



Notice of meeting of

Local Development Framework Working Group

To: Councillors (City of York Council), Steve Galloway (Chair), D'Agorne, Merrett, Potter (Vice-Chair), Reid, Simpson-Laing, R Watson and Watt

Date: Monday, 7 September 2009

Time: 4.30 pm

Venue: The Guildhall

AGENDA

1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point, members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on this agenda.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 18)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Local Development Framework Working Group held on 6 April 2009 and 20 April 2009.

3. **Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak, regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the remit of the Working Group, may do so. The deadline for registering is 5.00 pm on Friday 4 September 2009.

4. Green Infrastructure Update (Pages 19 - 42)

At an LDF Working Group in March 2008, Members agreed a report which set out the proposed approach to the Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure through LDF. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress so far and to request they approve the work undertaken to date.

5. Biodiversity Audit (Pages 43 - 224)

The purpose of this report is to request that Members of the LDF Working Group recommend to the Council's Executive that they approve the Biodiversity Audit, subject to recommendations of the Group, as evidence base to support the Local Development Framework.

6. Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:

Name: Laura Bootland

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

MEETING	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP
DATE	6 APRIL 2009
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), POTTER (VICE-CHAIR), AYRE, D'AGORNE, MERRETT, MOORE, REID, SIMPSON-LAING, WATT AND MORLEY (SUBSTITUTE)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR R WATSON

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

30. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

31. LDF CORE STRATEGY – SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

Members considered a report that set out the proposed spatial strategy for the Local Development Framework (LDF). The role of the Spatial Strategy will be to direct the future location of development at a strategic level, forming a key part of the Core Strategy. All subsequent LDF documents will need to be in conformity with the spatial strategy once adopted.

The report asked Members to approve the proposed spatial strategy for inclusion in the Core strategy Preferred Options document and provided Members with two options:

Option 1: To approve the approach outlined in the report for inclusion in the Core Strategy Preferred Options Consultation document.

Option 2: To seek amendment to the approach outlined in the report prior to inclusion in the Core Strategy Preferred Options consultation document.

An Officer Briefing Note on the LDF Core Strategy – Spatial Strategy Consultation and a letter from Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners were passed to Members and attendees at the meeting and are appended to these Minutes.

The Director of City Strategy introduced the report and referred to the Officer Briefing Note. He stated that York had never had an agreed Green Belt Boundary and that the LDF Core strategy would set this. He spoke of the need for a sound plan that: included clear evidence, that was robust and credible, that was in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), and that was deliverable and flexible. He stressed that the plan was not just about numbers, but about quality and type and that Officers believed that the approach was sound. He added that an unsound plan could cause delay and incur costs, and that the authority could be instructed to begin the process again. He noted that York had already been warned by Government Office and needed to move expeditiously on this.

The Principal Development Officer presented the report and referred to maps, which had been displayed at the meeting for Members, outlining the various proposed sites. He stated that the report was complicated, but at the core was guided by a sustainable settlement hierarchy. He said that officers had looked at villages and settlements around York and at those that were the most suitable, at the main urban areas which were most suitable and below that the smaller villages. He referred Members to areas 3a and 3b as potential flood zones, which should, as a precautionary principle, be ruled out. He referred to the historic character of York and the river corridor and views. He also spoke of the green infrastructure and the work being done with Natural England to map the green infrastructure and nature conservation areas of key constraints.

He stressed that the RSS spoke of expanding the main urban areas before expanding the villages. He explained about the potential areas of research within the Ring Road and that there was a need to use land at reasonable densities and to build in flexibility when looking at potential land in excess of what was needed.

The main question, he stated was: If urban extension was needed, where would this be and why would the site be chosen?

The Officer referred to the Employment Land Review previously brought to Members and stated that there was sufficient land until 2029 for Offices and Research and Development. For industrial and storage and distribution however, in addition to the existing supply, site C Hull Road and Site I North Minster Business Park were proposed, but that choices were to be made.

For housing, Officers had considered the potential urban extensions in terms of landscape quality, urban quality and transport. Transport favoured sites on the East and more capacity was predicted in this area of the city. Sites for housing had been prioritised at Monks Cross, and adjacent to Metcalfe Lane. Officers were not advocating all this land, but that a shortfall of 6000 houses was shown up by 2030 according to the RSS target. It was explained that if allowances were taken off for a windfall element after 2025 this left a shortfall of 4500 houses with a need for 135 hectares of land at a reasonable density. It was noted that the land in areas A and B would give up to about 200 hectares.

The Head of City Development spoke of the importance of a community strategy with a successful urban economy, cohesive and strong communities with sustainable growth and viability, with the built-in need to protect the historic character of the city and to minimise the use of Green Belt land.

Members then discussed and raised various concerns and questions about the LDF Core Strategy – Spatial Strategy to which Officers responded.

- **Minutes.** Concern was expressed that the Minutes of the previous two meetings were not included with the agenda papers and that the Minutes needed to go out promptly. Officers explained that the Minutes were still to be cleared.
- **Transport.** Members highlighted that transport, highways and traffic were key issues and questioned why there was no report on transport. It was noted that traffic congestion was an issue at Clifton Moor and Monks Cross and that transport was difficult on Osbaldwick Road and the bottom part of Stockton Lane. It was also noted that in the report, page 12, paragraph 27 that options D, E and F were constrained by highway capacity. Officers responded that Halcrow (traffic consultants) had provided a high-level study and had customised the transport model to understand the road network in 2030 and had been asked to investigate various scenarios. Halcrow had looked at travel patterns from the 2001 census. Officers explained that the land use model connected to the traffic model had given broad indications and that this then provided the high level commentary reported to Members in the report. This indicated that the outer Ring Road had a significant impact. It was felt that sites on the east provided a more sustainable transport solution. This model had also taken account of the expected shift away from cars. Officers reported that the next stage was to show a deliverable and more detailed transport modelling. Officers confirmed that a report on transport would be ready to be brought before Members in six to eight weeks.
- **RSS.** Some Members expressed concerns about the basic assumptions in the RSS, including windfalls, which they felt should be challenged. It was also felt that it was difficult to provide for the unknowable in terms of housing and employment needs. Other Members were concerned that challenging the RSS could, with a growing population in York, create future housing problems. Officers stated that they had to conform to the RSS figures and the future projected trends to 2026 and 2030 that were part of a robust approach to the LDF. Officers stated that windfalls could not be included before 2025, and that beyond then it might be challengeable, but would ensure that the advice from Members would be brought to the Executive.
- **Foss Basin.** Concerns were expressed that there was difficulty in what could be done with the Foss Basin and that more information was needed.
- **Copmanthorpe bus services.** It was noted that the report inaccurately reported that there was no evening bus service, when there was an evening service.

- **Germany Beck and Heslington East.** Officers confirmed that Halcrow's work had taken these two sites into account.
- **Village sustainability matrix**, page 27 and 28 of the agenda and **Skelton**. It was confirmed that there was only one football pitch and no changing facilities. Officers confirmed that the report drew on the evidence base PMP work.
- **Green Belt and the area east of Skelton** on page 30. Officers confirmed that Skelton was surrounded on three sides by areas identified as important in terms of the historic character and setting of York. A Member expressed concern about coalescence with Haxby.
- **Green Corridors.** Members also raised concerns with reference to page 5 paragraph 10 and felt all Green Corridors served an important Green Belt function and were concerned with reference to Area B along the Hull Road. Officers confirmed that these green strays/wedges were part of the historic strays and corridors.
- **Open Space Strategy and link with Green corridors.** Officers confirmed that this large piece of work would be brought back to Members when ready and in the next two months.
- **4500 houses needed and question of low density.** Officers confirmed that 30% of the gross site area on sites over 5 hectares were not for development but for infrastructure and also for open spaces. Also that consideration was given to the Housing Market Assessment, which indicated that provision should be 70% for houses and 30% for flats. Officers also confirmed that in terms of density, best practice examples would be used with Derwenthorpe and Germany Beck taken as examples and that it was important to create sustainable communities.
- **Ring Road delineation and boundary.** With regard to site B, a Member suggested that Stockton Lane and the Bad Bargain Lane turn from the road to the bridal way should be taken out and that there were delineations well within the Ring Road. Officers confirmed that the Ring Road was more of a barrier.
- **Transmission lines, page 41.** Officers confirmed that from the work done by ECUS, University of Sheffield, it was felt that transmission lines and pylons gave the landscape an industrialised appearance.
- **Buffer zones around nature conservation sites.** A Member felt that these needed to be taken into account.
- **Constraints.** A question was asked about whether the judgement of the coalescence was based on 2001/2 work or had this been updated? Concerns were also expressed about Murton, particularly if site C was approved. The Member argued for constraints to avoid coalescence. Officers confirmed that they had used the original work and factored in Officer knowledge, but that further work would be undertaken on this.
- **The sustainability of small villages to the south.** Officers confirmed that the thrust was for strategic level development concentrating on the main urban areas first.
- **Derwenthorpe and concerns that Area B** might have detrimental impact in bringing this area forward. Officers confirmed that these details would be picked up at the next stage.

- **Public consultation and the question of Green Belt.** Officers confirmed that public consultation was very important.
- **Possible Deferral of Core Strategy until the transport evidence was available for Members.** Officers confirmed that deferral would put back the process. Officers also confirmed that this was a preferred options document and not a final one and that other reports were to follow. Officers agreed to make the transport information available alongside the other consultation documents.
- **Consultation.** Officers confirmed that the consultation process would involve advertising city-wide using the Council's newspaper, Ward Committees, Parish Councils, and that they would write to the people on the LDF database. It was also confirmed by officers that the consultation process and timetable would be agreed with the Executive and the Shadow Executive. A suggestion was made about the possible use of supermarkets.
- **Current recession.** Concerns were expressed about this and York's future development.
- **York North West.** Concerns were expressed that if green field sites were identified outside the Ring Road, where would the authority stand in relation to the development position? Officers confirmed that the authority had significantly strong powers to ensure that brown field sites were considered first and that this could be controlled through planning and that planning applications could be refused if they did not meet planning policy.

RESOLVED:

That the LDF Working Group recommends that the Executive

1. Place on record its concerns that the current officer report implies possible development of land that was currently regarded as draft Green Belt.
2. Consider further the spatial strategy produced by officers with a view to approving, for the purposes of public consultation, a core strategy which provides choices for residents in respect of the numbers of homes to be provided in the city in the light of the current recession, the assumptions to be made about windfall sites during the whole of the plan period and the densities which should be assumed in - at least - the latter period of the plan.
3. Requests that Officers make the strongest possible representations, to the Regional Planning Board that the housing and employment growth assumptions for the City - featured in the current RSS - should, in the light of the current recession, be lowered when the RSS is revised and reissued.
4. That representations be made to the Government to allow an assumption that housing windfall sites should be included in LDF policies.

Note: Cllrs Simpson-Laing, Merrett and Potter voted against these recommendations and asked that their opposition be recorded.

REASON:

To progress the Local Development Framework Core Strategy to its next stage of development.

Cllr S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.35 pm and finished at 6.15 pm].

MEETING	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP
DATE	20 APRIL 2009
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), POTTER (VICE-CHAIR), AYRE, D'AGORNE, MERRETT, MOORE, REID, SIMPSON-LAING, WATT AND WAUDBY (SUBSTITUTE)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR R WATSON

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

33. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Minutes of the Local Development Framework Working Group held on 3 March be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendments being made to the comments section of Minute 25 (Employment Land Review – Evidence Base).
 - (a) 5th bullet point (re Clifton Moor), wording be amended to read “It was noted by Members that *higher density* development might be possible...”
 - (b) 7th bullet point (re St Leonards), wording be amended to read “Questions were raised about why St. Leonard’s was ranked so high when it was considered *unsuitable as an office* and the inclusion of Hudson House given recent consents”.
 - (c) 11th bullet point (re floorspace requirements), wording be amended to read “Concern was also expressed *whether this reflected the trend* for people being packed more densely into offices.’
 - (d) 14th bullet point (re Foss Islands) wording be amended to read “Members asked about the regeneration of the site and whether further development could squeeze out existing *types of* employment, which was important to people in the area.”

- (e) Resolution (ii) be amended to read “Delegate to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive member for City Strategy *and the Shadow Executive Member*, the making of any other necessary changes.....”
- (ii) That the Minutes of the Local Development Framework Working Group held on 3 March be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to an additional bullet point being added to include comments made by Members as follows “*North side of Grimston Bar. This was considered to be a Green Wedge and Members wanted the Officer report to reflect this*”

Comments were also made by some Members about issues discussed at previous meetings that Officers had said that they would look at, including Foss Islands, Layerthorpe and Hull Road and that alterations were expected to the report. Officers stated that they were looking at the Employment Land Review and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, and that approval would be required from the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member on these changes. Officers also stated that they did not think that these changes would affect the Spatial Strategy and the Core Strategy.

34. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that six people had registered to speak at the meeting under the Council’s Public Participation Scheme.

Mark Waters addressed the meeting on behalf of York Natural Environment Trust (YNET). He referred to the City of York Local Development Framework – Draft Core Strategy Preferred Options, Section 14: Green Infrastructure. He was critical of the Council’s development policy, particularly with regard to West Carr Lane Osbaldwick and East Metcalfe Lane and the suggested 250 acres for development. He referred to the 2006 public enquiry with regard to Metcalfe lane and the Green Belt boundary, and on behalf of YNET questioned why this site had been promoted as urban expansion. He re-iterated the request he had made at the LDF meeting on 9 March 2009 for an open public meeting on this.

John Reeves, Chairman of the Helmsley Group, spoke about the proposed change to the Affordable Housing Policy referred to in Section 9 of the report on the agenda. He stated that developers wanted a sustainable solution to the affordable housing issue. He stated that developers could not deliver a policy, which they believed would not work, and which was not sufficiently flexible. He further stated that one-size fits all policy would not work and that anything above 25% would not work. The main issues were density - the higher this was, the less likely it was to work financially and the mix of tenure – and social rental was a thorny issue and had a real affect on values and that there were no plans to develop at the present time. He invited councillors and officers to attend a frank and open meeting to discuss these issues.

Geoff Scott, Managing Director of Hogg the Builder, also spoke about the Affordable Housing Policy referred to in Section 9 of the report. He stated that 15 months ago he had asked for discussions on the 50% affordable housing plans. He also spoke of the current very different economic climate and the effect that this had had on the building industry. He felt that the report was seriously flawed and failed to recognise the difference between building in urban and rural locations. He added that he did not agree with the advice given in the report and felt that the exclusion of settlements of over 5000 people was worrying with damages to communities resulting and consequences with regard to the viability of house building. He stated that this would lead to a building standstill.

Matthew Laverack, Partner with Laverack Associates, also spoke about the Affordable Housing Policy. He stated that the 50% Affordable Housing Policy had failed and that the latest policy would make things worse. He added that the house building industry had been strangled and building costs had increased, while selling prices had fallen drastically.

Lillian Coulson, Regional Planning Manager, Persimmon Homes, also spoke about the Affordable Housing Policy. She stated that she felt that the Officer report was idealistic and unviable and would lead to a decrease in housing production. She stated that the affordable housing target looked at need and not at viability. She noted that since the 50% target used by some London boroughs had been introduced, little affordable housing had been produced and that was in a better economic period. In York, it was stated, that the price of flats had fallen by half and houses by 20-30%. This had meant a large loss of revenue and for larger developments, a huge loss. The speaker also emphasised that the officer report ignored house building sustainability and did not reflect PPS3. The speaker urged officers to reflect on the report and to meet with their planners.

Tom Hughes, from the Meadlands Area Residents Association, commented that the Minutes of the 6 April meeting were not yet available. He referred to the LDF Working Group meeting of 9 March 2009 and the reference to Green Belt Land and to the discussions that were held at Full Council Meeting on 2 April 2009, as well as a recent Liberal Democrat Newsletter. He stated that local residents welcomed the news that Green Belt sites were classified as unsuitable for development. With reference to page 92 of the LDF Working Group Agenda of 20 April 2009, Mr Hughes asked whether the vote taken at the Council Meeting on 2 April 2009 had been dealt with at the LDF Working Group meeting of 6 April and how this had affected the report presented to Members at the 20 April 2009 meeting.

35. CITY OF YORK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – DRAFT CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTIONS

Members considered a report asking them to recommend that the Executive approve the Draft LDF Core Strategy Preferred Options document for consultation in late Spring, subject to their recommendations.

The report presented the following options for consideration in relation to the Core Strategy Preferred Options document:

- Option 1: To approve the document along with supporting information for public consultation
- Option 2: To seek amendments to the document through the recommendations of the LDF Working Group.

In response to the comments made by Mark Waters and Tom Hughes under Item 3 (Public Participation), the Principal Development Officer stated that the recommendations from the recent LDF Working Group meetings would be considered by the Executive on the 12 May 2009 and following that meeting any further necessary alterations to the reports would be made. With regard to the issue of transport raised at previous meetings, he explained that he had spoken to the consultants Halcrow who were in the process of producing a background note, which would be circulated to Members before 12 May 2009. With regard to green infrastructure, he stated that a report would be brought to the LDF Working Group in May.

The Principal Development Officer drew Members attention to recommendation (iii) of the officers report and advised that this should refer to the "*Preferred Options*" document consultation instead of the "Issues and Options" document consultation.

On the subject of affordable housing, he explained that Government policy encouraged local authorities to maximise opportunities to provide affordable Housing. He noted that York has one of the highest levels of affordable housing need in the north of England and that affordable housing provision needed to be increased. He explained that the current 50% target emanated from the 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment and that 30% to 50% has been agreed on a variety of sites in York in recent years. Government advice requires local authorities to look at the long term housing market and more normal market conditions. The proposed new policy introduces a sliding scale, which was supported in principle through public consultation and meetings with developers. Monitoring of recent completions and commitments suggest that the policy could achieve up to 43% affordable housing, subject to assessments of site viability. This is in line with the provisional minimum of 40% for York set out in 2008. Smaller sites would achieve some affordable housing, which is not the case at the moment, and the level would increase as site size and economies of scale increase.

Members provided comments and put forward questions on **Section 9 - Access to Housing: Affordability and Type** of the Draft Core Strategy – Preferred Options report.

- (i) Members expressed concerns that the sliding scale averaged out at less than 40%. Officers explained that the desktop study had responded to the provisional RSS minimum target of 40% and, with rural sites added, would achieve up to 43%.
- (ii) Concern was expressed by another Member that the table on pages 249 and 250 of the agenda papers only delivered 37.5%

of affordable housing and that this did not meet the RSS 40% minimum. Officers said that, with the addition of rural sites and 100% allocated sites, 40% could be achieved but agreed to revisit the figures.

- (iii) Members welcomed the bringing back of empty homes to use.
- (iv) Officers confirmed that a supplementary guidance to go with the policy would be made available and would give details on the mechanism and the pre-application negotiation.
- (v) Page 244 point 59 on viability assessment and report back. Officers confirmed that this would be available in the near future and that they were currently completing tendering on this.
- (vi) Concerns were expressed that the policy needed to reflect the economic downturn and longer term market recovery. Officers confirmed that they were currently looking to add legal obligations in order to re-appraise sites where there have been significant changes in market values. It was confirmed that the intention was to update regularly.
- (vii) On the question of affordability, some Members felt that there was little reference in the report to the high cost of private rents and the policy in terms of the main urban areas on page 100 was not clear. Officers stated that this would be made clearer when the document went for public consultation.
- (viii) Members asked for clarity on what is meant by “in the urban area”. Officers clarified that, in paragraph 9.30 on page 101, the urban area included the sub urban areas as well as main urban areas.
- (ix) One Member stated that the 50% policy target was a complete failure. Other Members noted that the 50% target needed to be looked at.
- (x) A Member commented that businesses needed to work in partnership and to contribute to section 106 requirements
- (xi) Members stressed the importance of public consultation.
- (xii) It was also acknowledged that comments from the building industry reflected the problems they faced.
- (xiii) Concerns were expressed that housing demand was very much linked to employment. There were also concerns raised that without affordable housing the city would become too expensive for people and subsequently become a commuter city with the resulting impact on roads and transport.

- (xiv) It was further stressed that this was a document for the future, not for the current situation, and that flexibility needed to be built into a system that planned for the next 20 years.

An alternative sliding scale proposal was put forward by the Chair on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group and details of this were circulated to Members and attendees at the meeting. The proposal was as follows:

For the purposes of public consultation

1. On affordability, that one option to be considered is:
 - a. a matrix amended to read:
 - 1–10 units – 10% affordable
(NB effectively would be a S106 financial contribution for developments of less than 5)
 - 11-20 – 20% affordable
 - 20-30 – 30% affordable
 - over 30 – at least 40% affordable
 - b. That the same scale will apply to all developments including those in villages.
 - c. That developers have the option to negotiate an *off site* provision
 - d. That the Council will consider the payment of commuted sums in lieu of *on site* provision.

Other views by Members referred to the existing policy on affordable housing and the need to achieve at least 50% at the lower rate. Some Members also stated that more time was needed to consult on the various proposals brought forward on affordable housing. With regard to the 40% proposal, a Member sought clarification on point c and d of the Chair's proposal and that this should be amended to state 'all sites'.

After discussion it was agreed by Members that the officer report on page 104 of the agenda, section 9 of the document should incorporate three further options for consideration, including the current Local Plan, the option put forward by the Liberal Democrat Group and a further option to be put forward by the Labour Group. Officers confirmed that a number of options could be incorporated into the report for further consideration and debate on the viability of the various proposals.

Officers were asked to assess the likely supply of affordable housing through the various options, and make available information and implications on the choices. Officers advised that the document would be amended following the Executive meeting on 12 May and would be circulated to Members of the Working Group before it went out for public consultation.

With regard to Policy CS7, Members asked that the policy makes clear the acceptable density levels per site as advised by Government and that the permissions would not be exceeded on existing sites.

At this point (5.30pm), the meeting was adjourned in order for some Members to attend another meeting. The meeting resumed at 6.08 pm.

Discussion then followed on the remainder of the **Draft Core Strategy Preferred Options report**, with comments noted on each section of the document. Officers confirmed that a full sustainability appraisal would go out with the document and that a summary document would be made available for the public with the full documents.

Section 1:

- Map on page 31 of the agenda. It was noted that the map needed to be made clearer, that Rufforth needed to be identified and that the position of Murton and the York to Beverley rail line needed to be checked.
- More detail was needed on open space and leisure.
- More focus required on transport with the expected growth of the city.

Section 2:

- Underline the importance of a community stadium and provision of new city centre swimming pool.

Section3:

- Figure 7 needs to reflect issues discussed at previous meeting in relation to green corridors. Officers confirmed that the Core Strategy did need amending with regard to local and district green corridors.
- Page 56. needs to mention concerns re the possible development of brownfield sites, which may be prone to flooding. Officers confirmed that the policy on flood plains was very clear.
- Maps to be enlarged and legends to be put below.
- Distinction between flood zones 3a and 3b on the map.
- Page 57, second bullet to include in para ‘...high quality mixed use of development and *public open space*.’
- Page 62 Add to (ii) ‘*and or air quality problems*’
- Add additional bullet re access to local key services such as schools and health.
- Page 62, ensuring that development does not have an unacceptable impact on the highway network should also apply to ia and ib.
- Spatial Principle 3 should include cross reference to the affordable housing section.
- Reconsider the location of paragraph 3.20 – should this come before the spatial principles?

Section 4 - No comments

Section 5:

- Map to be clearer, to include the whole of the city centre, peripheral shopping streets and the inner ring road.
- Include reference to the elimination of air quality hot spots.

- Page 70 Para 5.9 - Note that York's market share has declined. Cross ref with Retail section.
- Page 70 para 5.11 re-word ref to SHLAA.

Section 6:

- Page 76 para6.3 Make reference to the eco credentials of York Northwest.
- Page 77 add ref to York Northwest as "exemplar" of sustainable development and reference should be made to central business district, open space, community facilities and low traffic scheme.

Section 7:

- Policy CS4. Add reference to historic buildings, cyclists and exploring.

Section 8

- Page 91, Table 2 add definition of submarkets.
- Add reference to historic building conservation.
- The SA refers to open space standards – this should be included within part c of Policy CS5

Section 9 - Changes to be made as discussed above.

Section 10

- Page 112. add "including swimming and community meeting spaces".
- "Affordable" to be added re community spaces.
- Officers to speak to Neighbourhood Unit about community space needs.
- Officers to check whether new build programme for schools had been taken into account.

Section 11

- Amendments would be made following the recommendations of the previous LDF meeting.
- Page 116. Jobs quality reference to be included.
- Page 119, para 11.22 Cross reference to the key diagram.

Section 12

- Page 125, para12.8 – emphasise wider viability benefits of increased market share in city centre.
- Additional bullet point re lack of support for significant retail growth in York Northwest.
- Page 127, CS11 Importance and need for local shops in the suburbs needs to be emphasised.

Section 13

- Public transport. Need to look at changing age profile and more tailored transport, particularly in rural areas.
- Parking needs to be mentioned.

- Cycle routes and cycle parking to be mentioned.
- Page 134. LPT2 targets. Document to look beyond these targets and be amended to percentage increase/ annual growth figures.
- Tram-train proposals details to be made public. Officers confirmed that were only looking at Phase 1 York to Harrogate.
- Make clear that the Core Strategy will only refer to schemes that need planning consent.
- Footstreets after 2011 will be dealt with through the City Centre AAP.

Section 14

- Page 138. Clarity required re the two different types of standards proposed in the PMP Study and ANGST.

Section 15 - No comments

Section 16 - No comments

Section 17

- Waste management hierarchy pyramid should be reconsidered and inverted with prevention at the base.
- Reconsider reference to City of York Council receiving funding for kerbside recycling facilities.

Section 18 - No comments

Section 19

- Approach to developer contributions needs to ensure sufficient flexibility for delivery and changing circumstances.

Section 20

- Ensure changes recorded in other sections are mirrored in Section 20.

Generally it was agreed that cross-referencing to the Key Diagram be included throughout the document and the role of Sustainability Appraisal was to be made clearer.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Executive be recommended to approve the City of York Local Development Framework – Draft Core Strategy Preferred Options document, subject to the inclusion of comments and recommendations made by Members of the LDF Working Group, particularly with regard to the inclusion of the four options for Section 9: Access to Housing Affordability Type. These options are to include:
 - a) the current Local Plan,
 - b) the Officer recommendations in the report,
 - c) the proposals from the Liberal Democrat Group
 - d) any proposals to be put forward by the Labour Group.

Reason: So that the Local Development Framework Core Strategy can be progressed to its next stage of development.

- ii) That the Executive be recommended to delegate to the Director of City Strategy in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy the making of any incidental changes to the draft document that are necessary as a result of the recommendations of the LDF Working Group.

Reason: So that changes recommended as a result of discussions at this meeting can be made.

- iii) That the Executive be recommended to delegate to the Director of City Strategy in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy the approval of the full sustainability appraisal to accompany the Preferred Options document consultation.

Reason: So that the report and accompanying document can progress through to the Executive.

- iv) That the Executive be recommended to delegate to the Director of City Strategy in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy the approval of a Consultation Strategy and associated documents.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed methods of consultation are satisfactory to members.

Cllr S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 7.30 pm].



Local Development Framework Working Group**7th September 2009**

Report of the Director of City Strategy

Green Infrastructure Update**Summary**

1. At an LDF Working Group meeting on 4th March 2008, Members agreed a report setting out the proposed approach to the Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure through the LDF. The purpose of this report is to update Members on our progress and request that they approve the work undertaken to date.
2. This report sets out the current local position in terms of the national, regional and sub-regional context including the work that we have been doing with Natural England, relevant local evidence base, and how Green Infrastructure is addressed through the LDF.

Background

3. Green Infrastructure is the term used for the overarching framework related to all green assets. Green Infrastructure is the physical environment within and between our cities, towns and villages. It is a network of multifunctional open spaces, including formal parks, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, waterways, street trees, nature reserves and open countryside. Well designed and integrated Green Infrastructure can deliver a range of benefits, often in combination, these could include:
 - opportunities for sport and recreation;
 - improvement in environmental quality e.g. better air and water quality;
 - improved access to the local environment promoting health and well-being;
 - mitigation and adaptation of climate change;
 - contribution to sustainable drainage and flood mitigation;
 - enhanced environmental backdrop and landscape that will assist in attracting business and inward investment;
 - maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity; and
 - help in the establishment of local identity or sense of place.

4. The Green Infrastructure of York is a key priority for the LDF process and work has continued towards ensuring that it is embedded within the Core Strategy in an appropriate way along with the production of a Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This SPD will provide the detail to supplement the strategic objectives, targets and policy in section 14 of the Core Strategy (attached at Annex C). This has included officer and interest groups' workshops, meetings and mapping work with organisations including Natural England and the Forestry Commission, and discussions at the regional level with other local authorities and Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (formerly the Regional Assembly). Through the LDF, we aim to raise its profile and increase the level and quality of open space, nature conservation sites, foot and cycle paths and the wider green infrastructure network.

Work undertaken to date

5. As reported at the LDF working group meeting on 4th March 2008, there are several key evidence base documents that will feed into the green infrastructure work. Below is an update of those recently completed and those still emerging.

Open Space

6. *The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (PPG17 Study)* was adopted in December 2008 and provides a register of all the open space sites that fit into the PPG17 typologies, and identifies local standards based on quantity, quality and accessibility of open space provision in York.
7. The standards have been used to inform the Core Strategy Preferred Options document and are referred to as a material consideration in development control decisions.

Biodiversity

8. The emerging *Biodiversity Audit* will identify potential new Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and assess these alongside existing ones to see if they have sufficient value to be designated as a SINC. Early indications show that a number of new sites will be designated. These sites will be considered by the North Yorkshire SINC Panel ahead of them being formally designated. The Biodiversity Audit and associated maps are also considered on this meeting's agenda.
9. The Biodiversity Audit will provide the baseline information on which to prioritise further action through the *Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)*. Work on the BAP is underway and completion is anticipated by the end of 2009.

Green Belt Character Areas

10. The *Green Belt Appraisal* (2003) identifies those areas of open land outside York's built up areas that are most valuable in terms of the historic character and setting of the city. These are:
 - areas which retain, reinforce and extend the pattern of historic green wedges;
 - areas which provide an impression of a historic city situated within a rural setting;
 - the setting of villages whose traditional form, character and relationship with the surrounding agricultural landscape of which is substantially unchanged; and
 - areas which prevent the coalescence of settlements to retain their individual identity.
11. These areas have helped shape the Core Strategy's spatial strategy and will play a key role in terms of the green infrastructure work.

Cycle Network

12. A review of the *Proposed Cycle Network* is underway. This ties in well with the aims of the Cycling City bid and will be done in parallel with the delivery of the Cycling City Programme. This should be completed by the end of 2009 when it will be presented to Members of the LDF Working Group.
13. In addition to the local routes within York, two national cycle routes, namely Route 65 and Route 66 run through York and provide connections to the wider *Sustrans National Cycle Network (NCN)*. Currently proposals are at an advanced stage to develop a new coast to coast route which will run from Morecambe, through Lancaster and York to finish at Bridlington. Whilst this route will be mostly on quiet roads some sections will use green corridors. The Council will continue to investigate opportunities in the future to provide further linkages to the NCN and to surrounding districts.

Rights of Way

14. Work on the *Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)* is expected to be complete by November 2009. This document is intended to be a management tool for improving York's network of PROW and other non-motorised routes, whilst taking into consideration the needs of all types of users.
15. Work is currently ongoing to bring York's definitive map and statement up to date. Both the former North and East Riding maps need to be revised and there is currently no definitive map for the former County Borough area of York (FCB) as it was excluded from the Definitive Mapping process under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act

2000 set a cut off date to have all historic routes added to the Definitive Map by 2026. Failure to do so will result in the loss of public rights over these ways. This cut off date is currently under review.

Green Corridors

16. Natural England are carrying out an exercise to map all Green Infrastructure in the region (this is being done for all regions in Britain but Yorkshire and Humber are one of the furthest ahead). Given York's work to date on this subject we have been a key contributor and player in this work which took place in three main stages.

Identification of Green Infrastructure Assets

17. Each authority had sent Natural England green asset maps that officers had drawn at local workshops in March 2009 (planners, ecologists, PROW officer, cycle officer etc). Natural England used these to map a standard set of assets to ensure that the map coverage was comprehensive across the region. Officers validated the Natural England maps and began to identify those assets that are Strategic Green Infrastructure using the regional evidence base e.g. SSSI, main rivers and their flood plains.

Initial mapping of Green Corridors

18. Officers began to map green infrastructure corridors. This was done initially at a local level through the officer workshops in March 2009, at the Environment Forum and taking on board Members comments following previous LDF Working Group meetings. Maps showing the existing green assets in York were used as a base to draw the corridors. These consist of existing green corridors such as rivers and green wedges as well as "stepping stones" of sites that provide linkages for wildlife and/or humans.

Establishment of a hierarchy of Green Corridors

19. Officers identified a hierarchy (regional, sub-regional, district and local) using Natural England's function matrix which set out all functions of Green Infrastructure identified in the regional evidence base. The corridors were named and graded – the more functions they have, the higher up the hierarchy they are placed. Based on this approach, the regionally significant corridors in York are the Ouse, Foss and Derwent rivers corridors (this includes the flood plains and the footpaths/ cycleways alongside them). The draft corridors maps and function matrix and results for York are include at Annex A and B. Large scale copies of the map are also available in the Members' library and will be available at the meeting for discussion and comment.

20. The next step involved identifying priority and opportunity areas for intervention. This included maps showing areas with a high Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score, low Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) score etc. These were viewed alongside the green corridors maps to see where the network could be extended or enhanced to tackle issues of poor health, poor access to green space, low levels of sport participation etc. In addition, we also looked at major development areas and allocated sites where the open space requirements could contribute to the wider Green infrastructure network.
21. All of the emerging evidence base will feed into the ongoing green corridor work, for example new national cycle routes that go beyond York's boundaries may be identified as strategic corridors and SINC sites that form natural 'stepping stones' for wildlife may be recognised as corridors with a specific biodiversity function.
22. In addition to the locally produced evidence base work and the work we have been undertaking with Natural England, the profile of green infrastructure has been raised at the regional and sub-regional level as well.
23. The inclusion of a specific Green Infrastructure policy (YH8) in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has acted as a catalyst for further work to be undertaken at the regional, sub-regional and local level. Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH) commissioned consultants to undertake a regional evidence base to support the RSS policy and emerging RSS review (now the Integrated Regional Strategy - IRS); York has been included as a good practice case study in this Study. The study was published in June 2008 and establishes the evidence base requirements for the Region and identifies those components of the overall Green Infrastructure asset base that should be regarded as being of strategic importance to the future growth and prosperity of the Region and its sub Regions.
24. In May 2009 , the Leeds City Region (LCR) chief executives approved the production of a LCR Green Infrastructure Strategy. The Strategy will set the strategic framework for green infrastructure across the city region, building on the work that has been undertaken over the last year with Natural England, and taking into consideration current plans and aspirations for GI in the LCR Authorities. The Strategy will support sustainable growth by establishing a network of strategic cross boundary, green infrastructure corridors that link existing green infrastructure assets with major regeneration and growth areas, and transport nodes. A LCR Green Infrastructure steering group has been set up to lead on the Strategy; a representative from York is on this group.

Consultation

25. Consultation exercises with officers and local groups played a key role in the preparation of the green corridors maps. Member feedback on the March 2008 green infrastructure report and at subsequent meetings regarding the Core

Strategy and evidence base documents has influenced the green infrastructure work undertaken to date.

26. The ongoing work with Natural England involves consultation with other authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber Region as well as Natural England themselves. This has ensured that our approach is consistent with the RSS and the approach taken by other authorities across England.
27. In addition, the inclusion of a Green Infrastructure section and policy (CS13) in the Core Strategy Preferred Options has meant that the approach to green infrastructure has been consulted on as part of the LDF consultation over the summer 2009.

Next Steps

28. The work that has been undertaken with Natural England along with all the work done to date and the emerging Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy will feed into the LDF process and will form the basis for a York Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will link to a strategic Core Strategy policy.
29. At this stage the Core Strategy Preferred Options document identifies the proposed regional level green corridors. These have formed constraints that have helped to shape the Spatial Strategy. The district and local corridors identified on the map in Annex A are still in a draft form and have not been subject to consultation or Member approval. The intention is that the district and local corridors will not form absolute constraints in the way that the regional corridors do, instead they will be designed into and enhanced by new development. It is important to recognise that the corridor work and the wider green infrastructure work is not about applying restrictions to new development but about enhancing York's green assets in a variety of ways. Existing green assets such as open space defined in the PPG 17 Study and Nature Conservation sites identified in the Biodiversity Audit will remain protected.
30. It is anticipated that the York-specific work will build on the strategic green infrastructure network to be identified in the LCR strategy, to identify district and local corridors. This stage of the process will involve representatives from key local interest groups and local neighbourhood groups. The intention is that the identification of local corridors will be very much a "grassroots" approach to ensure that sites and corridors that are important to local residents and communities are recognised and enhanced.
31. The completion of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the other outstanding pieces of work will provide a key evidence base for the future green infrastructure work.

32. The intention is that a Green Infrastructure SPD, linked to the Core Strategy will:
- Include a range of maps and will give a full background of the process that has resulted in the green assets and corridors being drawn. This will reflect the regional/LCR approach as well as the local consultation exercises that we intend to carry out.
 - It will also set out the priority/opportunity areas which will be based on a range of factors including the Natural England work as well as LDF evidence base documents e.g. the PPG17 study and Biodiversity Audit and Action Plan.
 - The SPD will include a Green Infrastructure Action Plan that will bring together the Council's aims and objectives for the natural environment, it will identify targets and a set of standards and policies that will build upon those set out in the Core Strategy. It will also identify projects and programmes for enhancing York's green infrastructure network.
 - It might be appropriate at this stage to include case studies and examples in York where green infrastructure can be "built in" to a scheme from the start as well as small scale local examples of where green infrastructure plays a key role in the community's everyday lives

Options

33. Members have the following options to consider in relation to Green Infrastructure:

Option 1: To endorse the approach taken for the emerging Green Infrastructure SPD to allow for further discussion with local groups; or

Option 2: To request further work from officers.

Analysis

34. An up to date, robust evidence base for the natural environment is important for the LDF process in order to ensure that York's green infrastructure is treated with an equal level of consideration as the existing and emerging built environment.
35. This report outlines the key pieces of work that the Council is currently undertaking and as mentioned previously, these will be brought together as part of the emerging Green Infrastructure work.
36. It is envisaged that the Green Infrastructure work will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will link to the Core Strategy policy. This approach will allow for the flexibility that is needed for this ever-changing area of work.
37. Habitats and species identified through the Biodiversity Audit which would be listed within the initial section of the Strategy could be updated when required

and the SPD revised within a short period of time. Similarly, the actions derived from the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) would sit within the overall Green Infrastructure action plan and again, as the BAP is monitored and reviewed and as targets are achieved, the Green Infrastructure action plan can be reviewed accordingly.

