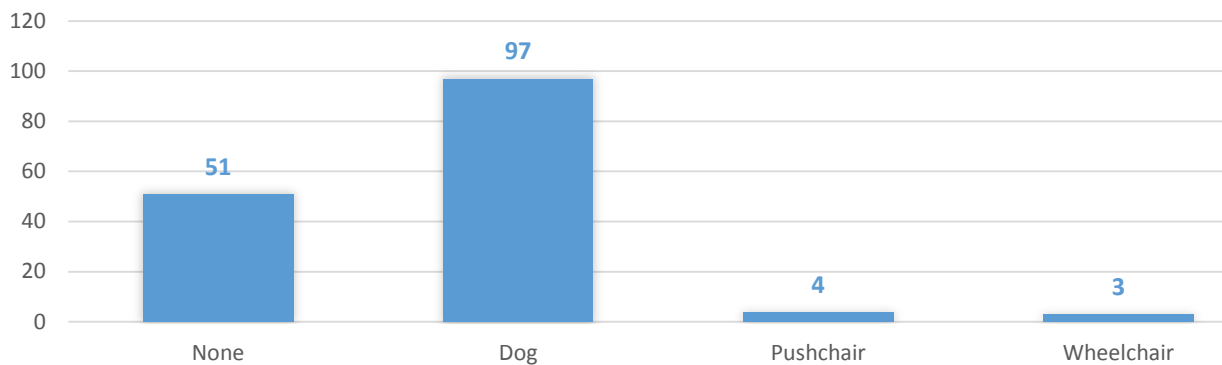
July 2015



Q1. ENGAGEMENT IN ACTIVITIES



ACCOMPANIMENT



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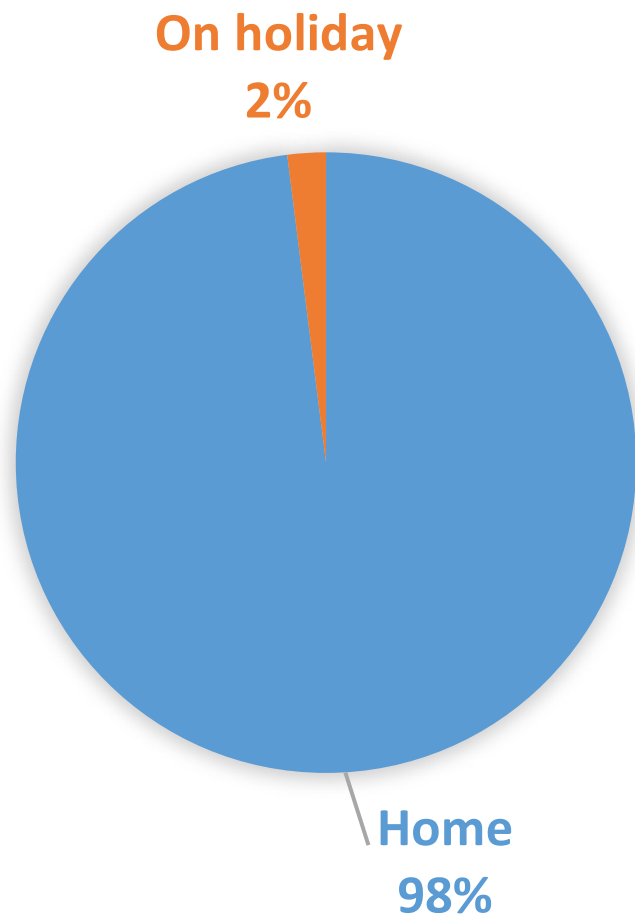
Visitor activities at the park - number of responses from 151 visitors

Figure 10



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Q6. ON HOLIDAY OR COME FROM HOME?



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Visitors on holiday or come from home

Figure 11

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'Peaceful', 'sense of wilderness', 'wildlife' and other reasons did not appear to be important reasons for visiting the site.

3.2.10 The reasons for choosing Orwell Country Park are given in Figure 12.

3.3 The spread of access, mode of travel to the park and distance travelled

3.3.1 The context of the survey being in March, and with no special promotion or events taking place, means that the results are appropriate to this time of year. A summer survey, with an event or Council promotion of visiting, would have resulted in different results not related to winter bird usage.

The origin of visitors to the Country Park

3.3.2 Figure 13 shows that practically all visitors to the park interviewed during March live within a few kilometres of the Country Park. There is a concentration of visitors coming from Gainsborough, close to the Country Park, with over 90% of visitors who walked to the Country Park living within 1.2km on a straight line basis. Other visitors predominantly live within an area defined by the A1214 and A1189, within and around the main part of Ipswich. Few visitors live outside this area, although there are isolated visitors in places such as Maidenhall, and further afield at Whitehouse. There are a small number of visitors from adjacent areas of Suffolk Coastal District including Rushmere and Kesgrave, and a small cluster of visitors from the Park Home site immediately to the east of Bridge Wood. Five visitors came from a longer distance from Ipswich Borough, with postcodes in Essex, Bacton (near Stowmarket) and Watford. During the period of the study, there were no special events taking place at the Park and there was no promotional activity undertaken by the Council.

3.3.3 The majority of those who drove, around 90%, live over 1.2km away but less than 4.5km distant, on a straight line basis.

3.3.4 There is a general tendency for visitors with dogs to travel from a wider area, compared to those without dogs. There is a more-or-less even split of those with or without dogs living closer to the Country Park, whereas the people who live at the greater distances from the Country Park are almost all with dogs (Figure 14). Those visitors with dogs that travel the furthest distances to the Country Park, pass near a number of other Ipswich Borough parks on their journey.

3.3.5 The home location of those visitors who visit the shore (Figure 15) is not clearly different from all visitors, probably because most people who visited did go to the shore.

Mode of travel to the Country Park

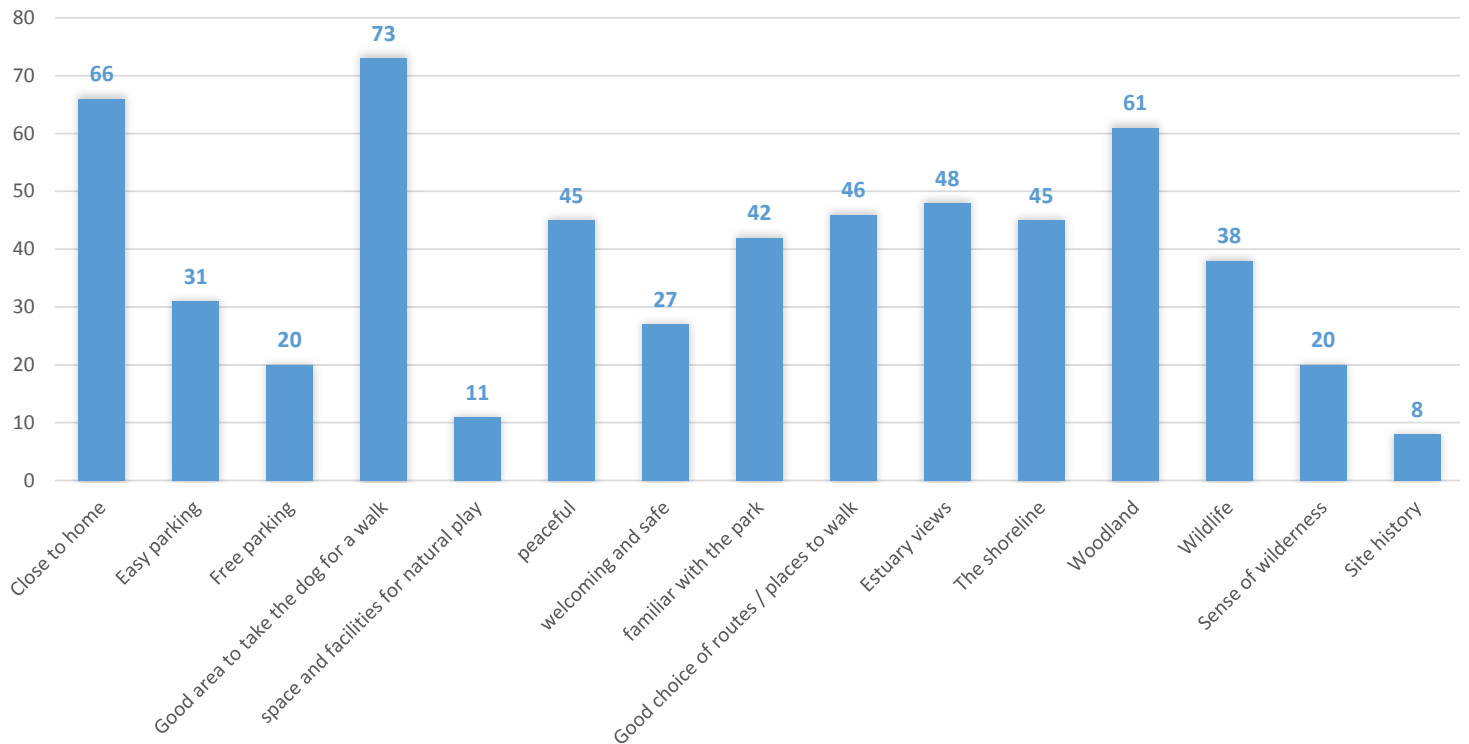
3.3.6 There was a more-or-less even split of those coming to the Country Park by car or on foot. Slightly over half the visitors said that they came by car (52%), and slightly under half (45%) said that they came on foot. Only 1% came by bus or bicycle respectively but these people also said that they travelled by car or on foot at other times. One person travelled to the site in a mobility scooter. Figure 16 shows this spread of travel modes.

3.3.7 On average, just over 7 people per hour arrived at the two car parks, and just under 5 people per hour arrived at pedestrian entrances. This statistic relates to individuals whether arriving singly or in groups and is a ratio of around 60:40 car-bourne / pedestrian arrivals. The ratio of mode of travel for 'visitor groups' is 52:45 car-bourne / pedestrian arrivals of visitor groups (single people travelling alone or groups of people travelling together). This demonstrates that people who come by car tend to have larger group sizes on average compared to walkers.

Frequency of visit related to mode of transport

3.3.8 There is a large difference in the frequency of visit depending upon how people travelled to the Country Park. People that walk visited much more frequently than those who drove there, as shown in table 4 overleaf.

Q11. REASONS FOR CHOOSING ORWELL COUNTRY PARK FOR THE VISIT



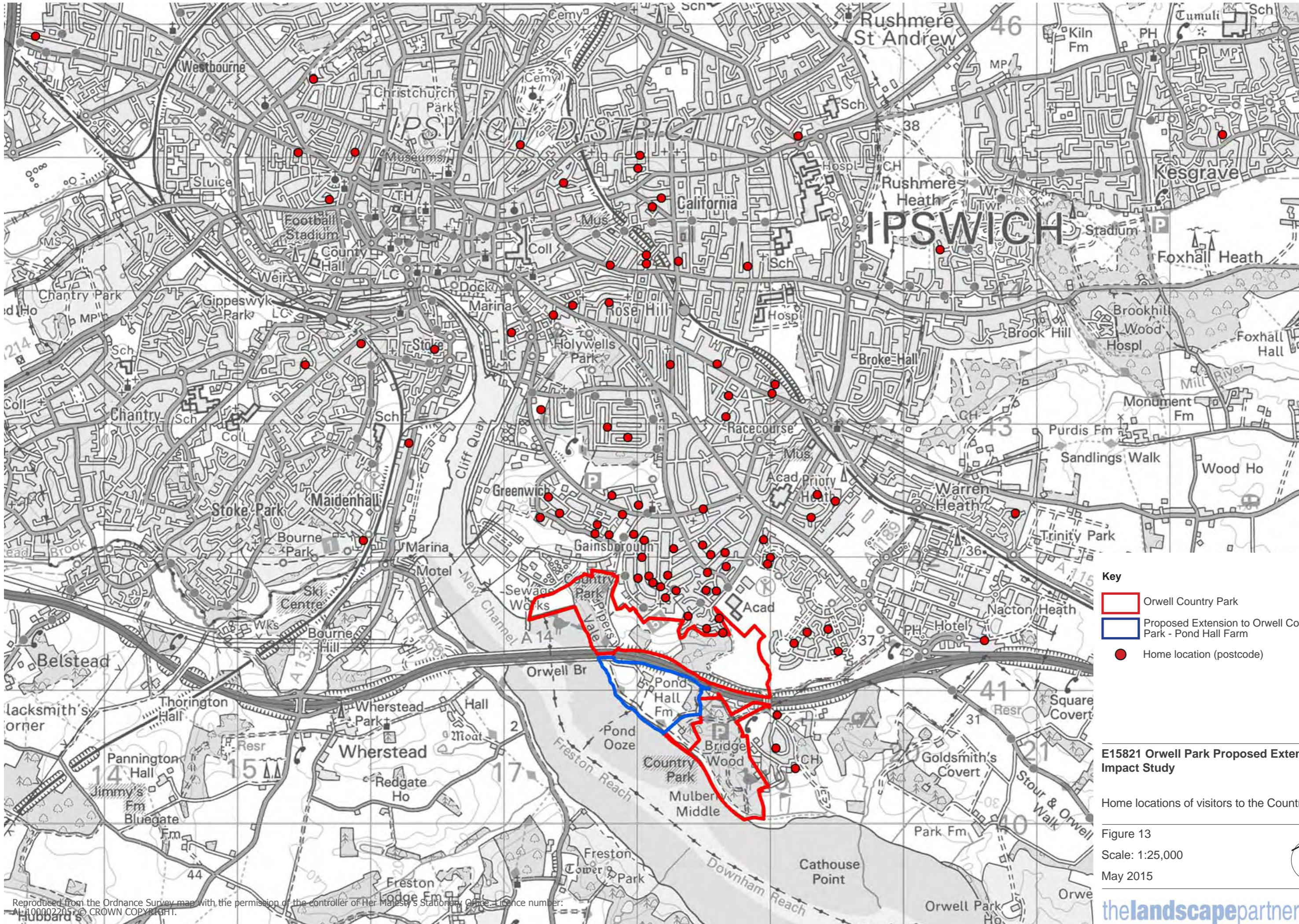
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Reasons for choosing Orwell Country Park for the visit - - number of responses from 151 visitors

Figure 12

July 2015





- Key**
- Orwell Country Park
 - Proposed Extension to Orwell Country Park - Pond Hall Farm
 - Home location (postcode)

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Home locations of visitors to the Country Park

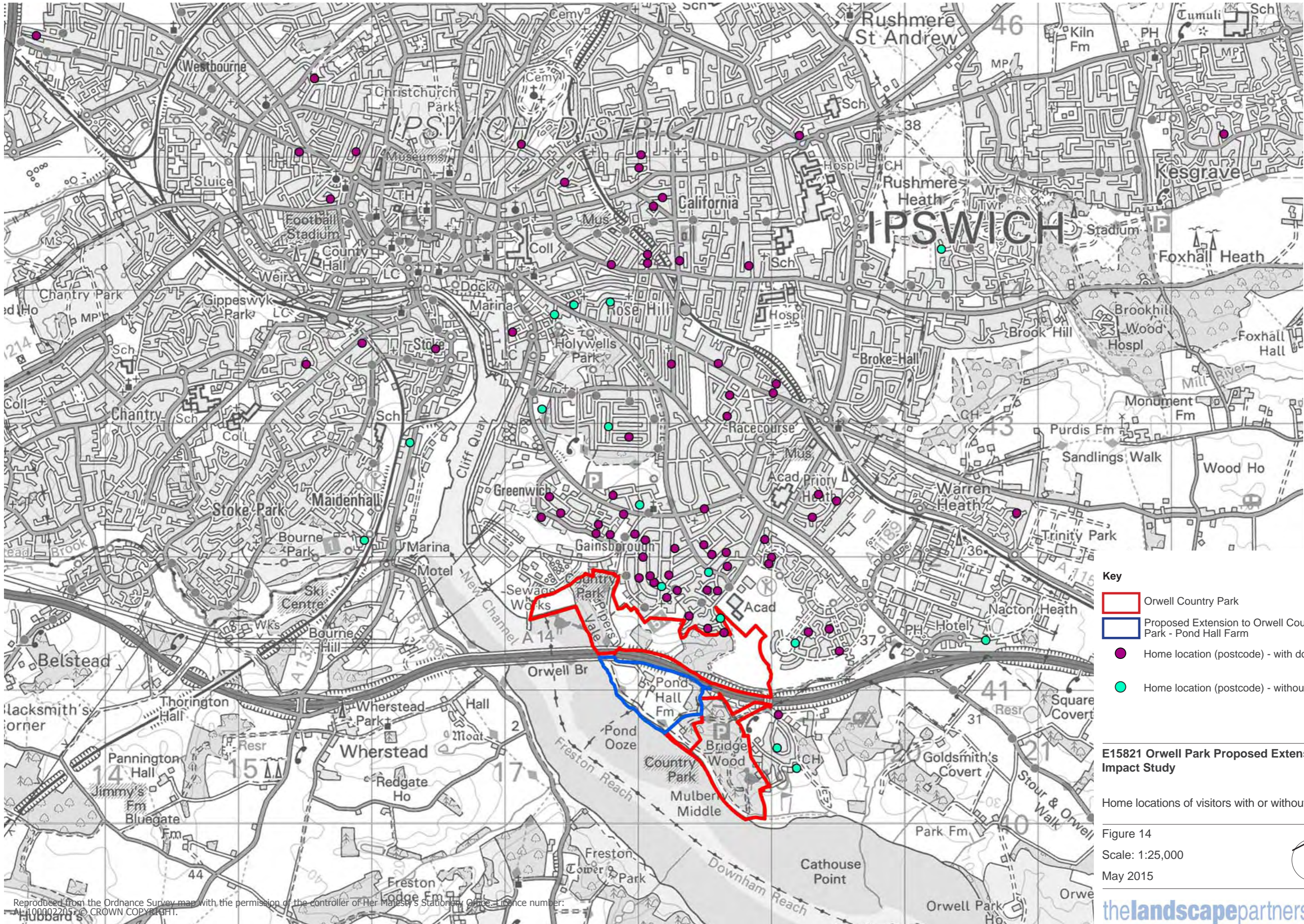
Figure 13

Scale: 1:25,000

May 2015



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- Key**
- Orwell Country Park
 - Proposed Extension to Orwell Country Park - Pond Hall Farm
 - Home location (postcode) - with dog
 - Home location (postcode) - without dog

