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Chelmsford Local Wildlife Sites Review 2024

**Client**

Chelmsford City Council

Author(s)

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Date

October 2024



Essex County Council

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Version	Date	Author	Description of changes
1.0	29/10/2024	Neil Harvey	Draft for comment
1.1	08/11/2024	Neil Harvey	Final version, incorporating client comments
Title of report		Chelmsford Local Wildlife Sites Review	
Client		Chelmsford City Council	
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) includes at Paragraph 185 reference to the need for development plans to identify locally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity as part of measures to safeguard wildlife-rich habitats and wider local ecological networks. It goes on to say that plans should also promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of such ecological networks.
- 1.2. Within Essex, sites identified as having nature conservation value at a county level are known as Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS). Although not receiving any statutory protection, it is expected that LoWS will be protected from significant harm within the planning system. Many LoWS are designated on the basis of the Priority Habitats that they contain, and so additional weight should be given to the need for their protection as a key contribution to the maintenance of biodiversity in England.
- 1.3. With the advent of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, as a requirement of the Environment Act 2021, LoWS and the ecological networks of which they are a part serve a more proactive and positive role within the conservation of biodiversity. Such locally designated sites of nature conservation value are considered to be Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) and form part of the core of the Nature Recovery Network, providing the focus for action to restore, enhance and recreate natural habitats throughout the landscape and available to all local communities. This should include measures to:
 - Improve the quality of LoWS, by improving their management, for nature conservation outcomes
 - Increase the area of existing LoWS, by creating new habitats to buffer them and improve their resilience
 - Better connect LoWS in the landscape, to facilitate the movement of species and so improve their ability to respond to environmental change (including climate change)
 - Create new high-quality habitats in the right locations so that they rapidly achieve the condition needed to be designated as LoWS
- 1.4. Since their original identification in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Essex LoWS have typically been selected as part of borough, district or unitary authority 'reviews' commissioned by the relevant local authority. Since 2010, Essex LoWS Selection Criteria have been published to guide the designation of LoWS, the most recent version having been prepared in 2016. In line with national guidance on Local Sites, areas which have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for the same features, have not been included in this Local Wildlife Sites register.
- 1.5. The LoWS network is an inclusive one, meaning that any site that objectively satisfies one or more of the published selection criteria should be considered as a LoWS and afforded appropriate consideration, whether or not formal designation has been completed.
- 1.6. This report has been prepared by Place Services on behalf of Chelmsford City Council as part of their work to prepare a new development plan. It details the methodology followed during a partial review of the LoWS within Chelmsford carried out during 2024, which updates the evidence base required to support Local Plan Review and future development management decisions. Information about sites not covered by this review can be found in the Local Wildlife Site Review 2016, prepared by EECOS and available within the evidence base on the Local Plan webpages¹.

¹ <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-local-plan/adopted-local-plan/evidence-base-for-the-local-plan/>

- 1.7. Identification of land as a Local Wildlife Site within this report does not confer any right of public access to the Site, above and beyond any Public Rights of Way that may exist. The vast majority of the Sites are in private ownership, and this should be respected at all times. Guidance on accessibility is provided within each Site description.
- 1.8. Whilst reasonable effort has been made to ensure accurate mapping of the site boundaries, the accompanying Local Wildlife Site maps should be considered as being illustrative only and, if necessary, they should be interpreted on site by a suitably qualified ecologist with reference to the LoWS Selection Criteria.

