

REPORT FOR DECISION



Agenda 7
Item

MEETING: PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

DATE: 15 DECEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE: 2014 REVIEW

REPORT FROM: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LOCALITIES)

CONTACT OFFICER: CHRIS WILKINSON

TYPE OF DECISION: COMMITTEE

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

SUMMARY: This report describes the purpose and application of the Register of Sites of Biological Importance in Bury. It also identifies the latest changes made to the Register. In 2014 no new sites were added or deleted. Eight existing sites were reviewed, one, Elton Reservoir, gained 1.8ha of additional grassland habitat, the remainder saw no grade or boundary changes. A revision to the site description has occurred at Wood at Bottoms Hall.

OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION

It is recommended that Planning Control Committee adopts the 2014 update of the Register of Sites of Biological Importance for use in development planning and management.

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

IMPLICATIONS:

Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:

Policies EN6/1 and EN6/2 of the Council's adopted Unitary Development Plan set out the Council's approach to managing development affecting existing and future SBIs.

Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:

The costs of the AGMA Ecology Unit, which compiles and updates the SBI Register, are funded through existing budgets.

Statement by Executive Director of Resources:

None

Equality/Diversity implications:

None.

Considered by Monitoring Officer:

Yes
The National Planning Policy Framework provides that planning policies should identify and map sites of importance for nature conservation and biodiversity. Updating the Register of Sites of Biological Importance will help to ensure that the Council complies with and its approach is where required, compatible with national planning guidance. The main issues are covered in the reporting.

Wards Affected:

All

Scrutiny Interest:

N/A

TRACKING/PROCESS

DIRECTOR: Mike Owen – Executive

Director of Resources and Regulation

Chief Executive/ Management Board	Executive Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Commission	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 harmful 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 Head of Planning Policy and Projects. The sites are classed as Grade 'A' (of regional or county Importance) 'B' (of district importance) and 'C' (of importance within the *identified* geographical locality).
- 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 2013 review was reported to committee on 28th October 2014. The 2014 changes are the subject of the current report.

2.0 ISSUES

- 2.1 Para 117 of the National Planning Policy Framework says that 'To minimise impacts on biodiversity..., planning policies should....identify and map....locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity'. Para 118 says that 'when determining planning applications,.....if significant harm from a development (*to biodiversity*) cannot be avoided..., adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.
- 2.2 Unlike Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) do not have statutory protection. However, the designation of 'regional and local sites' (i.e. SBIs) is promoted (in the NPPF and elsewhere) as a planning tool for conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Designation allows identified sites of ecological value to be protected from harmful development that requires planning permission.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 A list of changes to the register, a list of current SBIs and a location plan are attached to this report. The register has not changed substantially for some years.

2.5 An ECIA Initial Screening Assessment is appended to this report. It finds that the proposal to adopt the updated SBI Register serves an existing policy with minimal implications for equality or cohesion.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The 2014 update of the Greater Manchester Register of Sites of Biological Importance describes the current state of the most valuable sites of wildlife interest in the Borough. It will assist the Council in making decisions, particularly on planning applications, in accordance with government guidance, adopted Council policy and good practice. Its adoption is therefore recommended.

List of Background Papers:-

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (2008) 'Greater Manchester Sites of Biological Importance Selection Guidelines'

Website:-

<http://www.tameside.gov.uk/ecologyunit/sbi>

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**Greater Manchester
Ecology Unit**

APPENDIX 1:SBI REVIEW 2014 BURY – DISTRICT SYNOPSIS

In the review period January – December 2014 the Ecology Unit visited 8 SBIs representing 16% of Bury's SBIs.

During the review period no new sites were added to or deleted from the Register.

Elton Reservoir gained 1.8ha of additional grassland habitat.

The following sites recorded no changes to the site boundary or area, but revisions of the site description may have occurred: Wood at Bottoms Hall, Chesham Woods, Sailor's Brow & Spring Water Park, Elton Goyt, Wetlands & Meadows near Coggra Fold, Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal and Kirklees Brook.

Technical gains and losses are often due to the increasing accuracy used to draw boundaries and measure areas. Techniques used include orthorectified aerial photographs, which can be overlaid on the GIS system with the OS map base. This enables boundaries to be drawn to the edges of habitats where a clearly definable ground feature (e.g. fences, walls, streams etc) is not appropriate to use. In addition site areas are automatically calculated by the GIS system and a new OS base was acquired in 2013. There were no technical changes to any sites in Bury in 2014.