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Home locations of visitors with or without dogs

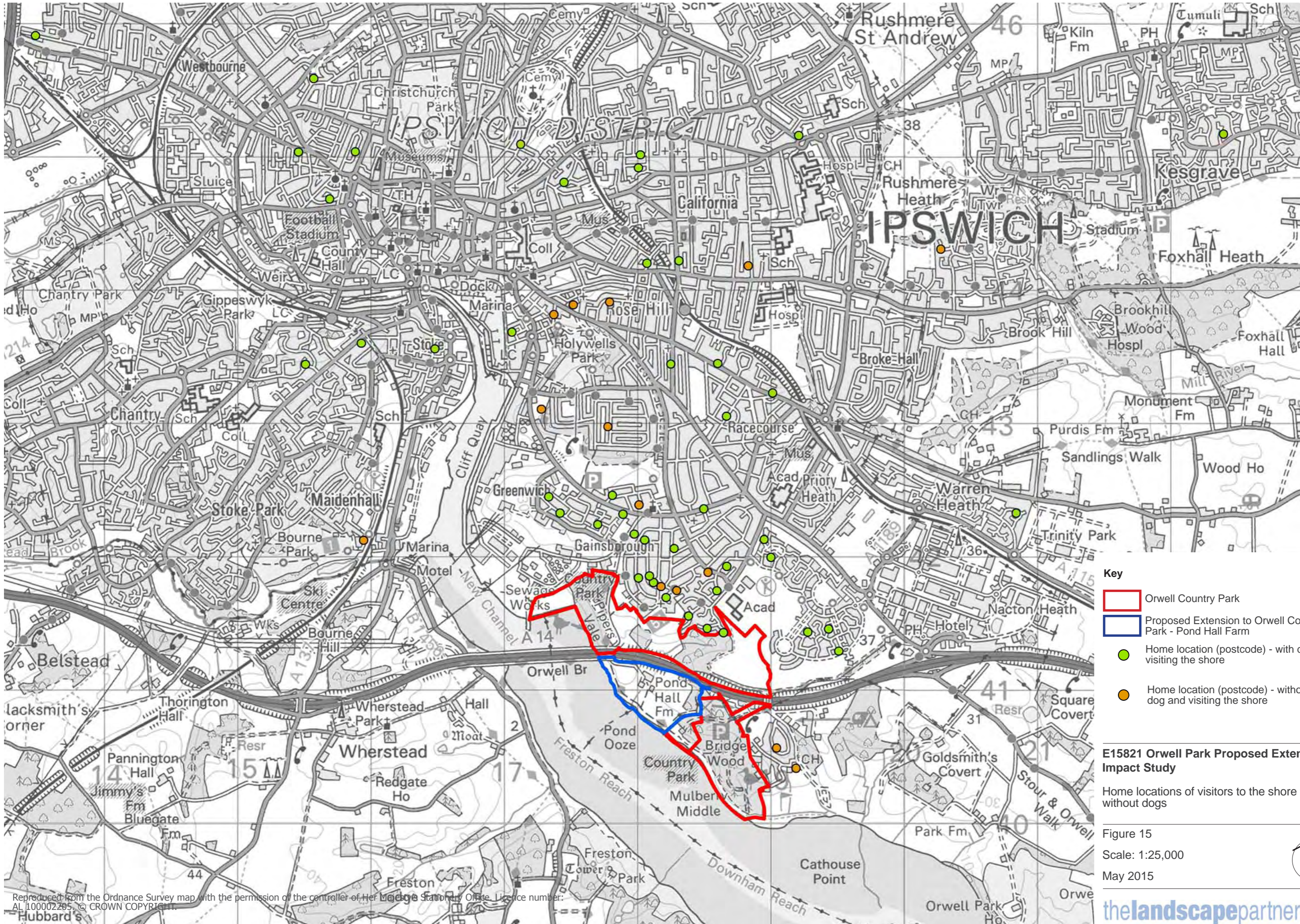
Figure 14

Scale: 1:25,000

May 2015



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- Key**
- Orwell Country Park
 - Proposed Extension to Orwell Country Park - Pond Hall Farm
 - Home location (postcode) - with dog and visiting the shore
 - Home location (postcode) - without dog and visiting the shore

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Home locations of visitors to the shore with or without dogs

Figure 15

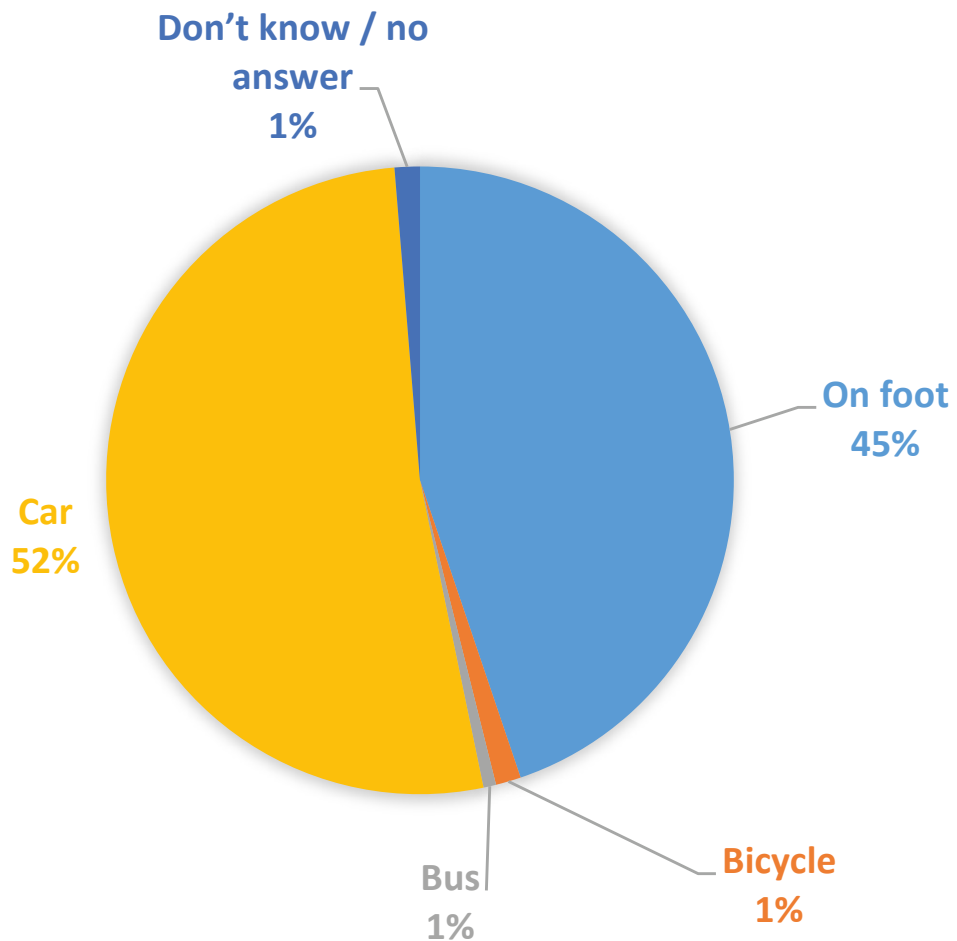
Scale: 1:25,000

May 2015



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Q3. MODES OF TRAVEL TO PARK



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Mode of travel to the country park

Figure 16

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Table 4. Frequency of visits

Mode of travel to Country Park	Visit daily	Visit 2 – 4 times per week	Visit once per week	Visit once per month	Visit less than once per month
Walk	47	11	5	3	1
Drive	9	19	20	22	11

3.3.9

The relative frequency of visits from people who walk or drive can be compared. For the month of March, the number of visits by each visitor who was surveyed can be calculated by estimating the number of visits made per month, multiplied by the length of the month. So for visitors who said that they visited daily, they would visit 31 times within March. It is assumed that those who said they visited 2 – 4 times per week would visit, on average, around 3 times per week, and given a four-week month, it is assumed that these people would visit perhaps 12 times in March. Those that visit once per week would visit 4 times in the month, and those that visit less than once per month would visit on average 0.5 times per month. These estimates can be used to calculate the number of visits in March made by those visitors who were surveyed. Table 5 shows the number of visits in March estimated for those who were surveyed.

Table 5. Number of visits to Orwell Country Park in March by those who were surveyed. 'Visitors' refers to people visiting alone or to groups of visitors visiting together.

	Visit daily (number of visitors surveyed x 31 days)	Visit 2 – 4 times per week (number of visitors surveyed x 12)	Visit once per week (number of visitors x 4)	Visit once per month (number of visitors)	Visit less than once per month (number of visitors x 0.5)	Total
Walk to Country Park	1457	132	20	3	0.5	1612.5
Drive to Country Park	279	228	80	22	5.5	614.5

3.3.10

The conclusion from the above table is that in a typical March there would have been 1612.5 visits from those people surveyed who walk to the Country Park, and 614.5 visits from those people surveyed who drove to the Country Park. A 'visit' could represent a single person visiting alone, or a small group of people visiting together. More people arrived by car and car groups tended to be bigger, but those who walk come more often. The key point is that each person who visits would visit 2.5 times more often if they live within walking distance compared to driving distance. Although slightly more visitors drove to the Country Park than those who walked there, there is a much larger number of potential visitors within driving distance of the park. Only a very small proportion of those people within driving distance actually visited at the time of the survey in March and each of those visitors visits less often than those visitors within walking distance.

Car park point counts

- 3.3.11 There was no clear relationship visible in the data between the number of cars in either car park and the number of people counted almost simultaneously at the shore. This suggests that counting parked cars would not be an accurate substitute for an estimate of the number of people visiting the shore at that time. This may be due to the number of people who walk to the Country Park or due to the size of the sample.
- 3.3.12 The data is shown in Figure 17.

3.4 Awareness of and attitude towards the nature conservation interest of the area***Awareness of wildlife value of estuary***

- 3.4.1 Visitors were asked "*Are you aware that the river and shore is very important for wildlife, particularly water birds during the winter months?*" This was intended to include information within the question, and may have been a leading question in that interviewees may have wished to claim awareness. The vast majority of visitors did claim awareness that the site was important as in the question, with just 7% admitting a lack of awareness. This is shown in Figure 18.
- 3.4.2 The interviewer then provided follow-up information about the estuary's SPA designation and the Council's duty to conserve the designated wildlife.

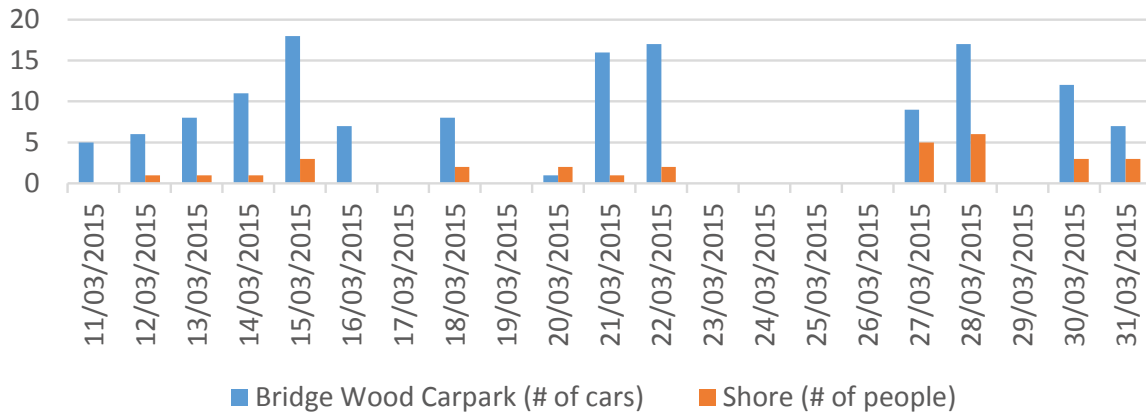
Respect for temporary closures

- 3.4.3 The next question asked whether or not the interviewee thought that '*most people would respect temporary closures of the shore to prevent disturbance to important birds?*' This question was written to try and prevent the interviewee being led into giving an answer; most people probably would have claimed that they themselves would respect temporary closures. So by asking for perceptions of other people, this interview bias was reduced.
- 3.4.4 Three quarters of people thought that 'most people' would respect temporary closures, although one quarter of respondents thought that most people would not respect closures. There was no information about how the closure would be implemented and wardened, which might affect perceptions on attitude to closures. The data on perceptions on temporary closures is given in Figure 18.

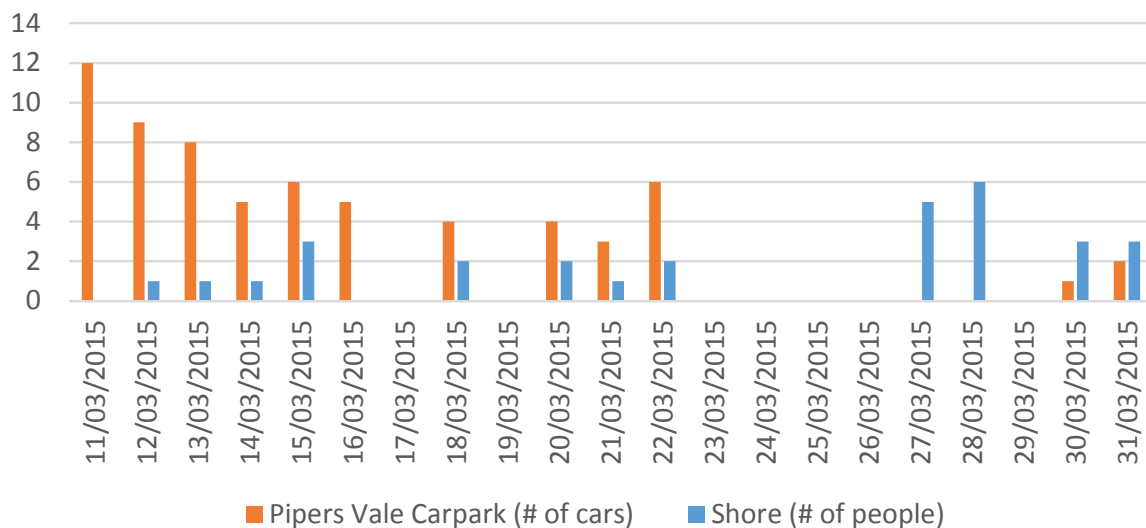
3.5 Visitor perceptions and willingness to pay for improvements***Desired improvements***

- 3.5.1 Visitors were asked an open question about what would improve their visit, with no options or leading statements (question 12). Multiple answers could be given. Eighty-six people answered this question, with the greatest response (33 people, 38%) suggesting that more dog bins would be beneficial. The second most popular 'improvement' desired by half as many people (16 people, 18%), was for 'no change'. It may have been a way of expressing concern about change, with undefined change often perceived as undesirable.
- 3.5.2 Twenty other desired improvements were put forward, with frequencies ranging from one or two people only (ten of the twenty desired improvements) up to 13 people mentioning it. The desired improvements mentioned by over ten people included litter bins, wardening improvements, and access improvements such as waymarking and path surfaces, which could be grouped together as site management resourcing issues.
- 3.5.3 Interestingly, built developments such as toilets, playground, visitor centre and café were little mentioned as desirable improvements. This may be related to the distance travelled from home, with those facilities available there following a short visit up to two hours. Alternatively, the people who desire those built facilities may have chosen not to visit the Country Park for this reason, and therefore were not interviewed. 'More space' was mentioned by just one person.
- 3.5.4 The complete list of desired improvements and the number of people who mentioned them is given in Figure 19.

COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF CARS AT BRIDGE WOOD CAR PARK AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT THE SHORE



COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF CARS AT PIPERS VALE CAR PARK AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT THE SHORE



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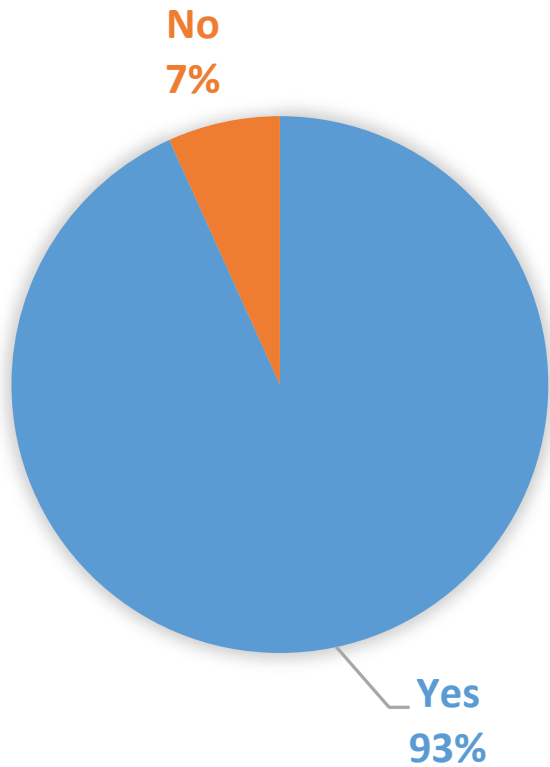
Car park point counts

Figure 17

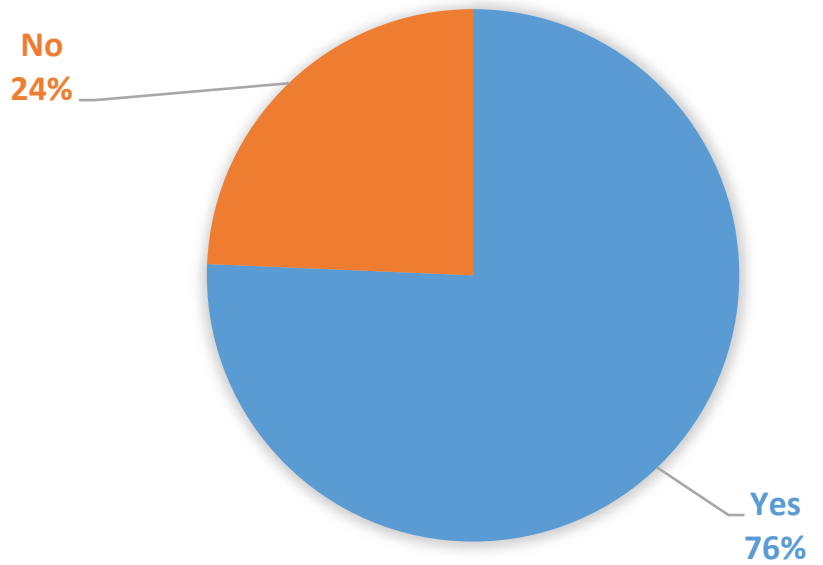
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Q14. AWARENESS OF WILDLIFE VALUE OF SHORE



Q15. WOULD PUBLIC RESPECT TEMPORARY CLOSURES TO SHORELINE?