2. Methodology

- 2.1. Local Wildlife Sites (previously referred to as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) were first identified in Chelmsford in 1992 by Essex Wildlife Trust, as part of a county-wide process. Subsequently, these sites were reviewed by Essex Ecology Services in 2004 and 2015.
- 2.2. This review has considered those designated Local Wildlife Sites assessed to have an ecological connection to sites identified within the Preferred Options Local Plan for development, either for housing or employment purposes. Each Site was visited by a suitably qualified ecologist and information was collected on the habitats present, and their condition. The sites were then assessed against the current Essex Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria (see Appendix 2 for a summary of selection criteria).
- 2.3. Any existing Site considered to not meet any of the published criteria for which they were selected, with reference to the previous site descriptions, are recommended for deletion from the LoWS register. Boundaries have been remapped where parts of Sites no longer meet criteria, or where additional qualifying habitat has been identified. Site descriptions have been reviewed and adjusted as necessary to reflect any changes within the Sites and to provide as full a description of the habitats present as possible. Candidate sites considered to meet one or more criteria are proposed for inclusion in the register.
- 2.4. As part of the assessment of the review Sites, their condition was estimated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment methodologies relevant to the habitats present, as far as was practically possible. Condition assessment methodologies for rivers and bodies of water involve in depth methodologies that could not be completed within the scope of this review. The results of the condition assessment are presented as one of 'good', 'moderate' or 'poor'. An additional descriptor relating to any observable trend in condition has been added, subject to the surveyor's professional judgement: 'stable', 'improving', or 'declining'.
- 2.5. The Site descriptions also highlight any management issues that were identified during the site visits, either as a result of current inappropriate management methods, lack of management, or through the use of the Sites for activities other than delivering nature conservation outcomes.
- 2.6. Nine sites identified during the 2015 review as Potential Local Wildlife Sites (PLoWS) were also visited and assessed to determine whether they now met any LoWS site selection criteria, or if they should remain as PLoWS, or if they were no longer likely to achieve LoWS status and should be deleted.
- 2.7. For consistency and clarity, all site codes have been retained from the previous LoWS register, which means that any new sites have a previously unused code, and there are gaps in the numbering where sites have been deleted or merged.

3. Results

Summary

3.1. As a result of this review, the following changes are proposed:

- One new LoWS of 0.3 hectares to be added
- One PLoWS of 5.6 hectares to be selected as a LoWS
- One PLoWS of 0.9 hectares to be added to an existing LoWS
- 14 LoWS to be increased by a total of 74.4 hectares
- Two LoWS to be reduced by a total of 3.9 hectares
- One LoWS of 0.1 hectares has been added to another existing LoWS (meaning its code is no longer in use)
- One LoWS of 18.1 hectares to be demoted to PLoWS
- Six PLoWS to be deleted
- One PLoWS to be retained

3.2. Overall, there are now 171 Sites with a total area of 1713.4 hectares, the same number of sites and a net increase of 57.9 hectares since the last review in 2015. The percentage of Chelmsford covered by LoWS designation is now 5%.

3.3. Full details of all LoWS are included within the accompanying Chelmsford LoWS Register 2024.

Changes to existing Local Wildlife Sites

3.4. The following table of previously designated LoWS includes a brief summary of the proposed changes, if any, applied as a result of the current assessment.

Table 1. Changes to existing LoWS at this review

Site code	Site Name	Change	Change in area (ha)
Ch2	Bushy Hays and Ashwood Springs	Review site ChPLoWS1 reinstated into Ch2	+0.9
Ch16	Boyton Cross Special Roadside Verge (SRV)	Matched to SRV boundaries and name changed from Boyton Cross Verges	+0.3
Ch17	Nightingale Wood	Track and waste storage area removed	-0.4
Ch68	Chelmer Valley Riverside	Re-mapped to add additional river corridor semi-natural vegetation; better matched to Local Nature Reserve (LNR) boundary where appropriate; fully canalised town centre section removed	+5.1
Ch87	Chelmsford Water Meadows	Re-mapped to add additional river corridor semi-natural vegetation	+2.1
Ch109	River Chelmer	Remapped to include bankside vegetation	+11.3
Ch113	Boreham Road Gravel Pits	Additional semi-natural and post-industrial habitat added along river corridor	+49.3
Ch114	Old Hare Wood Complex	Adjacent secondary woodland added, green lane connection to Hale Wood reinstated	+1.9
Ch115	Waterhall Meadows	Re-mapped to include Sandon Brook and its bankside vegetation	+0.4
Ch118	Hall Wood	Remapped for greater accuracy	+0.9
Ch123	The Chapel	Very small area of surfaced drive and path removed	0.0
Ch125	Boreham Meads	Remapped to remove bankside habitat now in Ch109; and to include adjacent SRV	-3.5
Ch129	Rectory Wood	Additional woodland habitat to north and Colam Lane verges added	+0.4

