

APPENDIX

ROCHFORD DISTRICT LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES REVIEW
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

1. Introduction

Essex Ecology Services Ltd (EECOS) was commissioned by Rochford District Council to review the Local Wildlife Site network for the District. This report summarises the results of the review and presents a proposed Local Wildlife Sites Register. A fuller report will follow, detailing the methodologies and processes that have been followed and considering broader ecological issues affecting the district, including the possibility of identifying green corridors and other links between Local Wildlife Sites and other key conservation and landscape areas within and around the District.

2. Identification of Wildlife Sites

The Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria have been used to re-assess the original suite of sites and also to evaluate other sites not previously selected, to generate a revised register of Local Wildlife Sites for Rochford District.

The suite of sites has been amended from those identified in the report in 1993 for the following reasons:-

1. Some sites have been de-selected on account of their decreased nature conservation value or failure to satisfactorily meet the revised selection criteria;
2. A few new, modified or previously overlooked sites have been identified and added to the register;
3. SSSIs have been removed from the system;
4. Some sites have been amalgamated where they lie next to each other or are otherwise sufficiently connected.

A major change is that areas designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest SSSI, included in the previous survey, are now no longer included in the Local Wildlife Site network, in line with national guidance. With regards to Rochford District, this removes: (old SINC identification numbers are given for ease of reference).

- W10 Hockley Woods SSSI (92.9 ha) TQ 832915
- G5 Butler's Farm Field (3.2 ha) TQ 902899; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- G6 Mucking Hall Marsh (3.3 ha) TQ 913898; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- FW2 Stannetts Lake and Creek (13.1 ha) TQ 925914; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C2 River Crouch Marshes SSSI, part EWT Reserve (45.5 ha within the seawall) TQ 835957 and TQ 927950; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C3 Lower Raypits Farm Seawall/Saltings part of EWT Reserve (2.6 ha excluding saltings) TQ 918965; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C4. Lion Creek Seawall EWT Reserve (3.0 ha) TQ 923951; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C6. Wallasea Seawall (1.5 ha) TQ 985946 to TQ 985932; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI
- C7. Foulness SSSI (1051.3 ha within the seawalls) TQ 990900; now part of the Crouch and Roach SSSI

Another deviation from past Local Wildlife Site Policy is in the inclusion of sites containing inter-tidal habitats. In the past Local Wildlife Status has been restricted to terrestrial and freshwater habitats, but it was felt during this review that this excluded important wildlife sites that fall outside of the SSSI boundaries. Both mudflats and saltmarsh are national Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats.

Site numbering has also been changed. Previously, sites were roughly grouped into habitat categories of Woodland, Grassland, Mosaic, Freshwater, Coastal or Heathland, with an appropriate letter code and sequential number. Given that this process was repeated across the 14 boroughs/districts in Essex, this means that the county had 14 “W1” SINC’s i.e. the first woodland site in each local authority area. In order to make the county-wide system less complicated, a new system has been introduced whereby each site has a borough/district

and number code, with all Rochford Sites now being prefixed “R” and with no indication of the habitat(s) present on the site. These numbers will be confirmed in the final site register

The proposed, revised list of Rochford Local Wildlife Sites is included in Appendix 1 of this document.

3. Deletions

A few sites are being proposed for withdrawal from the Local Wildlife Sites register. These are (old SINC identification numbers are given for ease of reference):-

- W2 “Hullbridge Wood” (1.8 ha) TQ808954; the habitat present is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria and the site has been degraded by intensive public access and inappropriate management;
- W3 “Hambro Hill Wood” (1.7 ha) TQ817921; this site does not appear on OS maps from the late 19th century and there is no other data available to justify its inclusion;
- W29. Buller's Grove (0.7 ha) TQ 885937; there is no data to justify this site's inclusion;
- W30 The Finches EWT Nature Conservation Area (0.8 ha) TQ905944; the habitat present is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria;
- W31 Bartonhall Grove (3.3 ha) TQ 906918; the habitat is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria and no species data is available;
- G1 A127 Special Roadside Verge (1700.0 metres) TQ778908 to TQ784906 and TQ782915 to TQ780907; habitat present is no longer of sufficient quality to meet site selection criteria
- M1. Blounts Mosaic (5.0 ha) TQ816926; the majority of habitat present is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria, but the wooded section at the eastern end has been added to W4 Blounts Wood;
- M2 Eastwood Rise Lake (3.7 ha) TQ834899; the habitat is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria and no species data is available; the site should be reviewed if access can be secured or survey information becomes available;
- M5 Creeksea Road Pits (20.9 ha) TQ922942; a considerable area of this site has been lost to land fill and no data is available on the remainder.

- FW1 Butts Hill Pond EWT Nature Conservation Area (0.3 ha) TQ899947; the habitat present is of insufficient quality to meet site selection criteria; Great Crested Newts present, but no survey data to suggest a population significant enough at a local level to warrant inclusion.