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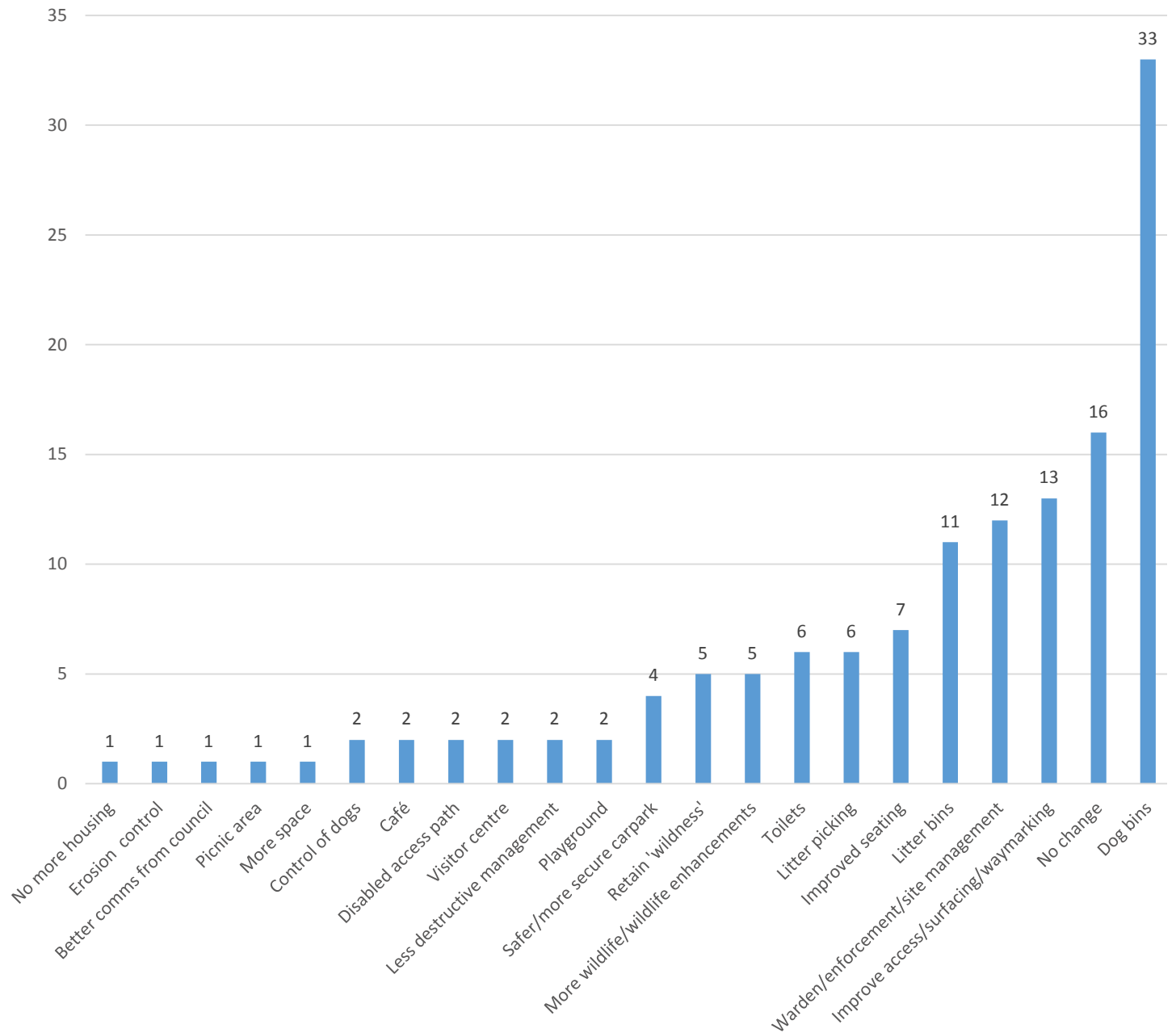
Awareness of wildlife value of the estuary and respect for temporary closures

Figure 18

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Q12. DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS



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Visitors' desired improvements - number of responses from 151 visitors

Figure 19

July 2015



Influence on visit frequency of desired improvements

3.5.5 Visitors were asked if their desired improvements would mean that they visit more often. Just under two-thirds of visitors said that they would not change their visit frequency if their desired improvement was made. As most people visit very regularly there would be little opportunity to visit more often. This suggests that the desired improvements would cause only a quality improvement to the visit for those currently visiting the Country Park.

3.5.6 The data is summarised in Figure 20.

Willingness to pay for improved facilities

3.5.7 Visitors were asked if they would be willing to pay for their suggested improvements. About two-thirds of people were not willing to pay for their suggested improvements. Of those who claimed to be willing to pay, some said it was a price-dependent matter, with a lower payment presumably better than a higher payment. A small percentage of people suggested funding through a car park charge.

3.5.8 The data is summarised in Figure 21.

Willingness to pay an entry fee

3.5.9 Visitors were asked if they would still come as often, if there were an entry fee or car park charge to fund improvements within the park, as a follow up question to ascertain general willingness to pay for desired improvements. Forty percent said that they would not come as often, if they had to pay to enter, which is a substantially smaller number of people compared to those who said they did not want to pay for their desired improvements. Perhaps introducing a mechanism of payment, on an 'as-used' basis, would mean that some people would find it easier to accept payment on entry. Possibly those who used pedestrian entrances were happy with the proposal of a car park charge to gain money for improvements, as it would not affect them personally.

3.5.10 Some of the 60% of people who expressed willingness to pay on entry qualified their willingness by making it price dependent, with lower prices being more acceptable than higher prices. Just 3% of people said that they would be willing to pay on entry if all the money was invested in the park, i.e. reflecting the premise of the question and implicitly expressing doubt over the use of the money.

3.5.11 The data is summarised in Figure 22.

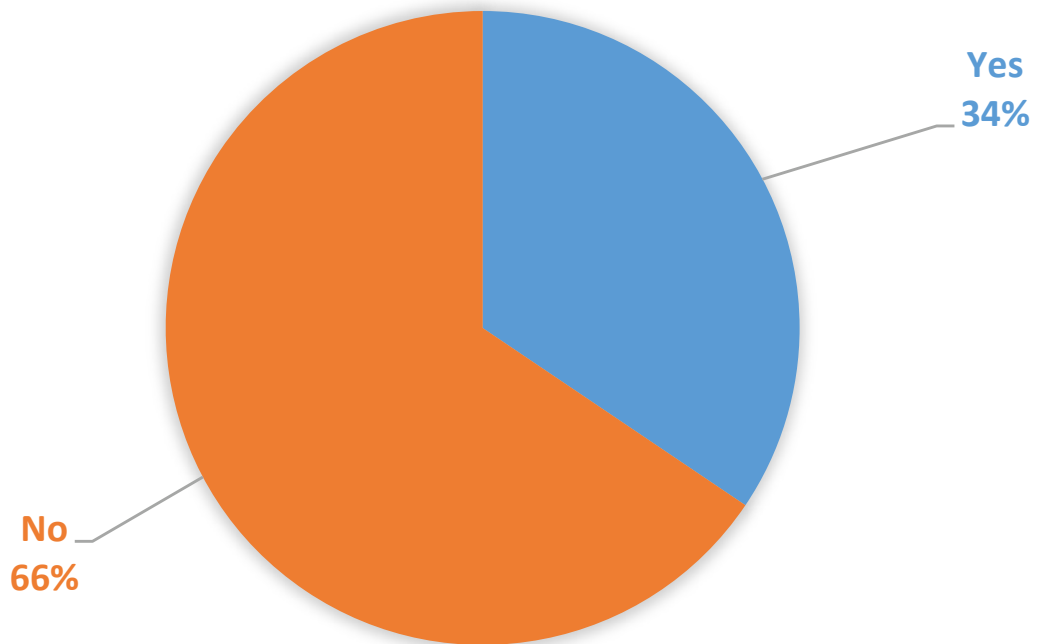
Alternative destinations

3.5.12 Visitors were asked if there were other places where they went, for similar reasons (Question 9). This question was intended to identify patterns in places visited, for example if the estuary side was an important factor in visits. Visitors were not offered options, although for ease of recording some possible alternative destinations were listed on the surveyor's questionnaire. Most answers were coincident with the destinations on the surveyor's checklist.

3.5.13 The two most popular alternative destinations were Christchurch Park, a formal town centre park, and Holywells Park, which has a combination of formal and informal features. Around one-third of people mentioned one or both of these places. Holywells Park is less than one mile in a straight line distance from Pipers Vale, and so it could be easy for some visitors to walk to Holywells Park and to Piper's Vale from nearby residential areas. Landseer Park, situated in between Piper's Vale and Holywells Park, was also a popular alternative destination, again presumably for those making short journeys to a park.

3.5.14 The fourth-most popular alternative destination was 'none', reflecting that many of the Orwell Country Park visitors visited very regularly and had no inclination to visit elsewhere. This response had 36 mentions, out of 151 questionnaires, indicating that one-fifth of all visitors to Orwell Country Park visited there exclusively for the activity forming the purpose of their visit. Thirty-two of these 36 visitors were dog walkers. Twenty-four (67%) of the 36 visitors who did not visit other places walked to the Country Park, higher than the proportion of all visitors who walked there, but with a significant minority of visitors who visit nowhere else travelling to the Country Park by car.

Q12A. WOULD YOUR IMPROVEMENTS INCREASE VISIT FREQUENCY?



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Influence on visit frequency of desired
improvements

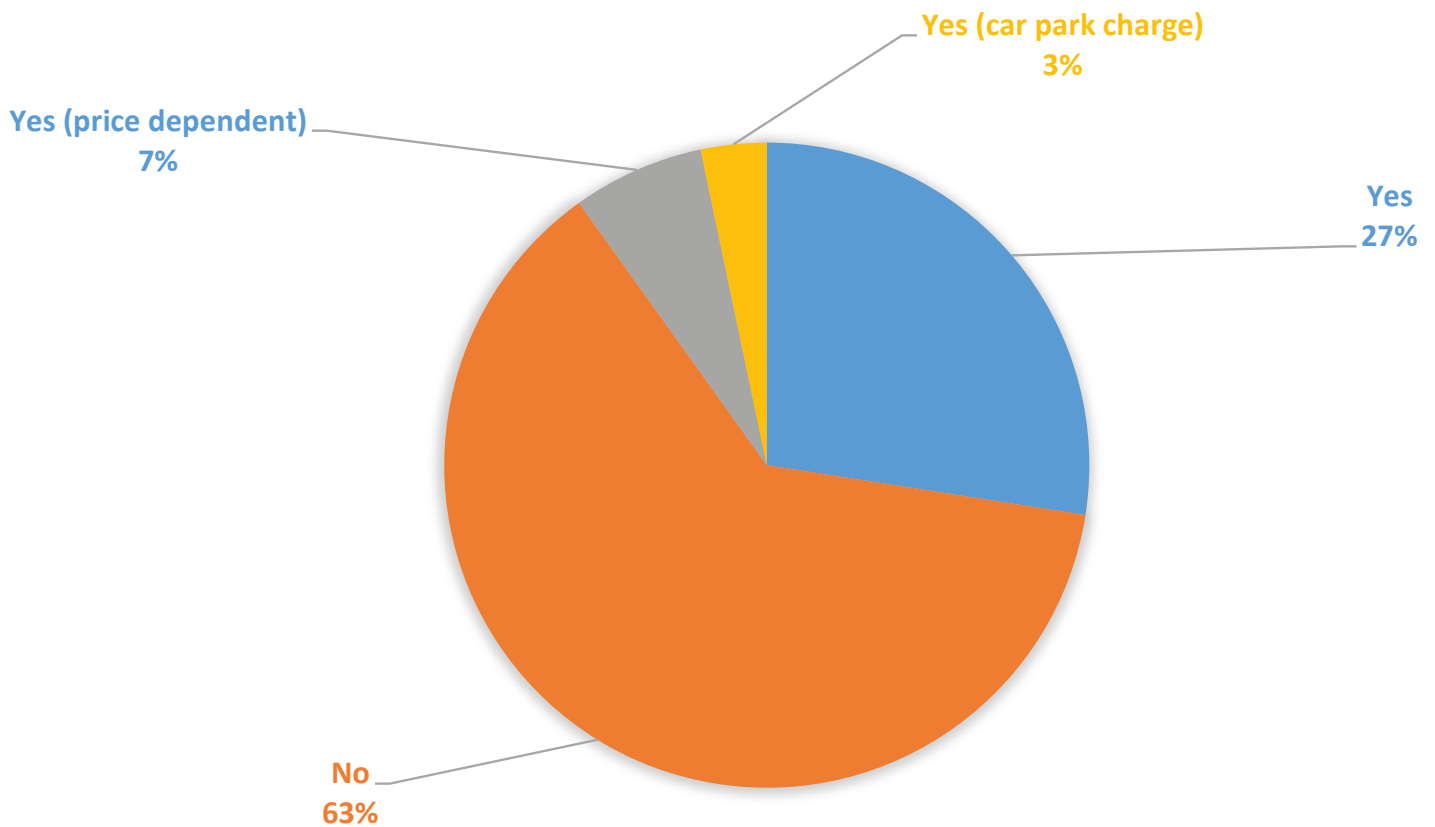
Figure 20

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Q12B. THOSE IN FAVOUR OF PAYMENT FOR IMPROVED FACILITIES



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Willingness to pay

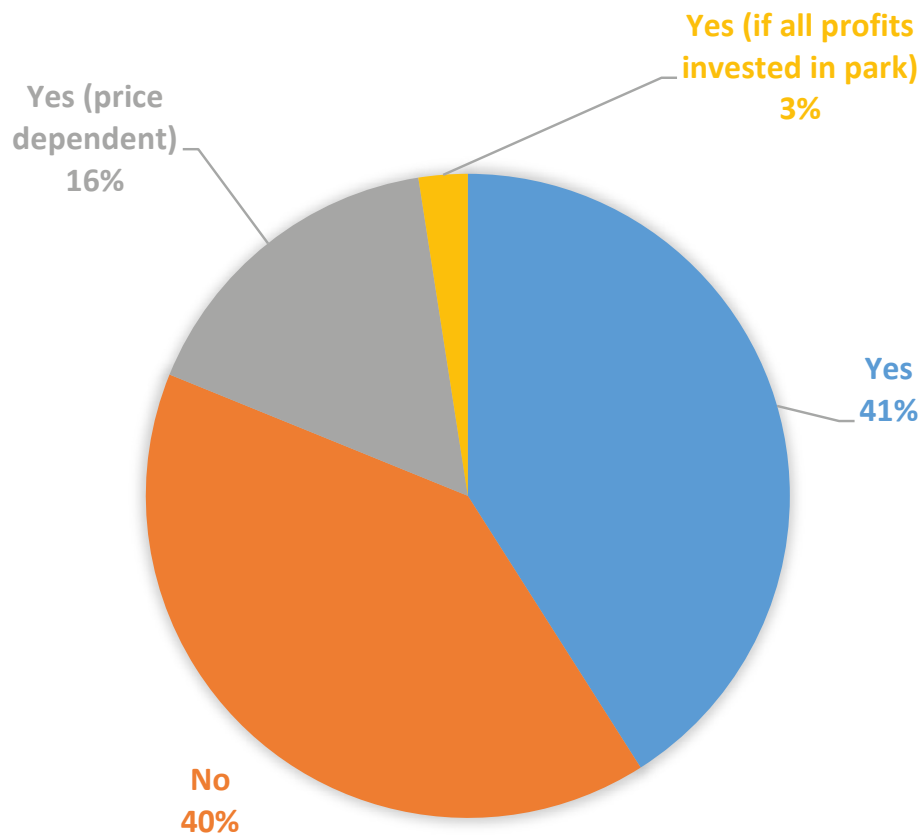
Figure 21

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Q13: RESPONSE TO ENTRANCE FEE



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Willingness to pay an entry fee

Figure 22

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3.5.15 Other places visited, by a minority of visitors to Orwell Country Park, included a combination of formal sites such as Chantry Park and informal countryside recreation facilities such as Rushmere heath, Bobbits Lane Nature Reserve and the riverside walk in Ipswich. Ten visitors said that they also visited Nacton Shore, a picnic site with carpark on the edge of the Orwell Estuary SSSI / SPA a couple of miles downstream from Bridge Wood. Ten out of 151 visitors is a low proportion of people, demonstrating that estuary shorelines are not a key reason for their visits.

3.5.16 The alternative destinations and their popularity is summarised in Figure 23.

Just over half the people interviewed visited the alternative destinations less frequently than they visited Orwell Country Park, 22% visited the other destinations with the same frequency and just 21% of people visited the alternative destinations more frequently. This shows a strong loyalty to Orwell Country Park by its regular visitors. This data is summarised in Figure 24.