Site code	Site Name	Change	Change in area (ha)
Ch130	Hollybred Wood	Re-mapped for accuracy	+0.1
Ch132	Little Gibcracks	No change	0.0
Ch165	Marconi Ponds Nature Reserve	No change	0.0
Ch177	Long Spring Wood	No change	0.0
Ch178	Danbury Park	Re-mapped for accuracy	+1.8
Ch179	Riffhams Lane Wood	Additional old woodland habitat at south end included	+0.4

Deleted Sites

3.5. The following LoWS are recommended for deletion as part of this review.

Table 2. LoWS to be deleted at this review

Site code	Site Name	Reason for deletion
Ch104	Sandon Pit	Demoted to PLoWS due to operational changes
Ch127	Colam Lane Verges	Added to adjacent LoWS Ch129 Rectory Wood

3.6. Neither of these sites is actually lost from the network. Colam Lane Verges has been incorporated into the adjacent LoWS, as they are part of the same ecological unit and any boundary between them is entirely arbitrary. Sandon Pit has been demoted to PLoWS status pending ongoing habitat changes associated with its operational status (see below).

New Local Wildlife Sites

3.7. The following new sites were identified during this review as meeting one or more of the current selection criteria and are proposed for inclusion in the LoWS network.

Table 3. LoWS to be added at this review

Site code	Site name	Area (ha)	Summary description
Ch15	Newland Osiers	5.6	ChPLoWS4 reinstated to previous LoWS code
Ch187	Essex Regiment Way Special Roadside Verge	0.3	Species-rich grassland habitat

3.8. Newland Osiers was previously a LoWS but was demoted in 2015 when the natural habitats were perceived to have declined in quality and as a response to active disturbance of the lake with machinery at the time of the review. With that disturbance now over, the overall mosaic of habitats has been assessed as meeting the necessary site selection criterion.

3.9. The Special Roadside Verge on Essex Regiment Way was designated as a SRV at about the time of the last review in 2015. Although relatively new, the grassland habitat of the verge is species-rich and so represents an increasingly scarce ecological resource in the Essex countryside.

Potential LoWS

3.10. PLoWS are sites that cannot be shown to meet any of the site selection criteria, but that may either be close to that threshold and capable of meeting it in the near future or are lacking in the necessary survey data to evidence selection. Thus, the main routes to full LoWS status are either additional survey work

aimed at demonstrating their value, or management actions that result in an enhancement of the site to the point that one or more criterion is met. Following this partial review, there are now two PLoWS.

Table 4. Potential LoWS

Site code	Site name	Area (ha)	Notes
ChPLOWs9	Channels	76.2	Ongoing development site
ChPLOWs16	Sandon Pit	40.5	Operational site, lacking ecological stability

- 3.11. Both of these sites have previously been designated LoWS and both represent substantial areas of land that could still make a significant contribution to biodiversity. Channels was demoted to PLoWS at the last review in 2015 following the commencement of development in the area.
- 3.12. Sandon Pit is a long-standing aggregates and waste site that remains operational and so is subject to ongoing change. The features for which it was originally designated were two large, deep pits surrounded by open mosaic habitat. The southern pit has been completely filled with inert waste and is now largely bare ground. The northern pit is currently being infilled. There are various areas of compensatory habitat around the former pits, but none of it has yet reached a state of ecological stability that allows it to be accurately assessed for LoWS status. Restoration plans include habitat aimed at supporting invertebrate and Great Crested Newt populations, but no data is yet available to judge the success of these measures.
- 3.13. Once operations have ceased and the resulting habitats have demonstrated some level of stability, it is likely that at least part of the site can be reinstated as a LoWS.
- 3.14. Channels is a former golf course that was designated for the population of Great Crested Newts supported by its ponds and associated habitats. The golf course and some of the surrounding area, consisting of aggregate extraction sites, is now in the process of development, largely for residential purposes. The green infrastructure incorporated in the development plans includes some compensatory habitat for Great Crested Newts. There is also potential for there to be a strategically important network of habitats across the wider site once development is complete.
- 3.15. The following sites were PLoWS but have been assessed at this review as no longer showing the likelihood of reaching the necessary level of value without a fundamental change in their management and/or condition.

