

REPORT FOR DECISION

Agenda Item	
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MEETING: PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

DATE: 22 MAY 2007

SUBJECT: THE REGISTER OF SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE – 2006 REVIEW

REPORT FROM: THE BOROUGH PLANNING, ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OFFICER

CONTACT OFFICER: CHRIS WILKINSON, GREENSPACE PROJECTS MANAGER

TYPE OF DECISION: COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE (KEY DECISION OR NON KEY DECISION)

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/ STATUS: This paper is within the public domain

SUMMARY:

This report identifies recent changes made to the Register of Sites of Biological Importance in Bury. It also describes the purpose and application of the Register

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDED OPTION (with reasons):

It is recommended that Committee adopt the updated Register of Sites of Biological Importance for planning purposes so that the Council's decisions are based upon the most accurate and up to date ecological information.

Other options (not recommended) are not to adopt the updated Register, or to partially adopt the updated Register

IMPLICATIONS -

Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:

Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes No

Financial Implications and

There are no direct financial or risk issues

Risk Considerations resulting from this report.

Statement by Director of Finance and E-Government: No comment beyond those made under financial implications above

Equality/Diversity implications Yes No (see paragraph below)

Considered by Monitoring Officer: Yes Comments

The proposals within the report are within the policy framework and powers of the Council. The proposals should enable planning decisions to take full account of national policy guidance.

Are there any legal implications? Yes No (see paragraph)

Staffing/ICT/Property: No additional requirements

Wards Affected: All

Scrutiny Interest:

TRACKING/PROCESS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Chief Executive/ Management Board	Executive Member/ Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Commission	Executive	Committee	Council

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Members will be aware that the Borough's Unitary Development Plan identifies a number of Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) that policies EN6/1 and EN6/2 seek to protect from damaging development. The wildlife value of sites is however, not static; it may increase or decrease as vegetation changes, neighbouring land changes in character, or survey information improves. The UDP policies anticipate this by referring to both existing SBIs and those to be designated in the future.

1.2 The Greater Manchester Register of Sites of Biological Importance is maintained and updated on behalf of the ten Greater Manchester Districts by the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit. The entries relating to Bury are kept by the Borough Planning, Engineering and Transportation Services Officer. The Greater Manchester sites are classed as Grade 'A' (of County Importance) 'B' (of District Importance) and 'C' (of more than local importance).

1.3 The Ecology Unit's Service Level Agreement requires it to re-survey each SBI at least every 10 years. It does this incrementally and produces an annual review of the

sites it has surveyed in the previous year. The 2004 review was reported to committee on 28th June 2005. The 2005 and 2006 reviews are the subject of the current report.

2.0 ISSUES

- 2.1** Unlike Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Sites of Biological Importance do not have statutory protection. However, the designation of 'regional and local sites' (i.e. SBIs) is promoted (in PPS9 and elsewhere) as a planning tool for 'meeting overall national biodiversity targets, contributing to the quality of life and the well-being of the community and in supporting research and education'. Designation allows identified sites of ecological value to be protected from development requiring planning permission.
- 2.2** The designation of SBIs is an objective and methodical process of evaluating sites against set criteria. Bury Council has consistently chosen to use the designation as a way of protecting the Borough's wildlife by incorporating SBIs into the planning process.
- 2.3** The GMEU made 4 changes to the SBI Register for Bury in 2005 and 5 in 2006. Most of the changes are minor and relate to descriptions or minor boundary amendments. However, there has been one new site declaration, that of Townside Fields in Bury, which, when its pond was surveyed in Spring 2006, contained one of the highest assemblages of amphibians in the County. Unfortunately the pond is now dry, so if it is not repaired the designation may have to be reviewed.
- 2.4** A list of changes to the register, a list of current SBIs and a location plan are attached to this report.

3.0 CONCLUSION

PPS9 states that 'in taking decisions, local planning authorities should ensure that appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance, protected species and to biodiversity and geological interests within the wider environment'. The updated Register describes the state of the most valuable sites of wildlife interest in the Borough more accurately than the previous version. It is therefore a better tool for planning.

List of Background Papers:-

ODPM (2005) Planning Policy Statement 9; Biodiversity and geological conservation.
GMEU (2005) Register of Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester.