APPENDIX 2: FACT SHEET

SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE IN BURY 2014 REVIEW



DISTRICT FACT SHEET (All areas in hectares)					
<i>BURY</i>					
				Net Change 2013 – 2014	
	1984	2013	2014	No.	%
TOTAL NUMBER OF SBIS	27	50	50	-	-
TOTAL AREA OF SBIS	691.3	923.9	925.7	+1.8	+0.2
TOTAL NUMBER GRADE A	9	19	19	-	-
TOTAL AREA GRADE A	554.4	761.5	763.3	+1.8	+0.2
TOTAL NUMBER GRADE B	10	20	20	-	-
TOTAL AREA GRADE B	65.0	118.1	118.1	-	-
TOTAL NUMBER GRADE C	8	11	11	-	-
TOTAL AREA GRADE C	71.9	44.3	44.3	-	-
Grid Ref	Change in Grade of existing SBI			2013	2014
-	-			-	-
Grid Ref	New Sites			Grade	Area
-	-			-	-
Grid Ref	Site Deleted in Part or in Total		Grade	Area Lost	Present Total
-	-		-	-	-
Grid Ref	Partial Gains		Grade	Area Gained	Present Total
SD788095	Elton Reservoir		A	1.8	31.6

Grid Ref	Site visited with no change/change to description only
SD764140	Wood at Bottoms Hall
SD815123	Chesham Woods
SD798067	Sailor's Brow & Spring Water Park
SD790086	Elton Goyt
SD765085	Wetlands & Meadows near Coggra Fold
SD764068	Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal (East)
- SD793096	
SD782130	Kirklees Brook

APPENDIX 3:**SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE IN BURY 2014
DATE LAST SURVEYED**

Site Name	Grid ref.	Grade	District Ref.	Last Updated
Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal (East)	SD764068 - SD793096	A	C1	15.8.14
Bradley Fold	SD756086	C	C2	27.8.13
Hawkshaw Brook	SD759146	A	C3	2.6.11
Hawkshaw & Boardmans Farms	SD756163	A	C4	15.9.92
Shore Top Reservoir	SD766063	B	C5	24.8.11
Reservoir & Canal Banks (East)	SD767068	C	C6X	23.6.04
Wetlands & Meadows near Coggra Fold	SD765085	A	C7	17.7.14
Ponds off Cockey Moor Road	SD767104	B	C8	17.9.12
Wood at Bottoms Hall	SD764140	B	C9	29.4.14
Wetland around Spenleach Lane	SD766156	A	C10	10.10.06
Holcombe Moor	SD770178	A	C11	4.10.12
Ainsworth Lodge	SD770093	B	C12	14.6.12
Redisher Woods & Holcombe Brook	SD767162	A	C13	2.6.10
Ringley Woods (East)	SD785045	A	C14	8.5.08
Reservoirs at Chapelfield	SD789062	C	C15	23.7.10
Wetland near Radcliffe	SD787078	C	C16	8.8.13
Marl Pits at Black Lane	SD781084	A	C17	14.6.10
Withins Reservoir	SD784087	B	C18	8.8.13
Elton Reservoir	SD788095	A	C19	15.7.14
Cyrus Ainsworth's Nurseries and Parker's Lodges	SD782110	B	C20	17.9.12
Meadow above Kirklees Valley	SD780132	B	C21X	11.6.04
Kirklees Brook	SD782130	A	C22	15.7.14
Broadhey Wood and Woodhey	SD788151	A	C23	1.5.13
Dick Field Clough	SD785173	B	C24	2.6.11
Carr Barn Wood	SD789176	C	C25	1.5.13
Phillips Park & North Wood	SD799038	A	C26	16.8.11
Sailor's Brow & Springwater Park	SD798067	C	C27	17.7.14
Swan Lodge	SD796085	B	C28	8.8.09
Elton Goyt	SD790086	B	C29	15.8.14
Lower Hinds	SD794096	A	C30	8.8.13
Daisyfield	SD791136	B	C31	6.5.09
Flushes at Springside	SD791136	B	C32	21.8.07
Gollinrod Wood	SD798153	A	C33	1.5.13
Crow Lumb Wood	SD791161	C	C34	1.5.13
Edgars Field	SD799166	C	C35X	15.8.08
Prestwich Clough	SD807034	A	C36	24.8.11
Lodges at Shuttleworth	SD806177	C	C37X	24.2.99
Parr Brook	SD815074	C	C38	2.7.09
Hollins Vale	SD818085	B	C39	29.6.10
Gorses Quarry	SD811131	B	C40	20.5.10
Baldingstone	SD812144	B	C41	14.6.12
Heaton Park Reservoir (West)	SD825050	A	C42	10.3.10