Corporate Priorities

38. The approach to Green Infrastructure accords with the following Corporate Priorities:

Sustainable City – The approach to Green Infrastructure will have benefits for the social, economic and environmental future of York.

Healthy City – One of the key benefits of green infrastructure is the opportunities it has for the health and well-being of York residents.

Learning City – Access to green spaces, especially nature conservation sites can provide an educational asset for the residents of York.

Inclusive City – The creation of a green infrastructure network should improve access to green spaces for the public. There may be scope to improve accessibility to ensure that some of these assets provide an inclusive resource for all citizens, including those with disabilities.

Thriving City – Enhancement of York's green infrastructure will provide an attractive environmental backdrop and landscape that will assist in attracting business and inward investment.

Implications

39. The following implications have been assessed.

- **Financial** – *None*.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – *None*.
- **Equalities** - *None*
- **Legal** - *None*
- **Crime and Disorder** - *None*
- **Information Technology (IT)** - *None*
- **Property** - *None*
- **Other** – *None*

Risk Management

40. There are no identified risks in this proposal

Recommendations

41. It is requested that Members:

i) Endorse the approach to green infrastructure in York to allow the work to date to be used for discussion with local groups.

Reason: So that further work can be progressed to support the emerging Core Strategy and wider LDF.

Contact Details

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City Development
City Strategy

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Damon Copperthwaite
Assistant Director of City Strategy
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**Report
Approved**



Date 27/08/09

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

N/A

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (CYC, 2008)

Annexes:

Annex A: Draft green corridor map

Annex B: Natural England Green Corridor function matrix

Annex C: Core Strategy Preferred Options Strategic Objectives, Targets and Policy

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Annex A

Draft Green Corridor map

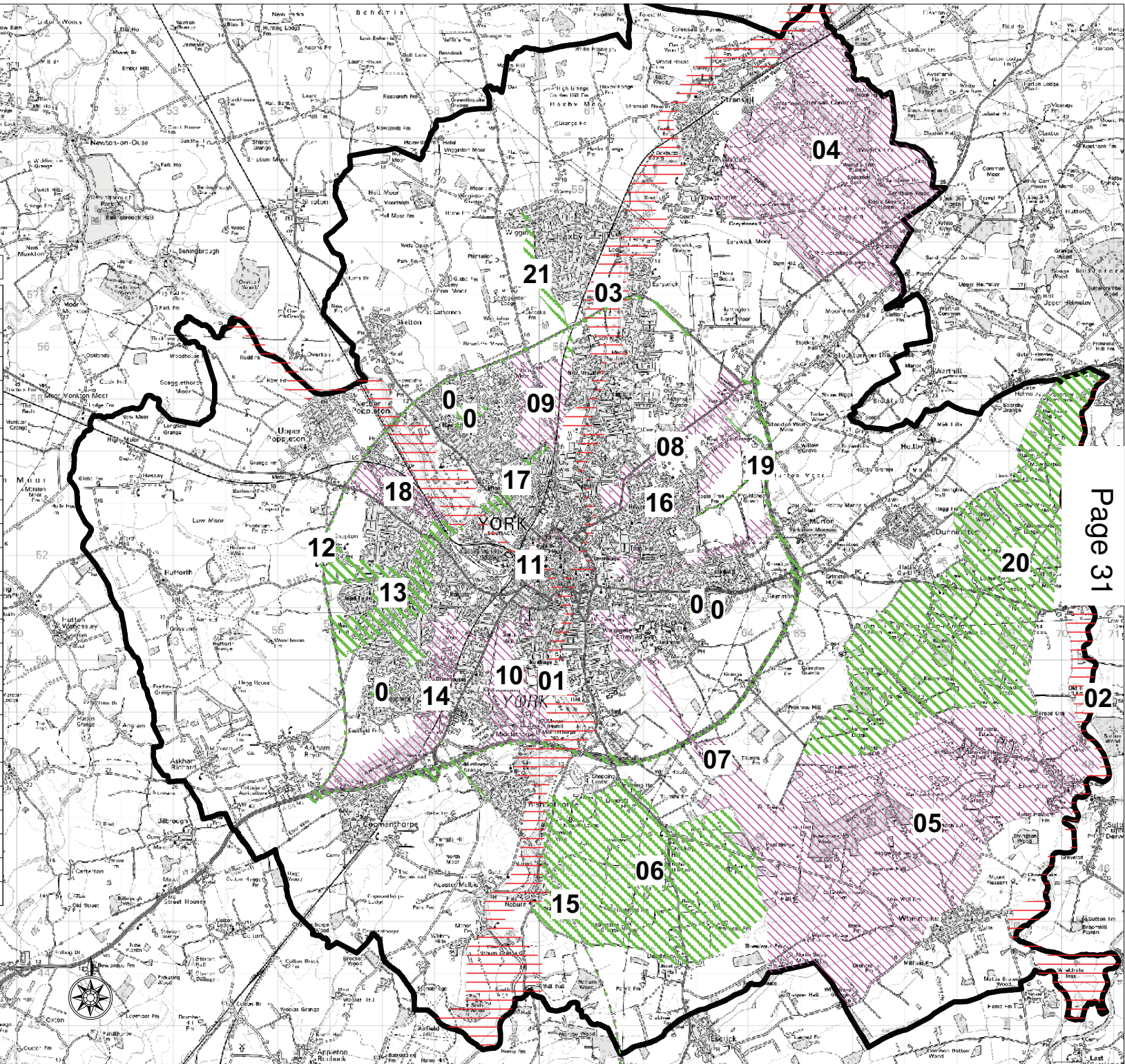
(large copies available in Members' Library
and at the meeting on 7th September)

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GREEN CORRIDORS

-  Local
-  District
-  Regional

ID	Level	CorridorName
0	Local	Still in consideration
0	Local	Still in consideration
0	Local	Still in consideration
0	Local	Still in consideration
0	Local	Still in consideration
01	Regional	Ouse Corridor
02	Regional	Derwent Corridor
03	Regional	Foss Corridor
04	District	Northern Heath
05	District	Elvington Tilmire
06	Local	Naburn Cultural Landscape Blown Sands
07	District	Tilmire
08	District	Monk Stray
09	District	Bootham Stray
10	District	Knavesmire/Hob Moor
11	District	City Walls
12	Local	Ring Rd Corridor
13	Local	Acomb Corridor
14	District	Askham Bog
15	Local	Selby Railway Corridor
16	District	Osbalwick/Tanghull Corridor
17	Local	Kingsway North
18	District	British Sugar
19	Local	Heworth Cycle Corridor
20	Local	Southern Heath
21	Local	Wigginton Corridor



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Annex B

Green Corridor Function Matrix

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York Green Corridor Assessment

No.	Corridor Name	Open Space	Biodiversity	Flood Risk	Accessibility	Recreation	Cultural	Landscape	Education	Quality Environment	Climate Change	Health	Tourism	Products from Land	Land/Property Value	Economic Growth	Score	Corridor Type
1	Ouse Corridor	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	15	Regional
2	Derwent Corridor	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			13	Regional
3	Foss Corridor	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	15	Regional
4	Northern Heath	•	•		•	•	•	•			•			•			8	District
5	Elvington-Tilmire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•		•	13	Regional
6	Naburn Cultural Landscape						•	•			•			•			4	Local
7	Tilmire	•	•		•	•	•		•		•	•		•			9	District
8	Monk Stray	•	•		•	•	•			•		•		•	•		8	District
9	Bootham Stray	•	•		•	•	•	•	•			•		•			9	District
10	Knavesmire/Hob Moor	•	•		•	•	•	•	•			•	•				9	District
11	City Walls	•			•		•	•	•			•	•				7	Local
12	Ring Road Corridor		•		•					•						•	4	Local
13	Acomb Corridor	•	•		•	•			•	•						•	7	Local
14	Askham Bog	•	•		•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•		10	District
15	Selby Railway	•	•		•				•	•		•		•			7	Local
16	Osbalwick/Tanghall	•	•	•	•	•		•		•			•		•		9	District
17	Kingsway North	•			•					•					•		4	Local
18	British Sugar	•	•			•	•		•	•				•	•	•	9	District
19	Heworth Cycle				•												1	Local
20	Southern Heath	•	•		•	•	•	•			•			•			8	Local
21	Wigginton Corridor	•			•	•				•					•		5	Local

York Green Corridor Assessment

Scoring Explanation for GI Corridors

Green Infrastructure Functions and Corridor Categorisation

The process

- 1 Decide where each corridor begins and ends and mark that on the map.
- 2 Give each corridor a name and number and list that on the score sheet.
- 3 Using the score sheet, guidance and maps, decide whether each function is present and significant for each corridor.
- 4 Add up the scores.
- 5 Decide on a category for each corridor based on score and size.
- 6 Return comments, maps and results back to Natural England.

Green Infrastructure Functions

These are the functions of green infrastructure. The datasets associated with each function are shown in brackets. For some functions there is no suitable indicator dataset so local knowledge and judgement is required.

Open Space – Contains open space assets such as parks and woodlands. (Green assets)

Biodiversity – Contains one or more site of significant wildlife value or areas to allow the movement of species due to climate change. (England Indicative Habitat Network)

Landscape – Contains at least one landscape feature worthy of protection or enhancement. (Local knowledge)

Products from the land – Includes areas in agricultural production. (Agricultural Land Classification, Local knowledge)

Mitigating floodrisk – Contains floodplain, areas at risk from flooding or areas where green infrastructure could be used to reduce run off into flood risk areas. (Floodzones, Wetland Feasibility Study)

Contribution to mitigating climate change – Contains areas which are, or could be, managed for climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration such as peatlands and woodlands or areas of energy crop production. (Local knowledge)

York Green Corridor Assessment

Health – Includes Air Quality Management Areas or locations with populations with poor health where green infrastructure can be used to increase outdoor activity or address pollution issues. (Combined Health Statistics)

Accessibility – Contains rights of way allowing access by foot, cycle or horse riding along the corridor. (Public Rights of Way)

Recreation – Contains formal and informal outdoor recreational assets such as golf courses, play areas and sports pitches. (Recreation space, Playing Fields, Golf Courses)

Education – Provides environmental educational opportunities such as a visitor centre or definite opportunities to use green infrastructure for safe routes to schools. (School locations relative to housing areas and rights of way, Local knowledge)

Cultural – Contains gardens, cemeteries, historic features or buildings with public access. (Scheduled Ancient Monuments, World Heritage Sites, relevant sites contained within the green assets datasets)

Tourism – Includes tourism assets which would form part of at least a day trip for people from outside the immediate area. (Tourism)

Quality Environment – Contains existing poor quality environments which could be improved with investment in green infrastructure. (Previously Developed Land, Coalfield Sites, Regeneration areas, Mineral Working Sites)

Land and property values – Areas where investment in green infrastructure would be likely to positively affect local land and property values. (Local knowledge)

Economic Growth – Includes areas where increased green infrastructure is likely to attract further economic investment e.g. higher value industry. (Local knowledge)

N.B. These are strategic scale corridors so functions provided by the green infrastructure should be significant. Therefore for single or small sites within a corridor, if they don't fully demonstrate a function, can be ignored.

York Green Corridor Assessment

Corridor categories

Regional – Likely to cross several local authority boundaries and demonstrates 13 to 15 functions.

Sub-regional – Likely to cross two or more local authority boundaries and has 10 to 13 functions.

District – Likely to be contained within a single local authority or simply connect two localities across a boundary and demonstrates 8 to 11 functions.

Local – Likely to be small scale, contained within a defined locality and has 4 to 8 functions.

N.B. The number of functions that each category can have overlaps. This is to allow for corridors to be defined by both their scale and contribution to functions rather than just by the number of functions demonstrated.

Annex C

**Local Development Framework
Core Strategy
Preferred Options**

Section 14: Green Infrastructure

**Strategic Objectives
Targets
Policy CS13**

Strategic Objectives

Nature Conservation

- To conserve and enhance biodiversity having particular regard to the maintenance, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats and species;
- To maintain and increase the tree cover across York whilst ensuring specific protection for ancient woodland, aged and veteran trees;
- To preserve and enhance the River Ouse, Foss, Derwent and other waterways and their flood plains for biodiversity; and
- To promote accessibility, where appropriate, to natural greenspace, including country parks and woodland.

Open space (recreational and natural)

- To protect existing open space provision;
- To enhance the quality of existing open space and promote biodiversity where feasible;
- To increase accessibility to existing open space;
- To create new areas of open space where needed; and
- To promote understanding of and interest in natural open space.

Green Corridors and Linkages

- To maintain and enhance a city-wide network of green corridors that link the above as part of the wider green infrastructure network.

Targets

Nature Conservation

- No loss or damage to existing wildlife habitats;
- An increase in the number of sites incorporating management for biodiversity;
- An increase in woodland cover in York whilst protecting ancient woodland, aged and veteran trees;
- An increase in the area and extent of waterways and floodplains under management for biodiversity; and
- An increase in accessibility to natural greenspace, where appropriate.

Open space

- An increase in the overall level of quality of provision across York;
- A reduction in the open space deficiencies identified in the PPG17 Study;
- All new developments meeting the standards as identified in the PPG17 Study; and
- An increase in the multifunctional quality of open space; and

Green Corridors and Linkages

- An increase in the quality and extent of green corridors and linkages.

Policy CS13: Green Infrastructure

The Council's approach to nature conservation, open space and the green corridors which link them is brought together in this policy and will be expanded on through a Green Infrastructure Strategy SPD which will ensure the protection, enhancement, management and maintenance of York's green corridors and wider green infrastructure network.

The SPD will act as a strategy that will support the Council to:

- **Promote effective stewardship of the city's wildlife through:**
 1. Identifying and safeguarding nature conservation sites identified through the Biodiversity Audit as well as national and international protected sites from inappropriate development including the provision of buffer zones where necessary to protect them from negative human impacts;
 2. Developing and maintaining a citywide network of local wildlife sites and wildlife corridors, links and stepping stones between areas of natural green space;
 3. Ensuring that development retains, protects and enhances features of geological, geomorphological or biological interest, and provides for the appropriate management of these features;
 4. Ensuring development seeks to produce a net gain in biodiversity by designing in wildlife, and ensuring any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated;
 5. Supporting wildlife enhancements which contribute to the habitat restoration targets set out in the Regional Biodiversity Strategy and the emerging York Biodiversity Action Plan;
 6. Maintaining and increasing tree cover across the city and ensuring that important individual trees, groups of trees and hedgerows are protected and enhanced; and
 7. Ensuring that the Rivers Ouse, Foss and Derwent and other smaller waterways are maintained and enhanced for biodiversity as well as recreational activities.

- **Ensure that provision will be made for all levels of open space based on those required in the PPG17 Study by:**
 8. Protecting existing open space in York in areas where a deficiency has been identified;
 9. Implementing the open space standards identified in the PPG17 Study; and
 10. Identifying new open space sites through the Allocations DPD process both within new development sites and as freestanding spaces.

- **Promote good access to natural greenspaces by enhancing existing sites and creating new ones.**

- **Protect, enhance and create green corridors which promote walking and cycling for recreational and commuting purposes.**

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**Agenda Item****Local Development Framework Working Group****7th September 2009**

Report of the Director of City Strategy

Biodiversity Audit**Summary**

1. The purpose of this report is to request that Members of the LDF Working Group recommend to the Council's Executive that they approve the Biodiversity Audit, subject to recommendations of the group, as evidence base to support the Local Development Framework. The Biodiversity Audit report is attached as Annex A to this report.
2. The Biodiversity Audit identifies species and habitats which are of UK or local conservation concern and provides us with baseline information on which to prioritise further action. Species and habitat action plans will be developed for these priorities with specific targets and proposals for action.

Background

3. The initial "City of York Biodiversity Audit" in 1996 had been commissioned by the then English Nature and the City of York Council as a first step towards implementing Government policy at the local level and was essentially a review of the City's known wildlife resource. It was not intended as a local strategy or action plan.
4. This audit though has formed the basis of conserving sites of nature conservation interest in York since it was produced in 1996.
5. The decision to develop the Local Development Framework (LDF) document, however, has meant that all of the existing data needed to be reviewed, not only because of the length of time since information had been collected but also because, in the intervening years, additional sites of interest and unusual species had been discovered. This suggested that there could be further areas and species of interest still to be recorded and

therefore needing to be taken into account if the database for the LDF was to be in any way comprehensive.

6. Also, over the years, the criteria used to establish sites of value had changed and improved and new guidelines had been published by Defra to establish Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or Local Sites in Defra terminology (July 2006). This meant that the existing guidelines used to identify SINC in York were out of date and new criteria and procedures needed to be developed, in line with best practice. All existing SINC therefore needed to be reviewed against these changed criteria to ensure regional and national compatibility.
7. This current report reviews the sites of wildlife interest present in York as identified in the 1996 Audit but also takes account of sites discovered in the intervening years, as well as those identified during the present round of survey. It also includes some re-assessment of protected species and other species of interest.
8. The map at Annex C identifies SSSIs and other national and internationally designated sites as well as existing and proposed Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. Sites that do not fulfil SINC Criteria but have a strong Social Value with regard to nature conservation are shown separately.
9. The map at Annex D identifies sites that do not fulfil SINC criteria but are still of interest for their wildlife value. Some of these sites are borderline as to their fulfilment of SINC criteria and may, with further survey, prove to be of SINC value.

SINC Criteria

10. Although adequate at the time and approved by the then English Nature (now Natural England), the guidelines used to designate sites in 1996 were not acceptable for present purposes. The decision was therefore made in 2007 to update these in line with best practice.
11. In North Yorkshire more objective and comprehensive criteria had already been established over many years. This began in 1997 when North Yorkshire County Council in partnership with other Local District Authorities, established a SINC Forum to develop criteria relevant to Yorkshire. In 2002 these criteria were published and have been regularly updated since as new information has been established. The most up to date version of these guidelines to site selection are included at Annex E (in the Members' library). Whilst it is accepted that objectivity is essential, it is recognised that there will always have to be a level of subjectivity and some professional judgment will remain an important factor in the selection process.

12. The criteria developed were in line with the Defra guidance, indeed were used by Defra in producing their report as an example of good practice.
13. The North Yorkshire system established a more regionally based assessment of sites that enabled comparison across the whole of the North Yorkshire Region and provided an objective, consistent and defensible designation system for wildlife sites.
14. In 2008, the Council adopted this system of designation. The rationale for this was that although a distinct unitary authority, York was part of the Vale of York area for which successful and well tried guidelines were already established. There was therefore little point in devising new criteria that could in themselves be challenged through comparison with the North Yorkshire system.

Survey

15. Concurrent with consideration and adoption of new criteria for designating wildlife sites, the Council also began a comprehensive review of wildlife interest. This included carrying out significant new survey work, the first time this had ever been undertaken.
16. In order to reduce unnecessary and time consuming field work, this review began with an assessment of habitat from aerial photographs. This enabled areas of arable and improved grassland to be removed and identified most areas of potential interest. There is some potential for a few grassland sites to be overlooked using this methodology as heavily grazed old pasture can be masked by their management, However, baring in mind the long history of intensive agriculture in the Vale of York, this should be limited.
17. A brief site visit was then made by experienced ecological surveyors to look at all sites identified from aerial photographs in order ascertain whether they require detailed survey as possible SINC candidates.
18. All sites so identified were then scheduled for a 2nd Phase survey to enable an assessment to be made of the quality of the site. Consideration was given to the likely interest of the site in order to prioritise their survey requirements. For instance woodlands were surveyed early in the year to optimise the data available, whilst others were scheduled for invertebrate survey work.
19. Survey details from the current round of work was then collated with existing information, where available to allow an assessment to be made of the individual sites against the SINC Criteria.

Assessment

20. From the previous review, 42 sites had been identified as being of significant interest for wildlife, i.e. of SINC quality, in addition to the 9 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 3 of which also have international designations as Ramsar sites (wetlands), Special Protection Area's (SPAs for birds) or Special Areas of Conservation (SACs for Habitats)
21. A review of these has identified that 37 sites still fulfil SINC criteria whilst 5 are proposed for de-notification either because their value has decreased or because they were never of sufficient interest to fulfil the new criteria. As such they will be moved to the list of sites of interest.
22. In addition, a further 49 new sites have been identified as fulfilling the requirements for designation as SINC's. In addition there are a further 15 sites that are close to SINC quality but where we have insufficient information to enable a firm assessment to be made. Such sites should effectively be considered as important sites until sufficient data is available.
23. Over and above these, a further 87 sites have been identified as being of wildlife interest but where this is insufficient to qualify them for designation. Such sites are though still of great significance for biodiversity and do therefore merit a level of consideration. Such sites are particularly valuable in the local context and when considering climate change and the establishment of habitat networks.
24. Hedgerows have been kept separate as generally, SINC designation is not their only means of statutory protection.

SINC/ Wildlife Sites – a summary of the site details are contained in the spreadsheet at Annex B

Title	Total No	Total Area	Total Length where appropriate.
SSSI's	9	895.08	18000
SAC's	3	714.75	18000
SPA's	1	136 ha (682 ha)	
NNR's	1	136 ha (682 ha)	
Total No. Sites of Statutory Protection	9	895.08	18000
Existing SINC's (retained)	37	426.40	7855
New Sinc's	49	154.53	24260
Sinc Hedges	41		11896
Total no. of Sinc's (excl. hedges)	86	580.93	
Total no. of Sinc's (incl. Hedges)	127		32115

SINC – Local Nature Reserves	3	54.65	
Non Sinc LNR's (1 prt SINC)	2	12.30	
Total LNR's	4	66.95	
Non SINC Sites with Social Value	2	5.70	0
New Sinc's - Possible	15	173.61	1900
Sincs to be De-notified	5	5.75	950
Sites of Interest (Not Sinc Quality)	87	330.51	18710
Created Sites	11	22.70	550
Total Sites of Interest (Not SINC value)	122	371.26	
Other sites(Unknown value)	18	155.50	750

25. There are some sites that have been identified that may conflict with existing allocations. In particular, the proposed designation of part of York Business Park as a SINC is on an area already identified for development.
26. With regard to this, SINC designation, as for SSSI designation, is made purely on established scientific criteria. Land use is not relevant to the assessment. The SINC designation simply highlights that the site is of value and enables due weight to be given to this value when considering what use can be made of that land.
27. Guidance from Central Government, the Regional Spatial Strategy and policies established in the Development Control Local Plan (2005) and for the new Local Development Framework do not preclude development on Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, they simply require that appropriate consideration is given to the interest, albeit with the proviso that any impact should try to be avoided or mitigated for and that where damage may occur, this should only be in the overriding public interest.
28. Also SINC designation should also outline what that interest is and what development can be accommodated that is unlikely to create any conflict.
29. SINC designation does not impart any constraint on land management or confer a right of public access.

Consultation

30. With regard to this initial phase of survey, no extensive public consultation took place, although informal contact with a number of local organisations and individuals was made to see if any sites of potential interest were identified. This followed on from previous contact over the intervening years since the initial biodiversity audit was undertaken in 1996.

31. Consultation was carried out for this earlier audit and for the draft Biodiversity Action Plan.
32. It is intended that a more extensive consultation will be carried out by the York Biodiversity and Local Sites Group when it is established. It is envisaged that this may identify further sites of interest, particularly from a social point of view.

Next Steps

33. With regard to the future, there is a need for the all of the existing data to be considered by the North Yorkshire SINC Panel to confirm the proposed designations and consider any sites that are of borderline interest. This is the agreed procedure for SINC Designation. The approved list can then be formally passed to the Council for ratification.
34. It is part of the nature of wildlife to change through time, depending on climate, management etc. Also, there are a number of sites where there is still insufficient data to come to a decision on their value. Sites will therefore be reviewed, particularly those sites that are of borderline interest, to see if they have improved or declined with a view to revising the designation.
35. Climate change is a major factor in this, with the ability of wildlife to move and adapt being critical to maintaining York's biodiversity interest.
36. The present list is therefore a snapshot of the wildlife interest at this time and its review is part of a continuous and ongoing assessment. Further survey work will therefore be undertaken to continue to refine and expand our knowledge of the wildlife of York.
37. This review also will form the basis for the further development of the Biodiversity Action Plan. This will aim to take forward the identification of sites and habitats and develop proposals to maintain and enhance the interest that we already have.
38. Both in planning terms and in wildlife enhancement terms, the sites of interest identified in addition to the SINC's are of critical importance in maintaining the diversity of interest in York.

Options

39. Members have the following options to consider in relation to the Biodiversity Audit:

Option 1: To approve the Biodiversity Audit for publication as part of the Local Development Framework evidence base; or

Option 2: To seek amendments to the Biodiversity Audit through recommendations of the LDF Working Group; or

Option 3 : To request further work from officers.

Analysis

40. The Biodiversity Audit (BA) and the Biodiversity Action Plan(BAP) will form part of the evidence base for the LDF and will sit behind and inform policies in the emerging Core Strategy.
41. The biodiversity audit is also a key element of the emerging Green Infrastructure work and together, the Audit and BAP will be critical in providing the basis for future work, including the development of detailed policies in a Supplementary Planning Document that will sit beneath the Core Strategy.
42. The establishment of a new BA has been critical to the further development of the Biodiversity Action Plan, it being difficult to progress work on the BAP until the audit had been finalised.
43. It is therefore necessary that members consider the audit as presented in order to permit continued progress with regard to the Core Strategy and the Biodiversity Action Plan.

Corporate Priorities

44. The Biodiversity Audit accords with the following Corporate Priorities:

Sustainable City – Approving the Biodiversity Audit attached at Annex A will ensure that sites of importance for nature conservation are identified and subsequently protected.

Healthy City – Identifying and protecting nature conservation sites will contribute to York’s wider green infrastructure which has benefits for the health and well-being of York residents.

Learning City – Some of the newly identified nature conservation sites have a social function and will be an educational asset for the residents of York.

Inclusive City – Some of the newly identified nature conservation sites have a social function and access to the public. There may be scope to improve

accessibility to ensure that some of these sites provide an inclusive nature resource for all citizens, including those with disabilities.

Implications

45. The following implications have been assessed.

- **Financial** – *None*.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – *None*.
- **Equalities** - *None*
- **Legal** - *None*
- **Crime and Disorder** - *None*
- **Information Technology (IT)** - *None*
- **Property** - *None*
- **Other** – *None*

Risk Management

46. There are no identified risks in this proposal

Recommendations

47. It is recommended that Members:

(i) approve, subject to the recommendations of this Working Group, the Biodiversity Audit, for publication as part of the Local Development Framework evidence base.

Reason: So that the Biodiversity Audit can be used as part of the Local Development Framework evidence base and to avoid delays to the Core Strategy production.

(ii) delegate to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy, the making of any incidental changes arising from the recommendation of the LDF Working Group, prior to its publication as part of the Local Development Framework evidence base.

Reason: So that any recommended changes can be incorporated into the Biodiversity Audit.

Contact Details

Author:

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Countryside Officer
Planning and Sustainable
Development

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Mike Slater
Assistant Director of City Strategy
Tel: 551300

**Report
Approved**

Date

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

N/A

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A: Biodiversity Audit

Annex B: Spreadsheet showing all sites of wildlife interest in York

Annex F: Primary Site Habitat Breakdown

The following Annexes will be sent separately to Members of the LDF Working Group ahead of the meeting

Annex C: Map showing Statutory and Non Statutory Sites of Wildlife Importance

Annex D: Map showing Sites of Wildlife Interest

The following Annex is available to view in the Members' library

Annex E: The Guidelines to Site Selection

Annex A
Biodiversity Audit

**CITY OF YORK
BIODIVERSITY AUDIT
2009**

**A Review of the Biodiversity Interest and Sites of Nature
Conservation Importance in York**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 1996, a report was prepared by Martin Hammond, on behalf of the City of York Council, entitled a Biodiversity Audit of the City of York. This report concerned the overall biodiversity of the Greater York area and followed on from previous work carried out looking at areas of known interest such as the York Green Spaces report of 1993.
- 1.2 In 1995, The UK Action Plan stated that “Biodiversity is ultimately lost or conserved at the local level... Government policies create the incentives that facilitate or constrain local action. ”
- 1.3 The initial “City of York Biodiversity Audit in 1996 had been commissioned by the then English Nature and the City of York Council as a first step towards implementing Government policy at the local level and was essentially a review of the City’s known wildlife resource. It was not intended as a local strategy or action plan.
- 1.4 At that time, after April 1996, the City of York covered areas previously administered by York City Council, Ryedale District Council, Harrogate District Council and Selby District Council. A number of non-statutory nature conservation sites had already been identified in the Local Plans produced by these authorities. As such, these sites were taken forward for consideration into the City of York’s Local Plan.
- 1.5 Following the re-appraisal most, but not all sites of nature conservation interest identified in the Harrogate, Selby and Southern Ryedale Local Plans were incorporated into the current inventory. Certain sites were excluded where it was felt that designation could no longer be justified.
- 1.6 The Audit, however, as in previous assessments, was based on known information and did not carry out any significant new survey work to identify the overall extent of the wildlife interest. Indeed, although parts of the Greater York area had had some Phase 1 survey work carried out prior to re-organisation in 1996 by previous authorities, no extensive survey of the whole of York had ever been undertaken.
- 1.7 This audit though has formed the basis of conserving sites of nature conservation interest in York since it was produced in 1996.
- 1.8 The decision to develop the Local Development Framework (LDF) document, however, has meant that all of the existing data needed to be reviewed, not only because of the length of time since information had been collected but also because, in the intervening years, additional sites of interest and unusual species had been discovered. This suggested that there could be further areas and species of interest still to be recorded and therefore needing to be taken into account if the database for the LDF was to be in any way comprehensive.
- 1.9 Also, over the years, the criteria used to establish sites of value had changed and improved and new guidelines had been published by Defra to establish Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or Local Sites in Defra terminology (July 2006). This meant that the existing guidelines used to identify SINC’s in York were out of date and new criteria and procedures needed to be developed, in line with best practice. All existing SINC’s therefore needed to be reviewed against these changed criteria to ensure regional and national compatibility.

1.10 In 2007 therefore, the Council began a complete re-assessment of its nature conservation procedures and the extent of its interest in Greater York.

1.11 This began with a review of the Council's SINC procedures and was reported in March 2008. This recommended that :

- i) City of York adopt the North Yorkshire SINC Guidelines as used by all the other local authorities in North Yorkshire.
- ii) Use the North Yorkshire SINC Panel for the assessment of the nature conservation interest of sites.
- iii) Establish a York SINC Panel to consider what sites should be recommended for assessment and to develop social criteria for use in conjunction with the nature conservation guidelines.
- iv) The York SINC Panel recommend to City of York Council sites for designation as SINC's.

1.12 These recommendations were approved and comply with the guidelines recommended by Defra with regard to the designation of wildlife sites.

Survey

1.13 Having considered Nature Conservation procedures and criteria to establish their value, there was still the requirement to update and expand the nature conservation database within York to ensure that wildlife is fully considered.

1.14 Consideration was therefore given as to how a more comprehensive survey of York could be carried out that would identify major areas of interest but could be accommodated within the timeframes and resources available.

1.15 A complete Phase 1 survey was not considered as improved grassland and arable are extensive within the Greater York area and the scale of survey work that would be required in non-productive survey would require an inordinate length of time and resources not least in ascertaining land ownership in order to seek access consent.

1.16 However, the availability of up to date aerial coverage has meant that much of this work could be carried out from aerial photographs. This would enable the majority of improved land to be identified and eliminated from the need for further survey, thus reducing substantially the area of land requiring more detailed assessment.

1.17 In 2007, two students were trained to assess habitats from photographs. Initial ground truthing was carried to ensure as high a level of accuracy as possible. Over the summer, they assessed the aerial photographic coverage of York, field by field, and habitats were mapped following simplified Phase 1 Habitat categories. In particular wetland, scrub, woodland and old grasslands were identified as being the major habitats within York.

1.18 From this assessment, in addition to the existing SINC sites, 201 other sites were identified as being potentially of interest.

1.19 Following on from this assessment, all these sites were visited or viewed to assess their basic value and decide whether they were of sufficient interest to warrant detailed survey.

- 1.20 Sites so identified were then considered for detailed survey to allow assessment against SINC designation criteria.
- 1.21 Hedgerows and ponds were excluded from the general survey process because the survey requirement would be extensive and could only be done systematically across the City area. However, some information was already available for these habitats allowing a degree of assessment to be undertaken. Such sites also already have a measure of protection from existing legislation.

Policy Background

- 1.22 The conservation of biodiversity was highlighted as an important global issue by the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. Here the Convention on Biological Diversity was one of five major environmental conventions signed by representatives of over 150 countries, including the UK government. In January 1994, the government published Biodiversity : The UK Action Plan, which set out a broad strategy for monitoring and conserving biodiversity on Britain. This commitment to action by national government was reinforced by the EC Habitats Directive (1992). This required members states to maintain certain key habitats and threatened species at 'a favourable conservation status'. (This directive was subsequently encoded in domestic law as the Conservation [Natural Habitats &c.] Regulations 1994). These Regulations were amended in 2007.
- 1.23 An important finding of the UK Action Plan was the need to define targets for the conservation of threatened species and habitats in Britain and to establish a framework within which these targets could be achieved. A similar approach had already been adopted by a consortium of non-government organisations. This group published a comprehensive review, the Biodiversity Challenge, in 1993 (revised in 1995).
- 1.24 In 1995, the UK Biodiversity Steering Group published a two volume report that set out 'short', 'medium' and 'long' lists of threatened species with an initial tranche of Species Action Plans for a number of habitats. Other recommendations covered the production of local biodiversity action plans, proposals for a national system of data gathering and proposals for increasing public awareness of biodiversity issues. These have been regularly updated over the intervening years and provide the basis for identifying those habitats and species in Britain requiring conservation.
- 1.25 In 2002 Defra produced an updated biodiversity plan 'Working with the Grain of Nature : a Biodiversity Strategy for England'
- 1.26 In August 2005, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister revised the Planning Guidance available to Local Authorities on wildlife (PPG 9) and replaced it with Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. This provided the framework for Local Authorities to consider biodiversity within the planning process.
- 1.27 In 2006, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 came into force laying a general duty on Local Authorities (and other bodies) to ' have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity' in exercising all of its functions.
- 1.28 In 2007, The New Performance Framework for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Single Set of National Indicators were established. This included

Performance Indicator 197 on Biodiversity. This Indicator reflects the work required to promote and enhance biodiversity within a local authority area through the management and enhancement of sites identified for their wildlife interest. In 2008, this indicator was adopted as one of the Indicators for City of York's own Performance Framework.

1.29 In 2004, through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Government introduced a new planning system in this country. For local authorities such as York the new system introduced a range of planning documents collectively known as the Local Development Framework (LDF) to replace the Local Plan. This new system requires that all documents produced are supported by an up to date robust evidence base. As mentioned previously, this meant that the 1996 Biodiversity Audit needed to be revised.

The Biodiversity Audit 2009

1.30 This current report reviews the sites of wildlife interest present in York as identified in the 1996 Audit but also takes account of sites discovered in the intervening years, as well as those identified during the present round of survey. It also includes some re-assessment of protected species and other species of interest.

1.31 Section 2 explains the rationale for designating Wildlife Sites and summarises the Procedures for SINC Designation as well as sources of information on which this report is based.

1.32 Section 3 outlines the criteria employed in the selection of Wildlife Sites.

1.33 Section 4 outlines the context of wildlife in the City and gives a general overview.

1.34 Section 5 and 6 reviews the extent and status of key habitats within York .

1.35 Section 7 Reviews the Sites of Wildlife Interest found in the City.

1.36 Section 8 highlights some of the species occurring in the City of York which enjoy special legal protection, but which occur mainly outside of protected sites.

1.37 Section 9 reviews the survey and data sources for the Review.

1.38 Section 10 provides a ref. List of documents.

1.39 Appendix 1 includes the summaries of the nine SSSIs within the boundary of the City of York. Derwent Ings SSSI is also part of the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve, which has been designated as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention and as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Conservation of Wild Birds Directive. The National Nature Reserve has also been designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the EC Habitats & Species Directive, as an example of lowland hay meadow habitat. The citation and map for the Lower Derwent Valley SPA /SAC are included in Appendix 1. Strensall Common has also been designated a SAC and its citation is also included.

1.40 Appendix 2 provides a list of sites identified as of SINC status.

1.41 Appendix 3 provides details of each site identified as of SINC status

- 1.42 Annex B lists and summarises the 86 wildlife sites now proposed for designation as Sites of Importance Nature Conservation (SINC's) as well as the 41 hedges that fulfil criteria for SINC designation.
- 1.43 Annex C Maps and identifies SSSI's and other national and internationally designated sites as well as existing and proposed Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. Sites that do not fulfil SINC Criteria but have a strong Social Value with regard to nature conservation are shown separately.
- 1.44 Annex D Maps and identifies sites that do not fulfil SINC criteria but are still of interest for their wildlife value.
- 1.45 Annex F provides details of a habitat breakdown for York.

2. The Rationale for designating Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation

- 2.1 Over the years a variety of terminology has been used to refer to non-statutory sites of nature conservation interest (Second Tier Sites, Wildlife Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Sites of Nature Conservation Interest etc.). In the Defra Guidelines produced in 2006 these were discussed and the term Local Sites proposed to encompass both biological and geological sites. However, whilst accepting the rationale of the terminology, it is not considered fully appropriate at least in the York context, as it does not refer to what the site is of interest for or to the range of intrinsic values encompassed by the terminology. This can be substantially higher than of local interest, indeed it can be of national significance. In York therefore 'local' sites are referred to as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation or SINC's.
- 2.2 The identification of wildlife sites is a cornerstone of nature conservation and planning policy in Britain. It is accepted that there is a need to know what we have and approximately how much in order that we can both conserve and enhance the overall biodiversity of the UK.
- 2.3 In Britain we generally have a hierarchical system for site designation and this is set out within PPS 9. This is done in order to allow due weight to be given to any wildlife interest that may be present in any decision relating to a particular site.
- 2.4 Natural England have, over many years, developed criteria to establish sites of national and international interest, this is the Sites of Special Scientific Interest or SSSI series. This is based on ensuring there is a representative series of sites across Britain. These are augmented by Special Protection Area's (SPA's) for Birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) for Habitats, where sites are considered of international significance and these are established as part of the European Habitats Directive. In addition there are Ramsar designations, again of International significance, set up specifically for wetlands.
- 2.5 Separate from this statutory system, is a non-statutory Local Sites system established by Local Authorities as part of their planning function. This is a system

for designating sites of regional and local interest. In certain circumstances, these 'local' sites can be of equal scientific value to national sites designated as SSSI's.