3.6 Pond Hall Farm inclusion within Country Park

Pond Hall Farm access availability and shoreline visiting

3.6.1 Visitors were asked whether, if access was available through the farmland at Pond Hall Farm, they would be more or less likely to use the river shore or it would make no difference. The surveyor indicated on the map where Pond Hall Farm was, for visitors who were not familiar with the name

3.6.2 There was an equal split between those who said that access through Pond Hall Farm would make no difference to their shore visiting, and those who said that they would be more likely to visit the shore. Less than 10% of visitors said that they would visit the shore less often if there was access through Pond Hall Farm. It is thought that the results of this may be unreliable, as it was a complex question in terms of behaviour and geography, visitors had not been pre-warned to give it any thought, and the precise wording of the question may have led visitors towards a 'more likely' answer. For example, visitors may have assumed that the purpose of the new access would be to aid reaching the shore.

3.6.3 Therefore, data was looked at for visitors to the shore only, to see if their views were different to those visitors interviewed elsewhere. Of the people interviewed at the shore, the split of views was very similar to the whole set of visitors, with nearly half saying it would make no difference and nearly half saying they would visit more often, with a minority saying they would visit less often. It is considered that survey results for the people who visited the shore gave answers that may have been equally unreliable as the wider visitor base.

3.6.4 The data is summarised in Figure 25.

Pond Hall Farm attractiveness

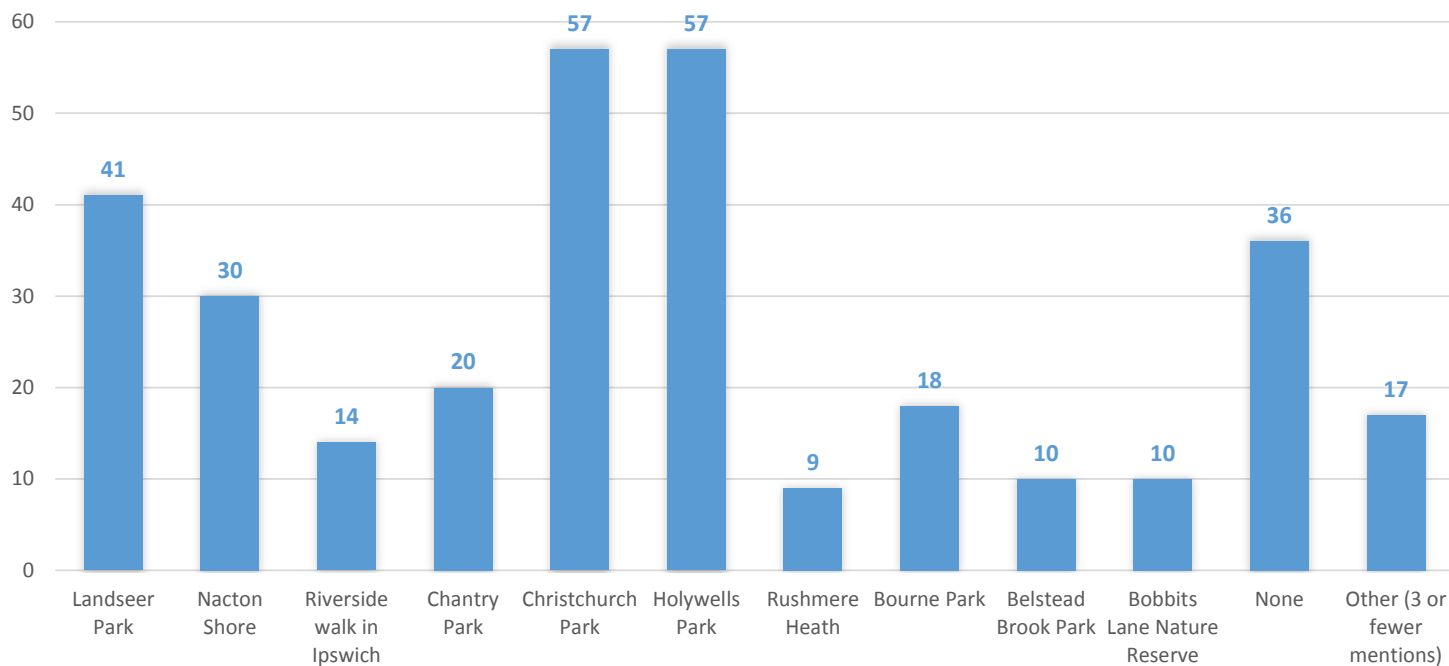
3.6.5 Visitors were then asked what would make them want to visit Pond Hall Farm if it became part of the Country Park. A list of options was presented from which the interviewee could choose one, more or none. Visitors' own ideas were also requested and received.

3.6.6 The two most popular options were each chosen by 40% of visitors (61 visitors). These were 'new paths' and 'dogs off leads area'. A 'dogs off leads' area is one where dogs may be let off leads but remain more-or-less within sight of the owner and is fenced so that the dog cannot run away. Attractive landscape planting, mentioned by around 25% of visitors (35 people) was the third most popular choice.

3.6.7 Active pursuits, such as room for running around, play equipment and cycle paths were mentioned by 12% - 18% of visitors (18 – 28 people). Shelter from wind, and sculptures, attracted a similar low level of interest. Visitors' unprompted comments, from 1 – 16 people, included ecological enhancement, unspecified visitor facilities, and nature trails. Just six visitors (4%) opted for no change.

3.6.8 The data is summarised in Figure 26.

Q9. ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS



E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension Impact Study

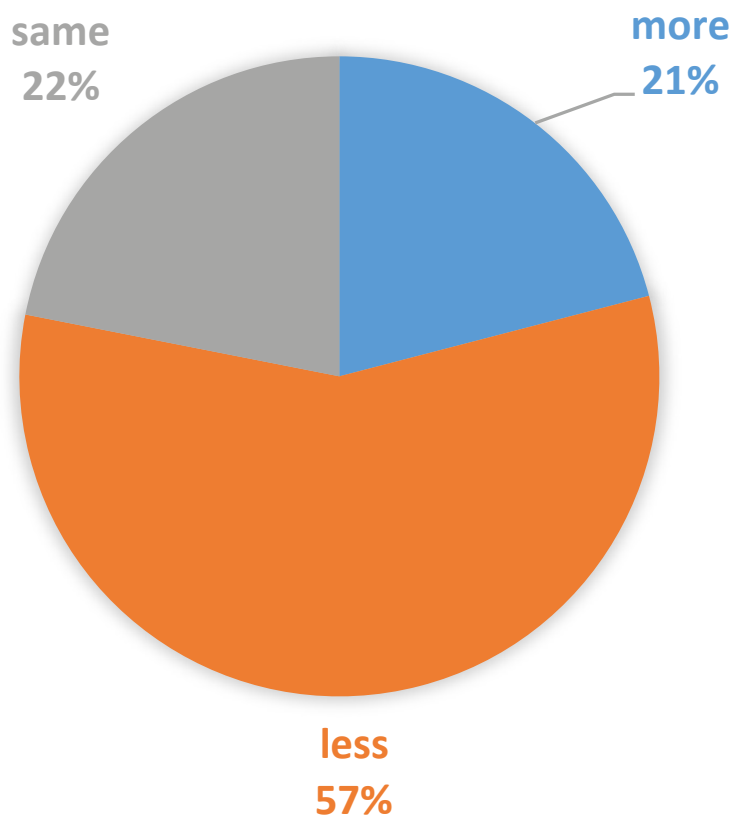
Alternative destinations visited - number of responses to 151 visitors

Figure 23

July 2015



Q9A. COMPARATIVE FREQUENCY OF VISITS ELSEWHERE



**E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension
Impact Study**

Comparative frequency of visits to alternative destinations

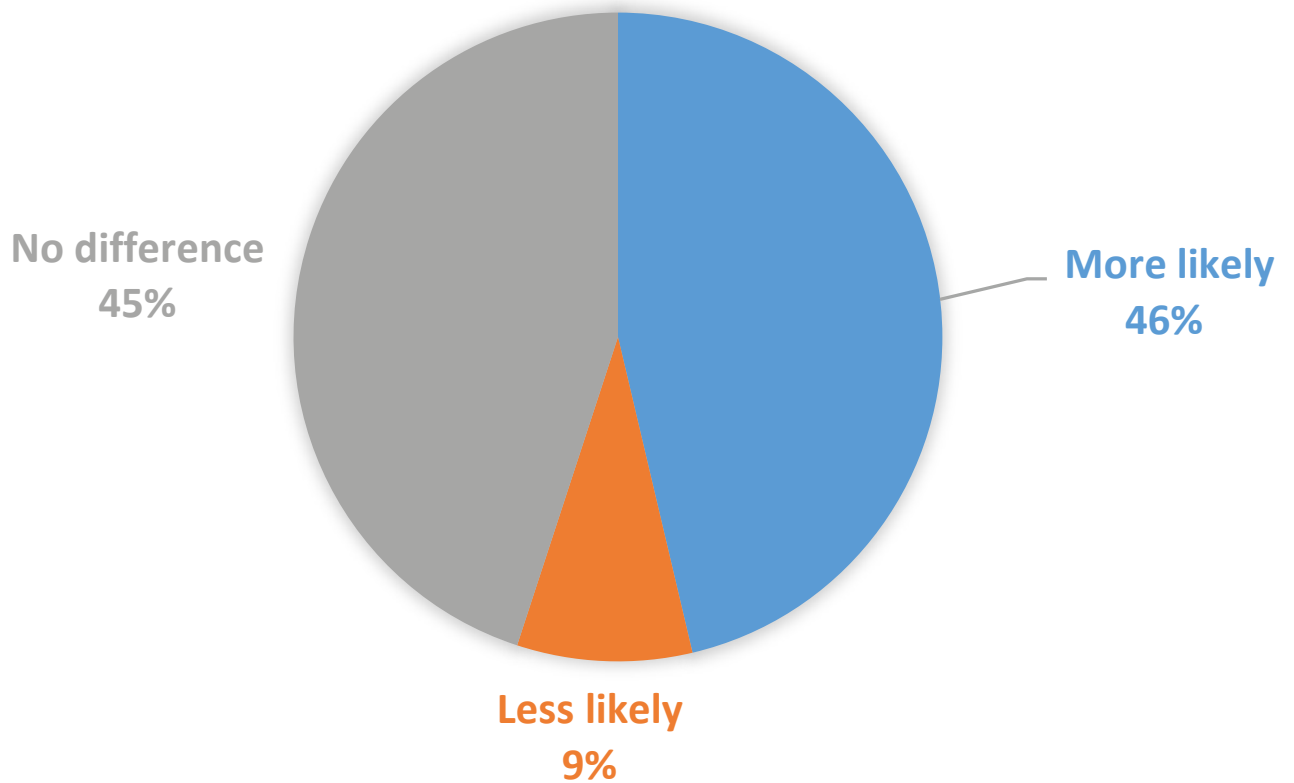
Figure 24

July 2015



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Q16. MORE OR LESS LIKELY TO VISIT SHORE IF ACCESS WAS AVAILABLE THROUGH POND FARM?



E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension
Impact Study

Pond Hall Farm access availability and
shoreline visiting

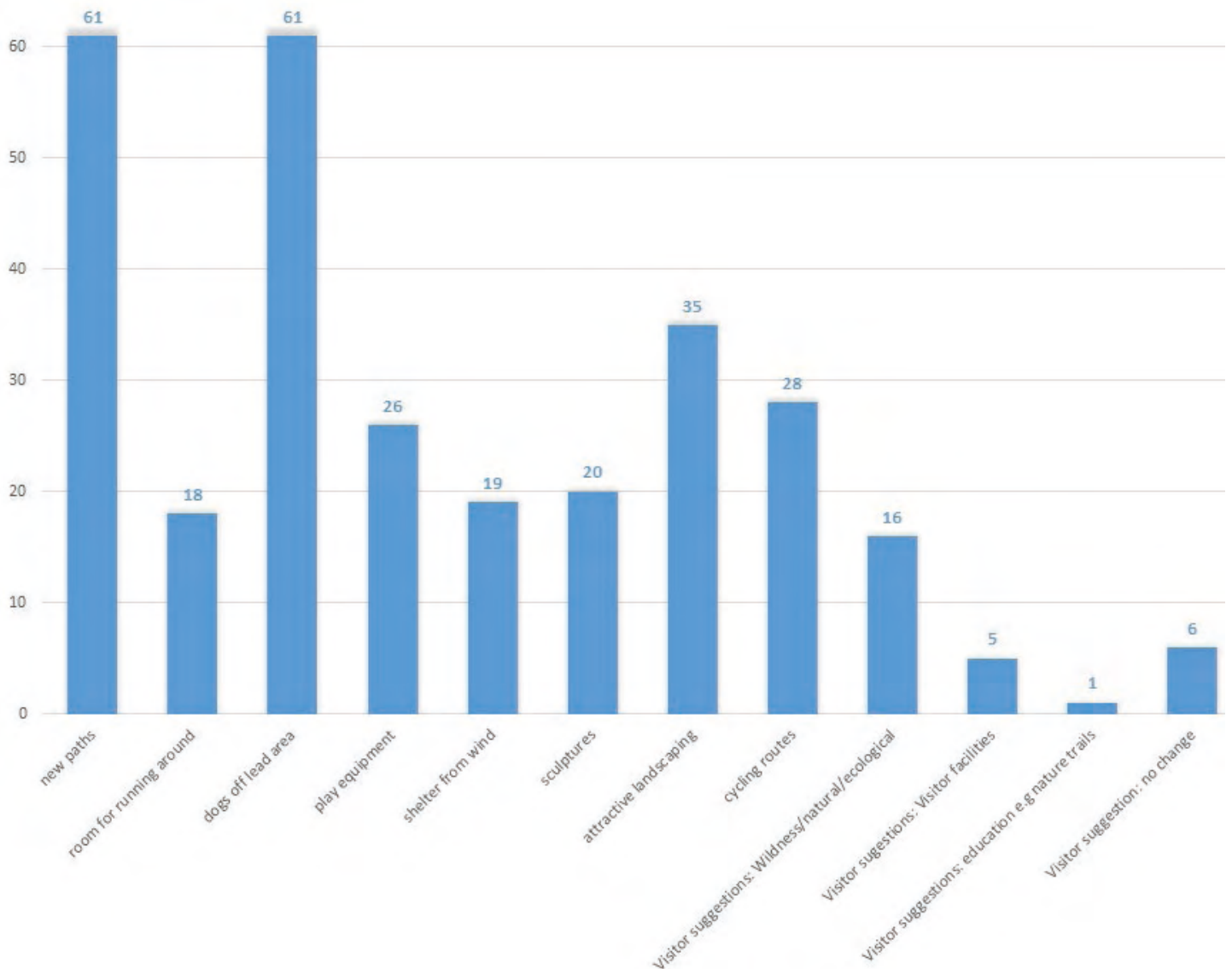
Figure 25

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Q17. WHAT WOULD ATTRACT PUBLIC TO POND HALL FARM AREA



E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension Impact Study

Pond Hall Farm attractiveness - number of responses from 151 visitors

Figure 26

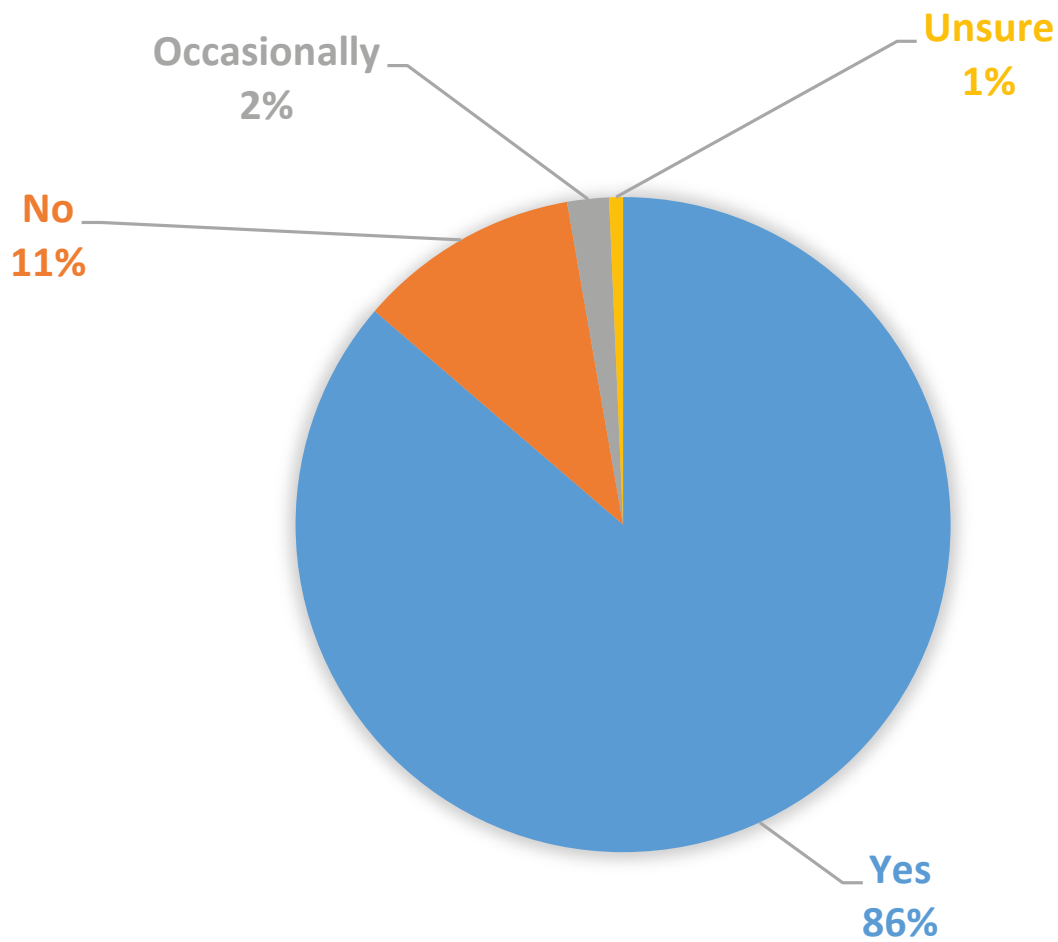
July 2015



Use of trees for shelter at Pond Hall Farm

- 3.6.9 Finally, visitors were told that one option for management of Pond Hall Farm is to plant trees to make a sheltered path on the open fields providing views over the river, so they could walk in shelter instead of along the shore. If there was a sheltered path above the shore, would this be a route they might use especially in winter? This provided a design option to test views on this concept, as few people might have thought of this possibility in the previous question or unprompted.
- 3.6.10 Overwhelmingly, visitors agreed that they would be likely to use this route instead of the shore, with 88% of people agreeing with a few of those qualifying their answer with an 'occasional' use. Just 11% of people said that they would not be likely to use that route. This appears to be inconsistent with answers to the earlier question on whether access through Pond Hall Farm would change the frequency of visits to the shore. The 'sheltered route' question and the proposal it relates to are simple to understand, and therefore it is easier for visitors to give a realistic answer. It is considered that the visitor agreement that they would use a sheltered route across Pond Hall Farm is a more reliable indicator of likely future behaviour than the response to the earlier question about frequency of visits through Pond Hall Farm to the shore.
- 3.6.11 The data is summarised in Figure 27.