Table 5. Potential LoWS to be deleted at this review

Site code	Site name	Notes
ChPLOWs2	Road Verge 2, Roxwell	No significant species or communities present
ChPLOWs3	Skreens Park, Roxwell	No substantial value in the site's grassland habitat
ChPLOWs7	Wellhope Meadow, Ford End	Habitat adversely affected by willow planting and game rearing activity
ChPLOWs11	Airfield Apron, Boreham	Site is now an active aggregates site, and all original habitat has been lost
ChPLOWs12	Sandon Riverside, Chelmsford	No habitat of substantial value identified
ChPLOWs13	New Lodge, Little Baddow	Land incorporated into garden management



4. Local Geological Sites

- 4.1. Geo Essex has kindly provided details of the sites of geological interest in Chelmsford that have already been assessed as meeting the relevant selection criteria and have been ratified as Local Geological Sites (LoGS).
- 4.2. There are eight LoGS already designated, two of which coincide with LoWS. These sites, included in Table 5 below with a brief description of their value, should be referenced along with LoWS as 'locally designated sites' within the emerging Chelmsford Local Plan.

Table 6. Chelmsford Local Geological Sites

Place	Site name	Grid reference	Brief description of site
Great Baddow	ChG1 Beehive Lane Sarsen Stone	TL71940554	A sarsen stone 90cm x 70cm x 60cm (3' x 2'4" x 2') in size sits in the car park of the Beehive Public House in Beehive Lane. It was obtained from the old 'Beehive' gravel quarry before 1906.
Danbury	ChG2 Buell Spring	TL78390451	Buell Spring on Danbury Hill is a good example of a natural spring. The spring has been used as a water supply in the past and now issues from a cast iron pipe. The spring is on land owned by the National Trust and adjacent to the extensive disused gravel pits on Danbury Common. Access is available at all times.
Little Waltham	ChG3 Channels Puddingstone	TL72381118	By the entrance to the former Channels Golf Club in Belsteads Farm Lane is a large boulder of Hertfordshire puddingstone on a mound of grass by the roadside. It is one of the largest puddingstone boulders in Essex, measuring 2.1 metres long by 1.2 metres high by 0.4 metres in thickness.
Danbury	ChG4 Danbury Common Gravel Pits	TL784047	In woodland in the northern part of Danbury Common are extensive disused gravel pits which formerly worked the Danbury Gravel, a thick layer of orange-brown sandy gravel that caps Danbury Hill.
Highwood	ChG6 Parson's Spring Gravel Pits	TL62390284	The woodland of Parsons Spring contains a number of disused gravel pits. The origin of this gravel, known as Stanmore Gravel (formerly called 'pebble gravel'), is unclear. It dates from the early part of the Ice Age and may have been deposited by northward-flowing tributaries of the pre-diversion Thames, or it may be of marine origin.
Sandon	ChG9 Sandon Pit	TL747043	The disused Sandon gravel pit has good exposures in Kesgrave Sands and Gravels (Thames gravel). Much of the pit has not been restored and the quarry slopes and edges are much as they were when quarrying ceased. This makes the site of interest for geology as well as wildlife. Sandon Pit is also a Local Wildlife Site.
South Woodham Ferrers	ChG11 South Woodham Ferrers Foreshore	TQ804956	The foreshore at South Woodham Ferrer is an exceptionally important site with many fine sections of recent alluvial deposits, resting on London Clay, beautifully exposed and constantly being eroded.
Stock	ChG12 Stock Road Gravel Pits	TQ69659962	These pits are an important geological site because it was one of the very few places where the 'Bagshot Pebble Bed' was formerly exposed.