- 2.6 This 'representativeness' is a key difference between SSSI's and SINC's. SSSI's are selected on the basis of simply being the best example of an appropriate habitat, whilst SINC's are selected on the basis that all examples are designated, provided that they fulfil the relevant criteria.
- 2.7 This is an important distinction as a representative series can only maintain a limited level of biodiversity, particularly at a local level, whilst, a SINC can be of equal value to a SSSI but not be so designated simply because there is already a representative example within the SSSI series.
- 2.8 Because SINC's cover all known examples of a particular habitat, they provide a much better way of maintaining overall local biodiversity than through the SSSI system alone.
- 2.9 SINC sites therefore provide a very important continuation of the representative series established through the SSSI system.

3.0 SINC DESIGNATION and Site Selection

- 3.1 Sites of wildlife interest are a cornerstone of biodiversity in the City of York. As set out in government guidance, they should comprise **all** the examples of the range of habitats and animal communities occurring in the district. Whilst it may not be feasible to designate examples of arable and certain urban habitats, the series of sites should encompass all the major semi-rural habitats found within the authority area.
- 3.2 Government planning guidance on nature conservation (PPS9) stipulates that,

"Local Planning authorities...should only apply local designations to sites of substantive nature conservation value". [Para 18].
- 3.3 It is important therefore that the selection of sites can be justified against this standard, especially if challenged at Local Plan Public Inquiry. Sites must therefore be of demonstrable biological importance and selected primarily on the basis of ecological criteria.
- 3.4 Criteria for the selection of Wildlife Sites have varied greatly from one local authority to another. In the past this situation has created a lack of consistency and, occasionally, a lack of credibility in applying wildlife designations to sites.
- 3.5 In York, sites had previously been designated using very basic and subjective criteria as to their value. Essentially this comprised a subjective assessment by an experienced individual as to whether the site was a good example of a particular habitat. Whilst enabling sites to be selected, this did not provide a quantifiable or defensible way of designation. Whilst appropriate at the time and agreed with English Nature, these were not sufficiently objective for present circumstance based as they were largely on the the interpretation of particular habitats. This did

not comply with the new guidelines issued by Defra to guide local authorities on how to establish such sites in an objective and comprehensive manner.

- 3.6 In North Yorkshire more objective and comprehensive criteria had already been devised over a number years. This began in 1997 when North Yorkshire County Council and other Local District Authorities in partnership, established a SINC Forum to develop criteria relevant to Yorkshire. In 2002 these criteria were published and have been regularly updated as new information has been established. Whilst it is accepted that objectivity is essential, it is recognised that there will always have to be a level of subjectivity and some professional judgement will remain an important factor in the selection process.
- 3.7 The criteria developed are in line with the Defra guidance, indeed were used by Defra in producing their report as an example of good practice.
- 3.8 The North Yorkshire system established a more regionally based assessment of sites that enabled comparison across the whole of the North Yorkshire Region and provided this objective, consistent and defensible designation system for wildlife sites.
- 3.9 In 2008, the Council adopted this system of designation developed by the North Yorkshire SINC Partnership. The rationale for this was that although a distinct unitary authority, York was part of the Vale of York area for which successful and well tried guidelines were already established. There was therefore little point in devising new criteria that could in themselves be challenged through comparison with the North Yorkshire system.
- 3.10 These criteria are based on those devised by Derek Ratcliffe of the then Nature Conservancy Council for the assessment of SSSI's. They include the size of a site, its naturalness, its representativeness, rarity, diversity, and position in an ecological unit.
- 3.11 The criteria also include evaluation of habitats through the number and extent of key indicator species within specific habitat types. The species and data used have been established by a panel of local ecologists and naturalists of the region as indicative of high quality examples of their type. They are therefore based on local expertise with local knowledge from across the region.
- 3.12 A full explanation of the criteria used are given in the North Yorkshire Guidelines. They have been established now for some 7yrs and have been used as examples of best practice elsewhere in the country and have been used and upheld in a number of public inquiries.
- 3.13 The existing guidelines are though based on strictly scientific criteria. Nonetheless SINC sites may often also be of social, amenity, landscape and historical value. Consideration is currently being given to developing and incorporating some social criteria into these guidelines to take account of the importance that such sites may have with local communities.
- 3.14 Within the context of SINC designation, however, only social criteria, ie the ability for the public to use and appreciate nature are considered relevant within the Defra guidance. Such criteria are yet to be fully established within the the North Yorkshire

and York system. At present therefore only sites already designated as Local Nature Reserves are considered for SINC status, whether or not they fulfil other 'scientific' criteria.

- 3.15 Their status as a Local Nature reserve in itself provides sufficient evidence both for public and social value and for ecological value as these are both prerequisites of LNR designation.

4 General Biodiversity Assessment

- 4.1 For a relatively small municipality (27200ha.) with apparently little relief and limited physical diversity, the biodiversity resource of the City of York is exceptionally rich. The City includes nine nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 3 of which are of international significance and designated as either Special Protection areas (SPA's) or Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's). This includes part of the internationally-important Lower Derwent Valley. The River Derwent, which forms the eastern boundary of the City, is considered one of the best rivers in eastern Britain in terms of its ecology, whilst Strensall Common is the most northerly lowland heath site in Britain.
- 4.2 Other important habitats include ancient flood meadows (some 9-10% of the national resource) and other species-rich grasslands, lowland heath (1% of the national resource), woodlands and wetlands. The City also supports some of Britain's rarest breeding birds such as Corncrake, Black-necked grebe, Ruff and Spotted Crake, a resurgent Otter population and numerous nationally-rare and highly localised invertebrates, including the Tansy Beetle found, nowhere else in Britain. Plant life includes such rarities as elongated sedge, marsh fern, bog rosemary and pillwort.
- 4.3 In part this diversity is due to the variability of the underlying drift geology and its location on the flood plain of the River Ouse.
- 4.4 York is set within the Vale of York and Mowbray Natural area, a low lying tract of land that stretches from the Humberhead levels in the south to the Hambleton Hills in the north. It is bounded by the Yorkshire Dales to the west and the North York Moors and Yorkshire Wolds in the east and links along the Derwent Valley to the Vale of Pickering, another low lying area running east to the sea.
- 4.5 The Natural Area concept was developed in the 1990's by national conservation organisations to identify areas of countryside that share a similar character, a unique combination of physical characteristics, wildlife, land use and culture. It is an area that shares a sense of place.
- 4.6 The Vale of York is an area that has been formed by the last glaciation that finished 10000 yrs ago. At that time, the ice sheets covered much of this area but as they retreated they left a thick layer of drift material over the land, covering the underlying geology. Geology plays little part in York's wildlife.
- 4.7 This deposition though was not done evenly or uniformly. As the ice sheets moved back and forth material was pushed up into features such as moraines,

deposits of clay and sand forming ridges across the underlying valley. York is built on one of these moraines because of the drier conditions found there.

- 4.8 Equally hollows create areas of impeded drainage and rivers flowing over the landscape are particularly important, creating flood plains and their associated wetlands.
- 4.9 Not only did the drift deposited provide a varied topography though but the material within it varies as well. Much of the material is clay, providing the heavy, wet conditions typical of much of the Vale but sorting by water flowing within the ice and afterwards as it melted created areas of sandy or silty conditions, whilst wind blown deposits created areas of loose sand.
- 4.10 All of this diversity creates different conditions providing opportunities for the wide variety of wildlife around us.
- 4.11 Whilst diverse in terms of quality though, the extent of the resource is limited. SSSI's cover 895ha, SINC's now cover a further 581ha. This totals 1476ha of significant wildlife interest
- 4.12 A further 371ha is known to be of some interest, although not sufficient to warrant designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
- 4.13 Annex F gives the habitat breakdown for the City of York, excluding sites of known interest that do not fulfil SINC criteria.
- 4.14 Overall this is only about 6.8% of the City of York area and individually, some habitats are even less well represented.

5.0 Habitats of Interest within Greater York

- 5.1 In the context of the local and national commitments to conserving biodiversity, the following habitat types in York are likely to be of particular significance. It is acknowledged, however, that designation of discrete sites is not in itself sufficient to maintain biodiversity: species of arable farmland, for example, cannot readily be protected by site designation, especially as this confers no control over agricultural practices. Equally some birds, covering as they do extensive ranges can also be difficult. In other cases, especially in urban situations, habitats may, by nature, be short-lived (e.g. communities of temporarily derelict land) and designation again may be inappropriate.
- 5.2 Certain habitats represented within the City of York are of international importance (see table 1). In the City of York they are mostly, but not exclusively represented within existing SSSIs.

Table 1

Habitats of international conservation importance in the City of York

The following habitats are listed in Annex 1 of the EC Habitats and Species Directive (1992).

Freshwater habitats

24.4 Floating vegetation of *Ranunculus* of plain and submountainous river
River water crowfoot beds mainly in the River Derwent and very locally in the River Foss.

Temperate heath and scrub

31.11 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*
The characteristic wet heath vegetation on Strensall Common also represented at World's End.

31.12 Dry heaths (all sub types)

Dry heath with ling, *Calluna* mainly at Strensall Common with isolated fragments elsewhere.

Semi-natural tall-herb humid meadows

37.31 *Molinia* meadows on chalk and clay
Purple Moor-grass fen represented at World's End and Fulford Golf Course.

Mesophile grasslands

38.2 Lowland Flood Plain hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis-Sanguisorba officinalis*)
These are the agriculturally unimproved flood meadows, the characteristic species-rich grassland of the Ouse and Derwent Ings.

- 5.3 In addition, some other habitats have become scarce or localised nationally. Old, species-rich meadows are an important example of this. Some 96% of these are thought to have been lost since the 2nd World War through agricultural improvement. In the City of York these occur mainly but not exclusively in small fields bearing the the imprint of pre-enclosure ridge-and-furrow cultivation. Despite the extent of previous losses, further losses are still occurring, not only from physical destruction but also, increasingly, from a lack of suitable management.
- 5.4 Such small, unimproved meadows often occur on the fringes of settlements and are frequently overlooked because of access difficulties but they do represent a highly threatened habitat, in part because they are often unmanaged or poorly managed as horse pasture or are looked on for development.
- 5.5 Another example is lowland acidic grassland and open sandy habitats supporting a characteristic annual herb vegetation. The latter is restricted to suitable substrate found particularly in the Acomb area. Here relicts of this old, almost breckland type habitat, are limited to just a very few, somewhat degraded sites. Such sites are critical though to the maintenance of the overall biodiversity value of York.

- 5.6 Other habitats are of widespread occurrence nationally but are rather poorly represented in the intensively farmed Vale of York. Semi-natural woodlands are an example. The Vale of York, the Natural Area in which the city is set, has been intensively drained and farmed for many hundreds of years. Because of this there are few ancient woodland sites left, indeed woodlands as a whole are poorly represented in the Vale of York.
- 5.7 Such woodland sites as are remaining may not be as diverse as elsewhere in Yorkshire but, because of this, they acquire a greater significance in the context of the City where such habitat is rare and often limited to small copses. They also help maintain the overall network of woodland helping link others areas of greater woodland diversity.
- 5.8 Other habitats of nature conservation importance also exist within the City but are naturally of a more restricted nature. These include habitats such as wet grasslands and fens, limited to wet sites where the water table is always at or close to ground level. Again, these provide links in the biodiversity network of the region as a whole.
- 5.9 Reference has been made to the difficulty of designating certain interest such as birds. The Lower Derwent Valley is a case in point. Here, the nationally, internationally and locally designated areas apply largely to certain wet habitat types such as the sps rich flood meadows. These are undoubtedly of paramount interest to the birds for which these sites are also designated. However, much of agriculturally-improved pasture on the river floodplain also supports large numbers of breeding and overwintering wading birds such as Lapwing, Redshank, Curlew and Snipe and birds move freely between the designated and non designated areas. These though still form part of the nationally important populations in the Lower Derwent valley. The same habitats are also locally-important for other species such as Hare and Yellow Wagtail. Any loss or disturbance to these unprotected habitats is still likely to have a considerable and detrimental impact on the value of designated areas.
- 5.10 Whilst it was considered impractical to designate a composite site covering the Derwent floodplain, its importance for wildlife should be specifically recognised in Local Development Framework through a specific nature conservation policy to be applied to the whole of the floodplain of the River Derwent downstream of Kexby. This is particularly pertinent in the light of potential threats from mining subsidence, changing climate, wind farms, increased abstraction from the river etc.
- 5.11 There are also inherent difficulties in applying non-statutory designations to rivers as habitats because of the extensive and dynamic nature of riparian habitats. In the case of the River Derwent though, the entire length along the City of York boundary is designated as a SSSI. Also a section of the River Foss corridor have previously been identified as a Wildlife Site, as it encompasses a series of interesting riparian habitats and supports a good cross-section of the flora and fauna characteristic of the Lower Foss. Whilst it is accepted that there are difficulties in designating whole river sections from a habitat point of view, there are valid reasons where this can be done. For instance, the River Ouse is internationally significant for migratory fish, notably River and Sea Lamprey, as well as Salmon and the increasingly threatened eel. Spawning areas, other than for eel, are not found in York but the Ouse does provide the corridor necessary for their dispersal. In addition sps like otter are now much more frequent and use extensive

ranges along the Ouse, Foss and Derwent. These are considered valid arguments for formally designating them, although careful consideration will need to be given when considering how this designation is interpreted when considering development. There is a need to draft policies which recognise the nature conservation importance of all three rivers but only constrain development which would have an adverse impact on their ecology.

5.12 The following list the habitats likely to be of particular importance for designation under the relevant criteria in York.

5.13 Habitats of international conservation importance

Habitats of international conservation importance outside of SSSIs as listed in Annex 1 of the European Community Habitats Directive (1992)¹. In the City of York these include:

- i. River water crowfoot beds (NVC A17 /A18)
- ii. Wet and dry heath (e.g. NVC H9, M16 and associated communities).
- iii. Lowland flood meadow (NVC MG4).
- iv. Purple moor grass fen (e.g. NVC M23/M24 and associated communities).

5.14 Scarce and Localised habitats

As with the previous audit, priority should also be given to habitats that have become scarce or localised in lowland Britain. All representatives' examples of these habitats should be designated. These include:

- i) Species-rich 'old meadow' grasslands (NVC MG5 and similar communities).
- ii) Agriculturally-unimproved wet grasslands (e.g. grazing marsh and fen meadow communities).
- iii) Semi-natural acidic grasslands (NVC U communities, excluding continuous bracken).
- iv) Grassland communities indicative of calcareous solids (these are of very localised occurrence in the City of York).
- v) Open sandy habitats with characteristic annual herb vegetation (thereophytic communities), other than on arable land.

5.15 Wetlands

Wetland habitats have become increasingly scarce in lowland Britain as a result of land drainage, river engineering and intensive agriculture. It is thus important to protect those that remain. Habitats such as fens, swamps and mires should normally be designated except where these are dominated by widespread and common plants such as reed sweet grass (*Glyceria maxima*), greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) or reedmace (*Typha latifolia*). These communities may nonetheless be represented within mosaics of other vegetation or have significant invertebrate interest. Ponds should only be included where they support a suite of uncommon or localised plant or animal species.

5.16 Woodland

¹ Council Directive 92/34/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. NB. This is included as an appendix to PPG9.

Woodlands sites should be considered for inclusion where the herb flora is characteristic of semi-natural stand types. (This will include both woodland with native tree species and replanted stands). Woodland with the shrub or field layer dominated by bracken, brambles or *Rhododendron* will not normally merit designation. Whilst those dominated by Bluebell acquire a special significance because on a European scale, Britain holds a great percentage of the world range of such woodlands. As there are known to be a considerable number of acidic oak woodlands (NVC W10) within the City, which are naturally more species poor, account should be taken of their quality in terms of naturalness, presence of ancient woodlands indicator species and wildlife value when selecting sites for designation.

- 5.17 Extensive habitats that contribute strongly to the character of the local landscape and have a historical management significance should be considered for inclusion where these also have substantive wildlife interest –e.g. some of the richer permanent pastures on the York Strays.

Sites important for fauna

- 5.18 Sites of importance for birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish or invertebrates will be judged in terms of species-richness, the presence of representative communities of species and their significance for scarce or threatened species. Guidance shall be sought from local experts in evaluating the importance of sites for fauna, and priority should be given to species of conservation concern (e.g. those listed by the UK Biodiversity Group, in British Red Data Books or in current Red/Amber lists of threatened birds).
- 5.19 Within the North Yorkshire SINC guidelines there are criteria to evaluate the best examples of all these habitats and sps in a Yorkshire context.

Sites of Social Value

- 5.20 Outside of the scope of the wildlife criteria established in the North Yorkshire SINC Guidelines, are sites that fulfil a social function either through providing locations that the public can appreciate and enjoy wildlife or where wildlife education is of significance.
- 5.21 Such sites, whilst being of value to the local community must also have a substantive nature conservation interest. This is the criteria established for the designation of Local Nature reserves, therefore it is proposed that any site already designated as a Local Nature Reserve that does not, in its own right already fulfil SINC designation criteria, will be considered for designation under social criteria. Thus sites such as Acomb Wood and St Nicholas Fields would now be considered of SINC status.
- 5.22 There are though other sites not designated as a Local Nature Reserve that could also be considered of both social and wildlife interest. York Cemetery is an obvious example of this. It is a fine example of an old Victorean cemetery with substantive wildlife interest, particularly invertebrates, that is also of great social and public value both as an educational resource and for informal recreation.
- 5.23 Presently there are no criteria established to designate these sites. It is therefore proposed to include them within a separate list of sites that may be of SINC quality, pending further clarification both of the criteria and their wildlife interest.

6 Extent and status of key habitats - Review of Wildlife Habitats in York

- 6.1 In York the predominant grassland type are those of neutral soils on the heavy clays typical of the valley as a whole. Where these occur in seasonally flooded land in river flood plains these develop as wet grasslands and flood plain meadow, traditionally managed as hay crop with aftermath grazing. On slightly higher land, this changes to old meadowland, either haycropped or grazed. There are though, where local conditions permit, small areas of calcareous grasslands and acid grassland. Acid grasslands tend to occur in the Acomb area, where windblown sands developed, and in an arc stretching from Strensall through Dunnington and Wheldrake around to **Deighton**. This belt has been identified as an important wildlife corridor.
- 6.2 York covers approx 27000ha of which agricultural land occupies approx. 18000ha. Of this approx. 9000ha is grassland.
- 6.3 It is estimated that there is only 297.7ha of flood meadow left and 116.8ha of old neutral grassland that could be classed as sps rich. In addition there are approx 10ha of calcareous grassland and 32.3ha of acid grassland. There is therefore only an estimated 459ha of diverse grasslands remaining. Within each site there are areas of less diversity or of different habitat type and these are therefore maximum figs based on overall site areas rather than areas of specific habitat type. Such information is currently not available.
- 6.4 In % terms this equates to approx. 2.5% of the overall agricultural area or 5% of the grassland area being of significant interest for its grassland habitat.
- 6.5 It is difficult to evaluate this for individual grassland types because it is not possible to quantify the geographic extent that would be available for each type.

Neutral Grasslands

- 6.6 Neutral grasslands are the most extensive grasslands in York with some 297ha of wet grassland and flood meadow and 117ha of meadow and Stray grassland. These are distinguished by seasonality of winter flooding. Nationally, flood meadow grassland is much less common than traditional old pastures with perhaps only 1200ha remaining. In York though, old grasslands are much less common.
- 6.7 The majority, although not all, of the flood meadow grassland are within 5 of the nine Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the York area, with a further 2 having wet grassland. There are no old meadows designated as SSSI's.

Old Grasslands

- 6.8 These generally species rich grasslands on well-drained soils occur mainly in small, enclosed fields scattered across the city and often showing the ridge-and-furrow imprint of pre-enclosure cultivation.
- 6.9 The Stray grassland, primarily at Hob Moor, has the most extensive area with 39ha. However these grasslands have been to some extent degraded. There are though a few other areas of aggregation where slightly more extensive areas occur, notably at Wheldrake and Huntington.

6.10 The characteristic plant community is crested dogstail - common knapweed grassland. These are classified as MG5 grasslands within the National Vegetation Classification (NVC). Typical herbs include common birdsfoot trefoil, betony, pignut and common knapweed. All the SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2
Neutral Old Grasslands

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area	Length	Proposed status	Criteria
2	Acomb Wood Meadow	Acomb	573494	0.90		SINC / LNR	Gr4
6	Brinkworth Rush (Elvington Airfield)	Elvington	676478	2.50		SINC	Gr4/Gr3
7	Brinkworth Rush(Elv.Air Museum)	Elvington	679481	2.00		SINC	Gr4/Gr3
8	Brecks Lane Meadow	Strensall	635612	2.00		SINC	Gr4
9	Carr Banks Meadow	Stockton on-the Forest	660561	1.50		SINC	Gr4
12	Clifton Backies	Clifton	597545	6.00		SINC/LNR	Gr4
17	Germany Beck Meadow	Fulford	616488	1.40		SINC	Gr4
23	Knavesmire Stables Meadow	Dringhouses	590490	1.00		SINC	Gr4
28	New Earswick Meadow	New Earswick	608459	0.80		SINC	Gr4
43	York-Selby Cycle Track	Deighton/Naburn	602459-616424	2.50	4005	SINC	Gr4
40	West Pits Meadow	Strensall	626603	0.50		De Notify	
Stray's							
20	Hob Moor	Acomb/Holgate	585505	39.00		SINC/LNR	Gr4
11				60.10	4005		
Neutral	Grassland Proposed						
49	North Lane Meadow	Huntington	623565	1.40		SINC	Gr4
53	Flaxton Road Meadows	Strensall	642609	5.40		SINC	Gr4
54	Ext to Carr Bank Meadow	Stockton on the Forest	659561	1.50		SINC	Gr3
55	Murton Meadow (10-11)	Murton	648529	0.90		SINC	Gr4
57	Osaldwick Meadow	Osaldwick	637520	1.10		SINC	Gr4
61	Ext to West Carr Masks	Elvington	701473	3.80		SINC	Gr4/Gr6/Gr1
65	Low Moor Lane Meadow Hessay	Hessay	532531	1.80		SINC	GR1/Gr4

67	Strensall Village Meadows Strensall Site 15d, 15e	Strensall	634606	0.60			
72	Holtby Rd Verge (Derwent Site 5)	Holtby	679540	0.60	280	SINC	Gr4
79	Benjy Lane Meadows (Wheldrake Site 14)	Wheldrake	661446	12.10			
89	Hazelbush Fields (Huntington Site 9)	Huntington	644560	2.30			Gr4
97	Sim Hill Tip	Acomb	580485	5.9		SINC	Gr4
106	Danebury Crt	Acomb	573518	0.10		SINC	Gr1/Gr4?
111	Strensall Horse Pasture	Strensall	649603	9.90		SINC	Gr1/ Gr4
174	Holtby Pond Rd Verge	Holtby	671544	0.1	60	SINC	Gr1/ Gr4
198	Ext to Hob Moor	Hob Moor Community School	581506	0.40		SINC	Gr4
199	Grasslands Farm Field	Rufforth	526499	2.40		SINC	Gr4
201 - 33	Hessay Churchyard	Hessay	523536	0.20		SINC	Gr4
207 - 7a	Copmanthorpe close to (5-19) Drome Lane Field	Copmanthorpe	575466	0.50		SINC	Gr4
208 - 7	Copmanthorpe (5-19) Drome Lane Hay Meadow	Copmanthorpe	576468	1.50		SINC	Gr4
210 - 10	Middlethorpe lngs (4-3)	Middlethorpe	600483	1.00		SINC	Gr4/I1/Mh1
21				53.00	340		

Flood Meadow Grassland

- 6.11 Generally, flood meadow grassland, as one would expect, is restricted to the flood plain of the Rivers Ouse and Derwent, with Clifton generally being the northerly limit. There are though a few grasslands to the north of York that at least have some affinity to these. Within the City of York area these are at Poppleton but none are either extensive or well developed, having been much improved.
- 6.12 Nationally however, due to a combination of historical and bio geographical factors, this type of flood meadow is almost unique to lowland eastern England. The City of York holds approx. 150ha. of meadow foxtail-great burnet grassland, representing around 8% of the national resource. The Lower Derwent Valley, which lies partly within the City boundaries, holds the most extensive area of floristically-rich flood meadow in Britain.
- 6.13 Flood meadow grasslands are characterised by the high proportion of Meadow Foxtail and Breat Burnett present within the sward, with other species such as Pepper Saxifrage, Meadowsweet and Bistort being frequent throughout. These are classified as MG4 grasslands within the National Vegetation Classification(NVC). At the wetter end these grade into wet grassland and fen communities with abundant sedges and Marsh Marigold, at the drier end they grade into the typical old grassland communities.

- 6.14 These meadows have a very long history of traditional management, in some cases possibly dating back to the Roman period. During the mediaeval period a complex system of management evolved based upon private rights to harvest hay from strips and common rights of aftermath grazing.
- 6.15 Threats include herbicide spraying, overgrazing, undergrazing and neglect. Potential threats include marina developments, mining subsidence and hydrological changes. Eutrophication of some meadows on the Ouse floodplain is a serious problem, resulting in replacement of herb-rich communities by grass-dominated swards.
- 6.16 The meadows in the Lower Derwent Valley form part of a complex of winter-flooded grasslands that also support internationally-important populations of wintering waterfowl and nationally-important concentrations of breeding waders and wildfowl.

Wet Grasslands

- 6.17 As for flood meadow grasslands, wet grasslands are largely confined to the main river flood plains of the City of York and often grade into flood meadow, fen or swamp communities. The largest concentration of wet grassland within the City is at Wheldrake Ings. The City contains an estimated 140ha. of agriculturally unimproved wet grassland.
- 6.18 Wet grassland communities are characterised by annual plants such as bur-marigolds and yellow-cresses along with sedges which occur in habitats that are flooded for much of the year but dry out rapidly in late summer.
- 6.19 Wet grasslands have seriously declined in the City of York as a result of land drainage and agricultural improvement, although no quantitative estimate of habitat loss is available. Areas of grazing marsh at Fulford Ings have declined in wildlife interest as a result of neglect or over-grazing.
- 6.20 In addition to their floristic interest, wet grassland and fen are of great entomological interest, supporting insects such as the rare ground beetle *Dromius sigma*, the nationally-scarce mirid bug *Capsus wagneri*, the Dentated Pug moth, the Marsh Carpet moth, *Panagaeus cruxmajor* (a ground beetle), *Agabus uliginosus* (a diving beetle), *Hydrothassa hannoveriana* (a leaf beetle), *Lymnaea glabra* (a Mud Snail).
- 6.21 As for flood meadow, they are also of significant bird interest.
- 6.22 All the SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3
Neutral Wet Grassland and Flood Meadow

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area	Staus	Criteria	Interest
5	Bishopthorpe Ings	Bishopthorpe	598468	15.50	SINC	Gr4/Gr1	Flood plain grassland
14	Clifton Ings	Clifton	583530	44.00	SINC	Gr4/Gr1/Sw1	Flood Plain grassland
31	Rawcliffe Meadows	Rawcliffe	583537	11.80	SINC	Gr1/Gr4/Sw1/Fe3	Flood plain grassland/Fen
37	West Carr Masks	Elvington	701472	6.20	SINC	Gr4	Flood plain grassland
4				77.50			
Proposed							
103	Holgate Millenium Green	Holgate	584523	1.30	SINC	Gr1/Gr4	Relict Mg4 sps rich grassland, stream corridor/ Water Vole?
193 - 4	Naburn Hall Meadow	Naburn	592453	7.90	SINC	Gr4	Flood Plain Grassland
194 -12	Middlethorpe Ings (4-1)	Middlethorpe	607488	12.00	SINC	Gr4/Gr1	Flood Plain Grassland
3				21.20			

Acidic grasslands

6.23 These grasslands are difficult to separate from heathland communities into which they grade and it is largely as mosaics within this community that acid grassland occurs. Some neutral grassland though also has affinities with this community and a number of neutral grassland areas have acidic components, notably at Elvington where acidic and neutral grassland occurs again in a mosaic structure.

6.24 There are though also occasional examples of sparsely-vegetated sandy 'breck' community, found on the most sharply-drained and summer-parched sands to the east of the York. These habitats are characterised by a colourful flora of miniature annual herbs such as common storks-bill, birdsfoot, sheep's sorrel, whitlow grass and changing forget-me-not. Such areas would once have been familiar on the large tracts of pre-enclosure Common, on rabbit warrens and around sandy lanes and field margins. Now this type of habitat is confined to paddocks at Sandburn with characteristic plant species also occurring on ride verges at Wheldrake Wood, firing range embankments at Strensall Common, abandoned arable at Millfield Lane and areas of amenity grassland at Westfield School and Bachelor Hill in Acomb.

6.25 Such grassland have a rich and important invertebrate fauna and a number of nationally and locally rare species have been recorded such as a long headed fly *Sciapus maritimus* and the fly *Trioxocellis marginella*. These, and others, are species normally associated with sand dune systems and as such, their presence in York is of great interest.

6.26 Following a re-appraisal, one existing site is proposed for de-notification because it does not fulfil the criteria for designation.

6.27 All the SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4
Grassland - Acid

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area	Staus	Criteria	Interest
4	Bachelor Hill	Acomb	569508	0.90	SINC	Gr3 & 11	Breck Grassland/ Inverts
16	Fulford Golf Course, Roughs	Fulford	623495 & 632482	9.00	SINC		Acid/neutral grassland
29	Oxcarr Lane	Strensall	636601	0.80	SINC	Gr3	Acid wet grassland
42	World's End	Strensall	665596	12.00	SINC		Acid grassland, heath, fen, marsh
26	Millfield Wood Drain	Kexby	698517	0.15	De-notify		Acid grassland
5				22.85			
Proposed							
59	Elvington Airfield	Elvington Airfield	666480	9.00	SINC	Gr4	Acid/neutral grassland
216 - 37	Ring Rd Embankment Millfield Lane A1237	Nether Poppleton	566537	0.10	SINC	Gr3	Acid grassland
177	Hazelbush Plantation	Stockton on the Forest	667579	0.1			
2				9.20			

Calcareous Grassland

6.28 Calcareous or chalky grasslands are the most uncommon grassland type. They are naturally rare rather than made so by human activity, as the soil and geological conditions necessary for calcareous grasslands are very limited in York.

6.29 As such there are no true calcareous grasslands known in York, only those with some affinity to them with the presence of some flower species more usually associated with them. This includes species such as Upright brome (*Bromus erecta*), field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*), Ladies Bedstraw (*Gallium verum*), Nodding Thistle (*Carduus nutans*) and clustered bellflower (*Campanula glomerata*).

6.30 Such sps occasionally occur as components of the vegetation on river bank top where the build of silt from the river often have a slightly calcareous influence.

6.31 All the SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 5.

Table 5
Calcareous Grassland

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area (ha)	Proposed Designation	Designation Criteria	Habitat/Interest
1	A64 Interchange	Dringhouses/ Copmanthorpe	579479	3.80	SINC	Gr4	Calcareous grassland
35	Severus Hill Reservoir Basin	Poppleton Rd	583519	0.90 4.70	SINC		Calcareous Grassland
Proposed							
206	Moor Lane Railway Verge Copmanthorpe	Copmanthorpe	566463	1.70	SINC	Gr4	Coarse calcareous grassland
202	Poppleton Glassworks (5-30)	Poppleton	570538	3.60	SINC	Gr4	Brownfield site Neutral/ calcareous grassland
				5.30			

Heathland

- 6.32 The City of York heathland and acidic grassland/mire is approximately 574 ha. This represents a fraction of the once very extensive tracts of heathy Common that overly the sandy soils to the east and north of York. Within City boundaries, over 77% of heathland and acidic rough pasture has been lost during the past 200 years due a combination of agricultural reclamation and afforestation.
- 6.33 The City of York also contains the country's most northerly example of extensive lowland heath at Strensall Common. This site represents 1% of the national habitat resource. The Common comprises a mosaic of wet heath with cross-leaved heath and purple moor-grass, dry heath dominated by ling, acidic grassland and mire communities. Other more fragmentary stands of heath survive nearby at World's End and in the roughs at Fulford Golf Course, along with more extensive areas of acid grassland.
- 6.34 Several fragments of former heathland such as Dunnington Rabbit Warren have reverted to birch woodland and other large areas have been planted with conifers, as at World's End Plantation and Wheldrake Wood. Within these coniferised woodlands however, remnants of heathland still exist.
- 6.35 Heath is very important for biodiversity in the City of York, not only for its floristic interest. A number of scarce and threatened plants are dependent upon this habitat including marsh gentian and pillwort. Alongside characteristic insects such as the green tiger beetle and heath assassin bug, notable rarities include the ground beetle *Carabus nitens*, the fly *Phaonia jaroschewskii*, the dark-bordered beauty moth and the mining bee *Andrena ruficrus*.
- 6.36 The fauna includes adder and common lizard as well as birds such as Whinchat, Woodlark and Tree Pippit. Nightjars have bred and still do at several sites although no longer on a regular basis.

6.37 All the SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 6.

Table 6
Heathland

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area	Status	Criteria	Interest
30	Rabbit Warren Wood	Dunnington	678501	13.40	SINC		Acid woodland / Heath
38	Westfield School Field	Acomb	566508	0.50	SINC	Gr3/Gr6	Breck Grassland
41	Wheldrake Wood	Wheldrake	660470	107.00	SINC	Gr3/A1a/A2	Relict heath
42	World's End	Strensall	665596	30.00	SINC		Acid grassland, heath, fen, marsh
4				150.90			
Proposed							
112	Worlds End Plantation	Strensall	662598	34.20			
1				34.20			

Woodland

6.38 The Vale of York has long been intensively farmed and woodland has been reduced to a much greater extent than elsewhere within Yorkshire. There are therefore few, if any, examples of semi natural ancient woodland present.

6.39 What deciduous woodland is present mainly occurs as small isolated copses and even this often has evidence of medieval farming in the form of ancient ridge and furrow indicating that it has previously been cleared. Larger woodlands tend to be on old heathland sites either as Birch woodland or conifer plantation.

6.40 Because of this, most woodlands have only a limited number of ancient woodland indicators. In addition many of the woodlands are on fairly acid clays, and such woodlands are often naturally species poor. However, such woods, if they reverted back to woodland many hundreds of years ago often hold dense stands of bluebell regardless of the tree component. Most of the Woodland is classified as W8 and W10 in the NVC classification.

6.41 Bluebell dominated deciduous woodland is uncommon in Europe and Britain holds the majority. As such it is considered to be an internationally threatened habitat worthy of protection.

6.42 In York we have approx. 110ha, of woodland with wildlife interest with larger sites occurring mainly in the west, although sites such as Hagg Wood have been much affected by forestry practice.

6.43 The best example is perhaps Stubb Wood, Acaster Malbis which is both diverse and quite extensive.

- 6.44 All the woodland SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 8.
- 6.45 Regardless of their floristic interest, some of the older woodlands do have numbers of ancient veteran trees. These are particularly important for wood boring insects.
- 6.46 Such trees are of value in their own right and can occur separately from woodland as individual trees within the open countryside or in a 'parkland setting' as at the Archbishop's Palace.
- 6.47 This parkland, the only example we have in York is of interest because of its veteran trees and as a mosaic habitat containing many different elements that together create a very diverse area. See Table 7.
- 6.48 Orchards are a special and distinct habitat, previously not considered. They comprise both tree and pasture habitat akin to parkland that elsewhere in the country can be of significant wildlife interest.
- 6.49 Orchards in York have a significant cultural interest with considerably areas being present through the victorean period particularly with the development of the railway that provide quick and easy access to markets.
- 6.50 During the 20th century these declined and there are now few examples, now as much degraded areas in the grounds of old hospital sites. Relict orchards are still present in areas such as Skelton where houses constructed on orchards had a number of trees included on each of the plots and written into their deeds.
- 6.51 Some of these trees still remain as very large specimens.
- 6.52 Whilst these are of interest, there are no criteria on which to base designation although some individual trees may be of interest as veteran trees.
- 6.53 The flora of the grassland sward on known sites is of limited diversity and none are proposed for designation. They will however be kept under review pending further, detailed study.

Table 7
Parkland Woodland

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area	Status	Criteria	
							Interest
3	ArchBishops Palace Grounds	Bishopthorpe	597480	5.30	SINC	PK1/ M1b/ Gr3/ Mh2	Parkland, Bats, Mosaic acid grassland
1				5.3			

Table 8

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area	Status	Criteria	Interest
15	Copmanthorpe Wood	Copmanthorpe	561450	6.00	SINC	Wd4	Ancient bluebell Woodland
21	Hagg Wood	Dunnington	685525	32.00	SINC	Wd5	Replanted Ancient woodland
24	Knavesmire Wood	Dringhouses	592488	6.00	SINC	Wd4	Mixed woodland/ Veteran trees
27	Moreby Far Wood	Deighton	615426	0.80	SINC	Wd3c	Ancient woodland
30	Rabbit Warren Wood	Dunnington	678501	13.40	SINC	Wd3c	Acid woodland / Heath
33	Rawcliffe Landing Wood	Rawcliffe	572549	0.60	De-notify?		Riparian woodland
36	Stub Wood	Acaster Malbis	588433	24.00	SINC	Wd3c	Ancient Woodland
7				82.80			
Proposed							
81	West Plantation	Wheldrake	660452	1.30			Acid Oak Bluebell Wood
86	Elvington Wood	Elvington	693465	12.30			W10 woodland
87	Gilbertsons Plantation	Wheldrake	661430	7.80			Bluebell Wood (Oak Syc Plantation)
167	The Parks	Askham Bryan	544481	0.50		Wd4/5	Woodland
169	Hagg Wood (Cop)	Copmanthorpe	550458	1.20			Woodland
175	Elvington Camp Copse	Elvington	693481	0.60			W10 woodland
204	Rush Wood	Naburn	602443	2.50	Bluebell Wood		
215	Taylorhall Field Plantation	Askham Richard	542482	0.90	SINC	Wd4/5	Woodland
8				27.40			

Woodland

Hedgerows

6.54 Hedgerows are a separate habitat on which there has been no systematic survey carried out. Some 300 hedges have, however, been sampled and approx 15% are considered to be sps rich and of SINC quality. All the SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 9.

6.55 These more diverse hedges tend to be of greater antiquity when considered against historical information. It is not possible at present to look at the distribution of diverse hedges as there is insufficient information, however, examples have been found throughout the city.