Q18. LIKELIHOOD OF USE OF SHELTERED INLAND PATH



E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension
Impact Study

Use of trees for shelter at Pond Hall Farm

Figure 27

July 2015



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4 Discussion and Analysis of Results

4.1 Bird disturbance on the estuary

- 4.1.1 Disturbance to birds on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries was studied in detail in 2007 on behalf of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit. The report of this study (Ravenscroft, Vonk, Parker and Wright 2007⁴) shows how disturbance affects birds and how the disturbance at Orwell Country Park affects bird numbers.
- 4.1.2 The distribution of recreation and other activities, and the disturbance they caused to birds, were measured on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries over three winters from 2004/5 to 2006/7. Walkers, walkers with dogs, and boats were the most frequent activities on the estuaries. These activities caused most disturbance, due to the frequency of the activities. Birds were most sensitive (reacted more) to infrequent events such as shooting, aircraft and bait diggers. Disturbance from shore-based activities was greatest at high tides. The greatest disturbance in the two estuaries occurred on favoured feeding areas for birds where visitor levels were high; hidden approaches, small mudflats and access to the shore at low tide compounded these effects. Overall, birds on the Stour Estuary were little affected by most activities, but the higher levels of activity on the Orwell Estuary may have had an impact on birds there.
- 4.1.3 Two of the study sections were referable to this study. 'Pond Ooze' was a section of shore located immediately downstream of the Orwell Bridge adjacent to Pond Hall Farm, and 'Bridge Wood' was a section of shore adjacent to Bridge Wood.
- 4.1.4 Bridge Wood was one of the three parts of the estuaries with the highest levels of all activities recorded with an average of 9.7 events per hour, peaking at 12.7 events per hour. Shore-based activities were highest at Nacton, Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze. Walkers, walkers with dogs, and joggers were the most common events. The frequencies of disturbance arising from the events was highest at Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze, being significantly above the average for the estuaries.
- 4.1.5 Walkers with dogs caused greater disturbance to birds at high tide, although birds responded similarly to walkers with or without dogs at low tide. On both estuaries, fewer birds occurred on parts of the estuary when there was more activity, with the relationship especially strong at high tide. Some walkers with or without dogs caused no disturbance at all, but on average over the study each walker displaced 24 birds, each dog walker displaced 33 birds and other shore activities displaced 30 – 50 birds.
- 4.1.6 Few birds were present at Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze compared to the areas of lower visitor activity. These sites had the highest levels of disturbance in the two estuaries. Paths along the shore which are shielded by woodland discharge visitors onto the estuary shore, and it was suggested that this sudden appearance of visitors caused surprise and was an important factor in the response of the birds. On other busy parts of the estuaries, levels of disturbance were relatively low, because few birds were present and those remaining birds were likely to be those which had habituated to disturbance.
- 4.1.7 Opening of Orwell Country Park in the mid 1990s was attributed to a recent (at the time of the study) large increase in visitors to Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze and a consequent pronounced decline in numbers of birds. However, the estuary adjacent to Piper's Vale supported the highest density of feeding birds on the estuary and is the only part of the estuary where there is no access to the shore. The study did not state by how much access increased, or give any evidence for the increase. There had previously been public access through public footpaths before the Country Park was formally opened.

⁴ Ravenscroft, Vonk, Parker and Wright (2007) *Disturbance to waterbirds wintering in the Stour-Orwell Estuaries SPA*. A report from Wildside Ecology to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit.

4.1.8 The data did not provide enough evidence to determine whether, or over what time period, bird numbers recovered after a disturbance event.

4.2 Bird distribution within the estuary

4.2.1 The distribution of birds within the Orwell Estuary was monitored by Suffolk Wildlife Trust over fourteen years, on contract to Harwich Haven Authority. A recent Suffolk Wildlife Trust report⁵ describes the results of this monitoring up to winter 2013/14 and is summarised here. The report considered all the bird species which individually exceed the population size for SPA designation, and some additional species, but not all those species which contributed to the SPA-qualifying assemblage of over 20,000 water birds.

4.2.2 The distribution and population size of wintering waterfowl was presented for the Orwell Estuary, as well as for the Stour Estuary. Change since 1999/2000 was discussed. The population trends of most waterbirds in the estuary were in line with national trends, although pintail, wigeon, oystercatcher and grey plover declined faster than national trends. There were strong declines in redshank from the north shores of the Orwell Estuary and parts of the Stour Estuary.

4.2.3 Trends in bird numbers are described in the report text and are also shown on a comparative map for each species. The graphics quality of mapped bird distribution in the first and final years of the survey is significantly different making visual comparisons unclear at times; caution should be taken in interpreting these maps. Table 6 below picks out relevant changes referable to the estuary at Orwell Country Park. In this report, Black Ooze is shown as just south of Orwell Bridge adjacent to Pond Hall Farm, and Pond Ooze is adjacent to Bridge Wood. Mulberry Middle is the next section downstream of Pond Ooze, adjacent to a golf course and farmland.

Table 6. Changes in bird numbers 1999/2000 – 2013/2014

Bird species	SWT report text (Section 3) summary	Estimation of change at Orwell Country Park from inspecting distribution maps from 1999/2000 and 2013/14
Brent goose	Distribution consistent in lower reaches of Orwell Estuary	None at Orwell Country Park at beginning of monitoring period, a few at end of monitoring period
Shelduck	No significant trends, well spread out on the Orwell Estuary	No clear changes in abundance at Orwell Country Park
Wigeon	Little change in distribution and well-distributed on the estuary	No clear changes in abundance at Orwell Country Park
Pintail	Consistent decline and have become localised in the upper reaches of the Orwell and at Trimley Marshes	None at Orwell Country Park at beginning of monitoring period, moderate abundance at end of monitoring period
Oystercatcher	Strongly mid and upper estuary distribution which has changed little in the survey period	Abundant at beginning of monitoring period; more abundant at the end of the period
Ringed plover	Used to be scattered across the estuary but now none at	Moderately abundant at the beginning of the monitoring

⁵ Ravenscroft / SWT Trading Ltd (August 2014) *Ornithological monitoring of the Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area: winters 1999/2000 to 2013/2014.*

Bird species	SWT report text (Section 3) summary	Estimation of change at Orwell Country Park from inspecting distribution maps from 1999/2000 and 2013/14
	Pond Ooze / Black Ooze by Orwell Country Park.	period, absent at the end of the monitoring period
Grey Plover	Strongly mid-estuary birds, declining	Moderately abundant at the beginning of the monitoring period, fewer at the end of the monitoring period
Lapwing	Distribution remains the same with birds in specific areas away from the Country Park	A few at the beginning of the monitoring period, absent at the end of the monitoring period
Knot	Were well-distributed through the estuary but now mostly in Mansbrook Bay.	Moderately abundant at the beginning of the monitoring period, fewer at the end of the monitoring period (but map is particularly poor graphics quality)
Dunlin	Well distributed on the estuary with no change recognised	Moderately abundant at the beginning of the monitoring period, fewer at the end of the monitoring period
Black-tailed godwit	Declining in numbers but no change in distribution recorded	No clear changes in abundance at Orwell Country Park
Curlew	Declining in numbers and becoming concentrated in the mid reaches of the estuary	No clear changes in abundance at Orwell Country Park
Redshank	Declining in numbers but no change in distribution recorded; well spread in the estuary	No clear changes in distribution at Orwell Country Park
Turnstone	Birds have abandoned Pond Ooze where they were relatively numerous and now found at Mulberry Middle and lower reaches.	Abundant at the beginning of the monitoring period, few at the end of the monitoring period

4.2.4 Overall, changes from 1999/2000 to 2013/14 are varied, with gains and losses of birds adjacent to Bridge Wood. There were no clear changes in shelduck, wigeon, black-tailed godwit, curlew and redshank, but there were increases in brent geese, pintail, and oystercatcher. There were decreases in ringed plover, grey plover, lapwing, dunlin and turnstone.

4.2.5 Ravenscroft, Vonk, Parker and Wright (2007) in their disturbance study looked at the sensitivity of different species to disturbance effects. Redshank were most easily disturbed at high tide and at low tide, and least affected at high tide were black-tailed godwit and golden plover. Generally

though the level of disturbance to any species was related to its occurrence, with more widespread species disturbed more often.

- 4.2.6 The 2014 Suffolk Wildlife Trust report looked in greater detail at the changes to redshank population during the 1999/2000 to 2013/14 monitoring period. Redshank was chosen for detailed study due to its strong consistent decline in the estuaries and nationally. Appendix 6 compares the decline in redshank over the monitoring period with the levels of disturbance recorded in the 2007 disturbance report. Text in the 2014 report says that largest declines occurred in sections where there has been an increase in recreation and access especially around Bridge Wood which might have affected populations at Pond Ooze and Mulberry Middle. However, this is not borne out by the figure, which shows Mulberry Middle being at some distance downstream from the disturbance at Bridge Wood.
- 4.2.7 The unnumbered figure on page 15 of the 2014 report shows that redshank has declined in both areas of higher disturbance and lower disturbance. For example, a decline of 20-40% was recorded at Orwell Country Park, but there was a decline of 40-60% immediately downstream in areas of lower disturbance at Alnesbourne and Nacton. It is therefore difficult to link the localised declines to localised disturbance. Other declines occurred on other parts of the estuary where there was little disturbance. A comparison of the 2014 report's figure of redshank decline and the 2007 report's disturbance measurements is given in Appendix 6.

4.3 Population and housing change in Ipswich

Population change 2001 – 2011/2014

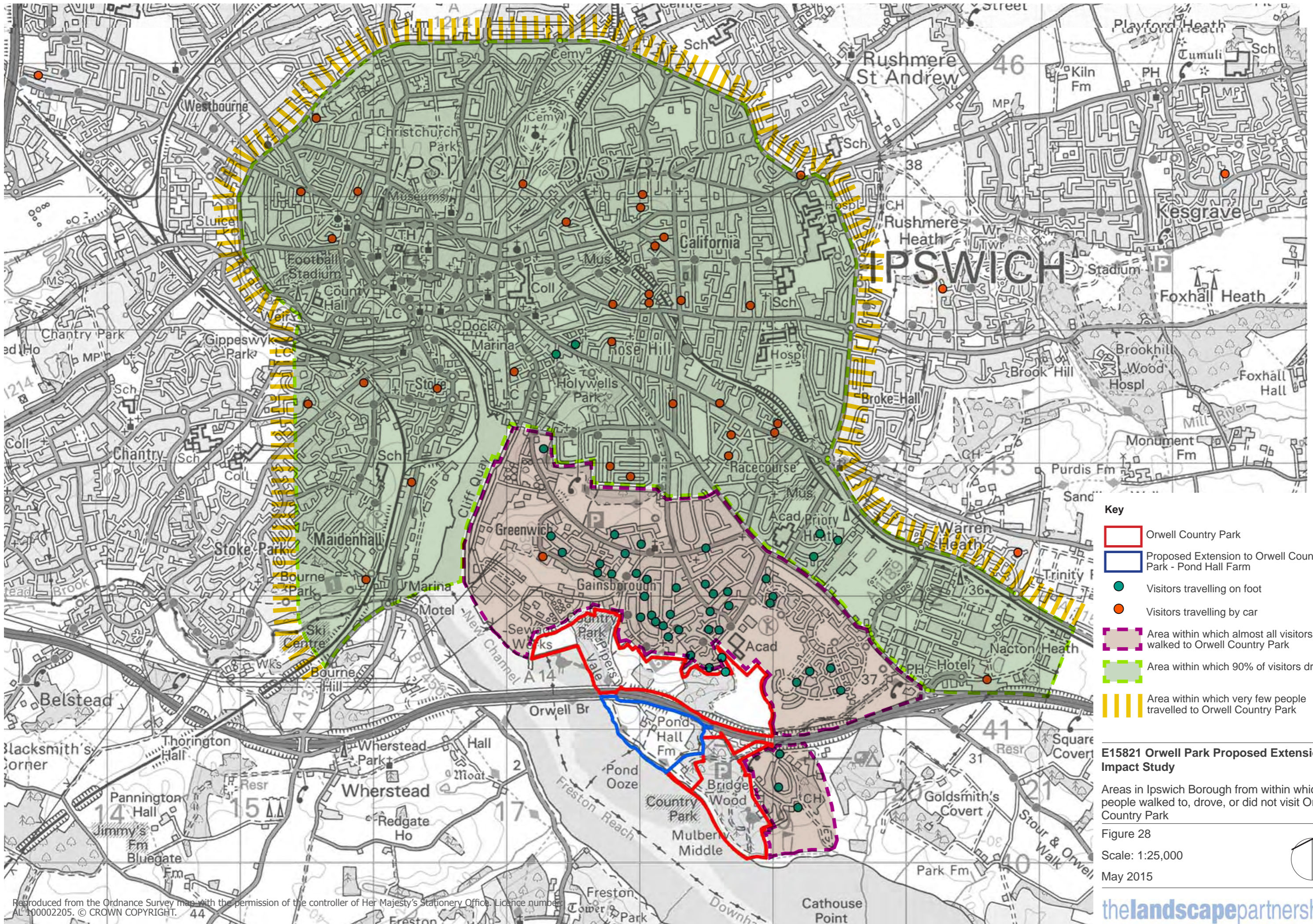
- 4.3.1 The population of Ipswich grew by 16,326 people from 2001 to 2011 to a total of 133,400 people (2011 census) in 58,700 households. In the same period, 6,903 dwellings were built (Ipswich Core Strategy, Policy CS7, table 4⁶). This equates to one new dwelling built for every 2.37 person increase in population. Table 4 of CS7 also says that a further 1,077 dwellings were built from 2011 – 2015, which makes a total of 7,980 dwellings constructed in the period 2001 – 2015 and a total number of dwellings of 59,777 by the end of 2015. The mid-year population estimate for 2013 was 134,693 people.

Population change, 2014 – 2031

- 4.3.2 The proposed submission Core Strategy and proposed submission Site Allocation Local Plan⁷ documents together allocate sites for 1,929 dwellings to be built in Ipswich by 2031, plus a further 3,500 dwellings at Ipswich Garden Suburb, of which 2,700 dwellings are expected by 2031.
- 4.3.3 Figure 28 shows the area from within which visitors walked to Orwell Country Park, and the area of Ipswich from within which visitors drove to Orwell Country Park. Outside these areas, of those surveyed no-one from Ipswich Borough visited the Country Park. There were three visitors who came from Suffolk Coastal District, to the east of Ipswich Borough, who are excluded from this discussion of population change within Ipswich Borough.
- 4.3.4 Appendix 7 lists the sites allocated for residential development with the indicative capacity of homes which could be built, extracted from the Pre-Submission Main Modifications (September 2015) to the Proposed Submission Site Allocations Plan. The number of homes within the distances from which people walk, or drive to, Orwell Country Park is listed based on the areas in Figure 28. Of the 1,929 homes in allocated sites, none are within the distance within which people walk (of those surveyed) to Orwell Country Park, 1,386 are within the distance within which people drive to Orwell Country Park, and the remainder are further than the distance from within which people from Ipswich Borough visited.
- 4.3.5 There would also be 1,800 windfall site dwellings within the plan period, in locations currently not known and to be identified by developers. If these follow the broad pattern of allocated sites,

⁶ Proposed Submission Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document Review Pre-Submission Main Modifications, (September 2015)

⁷ Proposed Submission Site Allocations and Policies (incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) Development Plan Document Pre-Submission Main Modifications, (September 2015)



- Key**
- Orwell Country Park
 - Proposed Extension to Orwell Country Park - Pond Hall Farm
 - Visitors travelling on foot
 - Visitors travelling by car
 - Area within which almost all visitors walked to Orwell Country Park
 - Area within which 90% of visitors drove
 - Area within which very few people travelled to Orwell Country Park

E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension Impact Study

Areas in Ipswich Borough from within which people walked to, drove, or did not visit Orwell Country Park

Figure 28

Scale: 1:25,000

May 2015



about 75% (1,350 dwellings) would be within driving distance of Orwell Country Park, and the remainder would be further than the distance from within which people from Ipswich Borough visited. None would be within walking distance.

4.3.6 Aadastral Park at Martlesham is the major growth location identified by Suffolk Coastal District Council through its adopted Core Strategy. This lies outside the distance within which most people who were surveyed travelled to Orwell Country Park.

4.3.7 Subject to there being no development allocations in Suffolk Coastal District in the locations within which people surveyed walked or drove to the country park, it is estimated that there would be no changes in winter visitor numbers individually from site allocations in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and therefore no in-combination effect at Orwell Country Park from site allocations. However, the effects and mitigation measures identified in the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy remain relevant in terms of overall effects of housing growth. Any windfall housing development may increase usage. It should be noted that these Suffolk Coastal locations are outside the 'walking' catchment but within the 'driving' catchment, albeit outside of the area from which most visitors travelled.