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SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE IN BURY – 2006 REVIEW

DISTRICT FACT SHEET (All areas in hectares)

BURY

				Net Change 2005 – 2006	
	1984	2005	2006	No.	%
TOTAL NUMBER OF SBIS	27	49	50	+1	+2.0
TOTAL AREA OF SBIS	691.3	923.0	940.9	+17.9	+1.9
TOTAL NUMBER GRADE A	9	18	18	-	-
TOTAL AREA GRADE A	554.4	707.8	724.9	+17.1	+2.4
TOTAL NUMBER GRADE B	10	20	21	+1	+5.0
TOTAL AREA GRADE B	65.0	176.2	177.0	+0.8	+0.5
TOTAL NUMBER GRADE C	8	11	11	-	-
TOTAL AREA GRADE C	71.9	39.0	39.0	-	-
Grid Ref	Change in Grade of existing SBI			2005	2006
-	N/A			-	-
Grid Ref	New Sites			Grade	Area
SD805103	Townside Pond			B	1.3
Grid Ref	Site Deleted in Part or in Total		Grade	Area Lost	Present Total
SD772109	Cockey Moor Wood Pasture & Marsh		B	0.5	7.9
SD765085	Wetlands & Meadows Near Coggra Fold		A	0.9	26.9
Grid Ref	Partial Gains		Grade	Area Gained	Present Total
SD785039	Rhodes Farm Sewage Works		A	14.3	67.8
SD799038	Philips Park & North Wood		A	3.7	62.6
Grid Ref	Site visited with no change/change to description only				
SD782130	Kirklees Brook				
SD785128	Grassland near Brandlesholme Old Hall Farm				
SD766156	Wetland around Spenleach Lane				

SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE IN BURY 2006 REVIEW

Site Name	Grid ref	Grade
Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal	SD764068 – SD793096	A
Bradley Fold	SD756086	C
Hawkshaw Brook	SD759147	A
Hawkshaw & Boardmans Farm	SD756163	A
Shore Top Reservoir	SD766063	B
Wetlands & Meadows near Coggra Fold	SD765085	A
Ponds off Cockey Moor Road	SD767104	B
Wood at Bottoms Hall	SD764140	B
Wetland around Spenleach Lane	SD766156	A
Holcombe Moor	SD770178	A
Ainsworth Lodge	SD770093	B
Starling Road Reservoir	SD773098	C
Cockey Moor Wood Pasture & Marsh	SD772109	B
Redisher Woods & Holcombe Brook	SD767162	A
Rhodes Farm Sewage Works	SD785039	A
Ringley Woods (East)	SD785045	A
Reservoirs at Chapel Field	SD789062	C
Wetland near Radcliffe	SD787078	C
Marl Pits at Black Lane	SD781084	A
Withins Reservoir	SD784087	B
Spenn Moor Ponds	SD783094	B
Elton Reservoir	SD788095	A
Barracks Lodge	SD784103	A
Cyrus Ainsworth's Nurseries & Parker's Lodges	SD782110	B
Grassland near Brandlesholme Old Hall Farm	SD785128	B
Kirklees Brook	SD782130	A
Broadhey Wood & Woodhey	SD788151	A
Dick Field Clough	SD785173	B
Carr Barn Wood	SD789176	C
Philips Park & North Wood	SD799038	A
Sailor's Brow & Spring Water Park	SD798067	C
Swan Lodge	SD796085	B
Elton Goyt	SD790086	B
Lower Hinds	SD795096	A
Daisyfield	SD791098	B
Flushes at Springside	SD791136	B
Gollinrod Wood	SD798153	A
Nuttall Farm Pasture	SD793160	B
Crow Lumb Wood	SD791161	C
Edgars Field	SD799166	C
Prestwich Clough	SD807034	B
Townside Pond	SD805103	B
Parr Brook	SD815074	C
Hollins Vale	SD818085	B
Gorses Quarry	SD811131	B
Baldingstone	SD812144	B
Heaton Park Reservoir (West)	SD825050	A
Hollins Plantation	SD820080	C
Pilsworth	SD830084	B
Smethurst & Elbut Woods (West)	SD837115	C

SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE AND 'PROTECTED SPECIES' SITES DEC 2006