6.56 Whilst being of wildlife interest, hedgerows do have a measure of protection under the Hedgerow Regulations 2007.

Table 9
Hedges of SINC Quality

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Length (m)	Revised Status 2008	Designation Criteria No. Sps
Within Existing SINC						>10
17	Germany Beck	Fulford	616489-614488	300	SINC	12
Hedges of SINC Quality Proposed						
20	West Wood Lane (AB1)	Askham Bryant	545486-544490	1000	SINC	10
K16 (101)	Old Hall Farm	Kexby	703501	250	SINC	12
P5	Newlands Lane	Upper Poppleton	540544	720	SINC	10
Ask2	Askham Fields Lane	Askham Bryan	553481	370	SINC	11
Elv1		Elvington		275	SINC	11
H79	White Horse Farm	Huntington	634567	245	SINC	10
H120/ H120b	White Horse Farm	Huntington	634567	240	SINC	13
H49	White Horse Farm	Huntington	624557	185	SINC	10
H126	White Horse Farm	Huntington		270	SINC	10
H18	White Horse Farm	Huntington	619545	315	SINC	10
K35	Old Hall Farm	Kexby	695491	360	SINC	11
K7	Old Hall Farm	Kexby	702506	270	SINC	12
Kel 10	Kelfield Lodge Farm	Naburn	?		SINC	10
Nab1		Naburn	613458	290	SINC	11
Nab8		Naburn	606442	200	SINC	10
R20	Grasslands farm	Rufforth	525500	168	SINC	10
R24	Grasslands farm	Rufforth	525500	210	SINC	11
SF1	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	660562	230	SINC	11
SF10	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	665555	300	SINC	10
SF3	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the	662559	400	SINC	14

		Forest				
SF9	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	665555	300	SINC	10
SF7	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	660561	230	SINC	12
W100	Stud Farm	Wigginton	584591	266	SINC	13
W107a	Stud Farm	Wigginton	584593	130	SINC	12
W107b	Stud Farm	Wigginton	584592	300	SINC	11
W107c	Stud Farm	Wigginton	586590	155	SINC	11
W101	Stud Farm	Wigginton	583592	322	SINC	10
W138	Stud Farm	Wigginton	584590	220	SINC	12
W139	Stud Farm	Wigginton		270	SINC	10
W96ab	Stud Farm	Wigginton	588590	360	SINC	11
W96d	Stud Farm	Wigginton	587593	170	SINC	10
W97	Stud Farm	Wigginton	589589	288	SINC	15
ST1		Strensall		210	SINC	10
ST7		Strensall		300	SINC	10
E50	Church Lane	Elvington	999474-697473	236	SINC	12
H50	Turbary Lane	Huntington	642563-642565	211	SINC	10
AR1	Askham Richard	Askham Richard	538480-540481	230	SINC	11
	Cherry Lane	Knavesmire	586495-589495	300	SINC	11
	Cherry Lane	Knavesmire	586495-589495	300	SINC	11
	Naburn Ings	Fulford	603482-602478	500	SINC	10
Total No.	41			11896		

Wetland

- 6.57 Fens and other mires would formerly have been very widespread in the City of York, on river floodplains and on the once-extensive Commons. Agricultural improvement, land drainage, urban development and river engineering have resulted in the loss of most of these wetlands.
- 6.58 Although now limited in extent, the City of York contains a remarkable variety of fen types influenced by soils, hydrology and management history. Askham Bog contains fen woodland, fen-meadow and tall-herb fen communities. Wheldrake Ings has complex and extensive mixtures of wet grassland, fen, swamp and inundation communities whilst sites on the Ouse Ings contain more fragmentary examples of naturally-eutrophic flood plain fen. Examples of 'poor' fen, characteristic in more acidic conditions, are found at Heslington Tilmire and World's End. The latter site contains purple moor grass fen-meadow, a habitat of European conservation interest.

- 6.59 Askham Bog - a nationally important example of valley fen - has been affected by natural succession, lowering of the water table and pollution.
- 6.60 Small areas are particularly vulnerable, for instance a reedbed at Acomb Grange was cleared for agriculture in 1995 although this is now regenerating and another example has established at Strensall. Reedbeds in particular are a very uncommon habitat in York.
- 6.61 One community, *Glyceria maxima* swamp, has increased in recent decades as a result of agricultural dereliction at sites on the Ouse such as Fulford Ings, Bishopthorpe Ings and the Crematorium. Such areas are increasing at the expense of flood meadow along the Derwent as well. One reason is the increase in summer flooding that makes both haycropping and grazing difficult.
- 6.62 Spring fed fens are particularly rare and there is only one such site known, at Acomb. This has been much degraded and the floristic interest is limited but as a habitat Fishponds Wood is of great interest.
- 6.63 Some wetland communities are of very limited floristic interest, however they can be of considerable entomological interest, supporting insects such as the rare ground beetle *Dromius sigma*, the nationally-scarce mirid bug *Capsus wagneri* and the Dentated Pug moth. The glyceria swamp at the Crematorium is a case in point where there are very few flowers but 3 yorkshire rare species of water beetle have been found.
- 6.64 Scarce plants associated with fens locally include elongated sedge, marsh fern and marsh stitchwort.
- 6.65 These fen and swamp sites can also be of great ornithological value with larger wetland sites such as the Derwent Ings being internationally significant. Smaller sites though may also be of great interest with species like Spotted Crake being of particular note. Such sps, as for invertebrates may occupy sites that are otherwise unprepossessing. They are also particularly difficult to identify.
- 6.66 All the SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 10.

Table 10
Fens/Marshes

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area	Status	Criteria	Interest
39	Westfield Marsh	Acomb	565507	0.60	SINC	Fe3	Acid grassland and marsh
10	Church Ings	Acaster Malbis	597457	1.70		I2	Tall herb fen, Tansy beetle.
2				2.30			
Proposed							
104	Fishpond Wood	Acomb	572517	1.00	SINC	Fe7/I2	Seepage Fen/wet woodland
210	Middlethorpe Ings (4-3)	Middlethorpe	600483	2.00	SINC	Gr4/I1/Mh1	Relict sps rich neutral grassland/ Glyceria swamp
211	Middlethorpe Ings (4-1)a	Middlethorpe	601486	0.80	SINC		Fen
249	Bond Hill Ash Farm	Copmanthorpe	576477	1.3	SINC	Fe1 and Fe3	Fen
5				5.10			

Ponds

- 6.67 Largely unnoticed, there has been a significant decline in ponds, about three quarters have disappeared during the last century, from an estimated 1.3 million to 375,000. Surveys in Southern Ryedale in 1992 indicated a loss of one-third of ponds shown on recent OS maps, with a further 10% reduced to dried-up hollows. 86% of ponds in Acomb and Dringhouses (an area once containing numerous brick ponds) have disappeared since 1892.
- 6.68 In York today, based on assessment from aerial coverage and OS maps, there are in the order of 900 ponds. The condition of all of these is not known because of the difficulties of access, however based on a sample study, some 800 still regularly retained water.
- 6.69 The main types of ponds in the City of York are field ponds, fen ponds, heathland pools and brick ponds.
- 6.70 Long-established field ponds often support an interesting fauna absent from newer ponds and are a particularly important habitat for the declining Great Crested Newt. Ancient ponds such as Hassacarr Pond at Dunnington may support rich aquatic invertebrate communities and marginal flora.
- 6.71 Most of the brick ponds on the outskirts of York have been reclaimed and the six remaining are large, deep, steep sided water bodies with limited wildlife interest or marginal vegetation. Formerly the York brick ponds were of national importance for their water beetle and mollusc fauna.
- 6.72 Fen and heathland ponds are mainly found at Askham Bog and World's End, supporting several scarce aquatic insects. Heathland ponds on Strensall Common support a mixture and bog and fen species due to their unusual hydrology. Floating

or marginal carpets of *Sphagnum* moss are a characteristic feature of these ponds, which are now very rare in lowland Yorkshire.

- 6.73 An unusual pond type occasionally found are nutrient-poor clay ponds. These are usually associated with clean, clear water and support stonewort (*Chara*) beds, a habitat feature of European conservation concern. Examples are found at Rawcliffe flood reservoir and North Selby Mine.
- 6.74 When considering ponds for designation, only sites supporting a range of interests have been considered as many ponds have not been surveyed. However, any pond should be considered of potential interest, particularly with regard to the presence of amphibians. From sample survey work that has been undertaken on 300 ponds, approx 1/3 have been found to sustain populations of Great Crested Newt.
- 6.75 All the SINC quality sites are indicated in Table 11.

**Table 11
Ponds**

Ref No.	Site	Location	GR	Area	Designation		Interest
					n	Criteria	
18	Gollie Ponds	Naburn	602482	3.75	SINC	I1	Ponds, Fen, Carr, Rare Invertebrates
19	Hassacarr Pond	Dunnington	668523	0.50	SINC	Sw1	Sps Rich Pond Great Crested Newt
2				4.25			
Proposed							
98	JoRo School Pond	Earswick	609563	0.20	SINC	Sw1/A2/M2	Sps Rich Pond and adjacent grassland with Great Crested Newt, Palmate Newt and Water Vole
182	World's End Ponds	Strensall	661597	3.60	SINC	Sw1/Fe3	Mesotrophic ponds and Fen
196	Ring Rd Pond (AB11)	Askham Bryant	561478	0.40	SINC	Sw1	Sps Rich Detention Pond
200	Town Pond Shirbutt Lane (HY4)	Hessay	525533	0.03	SINC	Sw1	Pond
209	Balancing Ponds - A64 Ring Rd Roundabout	Copmanthorpe	573476	0.10	SINC	Sw1	Sps Rich Ponds/reedbed
5				4.33			

7. Review of Wildlife Sites in the City of York

- 7.1 There are nine Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the City of York : Strensall Common, Heslington Tilmire, Askham Bog, Fulford Ings, Naburn Marsh, Church Ings, Acaster South Ings, Derwent Ings and the River Derwent. These are sites of outstanding nature conservation importance, three of which (Strensall Common, Askham Bog and Derwent Ings) have been identified as being of national importance (Ratcliffe 1977). Derwent Ings is part of the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve, a wetland of international importance.
- 7.2 SSSIs only cover a small proportion of the City's wildlife habitats – a total of some 876 hectares or 3.2% of the land area. Many other sites are of special nature conservation interest in a city-wide context: these are identified in this report as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. These sites may be protected from development under Local Development Framework Policies, and should be regarded as critical natural assets – analogous in many ways to listed buildings in the built environment.
- 7.3 Identifying the best non-SSSI sites also allows resources for conservation management to be targeted more effectively. This is essential when considering the Council's Statutory duty under the NERC Act (2007) and in implementing National Performance Indicator 197 on the management of Local sites (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation). This indicator is also one of the Council's own Performance Indicators and requires the Council to work on progressively bringing SINC sites into favourable wildlife management.
- 7.4 From the previous review, 42 sites had been identified as being of significant interest for wildlife, ie of SINC quality, in addition to the 9 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 3 of which also have international designations as Ramsar sites (wetlands), Special Protection Area's (SPA's for birds) or Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's for Habitats)
- 7.5 A review of these (See Table 12) has identified that 37 sites still fulfil SINC criteria whilst 5 are proposed for de-notification either because their value has decreased or because they were never of sufficient interest to fulfil the new criteria. As such they will be moved to the list of sites of interest.
- 7.6 In addition, a further 49 new sites have been identified as fulfilling the requirements for designation as SINC's. There are a further 15 sites that are close to SINC quality but where we have insufficient information to enable a firm assessment to be made. Such sites should effectively be considered as important sites until sufficient data is available.
- 7.7 Over and above these, a further 87 sites have been identified as being of wildlife interest but where this is insufficient to qualify them for designation. Such sites are though still of great significance for biodiversity and do therefore merit a level of consideration. Such sites are particularly valuable in the local context and when considering climate change and the establishment of habitat networks.
- 7.8 Hedgerows have been kept separate as generally, SINC designation is not their only means of statutory protection.

- 7.9 Overall there has been a net increase in area of land under non statutory site designation from 432ha to 581ha in addition to the 895 ha under statutory designation. There is a further 174ha of land which is also of potential SINC quality but that requires further information.
- 7.10 Such sites may be of significant value and it is important that they are identified so that their potential interest can be given due consideration, until such time as the information becomes available.
- 7.11 Of particular note here is Elvington Airfield where access to collect information is difficult and Huntington Cemetery Fields where grazing pressure is high, making identification difficult.

Table 12
SINC/ Wildlife Sites

Title	Total No	Total Area	Total Length where appropriate.
SSSI's	9	895.08	18000
SAC's	3	714.75	18000
SPA's	1	136 ha (682 ha)	
NNR's	1	136 ha (682 ha)	
Total No. Sites of Statutory Protection	9	895.08	18000
Existing SINC's (retained)	37	426.40	7855
New Sinc's	49	154.53	24260
Sinc Hedges	41		11896
Total no. of Sinc's (excl. hedges)	86	580.93	
Total no. of Sinc's (incl. Hedges)	127		32115
SINC – Local Nature Reserves	3	54.65	
Non Sinc LNR's (1 prt SINC)	2	12.30	
Total LNR's	4	66.95	
Non SINC Sites with Social Value	2	5.70	0
New Sinc's - Possible	15	173.61	1900
Sincs to be De-notified	5	5.75	950
Sites of Interest (Not Sinc Quality)	87	330.51	18710
Created Sites	11	22.70	550
Total Sites of Interest (Not SINC value)	122	371.26	
Other sites(Unknown value)	18	155.50	750

8. Protected Sps

8.1 Within York there are known to be 3 European Protected Species. These are :

- i) Bat
- ii) Great Crested Newt
- iii) Otter

8.2 In addition there are a number of other species present that are protected by other legislation. These include :

- i) Water Vole
- ii) Badger
- iii) Barn Owl

8.3 These species receive special protection because, whilst they are threatened, they have a widespread rather than site specific occurrence and cannot therefore be adequately protected by site-based designations.

8.4 The legislative framework for these species is given in Appendix 4

8.5 Wildlife legislation extends protection to the habitats and places of shelter of a number of these species, as well as the individual animals. Local Development Framework policies should refer to and reflect these legal obligations.

*Ponds (and adjoining terrestrial habitats) inhabited by Great Crested Newts receive protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act. Great Crested Newts occur in a number of ponds in the City of York but a comprehensive survey has only been undertaken in areas of former Southern Ryedale although additional survey work has been carried in 2003/4 in other parts of the City. Caution should thus be exercised with regard to any developments affecting ponds and expert guidance should be sought.

*Stringent legal requirements pertain to bat roosts both in and out of dwellings. English Nature should be referred to for interpretation of these requirements. Council officers should be aware that bat roosts may occur in old trees (e.g. in parkland or woodlands), in bridges, all sorts of farm buildings, church buildings and private residences.

*Badger sets are protected under the provisions of the 1992 Protection of Badgers Act. Badgers are widespread in the City of York both inside and outside of the York Outer Ring Road, although absent from the inner urban area. Many woodlands in the City (both conifer and broad-leaf) support Badgers, and sets may also be found in hedge bottoms, ditch banks, paddocks and field margins, sometimes close to habitation.

8.6 A number of other bird species which breed very locally in the area are conferred special protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act including *protection from disturbance at their breeding sites*. Relevant species (listed in Schedule 1 of the Act) include Black-necked Grebe, Pintail, Garganey, Quail, Little Ringed Plover, Ruff, Black-tailed Godwit, Corncrake, Marsh Harrier, Goshawk and Black Restart have all occurred or may potentially occur as breeding species within the City of York and would be subject to the same legal protection. Some of these species can occur outside of protected sites. Guidance should be sought from Natural

England regarding the application of this and other wildlife legislation in specific circumstances.

9. Survey Information and Sources of Information

- 9.1 Phase I Surveys provide base line information on habitat resources. No Phase I surveys has been undertaken for the City of York as a whole but surveys were carried out for the previous local authorities in Ryedale, Selby and Harrogate Districts. No comparable information exists for the area formerly administered by York City Council.
- 9.2 Phase I surveys provide a field-by-field map of land use and habitats with target notes made for the more noteworthy sites. Phase I information is variable in quality and most appropriate for coarse-grained, quantitative analysis of habitat resources. It is not usually adequate for detailed evaluation of specific sites.
- 9.3 The first major Phase I initiative in this area was the Selby District habitat Survey undertaken by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in 1986-88 (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust 1988). A number of sites were resurveyed in 1993 (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust 1993). The Selby survey was commendably thorough and produced consistently usable data, despite some drawbacks such as a high margin of error in the classification of grasslands.
- 9.4 Southern Ryedale was surveyed in a piecemeal manner with some areas covered in 1989-90 and the remainder in 1992. Whilst the later survey work is of a high standard, the earlier surveys tend to lack detail.
- 9.5 The Harrogate and Hambleton Phase I survey was undertaken in 1993 and covered the parishes of Upper and Nether Poppleton, Rufforth, Knapton and Hessay. This survey did not highlight any sites of district significance within Greater York.
- 9.6 A Register of Green Sites in York (Hammond 1991) covers the area within the York Outer Ring Road, and thus virtually all of the area formerly administered by York City Council. This is a site inventory and not a field-by-field survey. The English Nature Ancient Woodland Inventory (Phillips 1994) is a map-based review of ancient woodland sites and has been referred to in conjunction with field surveys. Detailed vegetation surveys are available for Strensall Common and World's end (Weston & Littler 1994) and ditches on the Derwent Ings (Birkinshaw 1991). A National Vegetation Classification (NVC) survey of the Lower Derwent Valley grasslands was carried out in 1990 (Trinder 1990) with a Phase I survey of the river corridor commissioned by the National Rivers Authority in 1995.
- 9.7 A survey of the Ouse flood plain was carried out by the Greater York Countryside Project in 1995 (Brooks & Tankard 1995) and Hammond (1995) provides a more detailed review of habitat resources on the Ouse Ings.
- 9.8 Further sources of information include the Invertebrate Sites Register, a database maintained by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) which includes entries for 12 sites in the City of York. Relatively little entomological information is

available for other sites, with the exception of a detailed survey of Rawcliffe Meadows (Crossley 1995).

- 9.9 During the course of this earlier review, letters were sent to a variety of local conservation and natural history groups requesting information. Responses from Dunnington Conservation Group and North Yorkshire Bat Group were particularly useful. Responses from groups running local nature reserves were variable: some, such as Friends of York Cemetery, were able to furnish detailed records and a comprehensive management plan but others had little or no information to offer.
- 9.10 During the period 1996-2008, a number of planning applications required localised survey work and was carried out both by consultants acting for developers and the Council's Countryside Officer.
- 9.11 A series of surveys have been commissioned by CYC including :
 - i) The City Walls
 - ii) Invertebrate surveys of specific sites.
- 9.12 Pond Survey – 2002/3
- 9.13 Phase 1 assessment from aerial coverage – 2007
- 9.14 Walkover surveys of identified sites 2007/8
- 9.15 Phase 2 surveys of Identified sites. 2008/9

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APPENDIX 1

**SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIST INTEREST
(SSSIs)
IN THE CITY OF YORK**

Sites of special scientific interest (SSSI)

Acaster South Ings

Askham Bog

Church Ings, Acaster Malbis

Derwent Ings

Fulford Ings

Heslington Tilmire

Naburn Marsh

River Derwent

Strensall Common

Sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) GR			Area	Length	Status	Habitat	
Acaster South Ings	Acaster Malbis	594437	38.30		SSSI	Flood Plain Meadow	
Askham Bog	Dringhouses/	570480	44.70		SSSI Nature Reserve	Valley Mire – Bog, Fen, Woodland	
Church Ings	Naburn	594456	6.67		SSSI	Flood Plain Meadow	
Derwent Ings	Wheldrake	696443	136.00		Ramsar Site NNR SSSI SPA SAC	Flood Plain Meadow	Total area is 662.1ha
Fulford Ings	Fulford	608491	12.67		SSSI	Flood Plain Meadow	
Heslington Tilmire	Heslington	638475	46.67		SSSI	Tall Herb Fen Marsh Grassland	
Naburn Marsh	Naburn	600479	13.32		SSSI	Flood Plain Meadow	
River Derwent	Eastern Boundary	678287-825757	18.00	18000m	SSSI SAC	River	In York – Area based on 10m width.
Strensall Common	Strensall	650600	578.75		SSSI SAC	Lowland Heath	
			895.08	18000			

Date of Notification: 6 MAY 1988
 File Ref: SE 54 SL 5
 Site Code: 18 WJ5

NORTH YORKSHIREACASTER SOUTH INGS

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.

Local Planning Authority: North Yorkshire County Council
Selby District

National Grid Reference: SE 594437

Ordnance Survey Sheets: 1:50,000 : 105
1:10,000 : SE 54 SE

Area: 38.3 Hectares 94.6 acres

First notified: 1988

Description and reasons for notification

Acaster South Ings consist of two large alluvial flood meadows adjacent to the River Ouse, near Acaster Malbis and approximately four miles to the south of the City of York. These grasslands represent an increasingly rare habitat type which is threatened nationally as a result of drainage and agricultural improvement and are of particular importance for their neutral grassland flora.

The grassland is rich in plant species with great burnet (Sanguisorba officinalis) being notably abundant, together with grasses such as red fescue (Festuca rubra), crested dog's-tail (Cynosurus cristatus), Yorkshire fog (Holcus lanatus), meadow foxtail (Alopecurus pratensis) and creeping bent (Agrostis stolonifera).

Other herb species which occur frequently throughout the sward include meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) and common bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*). Species such as pepper-saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), common meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) and common bistort (*Polygonum bistorta*) which are of more local distribution, also occur, the latter forming distinct stands throughout the grassland.

On drier raised ground, adjacent to the riverbank footpath, a number of species of interest occur which are not found within the main flood-meadow. These include clustered bellflower (*Campanula glomerata*), field mouse-ear (*Cerastium arvense*) and meadow crane's-bill (*Geranium pratense*).

The river margin consists of a mosaic of tall herbs such as great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), reed canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*),

butterbur (*Petasites hybridus*), tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), and scattered shrubs including hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Osier (*Salix viminalis*).

Two rare leaf-feeding beetles (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae); *Chrysolina graminis* and *Aphthona nigriceps* are associated with tansy and meadow crane's-bill respectively.

The Douth Ings also provides one of a few suitable breeding areas for waders in the Ouse Valley, south of York, and is used regularly by curlew.

Maintenance of the nature conservation interest is dependent on the continuation of traditional management for haycropping followed by aftermath grazing.

Date of Notification: 5 SEPTEMBER 1984
File Ref: SE 54 SL 2
Site Code: 18 WNZ

NORTH YORKSHIREASKHAM BOG

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.

Local Planning Authority: North Yorkshire County Council
Selby District

National Grid Reference: SE 570480

Ordnance Survey Sheets: 1:50,000 : 105
1:10,000 : SE 54 SE

Area: 44.7 Hectares 110.7 acres

First notified: 1961* Date of Revision: 1984

Description and reasons for notification

Askham Bog is the remnant of a valley-mire which formed between two ridges of glacial moraine in the Vale of York just southwest of the City. Base-rich ground-water draining in the moraines has led to the development of a rich-fen community which demonstrates stages in serial succession to fen woodland. In the central areas there is a poor-fen community, thought to represent incipient raised-bog, where vegetation has grown above the influence of the ground-water and conditions have become acidic through the leaching action of rain-water and the growth of bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.).

The present habitats are considered to be secondary, raised-bog having largely replaced the original fen before peat-cutting in the Middle ages brought the vegetation back within the influence of base-rich ground water with the consequent reversion to fen conditions.

The majority of the site consists of birch (*Betula pubescens*) and oak (*Quercus robur*) woodland with alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) as the dyke margins. There is extensive willow carr (*Salix cinerea*), and the shrub layer also includes alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) and bog myrtle (*Myrica gale*). The open fen communities are very rich in flowering plants such as meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), common meadow rue (*Thalictrum flavum*), yellow loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*), common marsh bedstraw (*Galium palustre*) and woody nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*). Sedges are particularly well represented and include fibrous tussock-sedge (*Carex appropinquata*), elongated sedge (*C. elongata*) and great fen-sedge (*Cladium mariscus*). The site is also noted for the occurrence of royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) and marsh fern *Thelypteris thelypteroides*). More acidic elements of the ground flora include broad buckler-fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*), narrow-buckler-fern (*D. carthusiana*), purple moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and bog mosses (*Sphagnum fimbriatum*, *S. squarrosum* and *S. palustre*). In addition to the peatland habitats there is grassland along the northern and southern margins which has several species of interest such as adder's-tongue fern (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*) and early marsh orchid (*Dactylorhiza incarnata*), and the dykes are rich in aquatic plants, in particular the water violet (*Hottonia palustris*).

The site is renowned for its insect fauna which includes the scarce beetles (*Dromius sigma* and *Agabus undulatus*) and the fen square-spot moth (*Diarsia florida*).

Reference

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Cont.../...

Date of Notification: 5 SEPTEMBER
1984
File Ref: SE 54 SL 2
Site Code: 18 WNZ

Other Information

1. The importance of this site is such that although not included in 'A Nature Conservation Review' at the time of its publication, it has nevertheless since been recognised as an integral part of the national peatland series listed in that volume.
 2. During the 1983 revision the boundary has been extended.
 3. Part of the site is managed as a nature reserve by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust.
- * Under Section 23 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949.

Date of Notification: 17 JANUARY 1991
File Ref: SE 54 SL 7
Site Code: 18 WS8

NORTH YORKSHIRE

CHURCH INGS

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.

Local Planning Authority: North Yorkshire County Council
Selby District Council

National Grid Reference: SE 594456

Ordnance Survey Sheets: 1:50,000 : 105
1:10,000 : SE 54 NE

Area: 6.67 hectares 16.48 acres.

First notified: 1991

Description and reasons for notification

Church Ings comprises two unimproved alluvial flood meadows, adjacent to the River Ouse at Acaster Malbis in the Vale of York. These meadows are of particular importance for their neutral grassland plant community which is an increasingly rare habitat type, threatened nationally as a result of drainage and agricultural improvement.

The sward includes a variety of characteristic plant species, with great burnet (Sanguisorba officinalis), meadowsweet (Filipendula ulmaria), meadow buttercup (Ranunculus acris), pepper saxifrage (Silaum silaus), ribwort plantain (Plantago lanceolata), common bistort (Polygonum bistorta), ragged-robin (Lychnis flos-cuculi), cuckooflower (Cardamine pratensis), meadow foxtail (Alopecurus pratensis), creeping bent (Agrostis stolonifera), red fescue (Festuca rubra), crested dog's tail (Cynosurus cristatus) and common sedge (Carex nigra).

Where ground conditions are wettest there are stands of brown sedge (Carex disticha).

The nature conservation interest is dependent upon the maintenance of a high water-table and on management by mowing for hay followed by aftermath grazing.

**'Ramsar' Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
Especially as Waterfowl Habitat**

THE LOWER DERWENT VALLEY

The Lower Derwent Valley represents one of the most important examples of traditionally managed species-rich, alluvial flood-meadow habitat remaining in the UK. These grasslands, which were formerly widespread, are now very restricted in distribution due to agricultural improvement. The river and these flood-meadows play a substantial role in the hydrological and ecological functioning of the Internationally important Humber basin. The Lower Derwent Valley therefore qualifies under Criteria 1a and 1c as a wetland of international importance.

The boundaries of the proposed Ramsar site are coincident with those of the Derwent Ings SSI Melbourne and Thornton Ings SSSI, the River Derwent SSSI, Newton Mask SSSI and Brighton Meadows SSSI, apart from the exclusion of the section of the River Derwent SSSI north of Newton Mask SSSI and south of Brighton Meadows SSSI.

The site qualifies under Criterion 2a on the grounds of its rich assemblage of wetland invertebrates. This includes up to 16 species of damselfly and dragonfly, the most notable being the red-eyed damselfly *Erythromma najas* at its northernmost British site. Eight rare Red Data Book wetland species have been recorded, a ground beetle *Panagaeus cruxmajor*, two empid flies *Ramphomyia physoprocta* and *Hilara merula*, the water beetle *Hydraena palustris*, water snail *Lymnaea glabra*, the snail-killing fly *Sciomyza dryomysina*, the rove beetle *Carpelimus obesus*, and the click beetle *Selatosomus nigricornis*. In addition there are 3 Red Data Book 'K' wetland species, the scavenger beetle *Saprimus virescens*, a Ptilid beetle *Acrotrichis subcognata* and a Dolichopodid fly *Dolichopus cilifemoratus*. Also of note is the leafhopper *Cicadula ornata* for which the only known British site is the Lower Derwent Valley.

The site also qualifies under Criterion 2c as a staging area for passage birds in Spring. Of particular note are the nationally important numbers of Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (100, approx 7% of UK population) and *Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus* (100, 2% UK population).

The Lower Derwent Valley also qualifies under Criterion 3a by regularly supporting in winter over 20,000 waterfowl. In the five year period of 1986/87-1990/91, the mean peak figure recorded was 27,580 – comprising averages of 17,415 wildfowl and 10,165 waders. In no year did the combined total fall below 20,000 birds.

The site further qualifies under Criterion 3c by regularly holding important numbers of 2 species of wildfowl. In the five-winter period of 1986/87-1990/91, mean peak counts of 4,040 Teal *Anas crecca* and 7,790 Wigeon *Anas Penelope* were recorded. These represent >1% of the NW European population of these species, the former being 4% of the British wintering population, and the latter 3%.

The site is notable also for supporting nationally important wintering numbers of Bewick's swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*, Golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, Shoveler *Anas clypeata*, Pochard *Aythya ferina*, and furthermore, nationally important numbers of breeding Shoveler.

Date of Notification: 20 MARCH 1992
File Ref: SE 74 SL 3
Site Code: 18 WCH

NORTH YORKSHIREDERWENT INGS

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.

Local Planning Authority: North Yorkshire County Council
Humberside County Council
Selby District Council
Boothferry Borough Council
East Yorkshire Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SE 703466 - 703347
(northern & southern extremities):

Ordnance Survey Sheets: 1:50,000 : 105, 106
1:10,000 : SE 63 NE, 64 NE, SE
73 NW, SW, 74 NW, SW

Area: 662.10 hectares 1,636.05 acres

First notified: 1975* Date of Revision: 1981*, 1983°, 1992+

Description

The Derwent Ings consists of a series of neutral alluvial flood meadows, fen and swamp communities and freshwater habitats lying adjacent to the River Derwent between Sutton-upon-Derwent and Menthorpe. The freshwater habitats are associated primarily with a section of the Pocklington Canal, between East Cottingwith and Storwood, and the dyke system. The Derwent Ings represents one of the most important examples of agriculturally unimproved species-rich alluvial flood meadow habitat remaining in the UK. These grasslands, which were formerly widespread, are now very restricted in distribution due to agricultural improvement. They form part of an internationally threatened resource.

The character and species composition of the grassland, fen and swamp communities is largely controlled by topography, difference in winter flooding and by the type of agricultural management.

In the wettest areas the vegetation is dominated by species such as reed sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*), reed canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and slender tufted-sedge (*Carex acuta*), or by creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), marsh foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*) and silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*).

On the drier areas where flooding is short-lived, a species-rich community occurs characterised by species such as great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), sweet vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*),

meadowsweet (Filipendula ulmaria), sneezewort (Achillea ptarmica), ragged-robin (Lychnis flos-cuculi) and pepper-saxifrage (Silaum silaus), together with important populations of the nationally scarce narrow-leaved water-dropwort (Oenanthe silaifolia).

The site is important as a habitat for a wide range of breeding and wetland bird species. Breeding wildfowl include shoveler, shelduck, mallard, teal, pintail, gadwall and garganey. Breeding waders include snipe, lapwing, redshank and curlew. Other breeding birds include quail, barn owl, kingfisher, yellow wagtail and reed, sedge and grasshopper warblers.

In winter the Ings support internationally important concentrations of waterfowl (> 20,000 individuals) together with nationally important numbers (. 1% British Wintering population) of Bewick's swan, teal, wigeon, mallard, pochard, golden plover and ruff. Nationally important numbers of whimbrel occur in late April and early May.

The freshwater dyke system of the Ings support a rich diversity of plant species including two nationally scarce species, greater water-parsnip (Sium latifolium) and flat-stalked pondweed (Potamogeton freisii) together with locally rare species such as water-violet (Hottonia palustris) and round-fruited rush (Juncus compressus).

The site has an outstanding assemblage of invertebrates with species associated with the dykes and the fen and swamp habitats being particularly significant. These include up to 16 species of damselflies and dragonflies, together with a variety of species of other invertebrate groups and including three nationally rare species, a snail killing fly (Sciomyza dryomyzina), a freshwater snail (Lymbnaea glabra) and a Ptilid beetle (Acrotrichis subcognata).

Other Information

1. The Derwent Ings is of international significance and has been designated a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention and as a Special Protection Area under the terms of European Community Directive 79/409/EEC.
2. This is a nationally important site listed in "A Nature Conservation Review" edited by D A Ratcliffe (1977). Cambridge University Press.
3. Part of the site is declared as the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve under Section 19 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949 and Section 35 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.
4. Part of the site is owned by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and is managed in conjunction with the Nature Conservancy Council for England (English Nature) under the terms of a Nature Reserve Agreement under Section 16 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949.
5. Part of the site is a statutory Sanctuary under the Wild Birds (Wheldrake Ings Sanctuary) Order 1978, Statutory Instrument No. 1259.

- * Under Section 23 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949
- ° Under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981
- + Under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended).

Date of Notification: 2 MAY 1991
File Ref: SE 64 SL 3
Site Code: 18 WBT

NORTH YORKSHIREFULFORD INGS

Status:	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.
Local Planning Authority:	North Yorkshire County Council Selby District Council
National Grid Reference: (northern & southern extremities):	Se 608491
Ordnance Survey Sheets:	1:50,000 : 105 1:10,000 : SE 64 NE, 64 NE
Area:	12.67 hectares 31.31 acres
First notified:	Date of Revision: 1991

Description and reasons for notification

Fulford Ings is an important example of flood plain mire located on low lying land between the River Ouse and Fulford Village.

It supports a sequence of plant communities which reflect the topography and hydrology, with alluvial grassland on higher ground, adjacent to the flood bank, a transitional zone of rich fen meadow and swamp in the most low lying areas furthest from the river. Such a sequence of plant communities is now uncommon as a result of the drainage and fragmentation of wetlands and the fact that it remains largely intact at Fulford Ings is of particular importance. The alluvial grassland is characterised by meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Yorkshier Fog (*Holcus lanatus*), great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), ribwort plantain, (*Plantago lanceolata*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) and pepper-saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*).

The rich fen meadow is dominated by sedges, including brown sedge (*Carex disticha*), slender tufted sedge (*C. acuta*), lesser pond sedge (*C. acutiformis*) and false fox sedge (*C. otrubae*, with meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*), common spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), marsh arrow-grass (*Triglochin palustris*) and stands of reed canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*).

Where the site is flooded most frequently and for the longest duration there are extensive beds of reed sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*) with occasional stands of yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) and bulrush (*Typha latifolia*).

The nature conservation interest is dependent upon the maintenance of a high water table and on management of the alluvial grassland and fen meadow by mowing and grazing.

DATE: NOTIFIED: 6 SEP 1990

NORTH YORKSHIREHESLINGTON TILMIRE

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.

Local Planning Authority: Selby District Council

National Grid Reference: Se 638475
(northern & southern extremities):

Ordnance Survey Sheets: 1:50,000 : 105
1:10,000 : SE 64 NW

Area: 46.67 hectares 115.32 acres

First notified: 1990

Description

Heslington Tillmire is situated on silt and clay drift deposits on low lying, flat land in the Vale of York. It is important for its tall herb fen plant community and for its marshy grassland and associated assemblage of breeding birds.

The tall herb fen plant community is the only one of its type known within the Vale of York. It is characterised by marsh cinquefoil (Potentilla palustris), bogbean (Menyanthes trifoliata) and common cotton-greass (Eriophorum angustifolium), and a variety of sedges including bottle sedge (Carex rostrata), common sedge (C. nigra), tawny sedge (C. hostiana) and slender sedge (C. lasiocarpa). Herbs include greater bird's foot trefoil (Lotus uliginosus), marsh marigold (Caltha palustris), meadowsweet (Filipendula ulmaria), tubular water-dropwort (Oenanthe fistulosa), and common marsh-bedstraw (Galium palustre). Of particular note is the presence of the nationally scarce marsh clubmoss (Lycopodiella inundata).

The marshy grassland provides a breeding habitat for a range of wetland birds species. Up to ten species have bred in any one year including lapwing, snipe, curlew, redshank, teal, shoveler and pintail. The fact that the site is surrounded by intensively farmed arable and improved grassland makes it of particular importance for birds.

NORTH YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDERIVER DERWENT

Status:	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.
Local Planning Authority:	Ryedale and Selby District Council Boothferry and East Yorkshire Borough Councils
National Grid Reference:	SE 678287 - 825757
Ordnance Survey Sheets:	1:50,000 : 100, 101, 105, 106 1:25,000 : 62, 63, 64, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 87
Approx length	42.7 km North Yorkhsire (Ryedale) 42.1 km North Yorkshire (Selby)
Where River Derwent froms district boundaries the length is included in both districts.	19.8 km Humberside (Boothferry) 26.0 km Humberside (East Yorkhsire) 86.2 km Total
First notified:	1986

Description

The Yorkshire Derwent is considered to represent one of the best British examples of the classic river profile. This lowland section, stretching from Ryemouth to the confluence with the Ouse, supports diverse communities of aquatic flora and fauna, many elements of which are nationally significant.

Fed from an extensive upland catchment, the lowland course of the Derwent has been considerably diverted and extended as a result of glacial action in the Vale of Pickering.

In contrast to the upland reaches this section of the river is rich in nutrients and relatively unpolluted and supports an aquatic flora uncommon in Northern Britain. Several species, including river water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fluviatilis*), flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), shining pondweed (*Potamogeton lucens*), arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*), opposite-leaved pondweed (*Groenlandia densa*) and narrow-leaved water-parsnip (*Berula erecta*) are typically found in lowland rivers of southern England, and several occur here near their north-eastern limit in Britain. The presence of the unbranched bur-reed (*Sparganium emersum*) and yellow water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*) add to the floral interest.

The exceptionally rich assemblage of invertebrates reflects their affinities with the communities of the southern slow-flowing rivers. Species of particular interest include the mayflies *Baetis buceratus*, *Heptagenia fusogrisea* and *Brachycerus harisella*, and a stonefly *Taeniopteryx nebulosa*. Eleven species of dragonfly have been recorded including the banded agrion (*Agrion splendens*) at its most north-easterly site in the country.

The river is also noted for its diversity of fish species, which include or have included the bleak, ruffe and burbot. The presence of these European species reflect the Derwent's geographical position at the end of the Ice Age when migration of fish from the Rhine and other European rivers was possible across the North Sea which, at that time, was a fresh-water lake.

The riverine habitat also supports an excellent breeding bird community including common sandpiper, dipper, kingfisher, and yellow and grey wagtails. During the winter the Lower Derwent is vital in maintaining the internationally important population of Bewick's swans association with the adjacent Derwent Ings. The Derwet is also one of the few rivers in lowland Britain which still supports a breeding population of otters.

Other Information

Stretches of the river are also included within other SSSIs notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981; these are the Kirkham Park and Riverside; Derwent Ings SSSI; Breaughton Meadows SSSI. SSSIs adjacent to the river are Jeffry Bog and Newton Mask.