4.3.8 The Local Plan also includes the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan. Issues and Options consultation was undertaken on the Area Action Plan from December 2014 to February 2015. The Area Action Plan proposes a minimum of 850 units within the plan area, which also lies outside the distance within which most people who were surveyed travelled to Orwell Country Park.

4.4 Change in visitors to Orwell Country Park resulting from Ipswich Local Plan

Allocations for residential development within walking distance of Orwell Country Park

4.4.1 There are no allocations for residential development within the distance from which visitors in the March 2015 survey walked to Orwell Country Park. The Site Allocations Plan would therefore be unlikely to result in development which would generate new visitors who would walk to the Country Park. It is assumed that windfall sites would be in proportion to Site Allocations in any particular area, with therefore no windfall sites arising in this area.

Allocations for residential development within driving distance of Orwell Country Park

4.4.2 It is estimated that visitors travelled from an area encompassing 75% of the built-up parts of Ipswich by area. This percentage of the total number of dwellings in the Borough suggests that the catchment of visitors during the survey period is of around 45,000 homes. An increase of 1,386 homes in allocated sites and approximately 1,350 windfall site homes, or 2,773 homes in all, is an increase of 6% in homes in the visitor catchment. It is considered that each new home is equally likely to generate visits to the Country Park as would each existing home, with a 'visit' meaning one person or a group of people from that home.

4.4.3 During the survey, half the visitors surveyed lived in the area from which people drove to the Country Park. An increase of 6% in this proportion of those visitors would be an increase in 3% of total visitors from Ipswich Borough, bearing in mind that the number of people walking to the Country Park would not change because there are no allocations within walking distance.

Typical countryside walk lengths

4.4.4 Several other visitor studies show how far visitors to countryside sites tend to walk once they have arrived at the site. Table 7 overleaf shows typical walking distances.

Table 7. Typical distances walked in countryside sites, from other studies.

Study	Distance walked
Fearnley, H, Liley, D and Floyd L. (2014). Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA Visitor Survey. Unpublished report for Canterbury City Council by Footprint Ecology	On average, dog walkers covered a distance of 3.5km
Cruikshanks, Liley and Hoskin (2010). Suffolk Sandlings Visitor Survey. Footprint Ecology / Suffolk Wildlife Trust.	Mean route length by dog walkers was 3,297m, median length was 2,932m. Mean route length by walkers was 4,854m, median length was 3,932m
Clarke, R., Liley, D., Underhill-Day, J. & Rose, R. 2005. Visitor Access patterns on the Dorset heathlands. English Nature Research Reports, No. 683	The average distance walked on the heaths was 2.2km.
Fearnley, H. & Liley, D. (2011). North Kent Visitor Survey Results. Footprint Ecology.	Mean route length by dog walkers was 3.3km, median length was 2.6km. Mean route length by walkers was 4.3km, median length was 3km
Liley, D. (2007) Wokingham Borough Visitor Surveys. Footprint Ecology / Wokingham Borough Council	Dog walkers median distance was 1348.2m, non-dog walkers median distance was 1292.4m
Cruikshanks, K. & Liley, D. (2012). Pagham Harbour Visitor Surveys. Unpublished report by Footprint Ecology. Commissioned by Chichester District Council	At various sites, median walk length was 1.8km – 4.2km, with mean lengths of 2.8km – 4.7km

4.4.5

These surveys show that visitors to a multitude of countryside sites across England like to walk, alone or with a dog, average distances of at least 2km and up to 4.8km. At Orwell Country Park, there are no routes of such length at Piper's Vale alone or at Bridge Wood alone. Inevitably to provide the walk length that visitors desire, at Orwell Country Park the path along the shore is needed to provide that walk length as there are no other route options.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Local plan conclusions and recommendations

Likely significant effect of Orwell Country Park at the current time on Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA

- 5.1.1 There is conflicting evidence as to whether or not visitors to Orwell Country Park are having a likely significant effect upon Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA. The 2007 report for the AONB Unit, see Section 4.1, was clear that few birds were present in the estuary at Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze compared to the areas of lower visitor activity. These sites had the highest levels of disturbance in the two estuaries. The opening of Orwell Country Park in the mid 1990s was attributed to a recent (at the time of the study) large increase in visitors to Bridge Wood and Pond Ooze and a consequent pronounced decline in numbers although no data is presented. However, the estuary adjacent to Piper's Vale supported the highest density of feeding birds on the estuary and is the only part of the estuary where there is no access to the shore. This report suggested that the Country Park could be having an adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA.
- 5.1.2 However, these findings were not supported by a later 2014 study, which looked at changes in bird numbers from 1999/2000 to 2013/14 in the Stour and Orwell Estuaries (section 4.2). This later study found that for the estuary adjacent to Orwell Country Park there were no clear changes in shelduck, wigeon, black-tailed godwit, curlew and redshank numbers, and there were increases in brent geese, pintail, and oystercatcher. There were decreases in numbers of ringed plover, grey plover, lapwing, dunlin and turnstone. Generally the level of disturbance to any species was related to its occurrence, with more widespread species disturbed more often. Increases in some species adjacent to Orwell Country Park indicates that the levels of disturbance may not be sufficient to disturb those species.
- 5.1.3 The 2014 Suffolk Wildlife Trust report looked in greater detail at the changes to redshank population due to its strong consistent decline in the estuaries and nationally. The report shows that redshank has declined both in areas of higher disturbance and areas of lower disturbance, suggesting a factor other than disturbance may be influencing numbers. The decrease has been in line with national declines, suggesting a non-localised ecological factor may be in play.
- 5.1.4 One possible reason for the inconsistency between reports is that the earlier report included anecdotal evidence about pre-1995 bird numbers, whereas the later report used data only after the Country Park had been established.

Likely significant effect on Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA of the Ipswich Local Plan

- 5.1.5 The predicted 3% increase in visitors to Orwell Country Park resulting from allocated sites and windfall sites could potentially increase the disturbance to birds within the SPA, based on a linear relationship between visitor quantity, number of disturbance events and impact on birds. However, there is uncertainty about the current impact of visitors on birds, and it is possible that no harm would be caused. The uncertainty means that it is not possible to ascertain that there would be no likely significant effect or an adverse impact upon the integrity of the SPA resulting from the increased development in the absence of control measures. The conclusions and mitigation measures identified in the Habitats Regulations Assessments of the Ipswich Core Strategy therefore remain relevant⁸, and it should also be noted that the results of this survey do not rule out the possibility of visits to the country park from new dwellings outside of the area where most people surveyed currently live.

Recommendations to reduce possible visitor impacts – policy for use of Country Park

- 5.1.6 The identification in this study of the predominant use of the Country Park as a local facility for recreation, rather than it being a visitor destination, is crucial to policy for its future. The Country

⁸ This includes the Appropriate Assessment for Ipswich Borough Council Proposed Submission Core Strategy and Policies (September 2009) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) for Ipswich Borough Council Proposed Submission Core Strategy and Policies DPD Review (December 2014)

Park generally attracts local visitors for fairly short visits (up to two hours). It is possible that if built facilities were provided, such as toilets, café and / or visitor centre, visitors would stay longer, a greater percentage might visit the shore and consequently cause a significant increase in disturbance to SPA birds. There might be an increase in those visitors who prefer those facilities but currently go elsewhere, thus adding to visitor numbers and potential disturbance. In fact, a large increase in visitor numbers would be likely to be required to make the facilities viable, normally with high levels of promotion of those facilities.

5.1.7 Furthermore, built facilities are normally situated close to car parking areas, to maximise use of those facilities. With two car parks and several entrances, there is no one single location where facilities could be reached easily by all visitors to the park.

5.1.8 It is recommended that Ipswich Borough Council undertakes further assessment in relation to built facilities' potential effects upon the SPA.

The need for an extension to include Pond Hall Farm

5.1.9 The main reasons for visiting (Section 3.2) are for dog walking, access to woodland, and location close to home, which are a higher priority than shore visiting. The alternative destinations visited (section 3.5) also suggest that the shore is not a high priority for many visitors, at least in March, because the vast majority of alternative destinations do not feature a shore. In the summer, the shore may be popular as a seaside beach destination substitute, and questionnaire answers may be different during a summer survey.

5.1.10 It is therefore considered that the shore is often used as a link in a longer walk rather than an attraction in its own right, at least at the time of year the survey was carried out. To provide the walk length that visitors desire (e.g. at least 2km, see Section 4.4) at Orwell Country Park the path along the shore is currently needed to provide that walk length as there are no other route options. Birds on the estuary are therefore exposed to walkers at the shore because walkers have few other options at the Country Park for more than short walks.

5.1.11 Land at Pond Hall Farm is needed as an extension to the Country Park to provide walk length opportunities over 2km without the need for people to visit the shore. Not all visitors would use the Pond Hall Farm opportunities, but a proportion would, thus reducing exposure of birds to people.

5.1.12 On the evidence of the survey, it is considered that the Pond Hall Farm extension would attract some visitors from the shore to enjoy their visit away from the shore. In particular, dog walkers, and walkers, could benefit from and use the longer walks and shelter from the wind in winter when the SPA is most vulnerable to disturbance. It is not possible to quantify a prediction of visitor use of the country park extension. However, based on the evidence provided through the survey, it is considered that the extension would provide an appropriate measure to draw visitors away from the shore, thus reducing the likelihood of effects on the SPA.

Design features for Pond Hall Farm as an extension to the Country Park

5.1.13 An extension to the Country Park to include Pond Hall Farm would have significant benefits to the SPA as well as to visitors. It is recommended that the extension would include:

- a hedgerow / woodland belt to be planted on land alongside the shore, to provide a visual barrier between birds on the estuary and people on Pond Hall Farm yet maintaining some estuary views albeit from a distance, subject to its compatibility with habitat and landscape diversity and design at Pond Hall Farm;
- The remainder of land at Pond Hall Farm to be converted to grassland habitat with other features such as scrub/woodland planting to provide shelter and habitat diversity, public art, picnic benches, dog bins, litter bins etc to attract people from the shore. An attractive design would be required. Part would be a fenced 'dogs off leads' area;
- Paths within Pond Hall Farm to connect Piper's Vale and Bridge Wood, inland of the new shoreline woodland, and designed to make circular walk options of at least 2 – 3 km in length from entry points without the need to visit the shore and disturb birds. Paths would

be surfaced for pushchair and wheelchair use at least for one circular route, of sufficient width to allow small groups to comfortably pass each other and maintained in good condition. Path design would be assessed to minimise disturbance to any existing wildlife features as far as is possible ;

- Good connections from entry points under the Orwell Bridge and from Bridge Wood so that the path layout (direction, width, surface type, etc) offers a strong steer to guide visitors to their option to visit Pond Hall Farm rather than currently being automatically guided to the shore as at present. This would in particular require an investment in the paths of Bridge Wood as well as into the management of Pond Hall Farm.

5.1.14 The above recommendations are indicative and any extension to the Country Park would need to be designed to be compatible with any potential future new uses for the Pond Hall Farm buildings. Arrangements for future management of the Country Park would also need to take account of Natural England's aim for the creation of the England Coast Path and liaison with Natural England will be needed in this respect.

5.1.15 The results of the visitor survey, Section 3.5 'desired improvements' and section 3.6 above, show that visitors would appreciate and use the Country Park extension, especially in regard to the design as described above. The improvements and features desired by visitors are included. This use would be part of a range of options which would include visiting the shore. Figure 29 is a sketch of the design concept.

Use of Pond Hall Farm buildings

5.1.16 The Pond Hall Farm buildings are currently in agricultural use. With conversion of the farmland to Country Park, new uses may need to be found that are compatible with the location (i.e. uses which would not encourage, or be likely to increase, visitor recreation by the shore).

Habitats Regulations conclusions for Ipswich Local Plan in relation to Orwell Country Park

5.1.17 The Country Park extension as proposed and as described here (with no Visitor's Centre) would be sufficient to support the conclusion that the proposed Site Allocations Plan would not have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA in relation to Orwell Country Park. This conclusion is in relation to allocation IP149 Pond Hall Farm, as well as for the whole of the Site Allocations Plan.

5.1.18 This conclusion updates the adopted Ipswich Core Strategy AA, which suggested a Visitor Centre might be appropriate along with other measures at Bridge Wood as part of the mitigation for increased housing in Ipswich. The finding of this study, that a Visitor Centre is little desired and probably would not be used by many of the existing visitors at the time of year of the survey and with current levels of promotion, suggests that it may be ineffective in attracting people away from the estuary shore. However, further work would be needed to investigate the viability and potential impacts of a visitor centre.

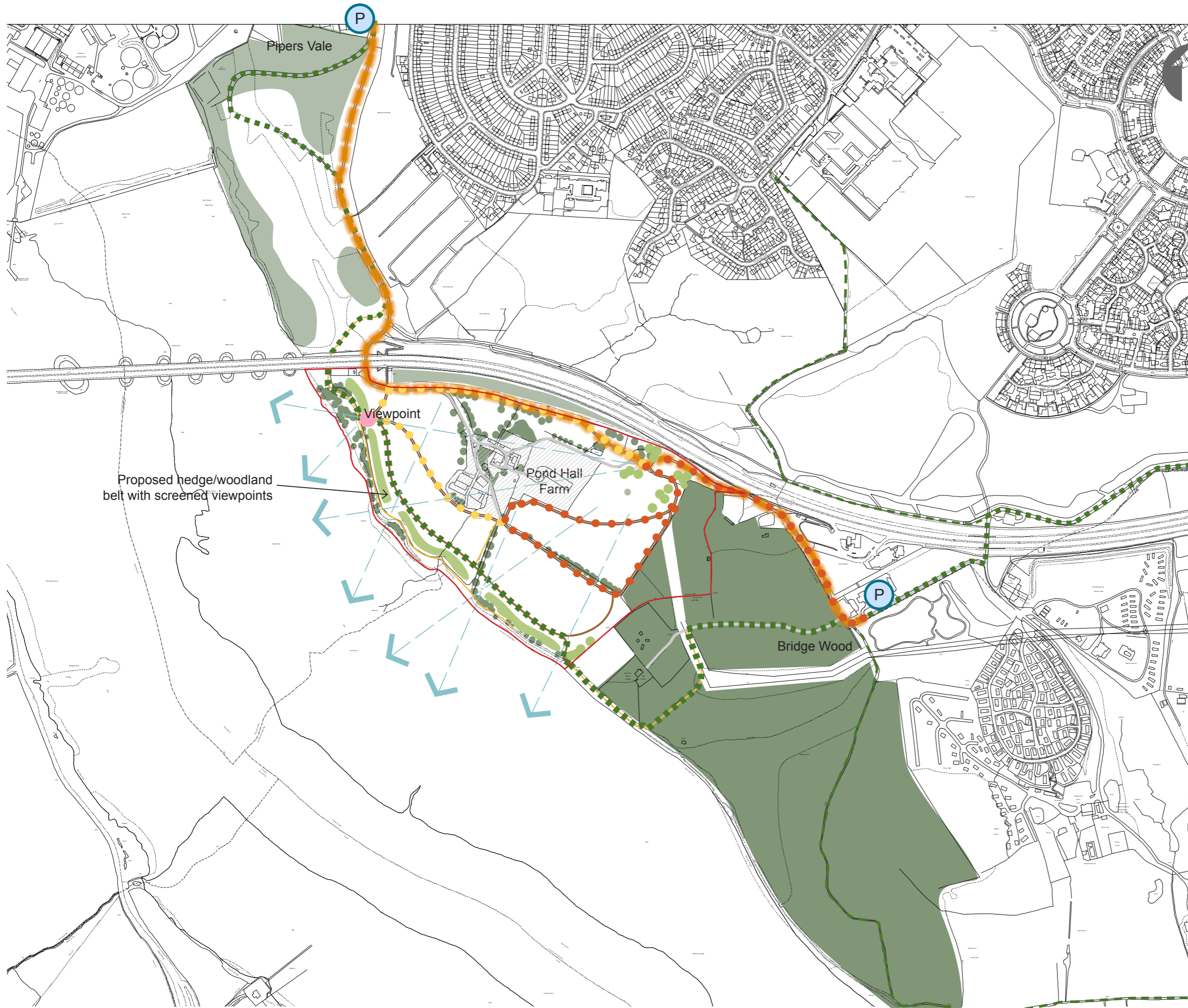
5.2 Site management conclusions and recommendations

Voluntary closures of the shore

5.2.1 Once alternative routes are in place for visitors through Pond Hall Farm, it would be possible for Country Park staff to make voluntary closures of the shore. The results of the visitor survey suggest that a large proportion of people would respect closures, although not all would. There would be two reasons for this, which would be

- to reduce visitor disturbance to birds, to reduce or avoid adverse effects to the SPA
- monitoring of bird response to changes in disturbance levels such as an increase in bird numbers during temporary voluntary closures

5.2.2 There is currently insufficient evidence to show that temporary voluntary closures are required to reduce or avoid adverse affects to the SPA, because the evidence that current amounts of visitors affect bird numbers at this location is inconclusive. However, temporary voluntary closures as



- KEY**
- Site boundary - Orwell Country park proposed extension
 - P Car parking
 - Existing vegetation
 - Proposed planting, including hedge/ woodland belt along shore
 - Proposed amenity areas
 - Public Footpath (Public Right of Way)
 - Long Distance Path - Stour and Orwell Walk
 - Existing track
 - Existing track to be used by public
 - Existing path
 - Proposed 2.6m min width hard surfaced path
 - Proposed 1m width loose surfacing path
 - Proposed route between carparks
 - 2¼km proposed circular route from Bridge Wood on hard surfacing
 - 1km extension to circular route from Bridge Wood on hard surfacing

Revision A: Annotation changes 09-12-15

E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension
 Impact Study
Indicative sketch design for Pond Hall Farm extension to the Country Park

Figure 29
 Scale 1:7,000 @ A3

June 2015



part of a monitoring exercise would be of benefit in assessing the bird use of the SPA in relation to Orwell Country Park visitors. See 'Monitoring' below.