4.3. A further 6 sites have been identified as Potential LoGS (PLoGS) on the basis that they meet the necessary selection criteria but have not yet been ratified by a Local Sites Partnership. These sites are listed in Table 6 and are proposed for inclusion as part of this current review.

Table 7. Potential LoGS

Location	Site name	Grid reference	
South Woodham Ferrers	Bushy Hill	TQ813986	Bushy Hill is a prominent and locally important landscape feature and a good example of natural landslips. It is the southernmost point of a ridge of high ground overlooking South Woodham Ferrers. The hill is composed of London Clay capped by Claygate Beds with a relatively thin capping of gravel of unknown age.
Little Waltham	Channels Till Section	TL72171100	In the new Channels development, a section through the Anglian till (boulder clay) has been preserved and provided with a signboard. It is all that remains of a cliff of till that was the edge of the former Broomfield Gravel Pit. The exposed rock was laid down by the Anglian Ice Sheet 450,000 years ago. The section is of educational and scientific interest containing rocks transported by the ice from the north.
Bicknacre	Fultons Farmhouse Boulder	TL788006	On private land, next to the garage of Fultons Farmhouse, is a splendid boulder of basalt 90 centimetres (3 feet) long. Large erratic boulders of basalt are very rare in Essex. The actual size of the boulder is 90cm x 60cm x 35cm. This boulder was probably transported from Scotland by the Anglian ice sheet about 450,000 years ago. Bicknacre is close to the southern limit of the ice sheet.
Runwell	Running Well	TQ75119657	An ancient spring that gave its name to the village of Runwell. Also known as Our Lady's Well.
Boreham	Russell Green Gravel Pit	TL746125	A former gravel quarry providing exposures of Kesgrave Sands and Gravels (laid down by a former route of the Thames) dating from the early Ice Age. There is currently a fine vertical cliff of gravel on the west side of the lake, visible from the road. The site is privately owned with no public access.
Danbury	Scrubs Wood Nature Reserve	TL789058	This site may have been a former gravel pit as the steep banks have plenty of gravel visible. The Danbury Gravel clearly dates from the Ice Age but its precise origin is still not clear, despite various investigations over the last 150 years.

Appendix 1 LoWS selection criteria (from ELSP, 2016)

Habitat Criteria:

Habitat Criterion 1 (HC1) – Ancient Woodland Sites

“All sites considered to be ancient woodland shall be eligible for selection.”

Habitat Criterion 2 (HC2) – Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland on Non-ancient Sites

“All significant areas of non-ancient Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland will be eligible for selection.”

Habitat Criterion 3 (HC3) – Other Priority Habitat Woodland Types on Non-ancient Sites

“Any area of Lowland Beech and Yew woodland (e.g. NVC type W15) or Wet Woodland, as defined in the Habitats of Principal Importance in England descriptions, will be eligible for selection.”

Habitat Criterion 4 (HC4) – Wood-pasture and Parkland

“Any remnant area of mature parkland and/or wood-pasture, preferably with veteran trees and/or a semi-natural ground flora will be eligible for selection, together with any more recent parkland sites that support inherent ecological interest and whose ecological value is not compromised by amenity use or other primary functions”.

Habitat Criterion 5 (HC5) – Woody Scrub

“Stands of woody scrub that support exceptional diversity, uncommon shrub assemblages, and/or which provide a valuable component of a site’s ecological value will be eligible for selection”.

Habitat Criterion 6 (HC6) – Veteran Trees

“Veteran trees known or suspected to be of specific nature conservation interest, for example supporting significant invertebrate assemblages, and/or epiphytic bryophytes and lichens, will be eligible for selection, even in the absence of other associated semi-natural habitat. The tree or tree group should encompass a sufficient area with appropriate habitat conditions for the associated species interest to be maintained”.

Habitat Criterion 7 (HC7) – Old Orchards

“All traditional orchards will be eligible for selection, particularly those that have retained mature fruit trees.”