DATE NOTIFIED: 13 MARCH 1992

NORTH YORKSHIRENABURN MARSH

Status:	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.	
Local Planning Authority:	Selby District Council	
National Grid Reference:	Se 600479	
Ordnance Survey Sheets:	1:50,000 : 105 1:10,000 : SE 54 NE, SE 64 NW	
Area:	13.32 hectares	32.91 acres
First notified:	1992	

Description

The flood meadows at Naburn Marsh are contained within a bend of the River Ouse about 4km south of the centre of the City of York. The site comprises a mosaic of species-rich flooded meadow grassland with swamp and inundation communities. This type of flood meadow grassland is now nationally rare and further threatened by conversion to arable land or more intensive grassland. The special interest of the site is augmented by the presence of a sequence of grassland and inundation communities which reflect the variations in topography and hydrology of the site.

At Naburn Marsh the higher ground supports species-rich flood meadow grassland. Great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) and meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*) are prominent in the sward together with large stands of bistort (*Polygonum amphibium*) and clumps of marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*). Of more scattered occurrence are pepper-saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) and water forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*).

The lower lying central area is covered in water for longer periods during winter floods and also remains damper during the summer months. Here, there are large stands of reed canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) swamp with creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and common couch (*Elymus repens*). Occasional plants of meadow buttercup, great burnet and common marsh-bedstraw (*Galium palustre*) can also be found and there are several extensive areas of common meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*). Short inundation grassland dominated by marsh foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*), with creeping bent, rough meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), occurs in the damper areas in a mosaic with the beds of reed canary-grass.

NORTH YORKSHIRESTRENSALL COMMON

Status:	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.	
Local Planning Authority:	Ryedale District Council	
National Grid Reference:	Se 650600	
Ordnance Survey Sheets:	1:50,000 : 100 & 105 1:25,000 : SE 65, 66	
Area:	578.75 hectares	1,430.09 acres
First notified: 1965*	1984	

Description

Strensall Common is a northern example of acidic lowland heath and is one of only two extensive areas of open heathland remaining in the Vale of York, the other being Skipwith Common.

The complex mosaic of sands and clays given rise to an equally diverse vegetation comprising wet and dry heath, woodland and wetland. The dry heath, dominated by heather (Calluna vulgaris), is noted for petty whin (Genista anglica) and bird's foot (Ornithopus perpusillus), whilst extensive areas of purple moor-grass (Molinia caerulea) and cross-leaved heath (Erica tetralix) characterise the wet heath. The Common also has significant populations of the very local marsh gentian (Gentiana pneumonanthe), other species of note including narrow buckler-fern (Dryopteris carthusiana) and long-leaved sundew (Drosera intermedia).

Drainage has reduced the extent of the wetland vegetation which includes permanent pools with great reedmace (Typha latifolia), fen dominated by common reed (Phragmites australis) and extensive areas of soft rush (Juncus effusus); species associated with the wetlands include marsh cinquefoil (potentilla palustris), bog bean (Menyanthes trifoliata) and uncommon species such as marsh St. John's wort (Hypericum elodes).

Frequent heathland fires have restricted the development of birch (Betula sp.) woodland which is less extensive than at skipwith. Elsewhere on the heath oak (Quercus robur) occurs and Scot's pine (Pinus sylvestris) has been planted.

The entomological interest of the site is considerable with several rare moths (Lepidoptera) and bugs (Hemiptera) present.

Other Information

1. This site is listed in "A Nature Conservation Review" edited by D A Ratcliffe (1977). Cambridge University Press.
2. Much of the site is used for military training purposes but 22 hectares (54 acres) is owned and managed as a nature reserve by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.
3. During the 1984 revision the boundary has been amended.

*Under Section 23 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

Appendix 2 List of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC):

No.	Name	Parish
1	A64 Interchange	Dringhouses/ Copmanthorpe
209	A64 Interchange Ring Rd Ponds	Dringhouses/ Copmanthorpe
2	Acomb Wood Meadow	Acomb
3	Archbishop's Palace Grounds Bishopthorpe	Bishopthorpe
214	Askham Moor Lane Copse	Askham Bryan
4	Bachelor Hill	Acomb
79	Benjy Lane Meadows (Wheldrake Site 14)	Wheldrake
5	Bishopthorpe Ings	Bishopthorpe
8	Brecks Meadow, Strensall	Strensall
6	Brinkworth Rush	Elvington
7	Brinkworth Rush (Elvington Air Museum)	Elvington
203	British Sugar Sidings	Acomb
9	Carr Banks Meadow, Stockton on the Forest	Stockton on the Forest
54	Ext to Carr Bank Meadow	Stockton on the Forest
10	Church Ings,	Acaster Malbis
12	Clifton Backies	Clifton
45	Ext to Backies Burton Green Meadow (6-20)	Clifton Without
13	Clifton Bridge	Clifton
14	Clifton Ings	Clifton
15	Copmanthorpe Wood	Copmanthorpe
50	Earswick Meadow	Old Earswick
59	Elvington Airfield	Elvington
86	Elvington Wood	Elvington
175	Elvington Camp Wood	Elvington
104	Fishpond Wood	Acomb
53	Flaxton Road Meadows	Strensall
16	Fulford Golf Course (roughs & woodland)	Heslington
195	Fulford Ings Village Green	Fulford
17	Germany Beck Meadow	Fulford

87	Gilbertsons Plantation (Wheldrake Site 65)	Wheldrake
18	Gollie Ponds	Fulford
199	Grasslands Farm Field	Rufforth
19	Hassacarr Pond,	Dunnington
177	Hazelbush Plantation	Stockton on the Forest
89	Hazelbush Fields (Huntington Site 9)	Huntington
21	Hagg Wood,	Dunnington
169	Hagg Wood (Cop)	Copmanthorpe
201	Hessay Churchyard	Hessay
20	Hob Moor	Acomb
198	Ext to Hob Moor Hob Moor Community School	Acomb
103	Holgate Millenium Green	Holgate
72	Holtby Rd Verge (Derwent Site 5)	Gate Helmsley
98	Joseph Rowntree School Pond	Earswick
101	Kexby Bank West	Kexby
22	Kexby Bridge	Kexby
24	Knavesmire Wood	Knavesmire
23	Knavesmire Stables Meadow	Knavesmire
65	Low Moor Lane Meadow (Hessay)	Poppleton
194	Middlethorpe Ings (4- 1)	Middlethorpe
210	Middlethorpe Ings Crematorium (4-3)(Middlethorpe
211	Middlethorpe Ings Fen (4-1)a	Middlethorpe
206	Moor Lane Railway Verge Copmanthorpe	Copmanthorpe
27	Moreby Far Wood	Deighton
55	Murton Meadow (10- 11)	Murton
193	Naburn Hall Meadow	Naburn
28	New Earswick Meadow	New Earswick
49	North Lane Meadow	Huntington
57	Osbaldwick Meadow	Osbaldwick
63	R. Ouse	York
29	Ox Carr Lane,	Strensall
202	Poppleton Glassworks (5-30)	Poppleton

217	Poppleton Ings Ditch	Poppleton
30	Rabbit Warren Wood	Dunnington
32	Rawcliffe Ings Dyke	Rawcliffe
33	Rawcliffe Landing Wood	Rawcliffe
31	Rawcliffe Meadows	Rawcliffe
196	Ring Rd Pond (AB11)	Askham Bryant
34	River Foss Corridor, Huntington	Huntington/ New Earswick
216	Ring Rd Embankment Millfield Lane	Nether Poppleton
204	Rush Wood	Naburn
35	Severus Hill	Acomb
97	Sim Hill Tip	Acomb
67	Strensall Village Meadows Strensall Site 15d, 15e	Strensall
111	Strensall Horse Pasture	Strensall
36	Stub Wood	Acaster Malbis
205	Stub Wood Fen (4-13)	Acaster Malbis
215	Taylorhall Field Plantation	Askham Richard
167	The Parks	Askham Bryan
200	Town Pond Shirbutt Lane (HY4)	Hessay
81	West Plantation - Wheldrake Site 16	Wheldrake
37	West Carr Masks,	Elvington
61	Ext to West Carr Masks	Elvington
39	Westfield Fen/Marsh	Acomb
38	Westfield School Field	Acomb
197	West Wood Lane (AB1)	Askham Bryant
41	Wheldrake Wood	Wheldrake
42	World's End,	Strensall
112	Worlds End Plantation	Strensall
182	World's End Ponds	Strensall
43	York-Selby Cycle Track,	Deighton/ Naburn
	Social Sites	
232	Acomb Wood	Acomb
64	St Nicholas Fields	City Centre
129	York Cemetery	City Centre
Sites	For denotification	

11	Clementhorpe - Ouse Riverbank	Clementhorpe
25	Mattie Brown's Covert,	Wheldrake
26	Millfield Wood,	Kexby
33	Rawcliffe Landing Wood	Rawcliffe
40	West Pits Meadow,	Strensall
New Sites for Possible SINC Quality Consideration -		
	Site	Location
139	Bootham Stray Pond	Clifton Without
179	Broad Highway Verges	Wheldrake
212	Connaught Court	Connought Court, Fulford
106	Danebury Crt	Acomb
207	Drome Lane Field Copmanthorpe-	Copmanthorpe
208	Drome Lane Hay Meadow Copmanthorpe (5-19)	Copmanthorpe
99	Dunnington Rd Verge	Dunnington
59a	Elvington Airfield	Elvington
174	Holtby Pond Rd Verge	Holtby
213	Knavesmire Field Corners	Knavesmire
191	Monks Cross	Huntington
141	Rawcliffe Cornfield	Rawcliffe
222	Rufforth Field (5-14)(RU10)	Rufforth
78	Selby Mine Wheldrake Site 13	Deighton
48	Huntington Cemetery and Fields Area	Huntington

Appendix 3
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

Existing Sites

SINC Citation 2009

Site Code 01 - A64/LONDON BRIDGE INTERCHANGE (Copmanthorpe/Askham Bryan/ Dringhouses)
SE 579 477

Last Surveyed 10th July 2008

Principal NVC communities: MG1 *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland; MG9 *Holcus lanatus* – *Deschampsia cespitosa* grassland

Area Approx 3.8 ha.

This 'site' originally referred to a complex of roadside habitats around the London Bridge/A64 interchange and the 'York West' slip road which passes Pike Hills golf course. These verges supported a coarse, species-poor grassland dominated by false-oat (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) but with areas fine leaved grasses of greater diversity on the steep embankments where soils were thinner. These were characterised by the presence of some calcicole plants, reflecting the calcareous nature of the moraine along which the A64 runs. This is the only area in the City of York with naturally-occurring calcareous soils. In recent years, construction of the Copmanthorpe slip road has resulted in extensive physical disturbance of the original verges and the replacement of some semi-natural grassland by sown 'wildflower' mixtures including taxa such as the rayed form of common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra* var. *radiata*) which would not occur naturally. It would be inappropriate, at least in the near future, to consider these re-sown verges for SINC status.

The central, low-lying interchange island supports species-rich fen meadow vegetation and clayey, probably rather base-rich grassland. This remains although several species were not re-recorded in 2008.

These grasslands also support good populations of common grassland butterflies and moths.

Maintenance of its ecological interest will depend on some thinning of invasive scrub (especially planted sycamore) and management of selected areas of grassland to reduce encroachment by coarse vegetation.

SINC assessment:

Interchange island (SE 579 477) scores 9/8 under Guideline Gr4 based on species with an abundance of at least 'occasional' (scores 12/8 based on all indicator species).

Verges adj. cyclepath (SE 580 482 – SE 576 480): score 1/8 using Guideline Gr4 if only species with an abundance of at least 'occasional' are considered (4/8 based on all indicator species).

Designation

A64 interchange/London Bridge island is notified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an example of fen meadow and base rich grassland under Criteria GR4. This type of grassland is in a York context.

The adjacent verges, although of interest, are now excluded from the SINC designation.

NB. Parts of this site are extremely hazardous due to road traffic and must not be visited without permission of the Highways Agency.

SINC Citation 2009

Site Code 02

ACOMB WOOD MEADOW

SE 570 494

Last Surveyed 10th June 2008

Principal NVC community: **MG9** *Holcus lanatus* – *Deschampsia cespitosa* grassland.

Approx. 0.9 ha.

Acomb Wood Meadow is an example of agriculturally unimproved neutral grassland. Like many similar meadows in the City of York, it bears the ridge and furrow imprint of pre-enclosure cultivation.

This small remnant of clayey ridge-and-furrow grassland contains abundant meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) with creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), meadow fescue (*Festuca pratensis*) and tufted hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) occurring more patchily. Associated herbs include meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), greater birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus pedunculatus*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*). Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) occurs locally. The grassland is difficult to categorise using the National Vegetation Classification and shows features of both MG9 *Holcus lanatus* – *Deschampsia cespitosa* grassland and an impoverished version of MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra* grassland.

This small meadow has also been known to support good populations of grassland butterflies such as Common Blue, Small Skipper and Small Copper although no recent surveys have been carried out.

There are tall, well-timbered hedges to the north and west with a recently-planted hedge adjoining the Acomb Wood Drive shopping centre.

The site was formerly part of larger meadow, now partly built upon.

Assessment:

Acomb Wood Meadow scores 9/8 using guideline Gr4 if all indicator species are counted. However, 2 of these (*Carex ovalis* and *Rhinanthus minor*) are of rare occurrence within the site boundary; the latter species may also be an introduction since it has never been recorded during previous surveys (1989-2006). The plant community is a poor fit for NVC MG5 so application of guideline Gr1 is probably inappropriate. This site is therefore of borderline SINC quality based on botanical criteria.

It has though enhanced social value as part of a Local Nature Reserve with open public access. The grassland may also be of significant value for invertebrates. It is therefore proposed for retention.

Designation

Acomb Wood Meadow is notified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an example of old, herb-rich meadow. Although borderline under Criteria GR4, this type of grassland is an increasingly threatened habitat due to intensive farming practices and urban development and is important in a social context.

Archibishop's Palace Grounds

(Bishopthorpe)
Grid ref: SE 597 480
Approx. 4.0 ha.

The grounds of the Archbishop's Palace are notable for their fine gardens and exotic specimen trees, but also contain valuable wildlife habitats. Woodland areas support birds including Nuthatch. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and Hawfinch, all of which are uncommon and local in the Vale of York. Pipistrelle, Noctule and Daubenton's bats occur, with the wooded grounds and adjacent river and Ings providing rich feeding habitats. A number of plants characteristic of long-established woodland occur such as dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosa*). Old lawns contain an interesting flora including heath bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) and common spotted orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*).

The Archbishop's Palace grounds are designated as a district Wildlife Site as an example of parkland habitat, and for their importance to bats and woodland birds.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 04

BACHELOR HILL

SE 568 507

Surveyed 10th June 2008.

Principal NVC communities: vegetation on open sand shows no clear correspondence to NVC acidic grassland ('U') or sand dune ('SD') communities; MG1 *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland (OV23 *Lolium perenne* – *Dactylis glomerata* community).

Approx 0.9 ha.

Bachelor Hill is a prominent morainic sandy knoll overlooking Acomb. Most of the site is close-mown amenity grassland, although a small area of recently un-mown grassland in the NW corner supports a species poor Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), meadow-grasses (*Poa* spp.) sward. There is though also a small copse and an interesting and possibly unique (for York) area of open sand, a remnant of the previously much more extensive dry sandy habitat that once characterised the Acomb area.

The hilltop copse with a field layer of perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), wall barley (*Hordeum murinum*), annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*). Very small amounts of sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) and small-flowered cranesbill (*Geranium pusillum*) indicate the underlying sandy character of the soil on this morainic knoll.

Below and to the east of the knoll top is an area of eroded sandy slope. The margins of this, largely un-mown in recent years, support tall grassland. In places this is a rank, eutrophic sward characterised by cocksfoot, perennial rye-grass, false oat (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), sterile brom (*Anisantha sterilis*) and stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*). However, more open areas are characterised by red fescue and yellow oat-grass (*Trisetum flavescens*) with common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), common restharrow (*Ononis repens*) and field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) plus occasional white campion (*Silene latifolia*) and common mallow (*Malva sylvestris*). There is one clump of great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*).

The patchy areas of open sand, support a predominantly annual vegetation that includes common restharrow, haresfoot clover (*Trifolium arvense*), dovesfoot cranesbill (*Geranium molle*), small-flowered cranesbill, common storksbill (*Erodium cicutarium*), whitlow grass (*Erophilla verna*), thyme-leaved sandwort (*Arenaria serpyllifolia*), bladder campion (*Silene vulgaris*) and silver hair-grass (*Aira caryophylla*).

A survey in 2004 also recorded a number of other annual sps such as *Trifolium striatum*. The site is not in favourable management but is unlikely to have deteriorated botanically and as such, such sps should also be considered.

In 2004 an invertebrate survey of Bachelor Hill produced some surprising and remarkable records for sandy and heathy habitats. This included *Sciapus maritimus* at perhaps its first confirmed location in England. In addition to *Sciapus maritimus*, a number of other Diptera characteristic of coastal dunes were recorded including *Trixoscellis marginella*, the other *Trixoscellis* spp, the shore-flies *Philygria* spp, and the long-headed fly *Medetera micacea*. As such Bachelor Hill is extremely important within the region for its invertebrate interest.

Maintenance of the ecological interest of the site depends upon the avoidance of reseeded or use of fertilisers and herbicides.

SINC assessment:

The unmanaged area of eroded and exposed sand scored 4/8 under guideline Gr3 (lowland acidic grassland) and 2/8 under guideline Gr 4 (neutral grassland). However, it scored 7/8 under guideline Gr3 in 2004, possibly reflecting better detection of ephemerals owing to the earlier survey date. As such it does not qualify in botanical terms,.

However, Bachelor Hill does qualify for SINC status following guideline I1 due to the 2004 record of the long-headed fly *Sciapus maritimus* Becker (the second GB record of this rare sand dune species). Its designation on the basis of invertebrate interest re-emphasises the need for further entomological surveys.

Only the exposed sand area and an appropriate buffer strip are designated.

Designation

Bachelor Hill is designated as a district Wildlife Site primarily for its invertebrate interest under Guideline I1. However, this is due to the presence of characteristic open, sandy habitats and its annual plant communities. Such communities have become increasingly scarce as a result of extensive habitat loss through intensification of farming and forestry and urban development.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 05

BISHOPTHORPE INGS

SE 599 469

Last Surveyed 28 July 2008

Principal NVC communities: MG4: *Alopecurus pratensis* – *Sanguisorba officinalis* grassland; MG9 *Holcus lanatus* – *Deschampsia cespitosa* grassland; S28 *Phalaris arundinacea* tall-herb fen; S5 *Glyceria maxima* swamp.

Area 15.5 ha

Bishopthorpe Ings comprises a series of fields on or adjoining the flood plain of the River Ouse. Previously, the area had been heavily grazed and this had suppressed elements of the vegetation, however, in recent years (>5yrs), grazing has ceased and the land was recently sold.

The land is now primarily derelict MG4 flood meadow grassland grading to wet grassland and swamp characterised by Reed Canary Grass, stands of Slender Tufted Sedge (*Carex acuta*) and Reed Sweet Grass (*Glyceria maxima*). Within this are characteristic flood meadow sps including great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) with ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) and bistort (*Persicaria bistorta*) and marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*). Occurring locally in wetter areas. Low-growing carpets of inundation grassland contain species such as creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*), lady's smock (*Cardamine pratensis*), marsh foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*) and water forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*).

A ditch in the inward edge of the flood plain provides habitat for wetland plants including yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), branched bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*), meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) and creeping jenny. In places, dense stands of Himalayan Balsam dominate the vegetation and are suppressing what was previously species rich flood meadow grassland, most notably this occurs in Field 1.

Also occurring are plants such as Bluebell (*Endymion non-scripta*), wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and pignut (*Conopodium majus*). A strip of dry grassland alongside the river bank moorings is of special interest, with notable plants including sand leek (*Allium scorodraprasum*), field garlic (*Allium oleraceum*), crow garlic (*Allium vineale*), having been recorded. Salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*), quaking grass (*Briza media*) and, very locally, cowslip (*Primula veris*) at least still occur although this area appears to have reduced in diversity in recent years. The scarce yellow star-of-Bethlehem (*Gagea lutea*), an early spring flowering bulb, grows in several places on the river bank. This area and others dominated by Himalayan Balsam merit a late spring survey.

The well-timbered boundary of hedges of Bishopthorpe Ings are species-rich containing purging buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*), guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and red currant (*Ribes rubrum*). Internal hedges though are more species poor dominated by hawthorn and ash.

In addition to the very diverse plant communities found on Bishopthorpe Ings, the site supports birds including several pairs of Meadow Pipit and a few pairs of Reed Bunting and Sedge Warbler. Grasshopper warbler was recorded in 2009. Redshank and Snipe have bred in the past, but the site may now be unsuitable. Kingfishers are regularly seen on the river here.

The bankside also supports small populations of Tansy Beetle.

The site is presently unmanaged and there is some evidence of degradation occurring because of this. It is important to the survival of this site that some management is reinstated.

SINC assessment

The site as a whole produced 11/8 indicator species according to guideline Gr4 (neutral grassland), 9/8 of which were of at least occasional status. Individual fields are at best borderline with a maximum score of 6/8 for fields 2 and 3. Field 4 is predominantly swamp and Field 7 is very weedy, albeit containing a few patches of MG4 indicators. Fields 6 and 8 appear to support species-poor marshy grassland/tall-herb vegetation dominated by meadowsweet. Whilst these compartments would not qualify in their own right, they can be regarded as significant components of the mosaic of semi-natural neutral grassland and wetland habitats on Bishopthorpe Ings.

Recent surveys have mainly been in late summer. A survey earlier in the year may well re-establish the presence of other species.

Designation

Bishopthorpe Ings is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation under Guideline GR4 (Sps Rich neutral grassland) and GR1 (MG4 grassland) as an important example of a wet grassland habitat mosaic.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 08

BRECKS LANE MEADOW

SE 634 612

Surveyed 10th July 2008.

Principal NVC communities: **MG5** *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra* grassland; **MG1** *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland.

Approx. 2 ha.

This agriculturally-unimproved ridge and furrow grassland is situated on a north-facing slope overlooking the floodplain of the River Foss on the northern outskirts of Strensall. The flora is exceptionally rich with great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), betony (*Stachys officinalis*), pignut (*Conopodium majus*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and devilsbit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*) abundant over large areas. Variations in landform and drainage result in stands of damper grassland with meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), tussock grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) and, locally, brown sedge (*Carex dischita*). Leaching of minerals from the porous sandy loam has created further diversity, with species characteristic of more acidic conditions including tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and bitter vetch (*Lathyrus linifolius*). Other notable plants including quaking grass (*Briza media*) and common spotted orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*). A belt of more level ground adjoining Terrington Close is fairly species-poor false-oat (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) grassland with abundant Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*)

The site supports large populations of grassland butterflies and moths.

The adjacent Foss Flood plain(Site 69), although not of SINC quality, is of interest and forms part of the overall wildlife interest of the area.

Management at present consists of taking a late haycrop and this appears to be maintaining the diversity of the site although no hay was taken in 2007 and 2008 because of flooding.

Sinc Assessment

The site scores 14/8 under Guideline Gr4 based on species with an abundance of at least 'occasional' (one additional indicator species was recorded less frequently). It also qualifies under Gr1 as part of the site is representative of NVC MG5c.

Designation

This site is designated for its species-rich grassland and associated habitats under Guidelines GR4 and GR1 (presence of MG5 grassland).

SINC Citation 2009
Site 6/7

Brinkworth Rush (Elvington Airfield)

(Elvington)

Last Surveyed - 2007

Air Museum -Grid ref: SE 679 481 (Site 6)

Brinkworth Rush -Grid ref: SE 676 478 (Site 7)

Approx 7.1ha.

The site is in 2 parts separated by a small landfill site, the Air Museum site and Brinkworth Rush itself. Brinkworth Rush covers approx 2.5ha, the Air Museum site 4.6ha.

The Air Museum (Site 6) comprises a mosaic of neutral sps rich grassland and willow scrub with fen meadow and seasonal pools. A large pond occurs in the SW quarter which holds an extensive population of Great Crested Newts.

Besides the usual range of sps such as Knapweed, Birds foot Trefoil, Meadow vetch etc., the site also has Adders Tongue Fern, Marsh Speedwell and the scarce Narrow leaved Water Dropwort, Oenanthe silaifolia,. Buckthorn Plantain has also been recorded and an unidentified Helleborine sps. A number of rare water beetles including *Agabus labiatus* and *A.uliginosus* are also present using the seasonal pools.

The southern end of Site 6 is much less diverse but is included as being an integral part of the overall management unit.

Brinkworth Rush(Site 7) is a fringe of neutral, flushed grassland adjacent to Elvington Airfield similar in character to the Air Museum site. In part it has been planted and scrub encroachment is occurring although parts are still haycropped. Sps of interest include Yellow rattle and Yellow Bartsia.

Uncontrolled scrub encroachment is detrimental to the future of the site and some scrub control would be beneficial. The present grazing and haycropping should be retained.

SINC Assessment

The species list records 21sps each indicative of neutral and acid grasslands and 16 indicative of calcareous grassland plus others indicative of wetland sites. Under Criteria GR4, a minimum of 8 and 12 sps respectively from each list is required, or for intimate mosaics, as found here, a minimum of 20 from all lists is required under Criteria Gr5. In addition the presence of a large population of Great Crested Newt would qualify under Criteria A2 and the invertebrate species under Criteria I2.

SINC Designation

The site is designated for its neutral grassland and fen meadow mosaic under Criteria GR3,4, 5, its Great Crested Newt population under Criteria A2 and the invertebrate species under Criteria I2.

Carr Bank Meadow

(Stockton on the Forest)

Grid ref: SE 660 561

Approx 1.5 ha.

Carr Banks Meadow is situated close to the historic village of Stockton-on-the-Forest and represents an early enclosure. The fields bear the distinctive ridge-and-furrow imprint of pre-enclosure cultivation and contain semi-natural grassland which has not been subject to intensive agricultural treatments.

This meadow is of outstanding nature conservation interest with a very diverse flora characteristic of unimproved grassland. Frequent species include a common knapweed (*Centuarea nigra*), betony (*Stachys officinalis*), pignut (*Conopodium majus*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and lesser stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*). Devilsbit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), common restharrow (*Ononis repens*), great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), quaking grass (*Briza media*) and downy oat-grass (*Helictotrichon pubescens*) all occur more locally. The presence of some species indicative of acidic and nutrient-poor conditions is ecologically interesting and results from the leaching of undisturbed soil profiles.

A wide variety of invertebrates are present, with large populations of grassland butterflies and moths. These include the Chimney Sweep, whose larvae feed on pignut. The Carr Banks Lane hedgerow is species-rich and evidently of considerable antiquity, with a notable abundance of field maple (*Acer campestre*). An old farm pond at the northern end of the meadow supports a colony of Great Crested Newts.

Carr Banks Meadow is designated as an example of species-rich old meadow with valuable pond and hedgerow habitats. Maintenance of the nature conservation interest of this site is dependent upon the avoidance of ploughing, reseeding, and herbicide or fertiliser treatment (*including liming*). Positive management by seasonal grazing has been reinstated following a long period of neglect.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 10

Church Ings (outside SSS1) (Acaster Malbis)

Surveyed 15 July 2004

Grid ref: SE 597 457

NVC Communities

M27: *Filipendula ulmaria* – *Angelica sylvestris* mire (predominant)

Approx. 1.7 ha.

This field is an area of unmanaged tall herb fen adjacent to the River Ouse between Bishopthorpe and Acaster Malbis. The vegetation is dominated by meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), interspersed with reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*). Lesser pond sedge (*Carex acutiformis*), bistort (*Persicaria bistorta*) and meadow cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*) occur locally whilst Marsh Woundwort occurs widely in late summer. There are also large stands of meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*), an uncommon and declining species of fens and wet meadows adjacent to the internal ditch.

This small, abandoned field supports ruderal vegetation near the river bank, with species such as hedge bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and couch (*Elytrigia repens*). Tansy is abundant here though and there is a large Tansy Beetle population.

Birds include breeding Sedge Warbler and Reed Bunting. Harvest Mice have been known to nest in clumps of tall grasses: despite its name, this mammal now occurs primarily in tall floodplain vegetation rather than farmland.

SINC Assessment

This site scores only 4 out of 8 under criterion Gr4 (neutral grassland) and only 3 out of a minimum of 10 under criterion Fe3 (rich fens). The predominant plant community is NVC M27 (*Filipendula ulmaria* mire) but as the site is less than 2 ha. in extent, it would not qualify under criterion Fe2 (the area dominated by M27 is, at most, 1.5 ha.). The large Tansy Beetle population, however, would qualify the site under Criteria I1, the presence of a Red data book sps.

Although in habitat terms the site does not appear to meet any of the North Yorkshire SINC selection criteria, in York terms this is an important site .

SINC Designation

This site is designated primarily under Criteria I1 for the presence of Tansy Beetle but it is also as an example of tall herb fen, a restricted habitat in York. It adjoins Church Ings SSSI. The site boundary follows the river bank path but excludes the moorings.

SINC Citation 2009
Site 12

CLIFTON BACKIES

SE 598 543

Last Surveyed 25th June 2008

Principal NVC communities: **MG9** *Holcus lanatus* – *Deschampsia cespitosa* grassland;
MG1e *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland, *Centaurea nigra*.

Approx. 14.75 ha.

Clifton Backies contains a relatively large area of old, agriculturally-unimproved grassland, together with thickets and hedgerows. Once part of the mediaeval open fields of Clifton township, this area was enclosed in the 1590s: much of the grassland still bears the distinctive ridge-and-furrow imprint of oxen ploughing. More recently, the site formed part of the wartime Clifton aerodrome.

The centre of the site is bisected by wartime concrete tracks and contains the remains of ammunition stores and ancillary buildings. This area has been colonised by scrub woodland over the past fifty years, with mixtures of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), oak (*Quercus robur*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), apple (*Malus domestica*) and wild roses. The track verges support an interesting flora with notable species including fragrant agrimony (*Agrimonia procera*), spiked sedge (*Carex spicata*), biting stonecrop (*Sedum acre*), hybrid cinquefoil (*Potentilla x mixtra*) and Smith's cress (*Lepidium heterophyllum*).

To the south and east of the central scrub a series of fields have probably been managed as hay meadows in the past and do not appear to have been significantly 'improved' by reseeded or fertiliser treatment. Great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*) and pignut (*Conopodium majus*) are abundant in much of the grassland with betony (*Stachys officinalis*) and pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*) occurring locally.

To the north of the thickets, the grassland is very characteristic of unimproved pasture with frequent knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), crested dogstail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*). Adders Tongue Fern has been recorded in the past.

Scrubby areas provide valuable habitat for breeding and wintering birds, including several species of warbler and Reed Bunting. Short-eared Owls have occasionally been seen in winter hunting over the grassland and Long eared Owl recorded as a possible winter roost.

The re-introduction of hay cropping over much of the grassland has certainly improved the condition of the grassland and monitoring of the species component will be monitored. It is hoped to expand the extent of this haycropping in the future. A programme of scrub clearance has also begun in order to prevent the further encroachment of Blackthorn scrub.

SINC Assessment

The quality of the grassland component of this site is variable. However, the LNR as a whole scores 10/8 using guideline Gr4 (neutral grassland) for species recorded as at least 'occasional' with a further ten indicator species recorded more rarely. In 2004, the site scored at least 15/8 using guideline Gr4 but species-abundance was not considered. Guideline Gr1 could also be applied as NVC MG5 grassland is present but the extent and quality of this community has diminished during the past 15 years and some areas are now more similar to NVC MG1 or MG9.

The small wet field to the north is the only field which does not qualify in its own right under guideline Gr4, scoring only 5/8 even when indicator species of scarce occurrence in the field are counted. However, this field is retained within the SINC as it forms an integral part of the overall management unit .

The whole LNR (including the scrub component) merits SINC status using the Mixed Habitats guideline Mh2. The site is an important example of a grassland/scrub mosaic in the context of the Vale of York, similar examples (e.g. Elvington airfield, Anchor Plain) being scarce and very localised. It also has a habitat diversity score of 9/6 (unimproved neutral grassland + grassland/scrub mosaic + mixed scrub + monodominant scrub).

However, the balancing pond is characterised by vegetation of introduced origin and should be excluded from the SINC boundary.

SINC Designation

Clifton Backies is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation for its species-rich old meadows and pastures under guidelines GR1 and GR4 and for its scrub mosaic habitat under Criteria Mh2.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 13

Clifton Bridge

SE 598 543

Last Surveyed Aug/Sept 2008

Principal NVC communities: Bridge

Clifton Bridge houses important nursery colonies of Noctule, Daubenton's and Pipistrelle Bats which occupy cavities between the pillars and the underside of the bridge. The River Ouse, wooded riverbanks and the nearby lngs provide critical feeding habitats for the bats. The retention of such habitats needs to be considered in conjunction with this site.

SINC Assessment

Records of bats roosting at Clifton Bridge go back many years. The presence of a maternity roost of Daubenton's bats was confirmed during previous bridge works in 1994 when the roost was disturbed. In recent years North Yorkshire Bat Group have been aware of roosts of Common Pipistrelle, Daubenton's and Noctule bats in the bridge. The number of Noctule bats increased following the destruction of a tree roost during a storm several years ago.

SINC Designation

This site is designated for its mammal interest under Criteria M1b and M1c.

SINC Citation 2009
Site 14

CLIFTON INGS (RAWCLIFFE & YORK)

SE 582 531

Last Surveyed 25th June 2008

Principal NVC communities: MG4 *Alopecurus pratensis* – *Sanguisorba officinalis* grassland; MG8 *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Caltha palustris* grassland

Approx. 44.5 ha.

Clifton Ings is an ancient, unenclosed flood meadow, now also a flood storage reservoir, situated beside the River Ouse a short distance upstream of York city centre. These Ings were already meadow land at the time of the Domesday Book and are of significant historical as well as ecological interest. Originally managed communally as haymeadow followed by aftermath grazing, with strips of land divided among a number of 'commoners'. Over the years some have been amalgamated under several occupiers and management now consists of hay-making in late June or early July. Aftermath grazing has not occurred for several years.

Part of the meadow was sprayed with herbicide in 1994, damaging its ecological interest, however, some recovery of the grassland has taken place. Despite this, the site is one of the best examples of flood meadow grassland in the region. Although it has not been designated an SSSI, it is of SSSI quality.

The flood meadow supports a distinctive flora characterised by an abundance of great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*). Around 20 species of grass are represented in the sward, with red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), meadow barley (*Hordeum secalinum*) and native perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) amongst the most frequent. Bistort (*Periscaria bistorta*) and wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) are locally frequent with occasional pepper sasifrage (*Silaum silaus*) and meadow cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*). Lady's smock (*Cardamine pratensis*), Ragged Robin and marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*) are typical of wetter parts of the meadow along with extensive stands of Slender Tufted Sedge (*Carex acuta*) and Brown Sedge (*C. disticha*)

A broad drain running through the centre of the Ings is important for its wetland flora, which includes such species as wood club-rush (*Scirpus sylvaticus*), flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), bladder sedge (*Carex vesicaria*), tubular water dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*), ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) and large bittercress (*Cardamine amara*). The drain banks support meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*), bistort, sneezewort (*Achillea ptarmica*), creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*) and pepper saxifrage.

Until recently, Clifton Ings supported breeding birds typical of lowland wet grassland such as Snipe and Yellow wagtail. These species no longer breed, probably because of increased disturbance, though there are several pairs of Reed Bunting, Skylark and Meadow Pipit.

The river bank is well wooded, providing habitat for breeding warblers. Giant bellflower (*Campanula latifolia*) occurs under the trees at Clifton Scope. The river corridor and Ings provide valuable feeding habitat for bats using nursery roosts at Clifton Bridge. A number of rare insects have been recorded from Clifton Ings in the past, but there has been little

recent study. The nationally-scarce Tansy Leaf Beetle (*Chrysolina graminis*) is locally abundant on the river bank and also occurs on the banks of the central drain.

Continuing management as a haycrop is maintaining the interest of the site, although some limited herbicide treatment has again taken place(2008). There is evidence that the increased frequency of summer flooding due to its status as a flood storage reservoir is altering the flora to extend the area of wet grassland and sedge fen. Ways of mitigating for this need to be considered.

SINC Assessment

Clifton Ings qualifies for SINC status under several guidelines

Gr1: MG4 present (ca. 16 hectares).

Gr4: scores at least 14/8 including only those species recorded as at least 'occasional'. (At least two other indicator species were recorded as 'rare').

Sw1: the central drain scores 12/10.

Fe3: the central drain scores 9/10.

SINC Designation

Clifton Ings is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an example of species-rich flood meadow grassland under Criteria Gr1, Gr4, and Sw1.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 15

Copmanthorpe Wood

(Copmanthorpe)

Grid ref: SE 561 450

Approx. 6 ha.

Copmanthorpe Wood is an ancient woodland site which has been extensively replanted with sycamore but contains fine stands of native oak (*Quercus robur*) and some hazel (*Corylus avellana*) coppice. Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) are abundant in spring. Species characteristic of oak woodland on rather acidic soils include creeping soft grass (*Holcus mollis*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and broad buckler fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*). Wood melick (*Melica uniflora*), a scarce plant in the Vale of York, occurs locally at the edge of the wood.

A hedgerow extending southward of Copmanthorpe Wood contains a very diverse mixture of trees and shrubs including hazel, holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), field maple (*Acer campestre*) and much dogwood (*Cornus sanguineus*). This hedge is thought to be a relic of the original woodland cover.

SINC Assessment

Although this site does not have an extensive suite of woodland sps. (4/8), very few woodlands in the Vale of York achieve this because of the paucity of ancient woodland sites that have been retained and managed over the centuries, even more so in the City of York.

It does though have an extensive bluebell cover indicating a long continuity of woodland cover. As such, it fulfils criteria Wd5 of the SINC guidelines.

SINC Designation

Copmanthorpe Wood is designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation as an example of broadleaved bluebell woodland under Criteria Wd5 with plant communities indicative of ancient woodland.

SINC Citation 2009
Site 16

Fulford Golf Course (roughs and woodland)
(Fulford)

Last surveyed – 12 August 2009

Grid refs: SE 623 495/SE 632 482

Approx. 9 ha designated

Fulford Golf Course is situated on former heathland at Heslington Common and is a fine example of a traditional English Course whose design fits in well with the heathland character and incorporates many natural features within it.

It is divided into two sections, the long narrow section (29ha) within the ring road and the larger (46ha) block beyond it, between the ring road and Heslington Tilmire SSSI.