Monitoring

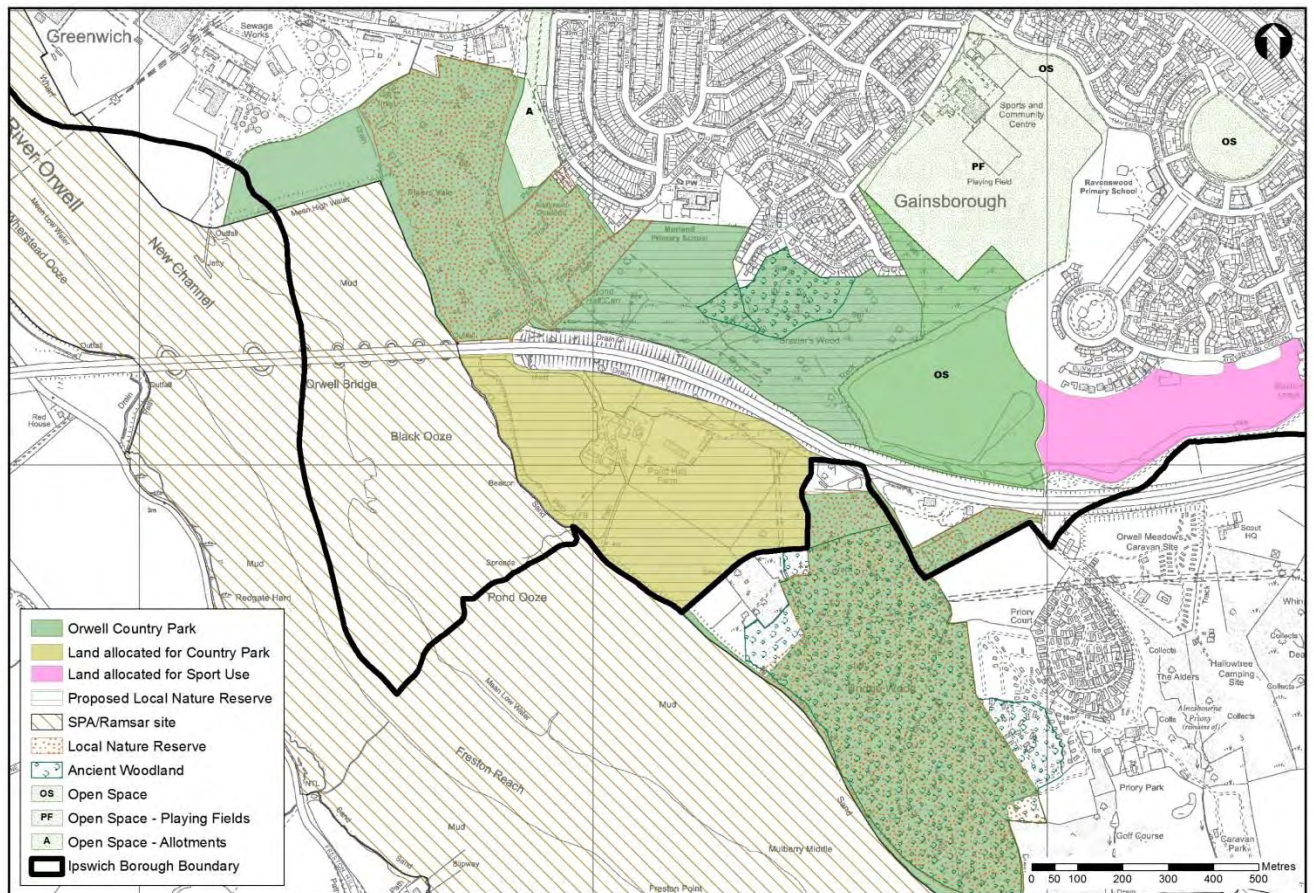
- 5.2.3 Further monitoring of birds and visitors would be of benefit to provide a better and more up to date understanding of bird disturbance issues. These are more relevant to Country Park management than to the Ipswich Local Plan.
- 5.2.4 Firstly, historic data of bird numbers from WeBS counts should be obtained so that bird numbers can be compared over a longer timescale than the 2014 Suffolk Wildlife Trust report did, especially if good comparative data were available for a run of years pre-Country Park establishment in 1995. This would help elucidate if the Country Park opening did cause a loss of birds in the estuary adjacent to the Country Park and if overall bird numbers in the estuary were affected.
- 5.2.5 Secondly, the 2007 disturbance report should be repeated twice, once to identify current levels of disturbance, and again after Pond Hall Farm extension is established. This can quantify disturbance events and help with an assessment of impacts upon the SPA when considered with the bird monitoring data collected by Suffolk Wildlife Trust.
- 5.2.6 Thirdly, temporary voluntary closures, e.g. for one period of Monday to Friday in winter, would be a useful method of monitoring the rate at which birds return with the reduced disturbance, and also help understand the true rate of visitor compliance for voluntary closure. It would be reasonable to test this once there is a suitable alternative at Pond Hall Farm for visitors to use.

Payment for entry

- 5.2.7 The survey brief asked for the possibility of payment for entry to be considered. Although a surprisingly high proportion of visitors said that they would be willing to pay, many visitors come regularly and would be disinclined to pay per visit; a season ticket arrangement would produce a very low income per visit.
- 5.2.8 A car park charge would not be considered fair by some car drivers, because the most regular visitors are those who walk to the Country Park would not pay for any of their visits. It is likely that many drivers who visit regularly would seek alternative parking options in nearby residential streets and use pedestrian entrances to avoid a car park charge, thus causing annoyance to residents of those streets. A car park charge tends to be worthwhile when the vast majority of visitors arrive by car, there are no other parking locations and the site is sufficiently attractive for people to choose to visit despite travel and parking costs.
- 5.2.9 The multitude of entry points means that it is impractical to charge people on entry and there is little merit in pursuing the idea.

Appendix 1

Appendix 1 Map showing location of the SPA, the existing Orwell Country Park and the proposed extension 'Land allocated for Country Park'



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Appendix 2

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds Special Protection Area (SPA)

Name: Stour and Orwell Estuaries

Unitary Authority/County: Essex, Suffolk.

Site description: The Stour and Orwell estuaries straddle the eastern part of the Essex/Suffolk border in eastern England. The SPA is coincident with Cattawade Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Orwell Estuary SSSI and Stour Estuary SSSI. The estuaries include extensive mud-flats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. The mud-flats hold *Enteromorpha*, *Zostera* and *Salicornia* spp. The site also includes areas of low-lying grazing marsh at Shotley Marshes on the south side of the Orwell and at Cattawade Marshes at the head of the Stour. Trimley Marshes on the north side of the Orwell includes several shallow freshwater pools, as well as areas of grazing marsh, and is managed as a nature reserve by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. In summer, the site supports important numbers of breeding avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, while in winter it holds major concentrations of waterbirds, especially geese, ducks and waders. The geese also feed, and some waders roost, in surrounding areas of agricultural land outside the SPA. The site has close ecological links with the Hamford Water and Mid-Essex Coast SPAs, lying to the south on the same coast.

Size of SPA: The SPA covers an area of 3,676.92 ha.

Qualifying species:

The site qualifies under **article 4.1** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain populations of the following species listed in Annex I in any season:

Annex 1 species	Count and season	Period	% of GB population
Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	21 pairs - breeding	5 year peak mean 1996 – 2000	3.6%

The site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the biogeographical populations of the following regularly occurring migratory species (other than those listed in Annex I) in any season:

Migratory species	Count and season	Period	% of subspecies/population
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	2,588 individuals – autumn passage	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	2.0% <i>britannica</i>
Dark-bellied brent goose <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>	2,627 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.2% <i>bernicla</i> , Western Siberia (breeding)
Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>	741 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.2% Northwestern Europe (non-breeding)
Grey plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	3,261 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.3% Eastern Atlantic (non- breeding)
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i> <i>islandica</i>	5,970 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.3% <i>islandica</i>
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>	19,114 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	1.4% <i>alpina</i> , Western Europe (non-breeding)
Black-tailed godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>	2,559 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	7.3% <i>islandica</i>
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	3,687 individuals - wintering	5 year peak mean 1995/96 – 1999/2000	2.8% <i>britannica</i>

Bird counts from: Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) database.

Assemblage qualification:

The site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by over 20,000 waterbirds (waterbirds as defined by the Ramsar Convention) in any season:

In the non-breeding season, the area regularly supports 63,017 individual waterbirds (5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98), including great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, dark-bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*, shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, wigeon *Anas penelope*, gadwall *Anas strepera*, pintail *Anas acuta*, goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*, ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, knot *Calidris canutus islandica*, dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina*, black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*, curlew *Numenius arquata*, redshank *Tringa totanus* and turnstone *Arenaria interpres*.

Non-qualifying species of interest: The SPA/Ramsar site as a whole, including the proposed extensions, is used by non-breeding marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*, merlin *Falco columbarius*, peregrine *Falco peregrinus*, short-eared owl *Asio flammeus* and kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* (all species listed in Annex I of the EC Birds Directive) in numbers of less than European importance (less than 1% GB population). It also supports breeding common tern *Sterna hirundo*, little tern *Sterna albifrons* and kingfisher (all listed in Annex I) in numbers of less than European importance.

Status of SPA:

- 1) Stour and Orwell Estuaries was classified as a Special Protection Area on 13 July 1994.
- 2) Extensions to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA were classified on 19 May 2005.

Appendix 3



European Site Conservation Objectives for Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9009121

With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

- **The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features**
- **The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features**
- **The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely**
- **The population of each of the qualifying features, and,**
- **The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.**

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

Qualifying Features:

A046a *Branta bernicla bernicla*; Dark-bellied brent goose (Non-breeding)

A054 *Anas acuta*; Northern pintail (Non-breeding)

A132 *Recurvirostra avosetta*; Pied avocet (Breeding)

A141 *Pluvialis squatarola*; Grey plover (Non-breeding)

A143 *Calidris canutus*; Red knot (Non-breeding)

A149 *Calidris alpina alpina*; Dunlin (Non-breeding)

A156 *Limosa limosa islandica*; Black-tailed godwit (Non-breeding)

A162 *Tringa totanus*; Common redshank (Non-breeding)

Waterbird assemblage

This is a European Marine Site

This SPA is a part of the Stour and Orwell Estuaries European Marine Site (EMS). These Conservation Objectives should be used in conjunction with the Regulation 35 Conservation Advice document for the EMS. For further details about this please visit the Natural England website at: <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/marine/protectandmanage/mpa/europeansites.aspx> or contact Natural England's enquiry service at enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk or by phone on 0845 600 3078.

Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where this is available) will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site under the provisions of Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the Wild Birds Directive, and the prevention of deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of its qualifying features required under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.

Publication date: 30 June 2014 (Version 2). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 29 May 2012 to reflect Natural England's Strategic Standard on European Site Conservation Objectives 2014. Previous references to additional features identified in the 2001 UK SPA Review have also been removed.

Appendix 4

	Pipers Vale Car Park	Bridge Wood Car Park	Platters Close	Braziers Wood Rd	Morland Road	Shore	Point counts (carpark-shore-carpark)	Day total hrs	Low Tide
Weds 11th		2	1		1	1.5	1	6.5	08.45
Thurs 12th	2			1.5		1.5	1	6	09.05
Fri 13th			1		2		1	4	09.45
Sat 14th	1	2				1	1	5	10.55
Sun 15th	2		2				1	5	12.25
Mon 16th				2	1.5	1	1	5.5	13.50
Tues 17th								0	15.10
Total hrs	9.0	4.0	3.5	4.5	5.0	6.0			

7 day total 32.0

Weds 18th	2		1		1	1.5	1	6.5	16.15
Thurs 19th		2			1	1	1	5	17.05
Fri 20th	2			2			1	5	17.55
Sat 21st		2	1			1	1	5	06.30/16.40
Sun 22nd	1		1.5		2		1	5.5	07.15
Mon 23rd								0	07.55
Tues 24th		2		1		1.5	1	5.5	08.35
Total hrs	11.0	3.5	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0			

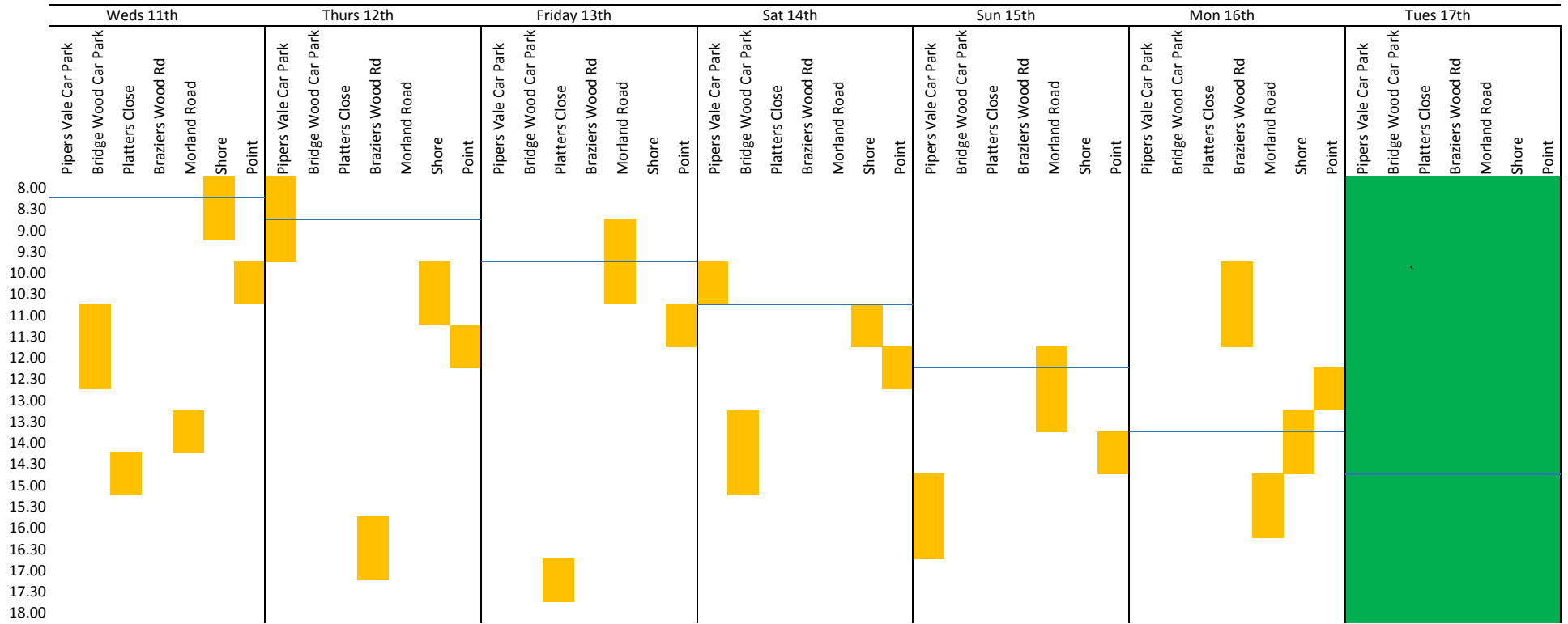
7 day total 32.5

Weds 25th		2		1.5		1	1	5.5	09.15
Thurs 26th	1	2		1.5		1	1	6.5	09.50
Fri 27th	2			1		1.5	1	5.5	10.35
Sat 28th		2			2		1	5	11.30
Sun 29th	1		2			1.5	1	5.5	13.40
Mon 30th	2		1.5			1	1	5.5	15.25
Tues 31st								0	16.40
Total hrs	12.0	3.5	4.0	2.0	6.0	6.0			

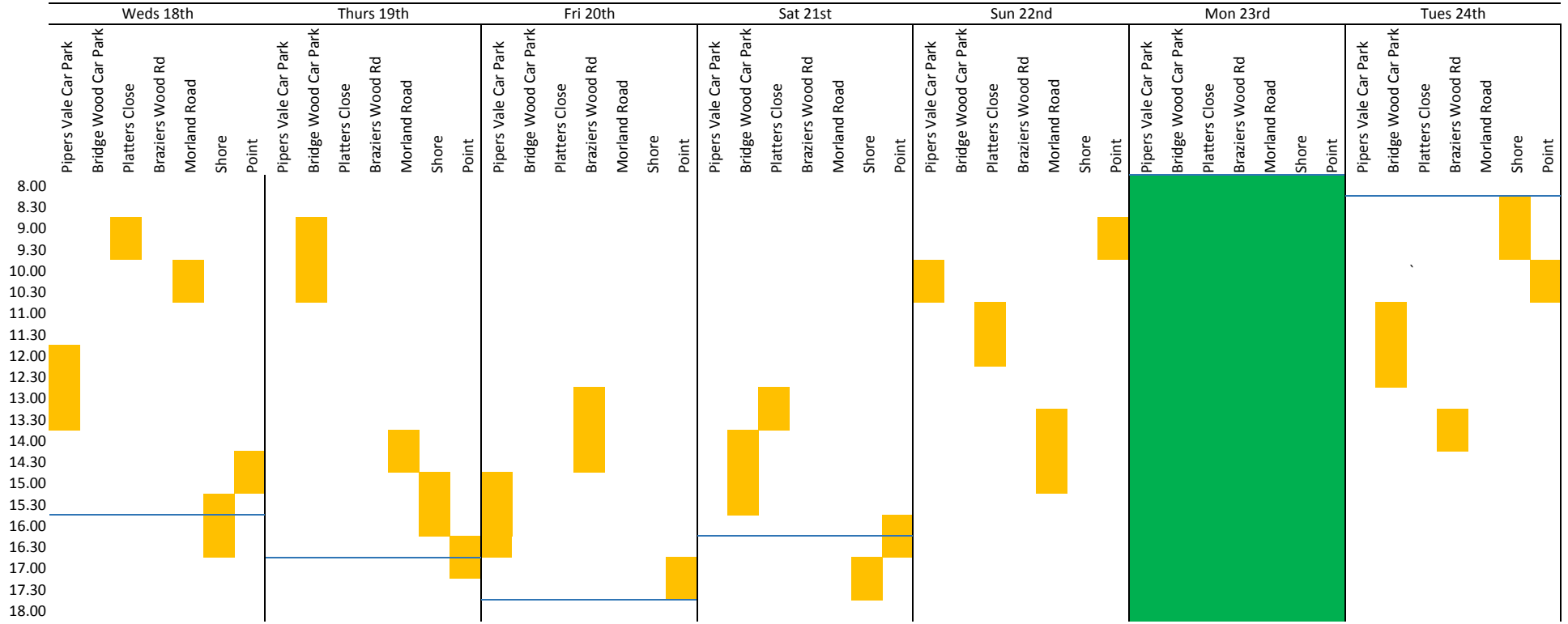
7 day total 33.5

Bridge Wood Carpark hours
Pipers Vale Carpark hours
Platters Close
Braziers Wood Rd
Morland Rod
Shore hours

16.0 16.0 11.0 10.5 10.5 16.0



Approximate low tide



Approximate low tide

Appendix 5

Orwell Country Park Proposed Extension

Visitor Questionnaire

This questionnaire is to help the Council plan the future management of the Country Park, to protect and enhance it for wildlife and visitors.