4. Additions

A number of new sites are being proposed for addition to the Local Wildlife Sites register. These are:-

- Hullbridge Road meadow TQ806937 0.55 hectare; reported lowland grassland habitat including population of Green-winged Orchids;
- Lion Creek Meadow TQ922947 3.1 hectares; good quality coastal grassland habitat adjacent to SSSI, Shrill Carder Bee and Scarce Emerald Damselfly present;
- Barling Pits TQ935896 10.1 hectares; reedbed, scrub and saltmarsh communities, invertebrate and bird interest; adjacent to SSSI;
- Wakering Landfill Site TQ953886 24 hectares; flower rich grassland on brownfield site, coastal grassland community, Sea Clover, Pale Flax, Dittander, breeding Skylark, invertebrate interest; adjacent reedy fleet; adjacent to SSSI;
- River Roach at Rochford TQ883903 7.9 hectares; herb rich grassland; relict grazing marsh, reedbed and saltmarsh; Red Data Book horsefly *Atylotus latistriatus*; although partly inter-tidal the location of this site makes it vulnerable to adverse impacts from neighbouring industrial land use and so it is recommended for inclusion;
- Wallasea Managed Realignment TQ964946 90.3 hectares; Mudflats and embryo saltmarsh; it is anticipated that this site will be incorporated into the Crouch and Roach SSSI when the boundary is next reassessed, but its inclusion as a LoWS is recommended in the meantime.

5. Amendments

Several former sites have been significantly revised, affected by both additions and deletions of land. These are (old SINC identification numbers are given for ease of reference):

- W1 Kingley Wood TQ794900; additional woodland habitat added
- W4 Blounts Wood TQ818928; to be extended to include wooded parts of M1, which is being deleted;

- Hockley Woods Complex TQ826918; amalgamation of W5, W7, W9 and W16, all of which are on the periphery of Hockley Woods SSSI; additional block of woodland added in northwest corner;
- Hockleyhall/Crabtree Woods TQ832934; amalgamation of W12 and W13; additional block of formerly contiguous woodland added south of the railway line;
- W15 Bett's Wood TQ834928; additional woodland habitat added;
- W24 Beckney Wood TQ848940; additional contiguous blocks of woodland added;
- M3 Magnolia Nature Reserve and Fields TQ860927; change of name from "Rouncefall and Magnolia Fields"; additional blocks of habitat added to south and east;
- G7 Great Wakering Common TQ 954878; northeast section removed, as grassland has been planted with trees;
- C1 Brandy Hole Marsh Extension TQ830953; extension of site to include habitat created by managed realignment;
- C5 Paglesham Seawall TQ 948922 to TQ 924910; additional section of seawall added to the east.

Maps are included that demonstrate these amendments. Several other Sites have been subjected to more modest amendments, mostly associated with more accurate mapping of the boundaries through the use of detailed base plans.

6. Other Sites

In addition to those sites selected as Local Wildlife Sites, there are two sites, Pulpits Farm, Hockley (TQ849932) and Highsteppers, Ashingdon (TQ862937), that were considered but that did not meet the selection criteria largely, because of a lack of data and poor access. Future survey work may result in this site fulfilling the selection criteria. The same applies to two sites that are proposed for deletion: M2 Eastwood Rise Lake and M5 Creeksea Road Pits. In addition the newly proposed Barling Pits site could be extended to include areas of the gravel pits and landfill site to the north should access be possible.

The following sites were surveyed and assessed, but failed to meet the site selection criteria. It is not felt that these sites are likely to qualify in the future:

Gardiners Lane road verge; The Wick, Canewdon; Ironwell Lane, Ashingdon to Hawkwell; Cherry Orchard Country Park; The Paddock, Canewdon (Woodland Trust); Ashingdon Churchyard; Barling Churchyard; Ashingdon Plotlands; Rayleigh Churchyard; Rayleigh Mount; grassland around Southend Airport.

Appendix 1 – Proposed List of Rochford District Local Wildlife Sites

Code	Site Name	Area (ha)	Grid Ref.
R1	Kingley Wood	1.7	TQ794900
R2	Hullbridge Road Meadow	0.55	TQ806937
R3	Blounts Wood	3.3	TQ818928
R4	Hockley Woods Complex	14.9	TQ826918
R5	Grove Woods	16.6	TQ827902
R6	Rawreth Hall Wood	2.1	TQ829905
R7	Brandy Hole Marsh Extension	14	TQ830953
R8	Hockleyhall/Crabtree Woods	14.9	TQ832934
R9	Folly Wood	1.4	TQ832926
R10	New England Wood	4.0	TQ833903
R11	Bett's Wood	2.9	TQ834928
R12	The Dome Grasslands	5.3	TQ835947
R13	Edwards Hall Park	12.9	TQ837896
R14	Marylands Wood	5.4	TQ838930
R15	Plumberow Wood	5.4	TQ839940
R16	Belchamps Camp, Hockley Woods	1.5	TQ841918
R17	Gustedhall Wood	5.7	TQ841907
R18	The Scrubs	9.6	TQ842903
R19	Primrose Wood	1.3	TQ846904
R20	Cottons	1.0	TQ848902
R21	Beckney Wood	17.3	TQ848940
R22	Potash Wood	13.8	TQ849909
R23	Trinity Wood	3.3	TQ856937
R24	Magnolia Nature Reserve and Fields	29.2	TQ860927
R25	Hyde Wood	2.9	TQ877938
R26	Doggetts Pond	7.0	TQ878915
R27	Sutton Ford Bridge Pasture	2.0	TQ882895
R28	River Roach at Rochford	7.9	TQ883903
R29	Wood Sloppy	2.2	TQ885924
R30	Lion Creek Meadow	3.1	TQ922947
R31	Canewdon Special Roadside Verge	ca. 210m	TQ923946 to TQ 925945
R32	Barling Pits	10.1	TQ935896
R33	Star Lane Pits	6.9	TQ937873
R34	Paglesham Seawall	8.6	TQ945917
R35	Wakering Landfill Site	24.0	TQ953886
R36	Great Wakering Common	4.5	TQ954878
R37	Wallasea Managed Realignment	90.3	TQ964946