To the north west of the ring road, there are extensive areas of rough (approx 18ha) forming a spine through the centre of the course. This comprises areas of scrub and woodland, both natural and planted, with a number of mature and veteran trees. Much of the rough grassland is dominated by Yorkshire fog but within it are areas of acidic and neutral grassland with small areas of remnant heath. Great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), pignut (*Conopodium majus*), harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and heath bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) are occasional, with common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), zig zag clover (*Trifolium*) (betony (*Stachys officinalis*) and devilsbit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*) occurring very locally. Heathy areas are very localised with heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cross leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Common Sedge (*Carex nigra*) and Green Ribbed Sedge (*Carex binervis*). There would appear to be some loss of interest through this area, with the apparent loss of some species and habitats, notably areas of sphagnum recorded in earlier surveys in the 1980's and early 1990's.

To the south of the ring road, there are some 36 ha of rough centred on the old Heslington Common. The fairways tend to follow a circuit around the edge with a large central area of woodland and rough. More neutral elements of grassland are largely absent with the vegetation being characteristically much more acidic. Areas of heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) are more frequent, along with extensive areas of wavy hair-grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*) (U3) or purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*) (M25). Woodland is mainly sps poor Oak woodland (W10) but there are sizeable areas of downy birch – purple moor grass woodland. This acidic woodland community is uncommon and as such notable.

The more frequent acidic elements include mat grass (*Nardus stricta*), Heath bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) heath rush (*Juncus squarrosus*) etc. with sps such as (*Danthonia decumbens*), Heath Violet (*Viola canina*) and (*Luzula multiflora*) occurring more locally. Of particular interest are the wet flushes that occur throughout the grasslands. These are particularly rich with sps such as Marsh Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*), Bog Pimpernel (). An area of particular interest is the central grassland practice area. This is frequently mown grassland but is very diverse.

It is likely that the invertebrate interest is also very high, with a mosaic of features likely to be of interest including heathland, *Molinia* stands, veteran trees and seasonal pools. 1 notable sps has been recorded, *Agabus uliginosus*, a sps of heathy seasonal pools.

A good variety of birdlife has been recorded at Fulford Golf Course including Tree Pipit, Bullfinch, Redpoll, partridges and occasionally Green Woodpecker. The site is also known for its varied fungus flora.

SINC Assessment

This is a complex site where it is difficult to identify exact areas of quality. As such the whole Course is proposed for designation but with the fairways and greens being excluded. The site would merit a detailed survey to accurately plot the various vegetation types.

Maintenance of the ecological interest of Fulford Golf Course depends upon the retention of existing areas of interest through un-intensive management of generous areas of rough, the avoidance of herbicide, fertiliser and fungicide treatments in the rough and woodland, clearance and management of birch woodland. Specialised areas such as the practice area south of the ring road in particular require careful management.

SINC Designation

Designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation for its semi-natural neutral and acidic grassland (Gr 3/4), heathland and woodland habitats. (PK2)

SINC Citation 2009

Site No. 17

GERMANY LANE MEADOW

SE 615 488

Surveyed 25th July 2008

Principal NVC communities: M27 *Filipendula ulmaria* – *Angelica sylvestris* mire; OV26 *Epilobium hirsutum* community; OV24 *Urtica dioica* – *Galium aparine* community; MG1 *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland.

Approx 1.4 ha.

This small old hay meadow is situated on low-lying ground adjacent to Germany Beck and is subject to occasional flooding.

The majority of this field comprises tall-herb vegetation characteristic of ungrazed floodplain sites. Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) are extensively dominant with varying amounts of stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and couch (*Elytrigia repens*). In the wetter areas there are also limited areas of inundation vegetation with amphibious bistort (*Persicaria amphibia*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), rough meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*) and creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), with slender tufted sedge (*Carex acuta*) occurring very locally. These wetter areas formerly held a lush sps rich grassland but have become much degraded.

In marginally drier areas, meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), meadow fescue (*Festuca pratensis*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) and lesser stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*) occur.

There are small patches of dry neutral grassland along the north side of the field characterised by red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), ribwort (*Plantago lanceolata*), meadow buttercup, common mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*) and lesser stitchwort. Common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) occur very locally. There are rather larger patches of rank, species-poor false oat (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) sward. The drier elements, as for the rest of the site, were formally more diverse and extensive.

An area at the eastern end was converted to arable in the early 1990's although it has been allowed to revert to a rank grassland. Himalayan Balsam is locally abundant.

An ancient hedgerow adjoining Germany Beck is markedly sps rich and contains a variety of trees and shrubs including holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), field maple (*Acer campestre*) and guilder rose (*Viburnum opulus*).

The meadow supports good numbers of grassland butterflies and moths, with species such as Small Copper, Small Skipper and chimney Sweep. Reed Bunting have also been recorded.

SINC Assessment

Using guideline Gr4 (neutral grassland), the site scores 7/8 if only species recorded as at least 'occasional' are considered. Two additional species (*Lotus corniculatus*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*) were recorded more rarely. This site is now of borderline quality, and has much deteriorated since the mid 1990s. This is likely to be a combination of factors including cessation of grazing and increased summer flooding.

The hedgerow adjoining Germany Beck scores 11/10 using guideline Wd7a.

SINC Designation

Germany Lane meadow was designated as an example of species-rich old meadow habitat. It presently is borderline as to its quality but will be retained because, although degraded, this type of grassland, which has not been subject to intensive agricultural management, is an increasingly scarce and threatened resource both locally and nationally. It will therefore be retained as a SINC under criteria Gr4. The area does have potential for restoration of the nature conservation interest but this will depend upon the reinstatement of traditional management, consisting of a late hay cut with no application of fertiliser.

SINC Citation 2009
Site 18

GOLLIE PONDS

Fulford

SE 603 480

Last Surveyed 22nd July 2008.

Principal NVC communities: W6b *Alnus glutinosa* – *Urtica dioica* woodland, *Salix fragilis* subcommunity?; W21 *Crataegus monogyna* – *Hedera helix* scrub; S5 *Glyceria maxima* swamp; M27b *Filipendula ulmaria* – *Angelica sylvestris* mire, *Urtica dioica* – *Vicia cracca* subcommunity.

Approx. 3.75 ha.

The Gollie Ponds are a complex of small pools situated on the Ouse floodplain immediately south of the York Outer Ring Road. Named because of their proximity to the old Naburn golf course, these were originally created in the late 18th or early 19th Century. The ponds were formerly surrounded by pasture, but following conversion to arable and grazing ceased, scrub grew up around them. This wet woodland (carr) is characterised by crack willow (*Salix fragilis*), grey sallow (*S. cinerea*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with some oak (*Quercus robur*), white willow (*Salix alba*), osier (*S. viminalis*) and other species such as guelder rose. There are small amounts of alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) but this is largely moribund, presumably as a result of alder root disease.

More recently the area of land between the ponds has been allowed to revert back to grassland (due to increased summer flooding). This grassland has a number of flood meadow sps regenerating within it including Great Burnett and Meadowsweet.

In the shaded pond margins are small amounts of false fox sedge (*Carex otrubae*), the uncommon wood club-rush (*Scirpus sylvaticus*), greater yellow-cress (*Rorippa amphibia*), creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*) and bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*). One small area in light shade is dominated by reed sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*) with small amounts of branched bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*). Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) forms extensive beds around the fringes of the scrub.

The ponds themselves are shady and support little submerged vegetation,

On the north side of the main pond complex is an area of dense tall-herb fen dominated by meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and, to a lesser extent, greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*). Stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and marsh woundwort (*Stachys palustris*) are more locally abundant. Associated species include meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), couch (*Elytrigia repens*) and reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). Tufted vetch (*Vicia cracca*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), meadow cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*) and common marsh bedstraw (*Galium palustre*) are occasional.

Of interest within the scrub adjacent to the central pond, 2 spikes of a Helleborine were discovered in 2008. Identification is uncertain but it would appear to be either a northern form of narrow-lipped helleborine (*E. leptochila*) or the 'Tyne helleborine' form of broad-leaved helleborine (*E. helleborine* var. *youngiana*).

The ponds have been known since the early 1970s as a site for the Red Data Book diving beetle *Agabus undulatus*. This was confirmed as still present. Although *A. undulatus* was formerly known from Askham Bog and a number of clay pits on the south-western outskirts of York as well as the adjacent Naburn lngs SSSI, these populations are now believed to be extinct. Whilst it is still known from a number of sites in East Anglia and the Fens around the Wash, this distinctive beetle has disappeared from outlying stations in

southern and western England. The Gollie Ponds population is probably now the only one in northern England.

A further sps of interest recently established is Tansy Beetle. This has appeared in the regenerating grassland where clumps of Tansy have also established.

In the past the pools have attracted small flocks of Teal etc in winter, whilst Water Rail and Grasshopper Warbler were occasionally reported. Because of the dense shade and reduced emergent vegetation, these are now unlikely.

SINC assessment:

The site does not qualify for SINC status using botanical criteria. It scores 2/10 using guideline Wd3d (wet woodland), 5/10 using Sw1 (standing water) and 3/10 using Fe4 (rich fens). It does not qualify using guideline Fe3 as the area of NVC M27 *Filipendula* mire is less than 2 hectares.

This site though is primarily of importance for the diving beetle *Agabus undulatus*. This is not a UKBAP Priority Species but arguably should be given strong evidence of range contraction. The Gollie Ponds therefore qualify for SINC status under guidelines I1² and I2 (this is currently its only known location in northern England).

The regenerating grassland whilst scoring 6/8 under Gr4, these are currently only of local distribution, however, the presence of Tansy Beetle within this grassland would qualify it under Guideline I1. Because of its regenerating interest which is likely to increase, its location between the ponds and the presence of Tansy Beetle within it, it is proposed to extend the existing boundary to include it.

SINC Designation

The Gollie Ponds are designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation primarily for its invertebrate interest under Guideline I1 and I2. It may also qualify under Guideline VP3 for the presence of a County rare sps, however, the identification of the Helleborine will need to be confirmed.

Although not sufficient in its own right, it is also an example of fen carr habitat. This habitat is scarce in lowland Yorkshire as a result of land drainage, river engineering and agricultural intensification.

The Gollie Ponds would benefit from some management to maintain open water and reduce the density of surrounding scrub. This site is adjacent to Naburn Marsh (Water Fulford Ings) SSSI.

² *Agabus undulatus* is listed as Red Data Book 3 (Rare) by Hyman & Parsons (1992) and as Near Threatened by Foster (2000)

Hagg Wood

(Dunnington)

Grid ref: SE 685 525

Approx 32 ha.

Hagg Wood is an ancient woodland site which has been almost entirely replanted with coniferous or broadleaved timber crops.

The northern part of the wood is coniferised and has an impoverished understorey dominated by bracken, brambles and Rhododendron. The centre of the wood contains interesting remnants of ancient woodland flora, mainly around the rides and drains. Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) and wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) are locally common with other notable species including early dog violet (*Viola reichenbachiana*), wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), wood speedwell (*Veronica Montana*) and twayblade (*Listera ovata*).

The south-western part of Hagg Wood is predominantly planted with sycamore but has scattered birch, oak and rowan. Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) dominates the herb flora, with abundant wood anemone. Associated species include sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*), common dog violet (*Viola riviniana*), wood sedge (*Carex sylvatica*) and wild strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*).

Ride verges support a luxuriant herb flora with frequent meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*), wild angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), gipsywort (*Lycopus europaeus*), greater birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus pedunculatus*) and corn mint (*Mentha arvensis*). Fragrant agrimony (*Agrimonia procera*) is particularly noteworthy. The rides provide valuable habitat for insects, with sheltered sunny conditions and abundant nectar plants.

Hagg Wood supports typical woodland birds such as warblers, tits, finches and Sparrowhawk.

The central and southern parts of Hagg Wood are designated as a district Wildlife Site for their ancient woodland flora and species-rich ride habitat. The northern part of the wood is excluded.

SINC Citation 2009
Site 19

HASSACARR POND

(Dunnington)

SE 673 519

Surveyed 17th June 2008.

Principal NVC communities: **S14** *Sparganium erectum* swamp; **S22** other water-margin vegetation; **A2b** *Lemna minor* community, *Lemna trisulca* subcommunity.

Approx.0.5 ha.

This old pond is situated close to the village of Dunnington. It was re-excavated ca. 1990 and, with an adjacent ex-arable plot planted with trees to form Hassacarr Nature Reserve, is managed by Dunnington Conservation Group.

With its name derived from the Old English phrase for a tussocky marsh, Hassacarr Pond has probably had a very long continuity of wetland conditions, which may explain its unusually rich flora and insect fauna.

The shallow margins of the pond are generally characterised by open cover of branched bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*) with small amounts of greater reed-mace (*Typha latifolia*) and yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*). There are small amounts of aquatic plants including amphibious bistort (*Persicaria amphibia*), broad-leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*), pond water crowfoot (*Ranunculus peltatus*) and common water crowfoot (*R. aquatilis*) with more abundant ivy-leaved duckweed (*Lemna trisulca*). Within the emergent fringe other species include common water plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), water forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), water-cress (*Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum*), water mint (*Mentha aquatica*) and frequent tubular water dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*).

Adjoining this swamp zone are dense, tussocky stands of soft rush (*Juncus effusus*) with woody nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*) and occasional other species. Around the eastern side of the pond, an intermittently flooded strip inland of the *Juncus* zone supports short fen vegetation comprising mixtures of marsh foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*), creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), common spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), jointed rush (*Juncus articulatus*), hairy sedge (*Carex hirta*), carnation sedge (*C. panicea*), the terrestrial form of amphibious bistort, marsh pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*) and silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*). Marsh speedwell (*Veronica scutellata*) is fairly frequent but only a few plants of marsh stitchwort (*Stellaria palustris*) could be found.

On drier ground to the east of the pond is a belt of rank tall-herb vegetation characterised by greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*).

Eleven species of dragonfly have been recorded at Hassacarr Pond, which also supports amphibian populations including Great Crested Newt.

SINC Assessment:

Hassacarr Pond scores 15/10 using guideline **Sw1**. It scores 8/10 using Fe3. Despite its small size, Hassacarr Pond represents one of the most important non-SSSI wetlands in the City of York.

SINC Designation

Hassacarr Pond is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation under Guideline Sw1.

SINC Designation 2009
Site 20

HOB MOOR

(Acomb)

SE 583 504

Last Surveyed 26th June 2008

Principal NVC communities: MG6 *Lolium perenne* - *Cynosurus cristatus* grassland (MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra* grassland; MG7 *Lolium perenne* grassland; U4 *Festuca ovina* – *Agrostis capillaris* – *Galium saxatile* grassland).

Approx. 39 ha.

Along with the Knavesmire, Hob Moor is one of York's two ancient commons and is still managed as summer pasture. Although part of Hob Moor was ploughed during the wartime Dig for Victory campaign, the site was subsequently reverted to grassland.

The Moor can be divided into 4 main areas, the main part of the Old Moor itself, Hob Moor Triangle to the north east, North Lane field to the south and Swimming Baths area to the south west. This south-western part of Hob Moor, adjoining Thanet Road, is a relatively recent addition to the Common and supports a rather disturbed semi-improved pasture with limited species diversity but abundant stands of thistle and nettle. This area was originally a series of clay pits filled in the 20th Century.

The old Moor itself predominantly supports perennial rye-grass – crested dogstail grassland in which typical species such as crested dogstail, perennial rye-grass, Yorkshire fog, red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and both bulbous and meadow buttercups are supplemented by widespread red clover, common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) and meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*). Local or occasional species include lesser stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*), pignut (*Conopodium majus*), Great Burnett (*Sanguisorba major*) and sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*). There are extensive stands of creeping thistle.

Perhaps 10% of the old Moor is close to crested dogstail – common knapweed grassland (NVC MG5), though this is often rather suppressed by grazing pressure. This community tends to be marked by the presence of common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) and catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata*). One stand of MG5 around grid reference SE 585 503 at the eastern end of the Moor also includes common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), velvet bent (*A. canina*), compact rush (*Juncus conglomeratus*), oval sedge (*Carex ovalis*) and tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), a combination of species suggesting rather moist, base-poor soil conditions.

The patchy structure of the grassland with mown sports pitches interspersed by tussocky pasture and scattered brushes provides ideal habitat for Meadow Pipit and Skylark, several pairs of which breed each year. Small numbers of Whinchat, Wheatear and Yellow Wagtail pass through during migration periods, and Merlin is occasionally recorded in most winters.

North Lane Field has strong ridge-and-furrow and supports grassland typical of old permanent pasture (NVC MG6) with meadow buttercup, creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), common sorrel, white clover, red clover, ribwort, crested dogstail and red fescue. Hob Moor Triangle is separated from the rest of the Moor by the Holgate Beck. To the east of this is an area of acidic grassland. This is presently very short and rabbit-cropped. The sward appears to consist of mixtures of common bent, red fescue, sheep's fescue (*Festuca ovina*) and field woodrush (*Luzula campestris*) with localised patches of creeping soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*) and a small amount of heath grass (*Danthonia decumbens*). Tormentil and heath bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) are locally frequent but possibly less abundant than previously. On the periphery of this area, great burnet (*Sanguisorba*

officinalis), common sedge (*Carex nigra*) and hairy sedge (*C. hirta*) occur locally. Betony (*Stachys officinalis*) and devilsbit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*) have also been recorded. The area of acidic grassland is fringed by rank grassland and tall-herb vegetation, partly associated with areas where dredgings from the beck are spread.

A variety of habitats occur around the periphery of Hob Moor. A small copse on Hob Moor sidings has pioneer woodland composed of silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). There are also section of species-rich hedgerow containing English elm (*Ulmus procera*) geulder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and hazel (*Corylus avellana*). The scrub provides valuable habitat for birds such as Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting, Bullfinch and Lesser Whitethroat.

To the north west is Hob Moor School. The playing field ceased being mown in 2005, following re-development of the school. Part of this area was on ridge and furrow and a sps rich flora became evident with Birds Foot Trefoil, Heath Bedstraw, Great Burnett, Betony and Sweet Vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) amongst others.

SINC assessment:

In 2008 at the date of the last survey, the whole site (except the 'Triangle') was heavily over-grazed throughout the summer so some indicator species will certainly have been un-recorded or under-recorded.

The area adjoining Thanet Road scores only 1/8 using guideline Gr4 (neutral grassland). This site is not known to have a high diversity and it is proposed to remove this from the designated site.

North Lane field also scored 1/8 but was very overgrazed at time of survey and is proposed to be retained as part of the historic moor.

The central area of Hob Moor contains small but relatively well-defined areas of NVC MG5, amounting to ca. 10% of the grassland. Criteria Gr1 therefore applies. This area scored 7/8 if only species recorded as at least 'occasional' are considered, although five additional species were recorded more rarely. In 2009, following undergrazing, a number of other sps were recorded and the diversity of others noted to be more extensive.

Hob Moor Triangle scores 6/8 using guideline Gr3 (acidic grassland). Again it is an example of a slightly more acidic element and as such is to be retained within the overall designated site.

SINC Designation

Hob moor is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an example of old permanent pasture habitat with areas of MG5 grassland, semi-natural acidic grassland and scrub. This is under Criteria Gr1, Gr3 and Gr4. Maintenance of the ecological interest of this site depends upon landscape continuity, the continuation of traditional grazing management and the avoidance of fertiliser and herbicide treatment (other than spot-spraying of invasive weeds). Part of Hob Moor Triangle was bulldozed by the Marston Moor Internal Drainage Board in 1991, and encroachment of rosebay willowherb threatens remaining areas of acidic grassland.

SINC Citation 2009

Site Code 22

Kexby Bridge

(Kexby)

Grid ref: SE 706 511

Last Surveyed -

The old Kexby Bridge houses a major breeding colony of Daubenton's Bats, with a population on excess of 120 adults. These bats feed extensively over the River Derwent whilst nearby woods may provide hibernation and pre-nursery roost sites.

Vervain (*Verbena officinalis*) grows on the masonry of the bridge, this being its only known location in the City of York.

SINC Designation

The site is designated for its mammal interest under Criteria M1c..

SINC Citation 2009
Site Code 23

Knavesmire Stables Meadow

(Dringhouses)

Grid Ref: SE 590 490

Surveyed 15th July 2008

Principal NVC communities: MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra* grassland;

Approx. 1.0 ha.

This small ridge and furrow hay meadow is attached to the York Racecourse stables at the Knavesmire and supports a flora characteristic of species-rich neutral grassland. Great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), Pignut (*Conopodium majus*), betony (*Stachys officinalis*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) and bulbous buttercup (*Rumex bulbosus*) are abundant, with a variety of fine-leaved grasses. Associated insects include butterflies such as the Common Blue and abundant burnet moths.

It formally had a unique management system whereby the hay was used as litter to cover access points for race meetings. Now haycropping is much less frequent. Adjacent to the access track the land was used for storage when some drainage works were carried out on the Racecourse in 2008. This area (approx 1/3 of the area) was reseeded and some work may be required to reinstate the floristic diversity in this area.

SINC Assessment

Knavesmire Stables Meadow is still occasionally mown for hay and, although not typical of the community, this grassland has clear affinities with MG5. This meadow has not been grazed in recent years but seasonal grazing would probably be beneficial in maintaining its floristic quality. Retention of haycropping is essential.

SINC Designation

Knavesmire Stables Meadow is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an example of species-rich old meadow habitat. It scores 10/8 under criteria Gr4 for sps that are at least occasional with 2 more sps at lower levels. This type of grassland is a threatened habitat nationwide due to intensive farming practices and urban development. The ecological interest of this site is dependent upon the cutting. In common with similar sites in the City of York, this meadow bears the ridge-and-furrow imprint of pre-enclosure cultivation.

Knavesmire Wood

(Dringhouses)

Grid ref: SE 592 488

Approx. 6 ha.

Knavesmire Wood originated as an 18th Century parkland planting, centred on an avenue of lime trees. Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) is now the predominant canopy tree, with a stand of oak (*Quercus robur*) in the north-east corner of the wood. There are fine specimens of hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and a small number of mature wych elms (*Ulmus glabra*): this species is now rarely seen as a fully-grown tree due to Dutch elm disease. In the western half of the wood, coppice regrowth from the stools of felled elms creates a distinct understorey.

Knavesmire Wood supports a rich herb flora, including several species normally associated with old-established woodland such as wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), goldilocks buttercup (*Ranunculus auricomus*), wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) and sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*). This site is also important for woodland birds with typical species including Greter Spotted Woodpecker, Tawny Owl, Chiffchaff, Garden Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker breeds in some years, and the elusive and uncommon Hawfinch may do so on occasion. This last species is more often seen as a winter visitor, attracted especially to hornbeam seed.

The invertebrate fauna of Knavesmire Wood is rather poorly recorded. Although not confirmed recently, this is a traditional site for White-letter Hairstreak, a very localised butterfly in Yorkshire which is associated with elm.

Knavesmire Wood is designated as a district Wildlife Site as an example of mixed broadleaved woodland with a rich herb flora. The site is also designated for its woodland bird communities and the presence of veteran lime trees.

Mattie Brown's Covert

(Wheldrake)

Grid ref: SE 690 437

Approx 3.5 ha.

Situated close to the Lower Derwent Valley, Mattie Brown's Covert is a small mixed woodland which holds the only heronry in the City of York area. This site is designated for its ornithological interest.

Millfield Wood (drain adjacent to main ride)

(Kexby)

Grid ref: SE 698 517

Millfield and Scoreby Woods are plantations of conifers and beech with scattered oak and birch trees. The ground cover in these woods is largely dominated by bracken, brambles or Rhododendron. Whilst the woodland as a whole is not of high nature conservation interest, old oaks along the main ride may provide pre-breeding roost sites for the colony of Daubenton's bats using Kexby Bridge.

Of specific importance, however, is a sandy drain adjacent to the main ride on the northern edge of Millfield Wood. This supports a flora characteristic of acidic, heathy woodland including several species which are scarce in the York area. These include lemon-scented fern (*Oreopteris limbosperma*), hard fern (*Blechnum spicant*), hairy woodrush (*Luzula pilosa*), green-ribbed sedge (*Carex binervis*) and slender St John's wort (*Hypericum pulchrum*). Other species of interest include wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), heath woodrush (*Luzula multiflora*) and corn mint (*Mentha arvensis*).

The drain is designated for its acidophilous plant community, which is rare away from heathland sites. Retention of old oak trees in Millfield and Scoreby Woods should be encouraged, and use of limestone surfacing along the central ride should be avoided to maintain acidic conditions in the adjacent drain.

Moreby Far Wood

(Deighton)

Grid ref: SE 615 427

Approx. 1.0 ha.

Only a small part of Moreby Far Wood lies within Deighton parish and thus within the City of York. Although much of Moreby Wood has been replanted, this portion is ancient semi-natural woodland with a canopy of oak, sycamore and birch and a hazel understorey. Despite its small size, this is perhaps the richest ancient woodland habitat in the City.

Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) is abundant in late spring, with associated herbs including ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*), wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) and wood speedwell (*Veronica Montana*). Other species characteristic of ancient woodland include early purple orchid (*Orchis mascula*), woodmelick (*Melica uniflora*) and hairy woodrush (*Luzula pilosa*). Broad-leaved helleborine (*Epipactis helleborine*) occurs locally.

The frontage of the wood adjoins the York-Selby cycle path and has an interesting woodland-edge flora including field rose (*Rosa arvensis*), English elm (*Ulmus procera*), apple (*Malus domestica*), aspen (*Populus tremula*), wood false-brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*) and bush grass (*Calamagrostis epigejos*).

Birds include Garden Warbler, Blackcap, Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff.

This part of Moreby Wood is designated as a district Wildlife Site as an example of ancient semi-natural woodland.

New Earswick Meadow

(New Earswick)

Grid ref. SE 608 549

Approx.08 ha.

This small, triangular remnant of old hay meadow bears the ridge-and-furrow imprint of pre-enclosure cultivation. Great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), pignut (*Conopodium majus*) and betony (*Stachys officinalis*) are locally abundant, with marsh thistle (*Cirsium palustre*) and meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) in damper areas. An adjacent stretch of disused railway line adds to the diversity of habitat with scrub and tall herb vegetation.

The ecological interest of New Earswick Meadow appears to be deteriorating, with the loss of species such as pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*) in recent years. This is likely to reflect an increase in abundance of coarse, competitive grasses such as false-oat (*Arrhenatherum elatius*).

New Earswick Meadow is designated as a district Wildlife Site as an example of species-rich old meadow habitat.

Ouse River bank, Clementhorpe

(Clementhorpe)

Grid ref: SE 604 504

Approx. 650 metres

This is particularly interesting example of natural river bank habitat, situated close to York city centre. Once part of Clementhorpe Ings, the upper bank still supports several plants characteristic of flood meadow grasslands such as greatburnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), bistort (*Persicaria bistorta*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and meadow cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*). This site is equally notable for an abundance of the nationally-uncommon field garlic (*Allium oleraceum*), a speciality of the York area. Many thousands of plants of this species are present, along with smaller colonies of sand leek (*Allium scorodoprasum*).

The lower river bank also supports an interesting flora including yellow loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*), hemp agrimony (*Eupatoria cannabinum*) and marsh woundwort (*Stachys palustris*). The nationally-scarce Tansy Leaf Beetle (*Chrysolina graminis*) occurs in tall herbage on the bank top. Kingfishers are regularly seen on this section of the river and breed nearby.

Clementhorpe river bank is designated for its relict flood meadow vegetation and its bulb flora. Maintenance of its nature conservation interest depends upon the retention of natural river bank vegetation and the avoidance of soil disturbance or tree planting.

Oxcarr Lane

(Strensall)

Grid ref: SE 636 601

Approx 0.8 ha.

This is a strip of land adjacent to Oxcarr Lane which effectively forms the edge of Strensall Common. A small area of acidic wet grassland supports species such as purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*), tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), green-ribbed sedge (*Carex binervis*), oval sedge (*Carex ovalis*) and slender St John's wort (*Hypericum pulchrum*). Adjacent to this is semi-natural oak-birch woodland, grading into dense bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

This site is designated for its acidic wet grassland and semi-natural woodland habitats. It is virtually contiguous with Strensall Common SSSI.

Poppleton Road Water Tower

(Acomb)

Grid ref: SE 583 519

Approx 0.9 ha.

The Victorian reservoir basin is situated on the glacial ridge overlooking Poppleton Road known as the Severus Hills. Drained during the inter-war years, a remarkable flora has colonised the interior of the dry basin, with many species characteristic of calcareous (limestone) grassland.

Upright brome (*Bromopsis erecta*) is the predominant grass with associated herbs including field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and clustered bellflower (*Campanula glomerata*). Weathered mortar in the reservoir walls is colonised by a succession of plant life from mosses to perennial herbs and grasses: interesting species include mouse-ear hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*), rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), harebell (*campanula rotundifolia*), white stonecrop (*Sedum album*) and biting stonecrop (*Sedum acre*). The warm, sheltered conditions provide ideal habitat for a variety of common grassland butterflies and moths.

The outer banks of the reservoir are also of some floristic interest, supporting species such as great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), pignut (*Conopodium majus*) and, very locally, cowslip (*Primula veris*).

Poppleton Road Water Tower is designated as a district Wildlife Site because of its calcicolous (lime-moving) plant communities: upright brome grassland is a rare community away from natural limestone areas, and is particularly notable in an artificial urban habitat.

Woodland at Rawcliffe Landing

(Rawcliffe)

Grid ref: SE 572 549

0.6 ha.

This is a small strip of riparian woodland on a steep slope beside the River Ouse north of York. The woodland is semi-natural and does not appear to have been extensively replanted. The canopy was probably, until recently, dominated by wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*) and there is still ample regeneration of this species despite the effects of Dutch elm disease. Other trees include alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), field maple (*Acer campestre*) and willows. The field layer vegetation is interesting, with a rich bulb flora featuring ransoms (*Allium ursinum*), few-flowered leek (*Allium paradoxum*), crow garlic (*Allium vineale*) and sand leek (*Allium scorodoprasum*): colonisation of these species is assisted by flooding. Giant bellflower (*Campanula latifolia*) is also notable.

Semi-natural riparian woodland is a scarce habitat in the York area: this site is designated as a district Wildlife Site as one of the few examples. No management is required or recommended to maintain the nature conservation interest of this site.

Rawcliffe Meadows

(Rawcliffe)_

Grid ref: 583 537

Approx. 11.8 ha.

This site is situated on the flood plain of the River Ouse on the northern outskirts of York, adjacent to Clifton Ings. The most important habitat is species-rich grassland which has been returned to traditional hay meadow management after a period of neglect and over-grazing. The grassland is of greatest interest towards the southern end of the site, where great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*) is abundant. Associated species include meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*) and lady's smock (*Cardamine pratensis*). A flood reservoir at the northern end of Rawcliffe Meadows contains damp grassland with abundant tussock grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), together with fen meadow, rush-pasture and inundation vegetation.

Other important habitats include mature, well-timbered hedgerows, scrub, ditch banks and a pond. The hedgerow extending north along the Ings Dyke is very species-rich, containing purging buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and red currant (*Ribes rubrum*) amongst more common trees and shrubs. Plants associated with ditch banks include tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*) and field garlic (*Allium oleraceum*). A number of aquatic plants have been introduced to the pond, but wild colonists include notable species such as lesser pondweed (*Potamogeton pusillus*), horned pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*) and rigid hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*).

Although Rawcliffe Meadows is visited by large numbers of people throughout the year, the site regularly attracts around 20 species of breeding birds including Tree Sparrow, Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler and Reed Bunting. Cuckoo, Skylark and Yellow wagtail have also been recorded breeding on occasion in recent years. The reservoir basin attracts numbers of Snipe in winter and tall hedges in an adjacent derelict field are an important winter roost site for finches and buntings.

Around 20 species of mammal have been recorded from Rawcliffe Meadows. These include small populations of Harvest Mouse and the increasingly scarce Water Vole.

The site is also of importance for its invertebrate fauna. The nationally rare snail-killing (*Sciomyzid*) fly *Dichetphora finlandica* occurs at the pond along with several scarce species of small, predatory fly belonging to the family Hybotidae. A total of some ten nationally-scarce insects includes the conspicuous Tansy Leaf Beetle (*Chrysolina graminis*), a speciality of the Ouse Ings.

Rawcliffe Meadows is designated as a district Wildlife Site for its species-rich flood meadow grassland, its mammals and its invertebrate fauna.

River Foss Corridor

(New Earswick/Huntington)

Grid ref: SE 617 561 to SE 609 546

Approx 2.6 km.

This section of the River Foss runs through a mixture of urban and rural, environments. In recent decades the ecology of the lower Foss has been affected by river engineering schemes and deteriorating water quality.

Although the river's once exceptionally-rich aquatic flora is now much impoverished, several notable species still occur on this section. These include flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) and arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*). River water crowfoot (*Ranunculus fluitans*) and bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) also occur, but only very locally. More common species typical of sluggish lowland rivers include yellow lily (*Nuphar lutea*), spiked water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), unbranched bur-reed (*Sparganium emersum*) and fennel pondweed (*Potamogeton pectinatus*). The nationally-uncommon green figwort (*Scrophularia umbrosa*) grows in several places on the river bank, often in association with its more common relative, water figwort (*Scrophularia auriculata*).

Despite poor water quality and occasional fish kills due to de-oxygenation, the lower Foss continues to support reasonable populations of several species of coarse fish. Kingfishers are present throughout the year and small numbers of Little Grebes can be found in winter. A small population of Daubenton's Bat occurs in the vicinity of Huntington Church Bridge. Aquatic invertebrates have probably declined in diversity, but some of the more pollution-tolerant dragonflies such as the brown Hawker and Common Darter are readily observed in summer.

Important riverside habitats include willows, hedges and scrub on the left bank. Lock Island at New Earswick is a small private nature reserve with an abundance of mature trees. This site has not been surveyed in detail but appears to support an interesting fungus flora associated with dead and decaying timber. A small area of tall herb vegetation adjacent to the Foss Beck at grid ref SE 612 554 supports an interesting flora including brown sedge (*Carex disticha*) and ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) and provides habitat for birds such as Sedge Warbler.

Rabbit Warren Wood

(Dunnington)

Grid ref: SE 678 501

Approx. 25 ha.

This wood was developed on former heathland which was once part of Dunnington Common. Drier areas support acidic oak-birch woodland with typical associated species including broad buckler fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and climbing corydalis (*Ceratocarpus claviculata*). Rhododendron forms an invasive understorey in places. Wetter areas support downy birch-purple moor grass woodland with stands of grey willow (*Salix cinerea*). Remnants of wet heath flora associated with this habitat include common cotton-grass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*), common sedge (*Carex nigra*) and cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*).

This wood is an important bird site with over sixty species recorded in recent years. These include Redpoll, Willow Tit, Marsh Tit, Woodcock and several warblers. Mammals include Hare, Roe Deer and Fallow Deer. The site has an interesting insect fauna including the Angle-striped Sallow, a nationally-scarce moth whose larvae feed on birch. Other notable lepidoptera include the uncommon Scarce Silver-lines moth and the Purple Hairstreak butterfly.

Rabbit Warren Wood is designated as a district Wildlife Site as an example of semi-natural woodland on acidic soils, and because of its ornithological interest. Maintenance of its ecological interest is dependent upon the continuation of natural tree cover and the absence of conifer planting. Control of invasive Rhododendron and restoration of open areas (especially with remnant heath vegetation) would be beneficial.

The designated site includes old hedgerows extending along Common Lane towards Elvington.

Rawcliffe Ings Dykes

(Rawcliffe)

Grid ref: SE 574 546

Approx 470 metres

Rawcliffe Ings is agriculturally-improved pasture land on the Clifton flood plain north of York. The main ecological interest here lies in drainage channels which support an interesting wetland flora including several uncommon and declining species. Flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) is plentiful in shallow water and fine-leaved water dropwort (*Oenanthe aquatica*), a scarce plant in the Vale of York, occurs very locally. Sedge species include bladder sedge (*Carex vesicaria*), slender tufted sedge (*Carex acuta*) and brown sedge (*Carex disticha*). Ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*), meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) and pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*) grow on the drain banks.

This site is designated for its wetland flora and is also likely to be of interest for its invertebrate fauna. Herbicide spraying and fertiliser applications on surrounding grassland are detrimental to the nature conservation interest of the dykes.

Woodland at Rawcliffe Landing

(Rawcliffe)

Grid ref: SE 572 549

0.6 ha.

This is a small strip of riparian woodland on a steep slope beside the River Ouse north of York. The woodland is semi-natural and does not appear to have been extensively replanted. The canopy was probably, until recently, dominated by wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*) and there is still ample regeneration of this species despite the effects of Dutch elm disease. Other trees include alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), field maple (*Acer campestre*) and willows. The field layer vegetation is interesting, with a rich bulb flora featuring ransoms (*Allium ursinum*), few-flowered leek (*Allium paradoxum*), crow garlic (*Allium vineale*) and sand leek (*Allium scordoprasum*): colonisation of these species is assisted by flooding. Giant bellflower (*Campanula latifolia*) is also notable.

Semi-natural riparian woodland is a scarce habitat in the York area: this site is designated as a district Wildlife Site as one of the few examples. No management is required or recommended to maintain the nature conservation interest of this site.

Rawcliffe Meadows

(Rawcliffe)

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Approx. 11.8 ha.

This site is situated on the flood plain of the River Ouse on the northern outskirts of York, adjacent to Clifton Ings. The most important habitat is species-rich grassland which has been returned to traditional hay meadow management after a period of neglect and over-grazing. The grassland is of greatest interest towards the southern end of the site, where great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*) is abundant. Associated species include meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), pepper saxifrage (*Silvaum silaus*) and lady's smock (*Cardamine pratensis*). A flood reservoir at the northern end of Rawcliffe Meadows contains damp grassland with abundant tussock grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), together with fen meadow, rush-pasture and inundation vegetation.

Other important habitats include mature, well-timbered hedgerows, scrub, ditch banks and a pond. The hedgerow extending north along the Ings Dyke is very species-rich, containing purging buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and red currant (*Ribes rubrum*) amongst more common trees and shrubs. Plants associated with ditch banks include tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*) and field garlic (*Allium oleraceum*). A number of aquatic plants have been introduced to the pond, but wild colonists include notable species such as lesser pondweed (*Potamogeton pusillus*), horned pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*) and rigid hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*).

Although Rawcliffe Meadows is visited by large numbers of people throughout the year, the site regularly attracts around 20 species of breeding birds including Tree Sparrow, Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler and Reed Bunting. Cuckoo, Skylark and Yellow Wagtail have also been recorded breeding on occasion in recent years. The reservoir basin attracts numbers of Snipe in winter and tall hedges in an adjacent derelict field are an important winter roost site for finches and buntings.

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The site is also of importance for its invertebrate fauna. The nationally-rare snail-killing (*Sciomyzid*) fly *Dichetophora finlandica* occurs at the pond along with several scarce species of small, predatory fly belonging to the family Hybotidae. A total of some ten nationally-scarce insects includes the conspicuous Tansy Leaf Beetle (*Chrysolina graminis*), a speciality of the Ouse Ings.

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Approx 2.6 km.