<p>1. What is your main activity / activities when visiting the park?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dog walking always on lead</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dog walking sometimes off lead?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Exercise e.g. jogging</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Walking</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bird/nature watching</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bait digging</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cycling</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Playing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Outing with the children</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)</p>	<p>2. How long is your normal visit / or this visit (if no 'normal')?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Under 1 hour</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 2 hours</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2-3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know / no answer</p>
<p>3. How do you normally travel to the Park?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On foot</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bus</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Car</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know / no answer</p>	<p>3a. For survey at the estuary shore only. Where did you enter the park?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pipers Vale car park</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bridge Wood car park</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Platters Close</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Braziers Wood Road</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Morland Road</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> By boat</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know / no answer</p>
<p>4. Do you normally visit at a certain time of day?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> before 9am</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Between 9am and 12</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Between 12 and 3pm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Between 3 – 5pm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> After 5pm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> It varies</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know / first visit</p>	<p>5. Do you plan your visit in relation to the high tide</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>6. Have you come from home or are you on holiday in the area? What is your postcode? (Just for making sure we understand the results properly and won't be used for anything else or given to anyone)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> From Home</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On holiday</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Postcode _____</p>	<p>7. How often do you visit?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Every day</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2-4 times a week</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once a week</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once a month</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Approximately _____ times a year</p>
<p>8. Is there a time of year when you tend to visit more often?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, all year round</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Spring</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Summer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Autumn</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Winter</p>	<p>9. Are there other places you visit instead of here, for similar reasons? (Instructions to interviewer - don't prompt or offer options)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Landseer Park <input type="checkbox"/> Bobbits Lane Nature Reserve</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nacton Shore <input type="checkbox"/> Belstead Brook Park</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Riverside walk in Ipswich <input type="checkbox"/> Bourne Park</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chantry Park <input type="checkbox"/> Rushmere Heath</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Christchurch Park <input type="checkbox"/> Holywells Park</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (name) _____</p>
<p>9a. Do you visit those other places more frequently or less frequently than here? Why?</p>	<p>10. Look at this map. Can you show me where you entered the park, and where you walked or plan to walk please? Instructions to interviewer – sketch on to the map the approximate route</p>

<p>11. What made you come here today rather than other places? Choose the most important reason and all other reasons;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Close to home <input type="checkbox"/> Easy parking <input type="checkbox"/> Free parking <input type="checkbox"/> Good area to take the dog for a walk <input type="checkbox"/> space and facilities for natural play <input type="checkbox"/> peaceful <input type="checkbox"/> welcoming and safe <input type="checkbox"/> familiar with the park <input type="checkbox"/> Good choice of routes / places to walk <input type="checkbox"/> Estuary views <input type="checkbox"/> The shoreline <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of wilderness <input type="checkbox"/> Site history <p>Other _____</p>	<p>12. What would improve your visit here?</p>
<p>12a Would any of them make you visit more often?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <p>Comments:</p>	<p>12b Would you pay to use any of those improvements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <p>Comments:</p>
<p>13. Would you still come as often, if there was an entry fee or car park charge to fund improvements within the park?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <p>Comments:</p>	<p>14. Are you aware that the river and shore is very important for wildlife, particularly water birds during the winter months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>Information from interviewer: The river is actually designated as a Special Protection Area, which means its one of the best places in the UK for water birds. In the winter, thousands of them use the mudflats to feed. The Council has a legal duty to protect the site and the birds.</p>	<p>15. Do you think that most people would respect temporary closures of the shore to prevent disturbance to important birds?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <p>Comments:</p>
<p>16. If access was available through the farmland at Pond Hall Farm (show on the map if people not sure where this is), would you be more or less likely to use the river shore or would it make no difference?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> More likely <input type="checkbox"/> Less likely <input type="checkbox"/> No difference <p>Comments :</p>	<p>17. what would make you want to visit the Pond Hall Farm farmland area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> new paths <input type="checkbox"/> room for running around <input type="checkbox"/> dogs off lead area <input type="checkbox"/> play equipment <input type="checkbox"/> shelter from wind <input type="checkbox"/> sculptures <input type="checkbox"/> attractive landscaping <input type="checkbox"/> cycling routes <input type="checkbox"/> anything else?
<p>18. One idea is to plant trees to make a sheltered path on the open fields providing views over the river, so you can walk in shelter instead of along the shore. If there was a sheltered path above the shore, would this be a route you might use especially in winter?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No 	

19. Age, ethnicity – to make sure we have a representative sample, please would you tell me your age group and ethnic background? This question is optional and you don't have to answer if you don't want to.

	Under 18	18-40	41-65	over 65	With dog	With pushchair	With wheelchair	Ethnic background
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								

Asian or Asian British

- **A1** – Indian
- **A2** – Pakistani
- **A3** – Bangladeshi
- **A9** – Any other Asian ethnic background

Black or Black British

- **B1** – Caribbean
- **B2** – African
- **B9** – Any other Black ethnic background

Chinese or other ethnic group

- **O1** – Chinese
- **O9** – Any other ethnic group

Mixed

- **M1** – White and Black Caribbean
- **M2** – White and Black African
- **M3** – White and Asian
- **M9** – Any other Mixed ethnic background

White

- **W1** – British
- **W2** – Irish
- **W9** – Any other White ethnic background

Not stated

- **NS** – Not Stated.

To be completed by Interviewer

Interview location

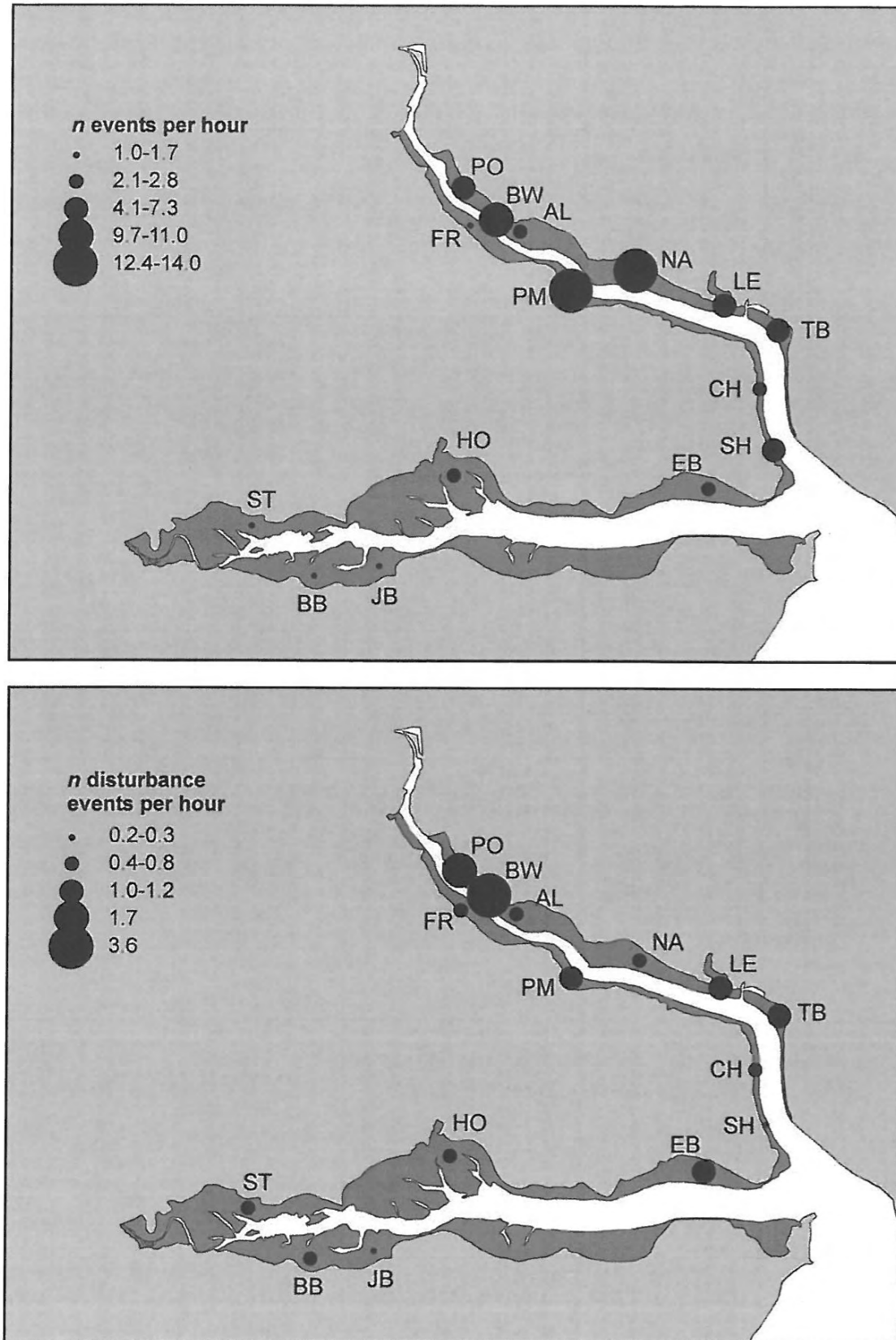
- Pipers Vale
- Bridge Wood car park
- Platters Close
- Braziers Wood Road
- Morland Road
- Shore

Interview date:

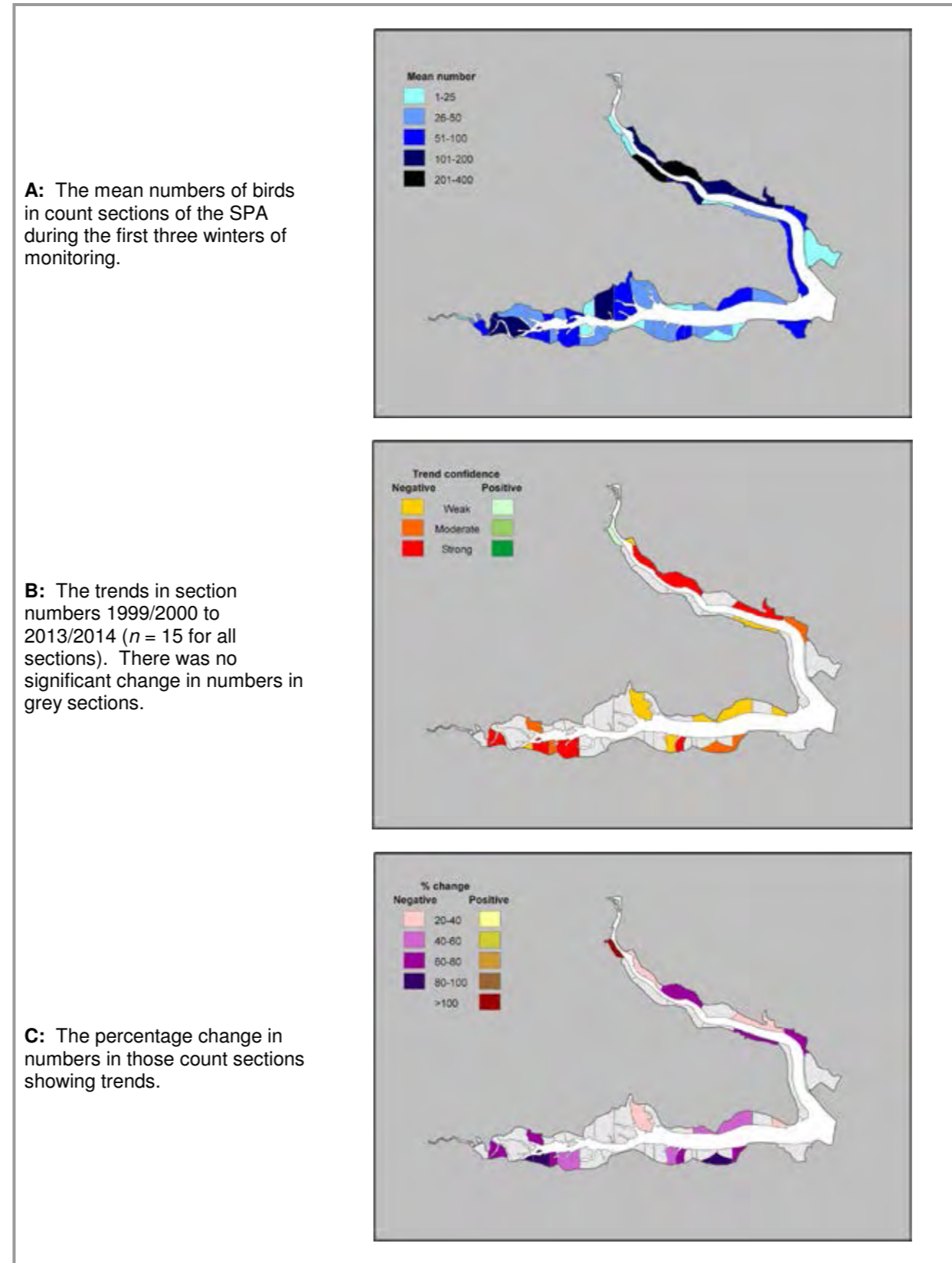
Interview time: GMT/BST

Appendix 6

Fig. 3: The frequencies (number per 500m per hour) of all events on the estuaries over the three winters (top) and the frequencies of events that caused disturbance (bottom).



The changes in redshank numbers and distribution from 1999/2000 to 2013/2014.

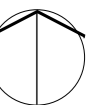


Key to sites

- PO Pond ooze (adjacent to Pond Hall Farm)
- BW Bridge Wood
- AL Alresbourne
- NA Nacton

E15821 Orwell Park Proposed Extension Impact Study

Comparison of Redshank decline with disturbance levels'



Appendix 7

Appendix 7. Site Allocations for residential development, in relation to walking and driving distance from Orwell Country Park. Based on Proposed Main Modifications to Site Allocations Plan) August 2015). See Figure 28 for walking and driving distances.

Site ref	Site name and development description	Indicative capacity of homes	Homes within walking distance of Orwell Country Park	Homes within driving distance of Orwell Country Park
IP004	Bus depot, Sir Alf Ramsey Way	48	0	48
IP005	Former Tooks Bakery, Old Norwich Road	101	0	0
IP006	Coop Warehouse, Pauls Road	28	0	0
IP009	Victoria Nurseries, Westerfield Road	12	0	12
IP010a	Co-op Depot, Felixstowe Road	66	0	66
IP010b	Felixstowe Road	75	0	75
IP011a	Lower Orwell Street	14	0	14
IP011b	Smart Street, Foundation Street	50	0	50
IP012	Peter's Ice Cream	29	0	29
IP015	West End Road Surface Car Park	22	0	22
IP029	Land opposite 674-734 Bramford Road	71	0	0
IP031	Burrell Road	20	0	20
IP032	King George V Field, Old Norwich Road	99	0	0
IP033	Land at Bramford Road (Stocks site)	46	0	0
IP037	Island Site	271	0	271
IP039a	Land between Gower Street & Gt Whip Street	43	0	43
IP040 and IP041	Civic Centre Area / Civic Drive.	0	0	0
IP043	Commercial Buildings and Jewish Burial Ground, Star Lane	50	0	50
IP047	Land at Commercial Road	103	0	103
IP048	Mint Quarter / Cox Lane regeneration area	72	0	72
IP054	Land between Old Cattle Market and Star Lane	28	0	28

Site ref	Site name and development description	Indicative capacity of homes	Homes within walking distance of Orwell Country Park	Homes within driving distance of Orwell Country Park
IP059a	Elton Park Industrial Estate, Hadleigh Road	105	0	105
IP061	Former School Site, Lavenham Road	30	0	30
IP066	JJ Wilson, White Elm Street	18	0	18
IP080	240 Wherstead Road	27	0	0
IP089	Waterworks Street	23	0	23
IP090	Europa Way	18	0	0
IP096	Car Park Handford Road East	20	0	20
IP098	Transco, south of Patteson Road	51	0	51
IP105	Depot, Beaconsfield Road	15	0	0
IP131	Milton Street	13	0	13
IP132	Former St Peter's Warehouse, 4 Bridge Street	73	0	73
IP133	South of Felaw Street	33	0	33
IP135	112-116 Bramford Road	14	0	0
IP136	Silo, College Street	48	0	48
IP142	Land at Duke Street	26	0	26
IP165	Eastway Business Park, Europa Way	94	0	0
IP172	15-19 St Margaret's Green	9	0	9
IP188	Websters Saleyard site, Dock Street	9	0	9
IP221	Flying Horse PH, 4 Waterford Road	12	0	0
IP214	300 Old Foundry Road	11	0	11
IP245	12-12a Arcade Street	14	0	14
IP256	Artificial hockey pitch, Ipswich Sports Club	18	0	0
	Total	1,929	0	1,386