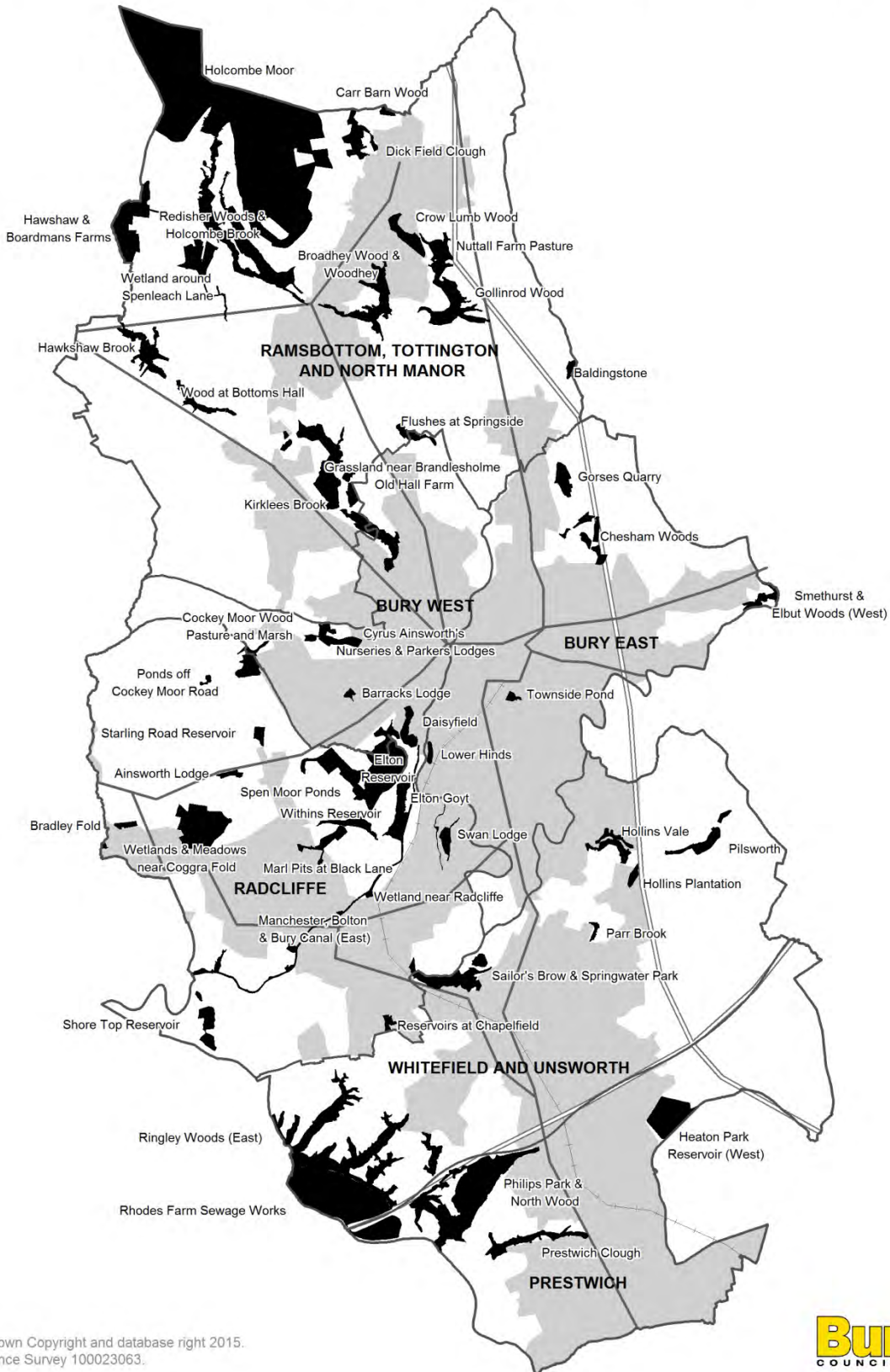
APPENDIX 3:**SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE IN BURY 2014
DATE LAST SURVEYED**

Site Name	Grid ref.	Grade	District Ref.	Last Updated
Hollins Plantation	SD820080	C	C43	19.4.12
Pilsworth Bleach Works	SD822083	C	C44X	8.4.03
Pilsworth	SD830084	B	C45	9.7.04
Burrs	SD789129	C	C46X	2.86
Grassland near Brandlesholme Old Hall Farm	SD785128	B	C47	26.6.11
Smethurst & Elbut Woods (West)	SD837115	C	C48	26.8.10
Spenn Moor Ponds	SD783094	B	C49	24.6.11
Rhodes Farm Sewage Works	SD785039	A	C50	13.6.06
Barracks Lodge	SD784103	A	C51	23.7.10
Cockey Wood Pasture & Marsh	SD772109	B	C52	17.9.12
Starling Road Reservoir	SD773098	C	C53	17.9.12
Nuttall Farm Pasture	SD793160	B	C54	19.6.03
Townside Pond	SD805103	B	C55	24.6.11
Chesham Woods	SD815123	C	C56	29.4.14

X = Deleted Site

APPENDIX 4: SBI LOCATION MAP

Sites of Biological Importance in Bury: 2014 Review



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