This section of the River Foss runs through a mixture of urban and rural environments. In recent decades the ecology of the lower Foss has been affected by river engineering schemes and deteriorating water quality.

Although the river's once exceptionally-rich aquatic flow is now much impoverished, several notable species still occur on this section. These include flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*). Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) and arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*). River water crowfoot (*Ranunculus fluitans*) and bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) also occur, but only very locally. More common species typical of sluggish lowland rivers include yellow lily (*Nuphar lutea*), spiked water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), unbranched bur-reed (*Sparganium emersum*) and fennel pondweed (*Potamogeton pectinatus*). The nationally-uncommon green figwort (*Scrophularia umbrosa*) grows in several places on the river bank, often in association with its more common relative, water figwort (*Scrophularia auriculata*).

Despite poor water quality and occasional fish kills due to de-oxygenation, the lower Foss continues to support reasonable populations of several species of coarse fish. Kingfishers are present throughout the year and small numbers of Little Grebes can be found in winter. A small population of Daubenton's Bat occurs in the vicinity of Huntington Church bridge. Aquatic invertebrates have probably declined in diversity, but some of the more pollution-tolerant dragonflies such as the Brown Hawker and Common Darter are readily observed in summer.

Important riverside habitats include willows, hedges and scrub on the left bank. Lock Island at New Earswick is a small private nature reserve with an abundance of mature trees. This site has not been surveyed in detail but appears to support an interesting fungus flora associated with dead and decaying timber. A small area of tall herb vegetation adjacent to the Foss Beck at grid ref SE 612 554 supports an interesting flora including brown sedge (*Carex disticha*) and ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) and provides habitat for birds such as Sedge Warbler.

Stub Wood

(Acaster Malbis)

Grid ref. SE 588 433

Approx. 24 ha.

Stub Wood represents one of the more interesting ancient woodland habitats in the City of York, containing stands of semi-natural broadleaved woodland as well as replanted areas. The herb flora includes a number of species indicative of ancient woodland such as primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), early purple orchid (*Orchis mascula*) and goldilocks buttercup (*Ranunculus auricomus*). Abundant wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) provide striking displays of spring colour. Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*), aspen (*Populus tremula*) and alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) occur locally in the understorey, and Whin Covert contains hazel coppice.

Birds found at Stub Wood include Greater and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, warblers, tits and finches. Small pools, ditches and wartime access tracks add to the diversity of habitats within the wood.

Maintenance of the ecological interest of Stub Wood is dependent upon the continuity of broad leaved woodland with a high proportion of native trees. In recent years invasive Rhododendron has been grubbed out and traditional coppice management reinstated at Whin Covert. This site is designated as an example of broadleaved woodland with ancient woodland plant communities.

West Carr Masks

(Elvington)

Grid ref: SE 701 472

Approx 6.2 ha.

West Carr Masks comprises agriculturally-unimproved hay meadows situated within a meander of the River Derwent downstream of Elvington village.

The meadow flora is typical of the Lower Derwent Ings with abundant great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*). Pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cucculi*) and bistort (*Persicaria bistorta*) occur locally, with tubular water dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*) and creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*) in wetter areas.

West Carr Masks is designated as a district Wildlife Site for its species-rich flood meadow vegetation. Maintenance of its nature conservation interest depends upon the continuation of traditional management based upon hay-making and aftermath grazing, with no application of artificial fertilisers.

Westfield Marsh

(Acomb)

Grid ref: SE 565 507

Approx. 0.6 ha.

Westfield Marsh is a small wetland close to Westfield School in Acomb. Situated in a waterlogged depression with peaty soil, the marsh supports fen vegetation including ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), devilsbit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), brown sedge (*Carex disticha*) and abundant marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*). The presence of greater tussock sedge (*Carex paniculata*) is particularly noteworthy, as this conspicuous plant is very scarce in the Vale of York.

A small knoll of sandy ground adjacent to the marsh supports drier acidic grassland.

Westfield Marsh is designated as a district Wildlife Site as an example of fen habitat. This type of habitat is now rare in much of lowland Britain as a result of intensive agriculture and land drainage. Fly tipping and fires have caused some damage to this site and should be discouraged; rotational cutting of small areas (with the removal of mowings) would be beneficial in reducing the accumulation of dead plant material.

This site was proposed as a Local Nature Reserve in the 1994 City of York draft Local Plan.

Westfield School Playing Field

(Acomb)

Grid ref: SE 566 508

Approx 0.5 ha.

Areas of short, close-mown turf on part of Westfield School playing fields are of importance for several species of tiny annual plants characteristic of open, sandy habitats. These include storksbill (*Erodium cicutarium*), birdfoot (*Ornithopus perpusillus*), sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) and haresfoot clover (*Trifolium arvense*). Knotted clover (*Trifolium striatum*) is particularly notable as this species is rare in Yorkshire, it also occurs in similar habitat at nearby Bachelor Hill.

This site is designated for its annual plant communities associated with nutrient-poor sandy soil. Maintenance of the nature conservation interest depends upon the avoidance of herbicide and fertiliser treatment.

West Pits

(Strensall)

Grid ref: SE 626 603

Approx 0.5 ha.

This site is a remnant of damp ridge-and-furrow meadow adjacent to the River Foss at Strensall, the remainder of which has recently been taken for housing development. An abundance of fine-leaved grasses in the sward is indicative of a lack of agricultural improvement. Associated herbs characteristic of old meadow grassland include pignut (*Conopodium majus*), lady's smock (*Cardamine pratensis*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) and bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*) with occasional great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*) and ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*).

Birds recorded here in Spring 1996 included Yellow Wagtail, Meadow Pipit and Skylark but the habitat has subsequently been reduced in extent.

This site is designated for its old meadow grassland, now one of the most threatened habitats in the City of York.

Wheldrake Wood

(Wheldrake)

Grid ref: SE 660 470

Approx. 107 ha.

Wheldrake Wood is a large conifer plantation owned by Forest Enterprise. Prior to afforestation, parts of this site were heathland on the old Langwith Common.

Although the interior of the conifer plantations is often impoverished, rides and tree nurseries provide important wildlife habitats. Small areas of remnant heathland vegetation feature ling (*Calluna vulgaris*), cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*), purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and heath rush (*Juncus squarrosus*). Grassland along the main ride is notable for its diverse flora including yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), fairy flax (*Linum catharticum*), heath speedwell (*Veronica officinalis*), mouse-eared hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*), corn mint (*Mentha arvensis*) and common spotted orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*). This grassland is interspersed with areas of bare sand which are notable for annual plants such as least mouse-ear (*Cerastium semidecandrum*), thyme-leaved sandwort (*Arenaria serpyllifolia*), slender sandwort (*Arenaria leptoclados*), changing forget-me-not (*Myosotis discolor*), birdsfoot (*Ornithopus perpusillus*) and early hair-grass (*Aira praecox*). Other species associated with open sandy ground include sand spurrey (*Spergularia rubra*) and the uncommon knotted pearlwort (*Sagina nodosa*).

Heathy vegetation surrounding a tree nursery at the centre of the wood supports trailing St John's wort (*Hypericum humifusum*) the hawkweed *Hieracium umbellatum*, heath woodrush (*Luzula multiflora*) and heath groundsel (*Senecio sylvaticus*). Shaded drains provide habitat for ferns, including lemon-scented fern (*Oreopteris limbosperma*) and locally-abundant hard fern (*Blechnum spicant*). A small pond supports species characteristic of acidic pools with bog pondweed (*Potamogeton polygonifolius*), bulbous rush (*Juncus bulbosus*), bog pimpernel (*Anagallis tenella*) and common yellow sedge (*Carex viridula oedocarpa*).

A number of other notable plants occur very locally within Wheldrake Wood. These include bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), heath cudweed (*Gnaphalium sylvaticum*) and marsh violet (*Viola palustris*).

In addition to its outstanding botanical interest, Wheldrake Wood is an important bird site. Breeding species include Sparrowhawk, Red-legged Partridge, Grey Partridge and large numbers of common woodland birds. Tree Pipit, Long-eared Owl and Nightjar have been recorded in recent years. Hares also inhabit the forest rides and both fallow and Roe Deer occur.

The pond has breeding populations of Common frog, Common Toad and Smooth Newt. A small population of Common Lizard survives around the main ride. The invertebrate fauna of this site is poorly known but likely to be of considerable interest, with preliminary surveys indicating the presence of relict heathland communities.

Wheldrake Wood is designated as a district Wildlife Site for its outstanding botanical interest, its ornithological interest and the presence of remnant heathland habitats. The site has considerable potential for the restoration of open habitats within the forest.

World's End

(Strensall)

Grid ref: SE 665 596

Approx. 42 ha.

World's End is one of the most important non-statutory wildlife sites in the City of York, comprising dry sandy grassland, acidic and neutral wet grassland and fen meadow, ditches, ponds and small areas of heath and birch scrub.

The driest areas are subject to drought and parching in the summer months. These include horse paddocks close to Sandburn Farm and a low, rabbit-grazed ridge adjacent to World's End plantation. Annual herbs such as common storksbill (*Erodium cicutarium*), sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), small-flowered cranesbill (*Geranium pusillum*), dovesfoot cranesbill (*Geranium molle*) and wall speedwell (*Veronica arvensis*) are characteristic of this habitat. Other notable species include birdsfoot (*Ornithopus perpusillus*), sand spurrey (*Spergula rubra*) and changing forget-me-not (*Myosotis discolor*).

The low-lying areas of rough pasture support a range of fen meadow, grassland and mire communities: purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and mat grass (*Nardus stricta*) are abundant on the more acidic soils, with rushes (*Juncus spp.*) and tussock grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) on the more neutral soils. A very rich associated flora includes quaking grass (*Briza media*), several sedges, heath milkwort (*Polygala serpyllifolia*), heath lousewort (*Pedicularis sylvatica*), fen bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), bog pimpernel (*Anagallis tenella*), marsh valerian (*Valeriana dioica*), pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), trailing St John's wort (*Hypericum humifusum*) and great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*). Creeping willow (*Salix repens*) and petty whin (*Genista anglica*) occur very locally.

Several ponds support abundant pond water crowfoot (*Ranunculus pelatus*) with emergent vegetation featuring tubular water dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*), flote-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*) and branched bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*). Plants associated with the ditches include marsh speedwell (*Veronica scutellata*), tufted forget-me-not (*Myosotis laxa*) and greater marsh bedstraw (*Galium elongatum*). Bristle club-rush (*Isolepis setacea*) and water purslane (*Lythrum portula*) occur very locally on bare damp sand in wheel ruts; the latter species is rare in Yorkshire.

Adders and Common Lizards occur at World's End, with Great Crested Newts in some of the ponds. Breeding birds include Yellow Wagtail and sometimes Curlew. The invertebrates fauna of the site has not been studied but is likely to be of conservation importance given the diversity of habitats and the proximity to Strensall Common SSSI.

World's End is designated as a district Wildlife Site for its fen meadow, acidic grassland, heathland and pond habitats, and also for its importance to reptiles and amphibians.

York-Selby cycle path

(Naburn/Deighton)

Grid ref: SE 602 459-SE 616 424

Approx metres.

This popular cycle path runs along a disused railway line from London Bridge to Selby. The section designated as a district Wildlife Site is valuable for its scrub and grassland habitats.

Some vegetation has been sown on the track verges, but native species include abundant oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and, locally, zig zag clover (*Trifolium medium*). Short turf on nutrient-poor soil at the edge of the former railway track supports small herbs such as fairy (*linum catharticum*), yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), eyebright (*Euphrasia sp.*) and thyme-leaved sandwort (*Arenaria serpyllifolia*). Scrub-edge vegetation features wild strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), wood false-brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*), common dog violet (*Viola riiniana*), fleabane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*) and agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*). This habitat is particularly interesting where the cycle path adjoins ancient woodland at Naburn Wood and Moreby Wood.

Frequent stands of scrub at either side of the cycle path contain a diverse mixture of shrubs and small trees, including several wild rose species. This provides an important habitat for birds such as Whitethroat, Blackcap and Yellowhammer. An abundance of nectar sources and warm baskings spots on sheltered banks make this a rich habitat for insects, of which butterflies such as the Common Blue, Gatekeeper, Small Skipper and Large Skipper are amongst the most conspicuous.

This site is designated as an example of scrub and neutral grassland habitat.

Proposed New Sinc's

SINC Citation 2009
Site 203

British Sugar Railway Sidings

SE 576532

Surveyed 30 April and 10th May 2007.

Principal NVC communities: Exposed sandy bank/ scrub fringe.

Approx. Length 500m - 0.5 ha.

The old railway sidings includes a steep, sunlit sandy bank with scrub along the bank top and open sandy/gravelly ground around the foot of the bank. Within the bank were numerous burrows of Aculeate Hymenoptera (bees, wasps). Surveys indicate that a number of unusual/rare bees, hoverflies and flies are present and breeding on the site.

The retention of the sunny aspect of the bank with its associated scrub fringe is critical to the continuation of the invertebrate interest. The extent and value of the habitat around as foraging habitat is uncertain and requires further investigation, however, it is safe to conclude that the maintenance of such habitat will be required to sustain the populations, although the habitats in themselves, will not necessarily be of SINC quality. Consideration of a buffer zone/ foraging routes will therefore also need to be considered.

SINC Assessment

The disused railway sidings site at the York British Sugar factory is important for Aculeates, supporting two species which are rare in Yorkshire, one of which is also scarce nationally. Several localised species were also recorded. The presence of large numbers of Aculeate burrows in the sandy banking indicates that this is a well-established nesting habitat for various species, as does the presence of a high proportion of cleptoparasitic ('cuckoo') species.

The sidings merits designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) based on Guideline H2: ("*Any site supporting a breeding population of native species of aculeate Hymenoptera considered rare in Yorkshire*".)

This applies with respect to the solitary bee *Melecta albifrons* and the Six-banded Nomad Bee, *Nomada fulvicornis*, both of which are listed as 'Yorkshire Rare' by Archer (1998 & 2002). *M. albifrons* was present in association with a large population of its host, *Anthophora plumipes*, so was almost certainly breeding, its first known breeding location in Yorkshire. This was confirmed in 2009 when it was again recorded in a brief visit in June. *N. fulvicornis* was presumed to be breeding since two females were collected, although its host was not detected.

Surveys also show that a number of uncommon hoverflies are present (*Sphaerophoria rueppellii*, *Epistrophe nitidicollis* and the Nationally Scarce *Platycheirus sticticus*). These are species whose larvae are aphid predators either in open habitats or in woodland / scrub- edge environments. This suggests that retention of the wooded fringe along the embankment top is important. A suite of sand-flies and shore-flies characteristic of sand dune-like habitats has also been recorded, including some very localised species, two of which have only recently been recognised as occurring in Britain. Brownfield sites quite frequently support scarce insects associated with open, sandy ground but some sand-loving flies may well have colonised from remnants of such habitat on the western outskirts of York. For example, Bachelor Hill in Acomb is known to support a significant fauna of 'sand dune' flies including rarities.

SINC Designation

The sidings at the British Sugar site are designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation under Criteria HI.

SINC Citation 2009
Site 59

Elvington Airfield (Elvington)

Last Surveyed Sept 2008

Grid ref: SE 666 480

NVC Communities

Approx. 9.0 ha.

Elvington Airfield is an extensive area of open grassland established around the old Elvington Airfield site. Overall the site covers 160 ha but there are 50ha of hardstanding. The majority of the remaining land is primarily sps poor grassland, however, within it are areas of much greater diversity, notably areas at the eastern and western ends of the site totalling 9ha.

These grasslands are a mosaic of neutral to acid grassland, fen and scrub with seasonal pools.

Besides the usual range of sps such as Knapweed, Birds foot Trefoil, Meadow vetch etc the site also has Adders Tongue Fern, Marsh Speedwell, Twayblade, Fragrant Agrimony with heather, amongst others, indicating the more acidic influence on the site. The grasslands here are related on the one hand to the more neutral and fen grassland of the Brinkworth Rush/Elvington Air Museum and the acidic and wet grasslands of the nearby Heslington Tilmire SSSI and Fulford Golf Course Roughs.

The airfield as a whole is also excellent for birds with breeding sps including Skylark, Meadow Pippit, Reed Bunting, Sedge Warbler, Snipe, Curlew, Common Partridge, Barn Owl and possibly Cuckoo amongst others. Yellow Wagtail have also previously been recorded. In winter large flocks of Lapwing and Golden Plover can roost and feed along with overwintering Snipe, Short and Long eared Owl and flocks of finches and larks attracting other raptors such as Hobby and Merlin.

Although with limited survey, 2 nationally scarce species have been recorded and 5UK BAP sps. In addition the rare water beetle *Agabus uliginosus* has been recorded within the seasonal pools within the sps rich grasslands and is likely to be within the pools elsewhere on the airfield. It is likely that other uncommon invertebrates would be recorded with further survey of the airfield as a whole.

SINC Assessment

Because of the limited extent of survey on the site as a whole it is difficult to provide an assessment of the airfield in overall wildlife terms. In botanical terms the areas indicated on the Citation plan score 34/20 for overall sps using Criteria Gr5 for mixed grasslands, with each of the individual grassland blocks proposed also scoring 21/8 & 8/8 14/8, 12/8 under neutral acid and calcareous grassland criteria GR2, 3 and 4.

These areas also fulfil criteria I1 for nationally scarce sps. although the boundaries of this invertebrate interest are unknown.

Equally with regard to birds, the existing information is incomplete but it does score 10/11 under Guideline B5 with the additional interest of good populations of Barn Owl, Skylark and Meadow Pippit and additional overwintering interest. The bird criteria are presently to be reviewed to accommodate updated information.

SINC Designation

At present, only the sps rich grassland areas qualify under Criteria Gr3,4,5 and I1 and as such these areas are designated as examples of sps rich neutral and acidic grassland and scrub with invertebrate interest.

The Airfield as a whole is potentially of SINC quality under bird criteria and will be retained as such pending further information.

SINC Citation 2009
Site 86

Elvington Wood

SE 693465

Date Last Surveyed 10th June 2009.

Principal NVC communities: W10 Oak Woodland

6.9 ha

Only the eastern part of the wood is of any interest with the eastern fringe as an area of mature oak woodland with hazel under-storey and an extensive Bluebell carpet on the northern edge. The majority of the rest of the woodland then being immature Oak/Birch woodland but again with an extensive Bluebell carpet throughout. There are several wet hollows dominated by willows with sps such as Creeping Jenny. The western part of the wood outside of the designated area is replanted conifer and mixed woodland.

SINC Assessment

Although this site does not have an extensive suite of woodland sps. (? out of the minimum no of ?? required), very few woodlands in the Vale of York achieve this because of the paucity of ancient woodland sites that have been retained and managed over the centuries. This is even more so in the City of York.

It does though have an extensive bluebell cover indicating a long continuity of woodland cover. As such, it fulfils criteria Wd5 of the SINC guidelines.

SINC Designation

Elvington Wood (East) is designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation as an example of broadleaved bluebell woodland (Wd5) with plant communities indicative of ancient woodland.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 104

Fishponds Wood

SE 572517

Surveyed ?? 2009.

Principal NVC communities: M36 Lowland springs

Area - Approx 1.0 ha.

Fishponds Wood is an interesting area with natural springs occurring from a sandy substrate. The area has been planted with Poplar and the vegetation is not diverse. However, within York there are very few such spring locations, particularly within the Acomb area with its underlying sand and as such this is an important habitat. Elsewhere, such sites can be very important for invertebrates. The Acomb area is already noted for its relict breck type fauna and flora and this spring area may prove equally interesting. In 2008 a new Yorkshire species of solitary wasp *Stigmus pendulus* was recorded nesting in the upstanding dead wood tree trunks.

SINC assessment:

The lowland spring community is of significant interest in the York context where there are very few such communities, although in floristic terms the site appears to be relatively poor. As such it may not fulfil criteria Fe7. Invertebrate interest is not currently known although the Solitary Wasp *Stigmus pendulus* has been found. This wasp is a southern sps of dead wood in sunny locations, however, a relationship to the spring habitat cannot be ruled out as it is not known from any other location in Yorkshire. The presence of this sps fulfils Criteria H2 for the presence of a sps rare in Yorkshire. Because the ecology of the sps is not fully understood and because the habitat itself is of interest with potential for improvement, the whole site is to be designated.

The site is adjacent to Danesmead grassland, a relict area of sps rich sward and together these sites form an interesting mosaic.

The site merits careful management to ensure that the required dead wood habitat is maintained and enhanced whilst opening up the springs and wetland areas to enhance their interest.

Designation

Fishponds Wood is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation primarily for its invertebrate interest under Guideline H2 for the presence of a rare sps in Yorkshire. However, the spring communities present may also warrant designation under Guideline Fe7. Such communities have become increasingly scarce as a result of extensive habitat loss through intensification of farming and forestry and urban development.

SINC Citation 2009
Site Code 53

Flaxton Rd Meadows Strensall

(Strensall)

Grid Ref: SE 642609

Surveyed 15th July 2004

Principal NVC communities: MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra* grassland;

Approx. Area : 5.3 ha.

These two small ridge and furrow meadows are adjacent to the railway line at Strensall along the track from the level crossing on Lords Moor Lane. The ridge and furrow is prominent. They support a flora characteristic of species-rich neutral grassland. Great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*). Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Pignut (*Conopodium majus*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) are amongst the sps that are frequent, along with a variety of fine-leaved grasses. The grasslands are generally wet and there is evidence to suggest that some of the old drainage is broken. Overall the meadows score 13/8 sps. although the eastern meadow is more diverse than the western one. In addition to the grassland interest, the hedgerows are also sps rich with a number of mature/overmature trees. Of particular interest is the presence of Spurge Laurel in the eastern ditch.

The meadows are presently quite rank at the moment with too little haycropping and grazing occurring.

SINC Assessment

The Flaxton Meadows are good examples of sps rich wet grassland that has clear affinities with MG5. The overall diversity with at least 13 qualifying sps , many at least occasional within the sward easily qualify it under Guideline Gr4.

The management of the meadows is inconsistent at present with occasional haycropping and some limited grazing in recent years. Haycropping has been problematic because of weather and the naturally wet conditions but continuing it and with increased grazing would probably be beneficial in maintaining its floristic quality.

SINC Designation

The Flaxton Meadows are designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an example of species-rich old meadow habitat. It scores 13/8 under criteria. This type of grassland is a threatened habitat nationwide due to intensive farming practices and urban development. The ecological interest of this site is dependent upon maintaining a haycrop and grazing regime. In common with similar sites in the City of York, this meadow bears the ridge-and-furrow imprint of pre-enclosure cultivation.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 175

Elvington Camp Wood

SE 693481

Date Last Surveyed 10th June 2009.

Principal NVC communities: W10 Oak Woodland

0.6 ha

This is a narrow strip of woodland adjacent to playing fields in Elvington. On the other side of the woodland are the remains of a 2nd WW? Camp with huts still standing, though derelict and being surrounded by scrub.

The woodland is largely replanted mixed deciduous woodland. The woodland floor is dominated by bluebell though this is not continuous but is in extensive patches. There are also extensive patches of Common Violet and probably Early Violet with occasional Sanicle and Goldilocks.

The trees are mixed with Oak, Ash, Birch, Sycamore and some Larch. All about 50yrs old. The Woodland is on line of an old hedge bank shown on 1st Ed OS.

SINC Assessment

Although this site does not have an extensive suite of woodland sps. (5?/8), very few woodlands in the Vale of York achieve this because of the paucity of ancient woodland sites that have been retained and managed over the centuries. This is even more so in the City of York.

It does though have an extensive bluebell cover indicating a long continuity of woodland cover. This bluebell cover is not continuous but does cover more than the requisite % required. As such, it fulfils criteria Wd5 of the SINC guidelines.

SINC Designation

Elvington Camp Wood is designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation as an example of broadleaved bluebell woodland with plant communities indicative of ancient woodland.

SINC Citation 2009

Site 195

Fulford Ings Village Green

Fulford

Surveyed 15 July 2009

Grid ref: SE 608486

NVC Communities

Approx.Area : 0.1

This is a small area of riverbank and banktop owned by the Parish Council. The grassland is rank arrhenatherum/nettle but with extensive Tansy. There is a very good, long established population of Tansy Beetle here.

SINC Assessment

Although the grassland is largely unprepossessing, the long established and large Tansy Beetle population here merits its designation as one of the core Tansy beetle sites.

SINC Designation

This site is designated primarily under Criteria I1 for the presence of Tansy Beetle.

SINC Citation 2009

Site Code 201

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCHYARD

(HESSAY)

SE 523 536

Surveyed 1st June 2007 and 15th July 2008.

Principal NVC community: MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra* grassland (MG1 *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland).

Approx. 0.2 ha.

St John the Baptist is a small victorian church and churchyard on the Hessay road from the A59 and was established about 1900.

This churchyard contains unimproved neutral grassland with frequent to locally-abundant plants including common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), crested dogstail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Occasional species include meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), field woodrush (*Luzula*

campestris), whilst pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*) and quaking grass (*Briza media*) occur very locally.

Cowslip and Primrose (as well as primula hybrids) are frequent in the spring. The grassland is similar to NVC MG5 (crested dogstail – common knapweed meadow) with a rather coarser sward (= MG1, false oat grassland) at the margins. Small areas along paths and on individual grave plots are closely mown. There is some shading by trees on the boundaries of the churchyard.

The grassland would appear to have derived from unimproved meadow, possibly from the enclosure of an old pasture field when the church was established.

Although small, this is probably one of the best examples of MG5 grassland surviving in the City of York, and certainly in the context of the western Parishes.

SINC evaluation

The churchyard contains at least 15 neutral grassland indicator plants as listed in the North Yorkshire guidelines for the selection of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (Guideline Gr4). 10 of these have an abundance of at least 'occasional', so the site would unequivocally qualify for SINC status.

Designation

The Churchyard of St John the Baptist at Hessay is designated as a site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an important example of old sps rich grassland of NVC type MG5. This is under Criteria Gr1 and Gr4.

SINC Citation 2009

Site Code 65

LOW MOOR LANE MEADOW

HESSAY

SE 532 531

Surveyed 15th July 2008

Principal NVC communities: MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra* grassland; MG9 *Holcus lanatus* – *Deschampsia cespitosa* grassland.

Approx. 1.8 ha.

This is a small field on the Low Moor Lane, Hessay, and as for Hessay Churchyard is old, unimproved neutral grassland with frequent to locally-abundant plants including common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), crested dogstail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Occasional species include meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), whilst pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and quaking grass (*Briza media*) occur very locally. Cowslip, Ladysmock and Adders Tongue Fern have also been recorded as locally frequent.

This meadow has shallow ridge-and-furrow and is surrounded on all sides by mature, well-timbered and more-or-less continuous sps rich hedgerows. The grassland appears to have escaped any significant attempt at agricultural improvement. Around 40-50% of the field can be categorised as NVC MG5 crested dogstail – common knapweed grassland, with the remainder being transitional between MG5 and Yorkshire fog – tufted hair-grass grassland (NVC MG9).

Together with Hessay Churchyard, this is probably one of the best examples of MG5 grassland surviving in the City of York, and certainly in the context of the western Parishes.

SINC evaluation

The field contains at least 16 neutral grassland indicator plants as listed in the North Yorkshire guidelines for the selection of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (Guideline Gr4). 12 of these have an abundance of at least 'occasional', so the site would unequivocally qualify for SINC status.

Designation

The field at Low Moor Lane, Hessay is designated as a site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an important example of old sps rich grassland of NVC type MG5. This is under Criteria Gr1 and Gr4.

SINC Citation 2009
Site Code 23

Knavesmire Stables Meadow

(Dringhouses)

Grid Ref: SE 590 490

Surveyed 15th July 2008

Principal NVC communities: MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra* grassland;
Approx. 1.0 ha.

This small ridge and furrow hay meadow is attached to the York Racecourse stables at the Knavesmire and supports a flora characteristic of species-rich neutral grassland. Great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*), Pignut (*Conopodium majus*), betony (*Stachys officinalis*), common birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) and bulbous buttercup (*Rumex bulbosus*) are abundant, with a variety of fine-leaved grasses. Associated insects include butterflies such as the Common Blue and abundant burnet moths.

It formally had a unique management system whereby the hay was used as litter to cover access points for race meetings. Now haycropping is much less frequent. Adjacent to the access track the land was used for storage when some drainage works were carried out on the Racecourse in 2008. This area (approx 1/3 of the area) was reseeded and some work may be required to reinstate the floristic diversity in this area.

SINC Assessment

Knavesmire Stables Meadow is still occasionally mown for hay and, although not typical of the community, this grassland has clear affinities with MG5. This meadow has not been grazed in recent years but seasonal grazing would probably be beneficial in maintaining its floristic quality. Retention of haycropping is essential.

SINC Designation

Knavesmire Stables Meadow is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as an example of species-rich old meadow habitat. It scores 10/8 under criteria Gr4 for sps that are at least occasional with 2 more sps at lower levels. This type of grassland is a threatened habitat nationwide due to intensive farming practices and urban development. The ecological interest of this site is dependent upon the cutting. In common with similar sites in the City of York, this meadow bears the ridge-and-furrow imprint of pre-enclosure cultivation.

SINC's to be De-notified

Possible SINC Sites

SINC Citation 2009

Site Code 214

Askham Moor Lane Wood

SE 559487

Last Surveyed 10th June 2008

Principal NVC community: **WG10** Woodland

Approx. 0.3 ha.

Askham Moor Lane Copse is a small area of woodland, probably retained from the medieval period. The trees are mainly native, although certainly replanted at least in the 19th Century. There are some relict ancient woodland species present including abundant Bluebell, Wild Garlic, Wood Sedge, Wood Anemone and Pignut.

Assessment:

Although small, this has a good ground flora for the Vale of York. It would not, however, fulfil SINC criteria Wd6 based on the number of woodland sps present (5/8). This however is more due to the strictness of the criteria in a Vale of York woodland context as very few woodlands here would fulfil this criteria. It does however fulfil Criteria **Wd5** for Bluebell Woodlands.

Designation

Askham Moor Lane Copse is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation under Criteria **Wd5** .

Annex B

**Spreadsheet showing sites
of wildlife interest in York**

Annex B - Sites of Wildlife Interest in York

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC):

	Site	Location	GR	Area (ha)	Length (m)	Revised Status 2009	Designation Criteria	Social Value	Habitat/Interest
1	A64 Interchange	Dringhouses/ Copmanthorpe	579479	3.80		SINC Ammend boundary	Gr4		Calcareous grassland. Gr4 12/8 but verges 1/8.
2	Acomb Wood Meadow	Acomb	573494	0.90		SINC/LNR	Gr4	Yes	Neutral Grassland. 7/8(+2) Gr4. Below criteria but could be enhanced
3	ArchBishops Palace Grounds	Bishopthorpe	597480	5.30		SINC	PK1/ M1b/ Gr3/ Mh2		Parkland/Bats/ Acid Grassland/ Mosaic habitats. Needs new bat survey
4	Bachelor Hill	Acomb	569508	0.90		SINC Ammend boundary	Gr3 & 11	Yes	Breck Grassland/ Inverts. 4/8 Gr3, 2/8 Gr4. Below botanical criteria but 7/8 Gr3 in 2004 due to earlier survey catching annuals. Rare sps of invertebrate present. Site could be enhanced.

5	Bishopthorpe Ings	Bishopthorpe	598468	15.50		SINC	Gr4/Gr1		Flood plain grassland. Below threshold for individual fields but 9/8 overall. Retain possibly with revised boundaries although unit as a whole would retain existing.
6	Brinkworth Rush (Elvington Airfield)	Elvington	676478	2.50		SINC	Gr4/Gr3		Neutral/Acid Grassland
7	Brinkworth Rush(Elv.Air Museum)	Elvington	679481	4.60		SINC	Gr4/Gr3		Neutral Grassland/Scrub GCN
8	Brecks Lane Meadow	Strensall	635612	2.00		SINC	Gr3/45/A2/I2	Yes	Neutral Grassland. 14/8 for Gr4
9	Carr Banks Meadow	Stockton on-the Forest	660561	1.50		SINC	Gr4		Neutral grassland. 5/8 Gr4 but overgrazed. Re survey
10	Church Ings	Acaster Malbis	597457	1.70		SINC	I1		Tall herb fen/ Tansy Beetle. 4/8 - Gr4 3/8 Fe3 Fe2 below area threshold. But contains large Tansy Beetle popn. - I1
12	Clifton Backies	Clifton	597545	14.75		SINC/LNR	Gr1,4, Mh2		Neutral grassland / Scrub. 10/8 (+10) Gr4 but grassland has declined due to lack of management. (previously 15/8)

13	Clifton Bridge	Clifton	589528			SINC	M1b/c		Bats. Substantial roost for Pips/Noctule and Daub. Still present.
14	Clifton Ings	Clifton	583530	44.00		SINC	Gr4/Gr1/Sw1	Yes	Flood Plain grassland. 14/8(+2) Gr4 Gr1 - 16ha. Ditch 12/10 Sw1 9/10 Fe3
15	Copmanthorpe Wood	Copmanthorpe	561450	6.00		SINC	Wd5/ Wd3b		Ancient Woodland/bluebells
16	Fulford Golf Course, Roughs	Heslington	623495 & 632482	9.00		SINC	GR3/4		Acid/neutral grassland
17	Germany Beck Meadow	Fulford	616488	1.40	300	SINC	Gr4		Neutral grassland. Much deteriorated since 90's. Now Fails Criteria 7/8(+2) Gr4. Adjacent hedge - 11/10 Wd7a
18	Gollie Ponds	Fulford	602482	3.75		SINC	I1		Ponds, Fen, Carr. Fails on botanical/habitat criteria but has Epipactus sp. Also Red Data book/LBAP invert sps present. Agabus undulatus
19	Hassacarr Pond	Dunnington	668523	0.50		SINC	Sw1		Pond. 15/10 Sw1 8/10 Fe3
20	Hob Moor	Acomb/Holgate	585505	39.00		SINC/LNR Ammend boundary	Gr4	Yes	Stray Grassland. Several areas below threshold but overgrazed. Main area 7/8(+5) Gr4, Triangle 6/8 Gr3. Re-survey

21	Hagg Wood	Dunnington	685525	32.00		SINC Ammend boundary	Wd5	Yes	Replanted Ancient woodland. Bluebell
22	Kexby Bridge	Kexby	706511			SINC	M2		Bats
23	Knavesmire Stables Meadow	Knavesmire	590490	1.00		SINC	Gr4		Neutral Hay Meadow. 2/3 still good Mg5 but extensive damage by machinery. Re-survey
24	Knavesmire Wood	Knavesmire	592488	6.00		SINC	Wd4	Yes	Mixed woodland/ Veteran trees. 2/12 - Wd3but late survey.(6/12 in 2004). Veteran trees Wd4 - 24 present.
27	Moreby Far Wood	Deighton	615426	0.80		SINC	Wd3c		Ancient woodland. WGS Part of larger wood outside York Boundary. 12/12 Wd3c.
28	New Earswick Meadow	New Earswick	608459	0.80		SINC	Gr4	Yes	Neutral Grassland. 8/8 Gr4 but Mg5 appears to be declining.
29	Oxcarr Lane	Strensall	636601	0.80		SINC	Gr3		Acid wet grassland. 4/8(+2) Gr3 but recently mown. Re- survey
30	Rabbit Warren Wood	Dunnington	678501	26.80		SINC			Acid woodland / Heath
31	Rawcliffe Meadows	Rawcliffe	583537	11.80		SINC	Gr1/Gr4/Sw1/ Fe3	Yes	Flood plain grassland/Fen. Gr1 ltd, 9/8(+11) Gr4, Sw1 flood basin pools 12/10, Fen 11/10.

32	Rawcliffe Ings Dyke	Rawcliffe	574546	0.10	950	SINC Ammend boundary	Sw1		Dyke. 16/10 Sw1 but all of dyke now of interest.
34	River Foss Corridor	Huntington/New Earswick	7561/6095	3.00	2600	SINC		Yes	Riverside
35	Severus Hill Reservoir Basin	Acomb	583519	0.90		SINC			Calcareous Grassland
36	Stub Wood	Acaster Malbis	588433	24.00		SINC	Wd3(c) and Wd3 (d)		Ancient Woodland. In WGS
37	West Carr Masks	Elvington	701472	6.20		SINC Ammend boundary	Gr4		Flood plain grassland. 6/8(+3) for Gr4.
38	Westfield School Field	Acomb	566508	0.50		SINC	Gr3/Gr6	Yes	Breck Grassland. 7/8 Gr3 (9/8 in 2004), Gr6 due to proximity of Westfield Marsh.
39	Westfield Marsh	Acomb	565507	0.60		SINC	Fe3	Yes	Acid grassland and marsh. 10/10 Fe3 (11/10 in 2004), 7/8 Gr3
41	Wheldrake Wood	Wheldrake	660470	107.00		SINC	Gr3/A1a/A2	Yes	Relict heath. Pond good for amphibs. Nursery 8/8 Gr3. Other areas and rides also Gr3.
42	World's End	Strensall	665596	42.00		SINC			Acid grassland, heath, fen, marsh. Severely damaged by illegal operations Dec 03. Previous assessments indicate SSSi quality. Reports from NE suggest lowland heath interest recovering.

43	York-Selby Cycle Track	Deighton/Naburn	2459-6164	5.00	4005	SINC	Gr4	Yes	Neutral grassland and scrub. 13/8(+?) Gr4.
Total No -	37			426.40	7855				
Sites Proposed for de-notification									
11	Clementhorpe Ouse River Bank	Clementhorpe	604504	1.00	650	De notify		Yes	Flood meadow/ bankside. Based on 10m width 3/8 but may have Tansy Beetle
25	Mattie Brown's Covert	Wheldrake	690437	3.50		De notify			Mixed woodland (heronry)
26	Millfield Wood Drain	Kexby	698517	0.15	300	De notify			Acid grassland.
33	Rawcliffe Landing Wood	Rawcliffe	572549	0.60		De notify			Riparian woodland
40	West Pits Meadow	Strensall	626603	0.50		De notify			Neutral grassland. 4/8(+2) Gr4. Damaged by tipping of spoil and domestic encroachment. Some areas may be recoverable.
Total No.	5			5.75	950				

	NON SINC LNR's	With Social value						Social Value	
232	Acombe Wood	Acombe	570493	3.00		Social SINC/LNR		Yes	Woodland. Does not qualify
64	St Nicholas Fields	City Centre	616517	9.30		Social SINC/LNR		Yes	Scrub rank grassland. Flora largely introduced but may have significant bird/invert interest. Too new to consider.
Total No.	2			12.30					

Sites below Criteria but with Social Value									
45	Ext to Backies Burton Green Meadow (6-20)	Clifton Without	598540	0.40		Social SINC	2005	Yes	Neutral grassland. 6/8 Gr4.
129	York Cemetery	City Centre	611508	5.30		Social SINC			Mosaic
Total No.	2			5.70	0				

New Sites for Consideration		SINC Quality							
	Site	Location	GR	Area (ha)	Length (m)	Revised Status 2009	Designation Criteria	Social Value	Habitat/Interest
49	North Lane Meadow	Huntington	623565	1.40		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Neutral grassland. 13/8 Gr4
50	Earswick Meadow	Old Earswick	622570	1.00		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Neutral Grassland.
53	Flaxton Road Meadows	Strensall	642609	5.40		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Neutral grassland. Surveyed as part of original planning application. 15/8 for Gr4
55	Murton Meadow (10-11)	Murton	648529	0.90		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Old MG5? 8/8 but patchy distrib due to rank unmanaged condition.
57	Osbalwick Meadow	Osbalwick	637520	1.10		Proposed SINC	Gr4		MG5 Grassland. Overgrazed semi improved sps rich grassland.

59	Elvington Airfield	Elvington Airfield	666480	9.00		Proposed SINC	Gr3/4/5 I1		Acid/neutral grassland Invertebrate interest. Site surveyed as part of planning application. 21/8, 14/8, 12/8 for neutral, acid and calc grasslands and 34/20 for mixed grassland habitats. possible bird designation.
61	Ext to West Carr Masks	Elvington	701473	3.80		Proposed SINC	Gr4/Gr6/Gr1		Neutral/wet Grassland. 3 fields- 11/8(+2) Gr4, 6/8(+1) Gr4- Gr6, 8/8(+2) Gr4, Gr1
63	R. Ouse	York	589425-541565		20600	Proposed SINC	F1	Yes	River - Rare sps fish, corridor
65	Low Moor Lane Meadow Hessay	Poppleton	532531	1.80		Proposed SINC	GR1/Gr4		Neutral Grassland. MG5 grassland Gr1 10/8(+3) Gr4
67	Strensall Village Meadows Strensall Site 15d, 15e	Strensall	634606	0.60		Proposed SINC	GR4		Sps rich wet grassland rig and furrow, MG5. 2 old strip fields now very rank and unmanaged but with abundant Knapweed, Lotus, Lathyrus and other sps. Rigg and furrow pronounced.
72	Holtby Rd Verge (Derwent Site 5)	Gate Helmsley	679540	0.60	280	Proposed SINC	Gr4		MG5 succeeding to MG1 Sps rich rd verge
79	Benjy Lane Meadows (Wheldrake Site 14)	Wheldrake	661446	12.10		Proposed SINC			MG5 hay meadows

81	West Plantation - Wheldrake Site 16	Wheldrake	660452	1.30		Proposed SINC	Wd5		Bluebell Wood
86	Elvington Wood	Elvington	693465	12.30		Proposed SINC	Wd5		W10 Bluebell woodland. Wheldrake Site 50 Semi Nat Wood with ext bluebell
87	Gilbertsons Plantation (Wheldrake Site 65)	Wheldrake	661430	7.80		Proposed SINC	Wd5		Mixed woodland W10 Bluebell Wood. Plantation Bluebell dominant with Wild garlic, Melica, Wood sedge.
89	Hazelbush Fields (Huntington Site 9)	Huntington	644560	2.30		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Unimproved neutral grassland and wet grassland. Part sec. broadleaved woodland, part unmanaged species rich unimproved grassland and wet pasture. Originally part of Sewage works.
97	Sim Hill Tip	Acomb	580485	5.9		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Brownfield Site. 6/6(+4) Gr4 Poss Invert
98	JoRo School Pond	Earswick	609563	0.20		Proposed SINC	Sw1/A2/M2	Yes	Pond (old clay working) and adjacent grassland.
101	Kexby Bank West	Kexby	703505-703501		400	Proposed SINC	Wd7a		Wooded bank&hedge, possibly relict AW with abundant bluebell, Anemone etc

103	Holgate Millenium Green	Holgate	584523	1.30		Proposed SINC	Gr1/Gr4	Yes	Relict Mg4 sps rich grassland, stream corridor/ Water Vole?
104	Fishpond Wood	Acomb	572517	1.00		Proposed SINC	FE7/H2	Yes	Seepage Fen/wet woodland. May not fulfill Fe7 although habitat is rare in York. Rare Wasp
106	Danebury Crt	Acomb	573518	0.10		Of Interest - Proposed SINC		Yes	Moderately Sps rich grassland in sheltered home adjacent to Fishponds Wood. Sps Rich but too small
111	Strensall Horse Pasture	Strensall	649603	9.90		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Neutral grassland
112	Worlds End Plantation	Strensall	662598	30.80		Proposed SINC	Wd2/ B4/ I1/ I3		Relict Heathland with invert and bird interest
167	The Parks	Askham Bryan	544481	0.50		Proposed SINC	Wd5		Semi nat deciduous Wood
169	Hagg Wood (Cop)	Copmanthorpe	550458	1.20		Proposed SINC	Wd5		Semi nat deciduous Wood
174	Holtby Pond Rd Verge	Holtby	671544	0.1	60	Proposed SINC	Gr1/ Gr4		Sps Rich rd Verge

175	Elvington Camp Copse	Elvington	693481	0.60		Proposed SINC	Wd5		Semi nat deciduous Woodland strip by playing field. Oak, Ash, Birch woodland (c50yrs old). Grd flora includes ext. Bluebell with Common and Early Violet, Sanicle and Goldilocks. Remote Sedge and False Fox Sedge in ditch on rdside. Old army camp on eastern edge.
177	Hazelbush Plantation	Stockton on the Forest	667579		370	Proposed SINC	Gr3		Acid wet fen? Ride through centre of wood.
182	World's End Ponds	Strensall	661597	3.60		Proposed SINC	Sw1/ Gr3		Mesotrophic ponds and Fen. Clearing in Worlds End, 1 pond at least fairly new, the other with rich fringing veg. Some of grassland is well maintained.
193	Naburn Hall Meadow	Naburn	592453	7.90		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Flood Plain Grassland. Aprox 4ha are good MG4 grassland.
194	Middlethorpe Ings (4-1)	Middlethorpe	607488	12.00		Proposed SINC	Gr4/Gr1		Flood Plain Grassland. 7/8(+1) Gr4. Earlier survey likely to increase additional indicators.

195	Fulford Ings Village Green	Fulford	608486	0.10		Proposed SINC	I1	Yes	Tansy Beetle. Adjacent to SSSI. Little botanical interest but good Tansy Beetle popn.
196	Ring Rd Pond (AB11)	Askham Bryant	561478	0.40		Proposed SINC	Sw1		Detention Pond. 15/10 Sw1 though some may be planted. Possible GCN. Crassula a problem.
197	West Wood Lane (AB1)	Askham Bryant	545486-544490		1000	Proposed SINC	Wd7a	Yes	Hazel Hedge/Relict Wood Sps. 12/10 trees/shrubs plus bluebell and other indicators
198	Ext to Hob Moor	Hob Moor Community School	581506	0.40		Add to Hob Moor	Gr4		MG5 Grassland. Part of school playing field.
199	Grasslands Farm Field	Rufforth	526499	2.40		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Neutral Grassland. Site has re-established following ploughing in the Early 60's? Area is rough sps rich grassland and scrub.
200	Town Pond Shirbutt Lane (HY4)	Hessay	525533	0.03		Proposed SINC	Sw1	Yes	Pond. 10/10 Sw1 GCN unlikely due to Stickleback
201	Hessay Churchyard	Hessay	523536	0.20		Proposed SINC	Gr4	Yes	Gr4. MG5 grassland. 8/8(+4) Gr4

202	Poppleton Glassworks (5-30)	Poppleton	570538	3.60		Proposed SINC	Gr4		Brownfield site Neutral/calcareous grassland. Dual designation. In 2 parts Plot 1 8/8 Gr4 calc Plot 2 5/8(+4) Gr4 neutral
203	British Sugar Sidings	Poppleton	576532	0.50	500	Proposed SINC	H1		Aculeate Hymenoptera Site. Demolition site at present
204	Rush Wood	Naburn	602443	2.50		Proposed SINC	Wd5		Bluebell Woodland.
206	Moor Lane Railway Verge Copmanthorpe	Copmanthorpe	566463	1.70	1000	Proposed SINC	Gr4		Coarse calcareous M115grassland. Calcareous / Neutral grassland
209	Balancing Ponds - A64 Ring Rd Roundabout	Copmanthorpe	573476	0.10		Proposed SINC	Sw1		Ponds/reed/Grassland. 1 recently built but scores 10/10 Sw1 although recently planted.
210	Middlethorpe Ings (4-3)	Middlethorpe	600483	3.00		Proposed SINC	Gr4/11/Mh1?		Relict sps rich neutral grassland/ Glyceria swamp, pond and willow carr. Has invert interest. 6 nationally scarce sps. but still ongoing
211	Middlethorpe Ings (4-1)a	Middlethorpe	601486	0.80		Proposed SINC			Fen.
215	Taylorhall Field Plantation	Askham Richard	542482	0.90		Proposed SINC	Wd4/5		Woodland. Old deciduous plantation with at least 5 AW indic and vet trees.

216	Ring Rd Embankment Millfield Lane A1237	Nether Poppleton	566537	0.10	50	Proposed SINC	Gr3		Acid grassland. 9/8 Gr3 (+4 others in 2004 during earlier survey) suggesting 8/8
249	Bond Hill Ash Farm	Copmanthorpe	576477	1.3		Proposed SINC	Fe1 and Fe3		Diverse Fen grassland with Sedges, Rushes, Thalictrum, Ragged Robin, Bugle, Gt Birds Foot Trefoil. Pond within site
Total No.	49			154.53	24260				

New Sites for Consideration -		Possible SINC Quality							
	Site	Location	GR	Area (ha)	Length (m)	Revised Status 2009	Designation Criteria	Social Value	Habitat/Interest
48	Huntington Cemetery and Fields Area 14b? Check	Huntington	620543	5.70		Of interest		Yes	Semi improved mod sps rich grassland. Relict MG5
54	Ext to Carr Bank Meadow	Stockton on the Forest	659561	1.50			Gr3		Rank grassland
59a	Elvington Airfield	Elvington	666480	148.00		9ha are SINC quality acid grassland.	Birds B5?		Acid/neutral grassland/Ext Semi Improved grassland. Site surveyed as part of planning application. 21/8,14/8,12/8 for neutral, acid and calc grasslands and 34/20 for mixed grassland habitats. possible bird designation.

78	Wheldrake Site 13 Selby Mine	North	Deighton	651441	3.80			Gr4/Mh2		Spoil heap being colonised. Ext area semi improved grassland. Good habitat mosaic. Site crosses Selby boundary. 4.8 ha of interest in Selby.
99	Dunnington Rd Verge		Dunnington	670532		400.00	Of Interest		Yes	Semi improved grassland
139	Bootham Stray Pond		Clifton Without	601544	0.10					GCN Pond
141	Rawcliffe Cornfield		Rawcliffe	578542	4.70				Yes	Farmland birds. Arable field managed for farmland birds
179	Broad Highway Verges		Wheldrake	672463 - 669486 & 676457- 676458		600				Filipendula dom. But with others sps as well. 1st section has Bluebelland Goldilocks in.
191	Monks Cross		Huntington	623545	3.50	500	Borderline SINC	M2	?	Water Vole. Ditches have good watervole popn + GCN+some adj. sps rich grassland.
207	Drome Lane Field Copmanthorpe close to (5-19)		Copmanthorpe	575466	0.50			Gr4		Old Grassland frequent Pepper Saxifrage
208	Drome Lane Hay Meadow Copmanthorpe (5-19)		Copmanthorpe	576468	1.50			Gr4		Old Hay meadow Gr4 Knapweed (f) and Birds Foot Trefoil (f) visible from roadside.
212	Connaught Court		Connought Court, Fulford	607495	0.01			Fu3	Yes	Fungi. Nominal area around Beech now felled. Re-survey

213	Knavesmire Field Corners	Knavesmire	589492	3.30			Gr4	Yes	Unimproved neutral grassland. 8/8 Gr4 but only for all sps.
217	Poppleton Ings - Ditch		573539 - 576536		400		Sw1		Ditch. 9/10 Sw1. Is adjacent to similar ditch that qualifies at Rawcliffe Ings.
222	Rufforth Field (5-14)(RU10)	Rufforth	528510	1.00		Area of interest too small?			Relict MG5 on Ridge and furrow but sps rich section very small although includes Adders Tongue Fern.
Total No.									
	15			173.61	1900				

Other sites of Interest		Unknown value							
	Site	Location	GR	Area (ha)	Length (m)	Revised Status 2009	Designation Criteria	Social Value	Habitat/Interest
47	Woodbine Cottage Farm (7-2/3)	Wigginton	592573	5.30					Semi improved grassland. In 2 parcels either side of house
56	Murton (10-9)	Murton	646527	0.40					Good Ridge and Furrow
59b	Dodsworth Farm	Elvington	669476	31.00			Wet grassland (Birds)		Wet sp poor semi improved grassland. some breeding waders.
70	Strensall Site 27	Stockton-on-the-Forest	652553	1.30					
75	Derwent Site 47 This is part of Rabbit Warren Wood SINC.	Dunnington	677500	14.90					Broadleaved woodland

82	Wheldrake Site 19	Wheldrake	667469	2.70					species rich meadow and grazed pasture
92	Huntington Site 17a This is part of Earswick meadow SINC. Check site codes	Bootham stray	605547	0.50					wet woodland
113	Scoreby Wood/ Millfield Wood	Kexby	720520	33.90					Conifer Woodland/ acid grassland/relict heath
115	Strensall Golf Course	Strensall	645605	44.30					Acid Neutral grassland/Heath
172	Askham Whin	Askham Richard	527486	2.10					Woodland, Willow Carr and ponds
173	Coronation Plantation	Askham Richard	534487	1.10					Deciduous Woodland?
186	Elvington Water Treatment Works	Elvington	704487	2.30					Area of derelict fen/flood meadow and scrub. Seen from outside and aerials only
187	Naburn Water Treatment Works	Naburn	602477	6.60					Area of derelict fen/flood meadow and scrub. Seen from outside and aerials only
188	Duncombe Wood and Ponds	Strensall	634622	2.80					Heathy Woodland and old ponds
192	Turkers Wood	Stockton on the Forest	655545	5.30					W16 Woodland. With abundant Corydalis
218	Wood Dike ??	Naburn	602439		750				Streamside Woodland.
219	Pond by Railway w. of Copmanthorpe Wood	Copmanthorpe	556451	0.50					Pond
228	Rufforth Grange Wood (RU4)	Rufforth	541505	0.50					Woodland.
Total No.	18			155.50	750				

Sites that do not qualify but are of Interest									
	Site	Location	GR	Area (ha)	Length (m)	Revised Status 2009	Designation Criteria	Social Value	Habitat/Interest
44	Skelton Hall (6-3)	Skelton	567566	1.10					Derilict Semi Improved grassland. Does not qualify 4/8 but may be others present under dense litter. Rig and Furrow present with some relict sps including Knapweed, Birds Foot Trefoil, Gter Birds Foot Trefoil and Pignut.
46	Ext to Backies(6-19)	Clifton Without	597546	1.50		Of interest			Relict MG5?/ Does not qualify(4/8+2 Gr4) though of interest. Seasonal Flood
51	Strensall Wood	Strensall	632600	0.60				Yes	Acid Wood
52	Lords Moor Lane/Flaxton Rd.	Strensall	640606	2.20		Does not qualify		Yes	Acid Woodland - Sensitive Fern
58	Dunnington Meadow	Dunnington	675524	0.80		Of interest			MG5 grassland
60	Elvington Clay Pit	Elvington	689484	0.40					Clay pit and scrub. Steep sided brick pit with no marginal fringe except for a few bulrush. Bankside is a dense fringe of willow, hawthorn and bramble.

66	Hessay Woodland	Hessay	532533	2.00					Wet secondary woodland (Crack Willow) and Hawthorn scrub.
69	Strensall Site 17	Strensall	633611	1.30					Damp, marshy grassland, B5 adjacent to Breckes Lane Meadow
73	Ings N. of Kexby (Derwent 19a, 19b)	Kexby	704514	11.80					semi improved, some wetland species
77	Sandhole Plantation (Wheldrake Site 3)	Naburn	603477	0.7					Broadleaved W10 woodland - Bluebell Wood
83	Wheldrake Site 34/35	Elvington	688479	6.10					Mod. species rich mown/grazed grassland and scrub including Knapweed, Lathyrus, Lady Smock.
84	Wheldrake Site 36	Elvington	692480	0.70					Band of thorn and elm scrub. Giant Hogweed a problem.
88	Haxby Rdabout (Huntington Site 3)	New Earswick	606564	2.30					Scrub and species rich grassland on embankment and adjacent small field.
90	Monks Cross -Huntington Site 14a	Huntington	621545	0.50					Area tussocky ungrazed damp grassland Relict MG5 with Smooth Tare
91	Monks Cross - Huntington	Huntington	622543	1.10					Derelict semi improved rank grassland and planting with old field pond - GCN

94	Huntington Wood (Site 20)	Huntington	643568	4.90					Mainly W10 woodland, some wetter areas W16??
95	Heslington Site 1	Heslington	621508	0.50					Mod species rich and semi improved grassland verges and embankments
96	Mill Hill Site 2 Heslington	Heslington	622509	1.50					More constant species rich grassland. MG5 on bank succeeding to MG1 in field
100	Kexby Bank East	Kexby	704513	0.01		Of Interest			Semi improved sps rich grassland
102	Whitehouse Farm Close	Askham Richard	538480	0.20		Of Interest			Wooded bank&Close (Wet grassland 6/8 Gr4)
105	Kexby Ings?	Kexby	704507	7.10		Of Interest			Improved wet grassland and fen. Includes Caltha, Oenanthe silaifolia.
109	Meadow at New Earswick by JoRo School	New Earswick	611559	4.60				Yes	Remnants of sps rich grassland in central area.

110	Elvington by Lock	Elvington	703474	3.90						Rank Neutral Grassland. Area of rank, improved, unmanaged grassland with some rushes and Lady Smock. A band of scattered Gt Burnett and Filipendula runs along the ditch side but about 30m in. Stand of Bird Cherry by gate.
114	Kingsmoor Plantation/ Sandburn Wood	Stockton on the Forest	669588	73.00						Conifer Plantation with Poor Fen/ relict Heath. Conifer wood with some relict heath present but shaded out. Good site for heath re-establishment and as link between other sites.
116	Metcalfe Lane Meadows	Osboldwick	628521	5.30				Of Interest	Yes	Relict MG5/semi improved grassland. 2 Meadows in block of 9 with prominent ridge and furrow. Some patches of MG5 with good diversity. Incl. Pepper Saxifrage etc.

117	York Central	Holgate?	590518	0.10			Of interest		Brownfield. Small area of sps rich sward with anthills etc. Adjacent areas have developing calcareous sward on ballast. May have been sprayed out in 2007?
118	City Walls Embankment	York City Centre	598513, 610513, 604523	5.00				Yes	Grassland. Interest patchy but could be enhanced by management. Area is approx.
119	Chapmans Pond	Dringhouses	578491	2.80				Yes	Clay Pit/ open scrub. Rough Grassland and scrub. Pond is steep sided-0.7ha
120	Mayfield Clay Pit	Dringhouses	586499	1.00				Yes	Clay pit/ open scrub. Clay pit steep sided - 0.6 ha
121	Hoggs Pond	Dringhouses	580492	6.70					Clay pit/scrub reseeded amenity grassland. Pond is steep sided - 4.3 ha
122	New Earswick pond	New Earswick	608548	2.20				Yes	Clay Pit/ Sec Woodland. Steep sided lake (0.7ha) with mat Sec woodland
123	Haxby Lake	Haxby	609574	2.60					Clay pit. 2 Clay pits (GCN Records) separated by narrow strip now Fishing Lake - 2,1 ha.

124	Stren Back Lane fishing pond	Strensall	621621	2.10					Fishing Lake. Lake area - 1.5 ha
125	Huntington Ponds	Heworth	618533	1.20					Clay pit - 1.1ha
126	Huntington Ponds	Heworth	619532	0.50					Clay Pit - 0.3
127	Dringhouses Sidings	Dringhouses	584502	2.50					Brownfield. Birch woodland on PFA
128	Kexby Fishing lakes	Kexby	693506	3.70					Small lakes. 4 Small lakes with surrounding relict sps rich grassland, scrub and sec. acid oak woodland. Lakes - total 1 ha.
136	Clifton Hospital Orchard/pond	Clifton Without	582535	0.60				Yes	Old orchard for hospital with rank improved grassland and balancing pond (0.1ha) Nat revegetation but with enhancement of sps. Bird interest - overwintering finches and reed bunting.
137	The Dormouse Orchard	Clifton Without	585537	0.30				Yes	Old Orchard. Old hospital orchard, grassland rank/improved
140	Moorlands Wood	Skelton	577588	10.80				Yes	Secondary Woodland - mixed
142	Knapton Scrub	Knapton	565518	0.70					Willow scrub. Willow scrub/ Rank sps poor grassland/Oak copse
144	Towthorpe Dam Hill	Strensall	649580	13.40					Relict Heathland? Coniferised plantation Possible Fritillary site

145	Hedge by Hassacar Pond	Dunnington	672519		50				Invertebrate interest. Brown Hairstreak
147	Clifton Airfield	Clifton Without	584555	9.5					Open scrub. Hawthorn scrub, plantation, rank&sps rich grassland.
148	Poppleton Ings	Nether Poppleton	574 538	3.00					Relict Flood Meadow Grassland. Old flood meadow, hedgerows.
149	Butterbump Bottom	Elvington	693469	1.50					Crack Willow Carr. Old fallen Carr with adjacent flood/drawdown areas
150	Hagghill Leas Ings	Elvington	701464	7.50					Relict flood meadow/swamp. Area of sedge/glyceria swap/ Phalaris/ inundation veg. with adjacent semi improved grassland and scrubby bank. may be of interest for inverts. Sps such as Filipendula are scattered clumps possibly due to ext flooding over past 2 wet summers.(2007/8)
151	Ings Cheesecake Farm	Elvington	696456	3.60					Fen/Swamp/ Relict old grassland. Area of sedge/glyceria swap with adjacent semi improved grassland and scrubby bank.

152	Ings Cheesecake Farm	Elvington	697460	2.60					Swamp/inundation area. Area of Glyceria/Phalaris swamp with 8 veteran willow on edge.
153	A64 Verge at Hopgrove Rd about	Huntington	645563 - 647564		250				Old grassland? Verge with abundant knapweed/ Moondaisy etc. Possibly a wf mix but now well established.
154	Upper Tanghall Beck								River corridor
155	Osbalwick Beck								River Corridor
156	Earswick Old railway Line	Earswick	604546	0.40					Relict Grassland. Relict MG5 grassland with limited sps such as Knapweed, Lotus, Greater Burnet etc.
157	Grimston Villa Fields	Osbalwick	644516	3.90					Semi improved grassland/ Orchard. Faint Rigg and furrow with sps poor grassland. Adders Tongue Fern/ Hairy Sedge, C. flacca, Yarrow. Also old orchard, ant hills, possible GCN.
158	Grimston Wood	Dunnington	661492	26.40					Relict heathland. Conifer wood with some relict heath present
159	W Bank Foss Strensall	Strensall	632611	0.30					Sedge Fen. Small area of sedge fen adjacent to FP. Some wetland sps.

160	Westfield Beck	Haxby	606561-601572	1.30	1290				
161	White Horse Farm Meadow	Huntington	628567	2.80					
163	Acomb Water works	Acomb	578532	10.50					
164	Turbary Lane Meadow	Huntington	642564	0.50					Mod Sps rich with Carex flacca, Lathyrus and Meadow Buttercup
165	Askham Grange Prison	Askham Richard	538481	2.10					19th Cent Plantation Woodland. Ltd floral interest but trees mature/overmature prob good for bats. Bank of Dogs Mercuy on boundary
166	Acomb Wood ext	Acomb	568494	1.10					Part of Acomb Wood owned by Wodland Trust and not part of LNR.
170	Sand Dyke	Rufforth	522520	0.4					Wet Carr wood and adjacent copse
171	Rufforth Village Pond	Rufforth	525519	0.1					Cleaned out and planted by BTCV 2005
176	Elvington Lane	Elvington	686482		200				Abundant Bluebell in patches. Woodland strip on 1st Ed OS Map. Abundant Hazel. Inula helenium opp Airfield turning.
178	Sandy Lane	Wheldrake	657451	0.70					Secondary woodland on old sand pit?
180	Haxby Sewage Treatment Works	Haxby	615576	1.7					Area of scrub and moderate sps rich grassland and riverbank. - Otter?

181	Strensall Sewage Treatment Works	Strensall	646618	4.9					Series of 3 lagoons, scrub, riverbank and moderately rich grassland.- Otter?
183	Strensall Reed Bed	Strensall	634605	0.7					Reed bed. Area of dry reed within grassed area. Some improvement has been tried in the past.
184	Strensall Field 3	Strensall	635605	0.7					Moderately sps rich Semi Improved field. Rank strip field with some flower sps still present.
190	Malton Rd road verge Huntington	Huntington	623539	1.50					Mod Sps rich semi improved grassland - Relict MG5 grassland. Verge -Grassland is rank Arrhematherum but with abundant Knapweed and Lathyrus, Field is heavily grazed but otherwise similar.
205	Stub Wood Fen (4-13)	Acaster Malbis	58574354	0.70					Fen/Swamp. No land management option on the fen
214	Askham Moor Lane Wood	Askham Bryan	559487	0.30		Too small	Wd5		Woodland. Bluebell Wood with other sps including Bird Cherry, Anemone, Ramsons, sedges.
220	Fulford non SSSI grasslands	Fulford	609488	5.00		Does not qualify			Flood Grassland/swamp
221	Ext to Westfield Marsh	Acomb	563505	1.00				?	Marsh/pond

223	Rufforth Green Lane Hannan Lane (RU12)	Rufforth	525517 - 519513		790				Hedged Lane. Attractive hedged lane with sps rich hedges, ditches and wet areas.
224	Foss Woodland Nether Poppleton SINC Survey 2004 MH	Nether Poppleton	538552	8.30		Of Interest			Pond, grassland, scrub. 7/8 Gr4 but in low no.s Scrub may be of bird interest
225	Meadow at Pop	Nether Poppleton	545556	0.80		Of Interest			Rank sps rich grassland. Gr1 but less than 0.1ha. 4/8(+2) Gr4
226	Poppleton Ings Ditch	Nether Poppleton	566551- 569547		630	May qualify as hedge but borderline.			Hedge. Ditch of limited interest but hedge is sps rich (10) and includes frequent Bellflower
227	Hurns Gutter Woodland	Skelton	565554	2.50					Riverside Wet woodland/scrub. Difficult to assess value because of woodland type.
229	River Foss corridor (including Sessions Nature Reserve)	Strensall/ Earswick/ Huntington	647620 605511		15500			Yes	Mammals
230	Benjy Lane Pastures (Wheldrake Site 14)	Wheldrake	660448	5.30					Old Pasture

231	Strensall Site 15f	Strensall	634607	0.80					Wet grassland rig and furrow, with pond and willows. 2 old strip fields, one now very rank and unmanaged, the other part of residential curtilage and rough cut but both with with some relict sps such as Knapweed, Lotus, Lathyrus and other sps. Rigg and furrow pronounced. Possibility of GCN
245	Wig Rd/Ring Rd Rdabout	Wigginton	597559	0.60					Relict MG5? Reseeded? Rank verges, primarily Knapweed with some Lathyrus, BFT, Perf St John's Wort.
246	Drome Lane Hayfield	Copmanthorpe	575468	1.30					Semi improved neutral grassland
247	Rawcliffe Ings	Rawcliffe	573 543 - 572547						Improved flood meadow grassland
248	Walmgate Stray	Heslington		25.90					Improved Stray grassland but with some relict sps. Knapweed, BFT, Lathyrus/ Carex nigra?
			616503						
Total No	87			330.51	18710				

Created Sites									
130	Danesmead Orchard	Fulford	605498	0.70				Yes	New Orchard/ Re-seeded wf grassland. Orchard planting, re-seeded wf grassland (mix)
131	Wheatlands Reserve	Upper Poppleton	561530	2.00				Yes	New native woodland and WF grassland. Woodland planting, re-seeded wf grassland (mix)
132	Stud Farm Meadow	Wigginton	584591	2.90					Re-seeded Wildflower grassland. Planting, re-seeded wf grassland (green hay)
133	Askham/Moor Lane Roundabout	Acombe	561492	2.00					Re-seeded Wildflower grassland (mix)/Balancing pond
134	Mayfields Open Space	Dringhouse	586500	1.60				Yes	Re-seeded Wildflower grassland (mix)
135	Rawcliffe Meadow ext	Rawcliffe	577541	0.50				Yes	Re-seeded Wildflower grassland (green hay)
138	Monks Cross P&R	Monks Cross	622543	0.60					GCN ponds. 2 ponds (original and 1 new totalling 0.06ha) surrounded by rank grassland.
143	Brinkworth	Elvington	674477	0.50					Neutral Grassland. Area adjacent to existing SINC. Reseeded in late 90's (mix)
146	Westfield Wood	Haxby	602570	5.20				Yes	New native woodland. Native woodland, rank grassland, pond.

162	Huntington Tree Plantations	Huntington	623566, 625564, 628567	5.9					New native woodland. 3 tree plantations, c 10yrs old? With rank grassland.
189	Copmanthorpe New Rd Verges	Copmanthorpe	570476 - 575479	0.80	550				Wildflower mix grasslands
Total No.	11			22.70	550				

Sites of Limited Interest									
	Site	Location	GR	Area (ha)	Length (m)	Proposed Status	Criteria		Habitat/Interest
62	Ext to West Carr Masks South meander	Elvington	700469		350				River meander. Does not qualify
68	Strensall Site 16	Strensall	623603	2.70					Reverting grassland from arable. One field has abundant Ash regeneration.
71	Strensall Site 35	Earswick	621570	0.70					Improved grass on rigg and Furrow
74	Derwent Site 21	Murton	653518	1.00					semi improved succeeding to MG1. 09 survey - improved.
76	Wheldrake Site 2	Naburn	600451	1.60					rigg and furrow, semi improved, sps poor+M143
80	Wheldrake Site 15	Wheldrake	657451	0.80		Does not qualify			Broadleaved woodland W10
85	Wheldrake Site 38a	Elvington	700483	2.80					seasonally inundated grassland- Rank
93	Huntington Site 17b, 17c	Bootham stray	604543	8.00					Wet Meadow. Limited botanical interest
107	Elvington north of bridge	Elvington	707479	14.70					Imp Flood meadow Grassland. MH Little interest

108	North End Acaster Church Ings	Acaster Malbis	596457	2.90					Semi Impr flood meadow
185	Poppleton Ings North	Poppleton	568550	23.10					Imp Flood meadow Grassland
232	Fulford n of rd.	Fulford	605483	1.60					
23	Bond Hill (4-22)	Acomb	576479	0.70					MG1/Relict MG5 now improved grassland.
234	Middlethorpe Ings (4-3)	Middlethorpe	600483	0.20		Does not qualify			Reseeded improved.
235	Askham Bryant Pond Field (AB7)	Askham Bryant	553484	0.90		Does not qualify			Semi Improved Grassland. Species poor grazed but with R&F
236	Knapton Field(5-10)	Knapton	561517	1.00		Does not qualify			Rank MG1. Sps poor MG1 with odd patches of Knap.etc
237	Rufforth Field (5-12)	Rufforth	548512	5.20					Semi improved grassland.
238	Rufforth Field (5-13)	Rufforth	546510	0.80					Scrub
239	Rufforth Grange Scrub (RU3)	Rufforth	544508	0.60					Scrub.
240	Hannam Lane Meadow (RU13)	Rufforth	521515	2.10		Does not qualify			Semi Improved Grassland. Sps poor
241	Upper Pop Moat (UP3)	Upper Poppleton	563551	2.00		Does not qualify			Old Grassland. Survey also for Hymenoptera Archaeological Site
242	Clifton Bridge embankments	Upper Poppleton	571544	0.01		Does not qualify			Aculeate Hymenoptera
243	Ouse Washlands, Poppleton Ings	By Upper Poppleton Railway Bridge	56/54 569550	23.40		Does not qualify			Neutral Grassland
244	Ext to West Carr Masks	Elvington	701473	3.80					Recently used for flood alleviation.
Total No.	24			100.61	350				

Sites of special scientific interest (SSSI)								
Name	Location	GR	Area	Length	Status			
Acaster South Ings	Acaster Malbis	594437	38.30		SSSI			Flood Plain Meadow
Askham Bog	Dringhouses/	570480	44.70		SSSI Nature Reserve			Valley Mire - Bog,Fen,Woodland
Church Ings	Naburn	594456	6.67		SSSI			Flood Plain Meadow
Derwent Ings	Wheldrake	696443	136.00		Ramsar Site NNR SSSI SPA SAC			Flood Plain Meadow
Fulford Ings	Fulford	608491	12.67		SSSI			Flood Plain Meadow
Heslington Tilmire	Heslington	638475	46.67		SSSI			Tall Herb Fen Marsh Grassland
Naburn Marsh	Naburn	600479	13.32		SSSI			Flood Plain Meadow
River Derwent	Eastern Boundary	8287- 8257	18.00	18000	SSSI SAC			River
Strensall Common	Strensall	650600	578.75		SSSI SAC			Lowland Heath
Total - 9			895.08	18000				

Hedgerows of SINC Value

	Site	Location	GR	Area (ha)	Length (m)	Designation Criteria No. Sps
Within Existing SINC						
17	Germany Beck	Fulford	616489-614488		300	12
Proposed						
20	West Wood Lane (AB1)	Askham Bryant	545486-544490		1000	10
K16 (101)	Old Hall Farm	Kexby	703501		250	12
P5	Newlands Lane	Upper Poppleton	540544		720	10
Ask2	Askham Fields Lane	Askham Bryan	553481		370	11
Elv1		Elvington			275	11
H79	White Horse Farm	Huntington	634567		245	10
H120/ H120b	White Horse Farm	Huntington	634567		240	13
H49	White Horse Farm	Huntington	624557		185	10
H126	White Horse Farm	Huntington			270	10
H18	White Horse Farm	Huntington	619545		315	10
K35	Old Hall Farm	Kexby	695491		360	11
K7	Old Hall Farm	Kexby	702506		270	12
Kel 10	Kelfield Lodge Farm	Naburn	?			10
Nab1		Naburn	613458		290	11
Nab8		Naburn	606442		200	10
R20	Grasslands farm	Rufforth	525500		168	10
R24	Grasslands farm	Rufforth	525500		210	11
SF1	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	660562		230	11
SF10	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	665555		300	10
SF3	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	662559		400	14

SF9	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	665555		300	10
SF7	Carrbank Lane	Stockton on the Forest	660561		230	12
W100	Stud Farm	Wigginton	584591		266	13
W107a	Stud Farm	Wigginton	584593		130	12
W107b	Stud Farm	Wigginton	584592		300	11
W107c	Stud Farm	Wigginton	586590		155	11
W101	Stud Farm	Wigginton	583592		322	10
W138	Stud Farm	Wigginton	584590		220	12
W139	Stud Farm	Wigginton			270	10
W96ab	Stud Farm	Wigginton	588590		360	11
W96d	Stud Farm	Wigginton	587593		170	10
W97	Stud Farm	Wigginton	589589		288	15
ST1		Strensall			210	10
ST7		Strensall			300	10
E50	Church Lane	Elvington	999474-697473		236	12
H50	Turbary Lane	Huntington	642563-642565		211	10
AR1	Askham Richard	Askham Richard	538480-540481		230	11
	Cherry Lane	Knavesmire	586495-589495		300	11
	Cherry Lane	Knavesmire	586495-589495		300	11
	Naburn Ings	Fulford	603482-602478		500	10
Total No.	41				11896	

SINC/ Wildlife Sites

Title	Total No	Total Area	Total Length
SSSI's	9	895.08	18000
SAC's	3	714.75	18000
SPA's	1	136 ha (682 ha)	
NNR's	1	136 ha (682 ha)	
Total Statutory Protection	9	895.08	18000
Existing SINC's (retained)	37	426.40	7855
New Sinc's - Sinc Quality	49	154.53	24260
Sinc Hedges	41		11896
Total Sinc (excl. hedges)	86	580.93	
Total Sinc (incl. Hedges)	127		32115
SINC LNR's	3	54.65	
Non Sinc LNR's (1 prt SINC)	2	12.30	
Total LNR's	4	66.95	
Non SINC Sites with Social Value	2	5.70	0
New Sinc's - Possible	15	173.61	1900
Sincs to be De-notified	5	5.75	950
Sites of Interest (Not Sinc Quality)	87	330.51	18710
Created Sites	11	22.70	550
Total Sites of Interest (Not SINC value)	122	371.26	
Other sites(Unknown value)	18	155.50	750

Annex C

Map showing Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites of Wildlife Importance

(Copies of this large map will be sent to Members)

Annex D

Map showing Sites of Wildlife Importance

(Copies of this large map will be sent to Members)

Annex E

The Guidelines to Site Selection

(Copies of this will be available in the Members' Library)

Annex F

Habitat breakdown for York

Primary Sites - Habitat Breakdown

Habitat	SSSI	SINC	Length	SINC Proposed	Length	Linear Area	Total Area		No. Existing SSSI	SINC	No. Proposed	Total No.
Grassland - Calcareous		4.70		5.30			10.00		0	2	2	4
			0		0			0				0
Grassland - Neutral		60.10		53.00			115.38		0	11	23	34
			4005		340	2.28		4345.00				0
Grassland - Neutral Flood Meadow	206.96	77.50		13.20			90.70		5	4	3	7
			0		0			0.00				0
Grassland - Acid		22.85		9.10			32.30		0	5	2	7
			300		420	0.35		720.00				0
Heathland	578.75	150.90		34.20			185.10		1	4	1	5
			0		0			0.00				0
Ponds		4.25		4.33			8.58		0	2	5	7
								0.00				0
Ditches							0.00		0	1(+1)	1	2
			1250.00		400.00			1650.00	0	3	1	4
Rivers and River banks		3.65			0.00		3.65		0	1	1	2
	18000.00		3250		20600			23850.00	1	2		2
Fens and Marshes	91.37	2.30		5.10			7.40		2	2	4	6
								0.00				0
Parkland		5.30		0			5.30		0	1	0	1
		0			0			0.00				0
Woodland		82.80		27.10			109.90		0	7	9	16
								0.00				0
Scrub		10.75		0.00			12.75		0	(3)	0	
			4005		0	2.00		4005.00				0
Hedges			300		10796			11096.00	0	(1)	37	37
		425.10		151.33		4.63	581.06	45666.00	9	43 (+7)	52 + 37	97
Sps												134
Mammals/Birds									0	3		
Amphibians									0			1
Fungi									0			1
Invert									0	(1)		2