Habitat Criterion 8 (HC8) – Hedgerows and Green Lanes

“Hedgerows and green lanes shall be eligible for selection if they are assessed as having significant ecological value in terms of:

- *their intrinsic flora and fauna*
- *a defined ecological function in the landscape”*

Habitat Criterion 9 (HC9) – Lowland Meadows

“All old, largely unimproved grasslands identifiable as falling within the definition of the NVC MG5 Lowland Meadow vegetation type will be eligible for selection.”

Habitat Criterion 10 (HC10) – River Floodplain

“Significant areas of river floodplain grassland should be considered for selection, especially those areas still subject to seasonal inundation. The role of such grasslands as wildlife corridors should also be considered”.

Habitat Criterion 11 (HC11) – Other Neutral Grasslands

“Unimproved or semi-improved¹² pastures or meadows that do not clearly fit criterion HC9 shall be eligible for selection if they support features that indicate long continuity as grassland or support notable populations of invertebrates. Special consideration should be given to sites listed in the Grassland Inventory for Essex and to sites supporting plants listed in Appendix⁴”.

Habitat Criterion 12 (HC12) – Lowland Calcareous Grassland

“All areas of grassland supporting assemblages of typical chalk grassland species included in Appendix 5 should be considered for selection.”

Habitat Criterion 13 (HC13) – Heathland and Acid Grassland

“Any site supporting characteristic heathland or acid grassland vegetation, including deteriorated sites with the potential for restoration shall be eligible for selection”.

Habitat Criterion 14 (HC14) – Lowland Fen Vegetation

“Significant areas of lowland fen vegetation¹⁴, or such habitat known to support notable species, will be eligible for selection. Usually such sites will include the associated water body or source of groundwater, if applicable.”

Habitat Criterion 15 (HC15) – Reedbeds

*“All significant stands of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) will be eligible for selection.”*

Habitat Criterion 16 (HC16) – Lakes and Reservoirs

“Lake and reservoir LoWS identified on the basis of Mosaic Habitat or Species Criteria should be of sufficient size and habitat quality to maintain the seasonal or resident population of that species. Where a seasonal species utilises several water bodies during the course of its stay, all such bodies should be selected”.

Habitat Criterion 17 (HC17) – Ponds

“Pond LoWS identified on the basis of Species Criteria should be of sufficient size and habitat quality to maintain the population of that species at a sustainable level.”

Habitat Criterion 18 (HC18) – Rivers

“Where a section of river, stream, canal or borrow dyke is designated via Species Selection Criteria, a minimum 500 metre section of that water course shall be designated (250 metres upstream and downstream of a positive sample site or 250 metres upstream and downstream of the end points of a cluster of records from the same population). The Site shall be deemed to extend at least 2 metres away from the top of the bank into the adjacent habitat.”

Habitat Criterion 19 (HC19) – Extended Riverine Habitat

“Where two designated sections of watercourse are separated by no more than 1000 metres of undesignated water, the intervening section may be included within one large site, if it is deemed that the central section has the potential to be restored to good condition or realistically colonised by the species concerned”.

Habitat Criterion 20 (HC20) – Complex Riverine Habitats

“Sections of river that support a suite of natural features, leading to a complex riverine habitat structure will be eligible for selection.”

Habitat Criterion 21 (HC21) – Coastal Grazing Marsh

“All areas of coastal grazing marsh shall be eligible for selection”.

Habitat Criterion 22 (HC22) – Tidal Transition Zones

“All sites exhibiting an unrestricted upper saltmarsh to grassland transition will be eligible for selection”.

Habitat Criterion 23 (HC23) – Saltmarsh and Mudflats

“All areas of saltmarsh and other intertidal habitats outside of SSSIs will be considered for selection. Newly created habitats within managed retreat zones can be considered once they have acquired a typical flora and use by other coastal wildlife is demonstrated”.

Habitat Criterion 24 (HC24) – Saline Lagoons and Borrow Dyke Habitats

“Sections of borrow dyke and tidal or semi-tidal brackish or saline lagoons known to support a flora and fauna characteristic of saline lagoon conditions will be eligible for selection”.

Habitat Criterion 25 (HC25) – Sand Dune and Shingle Beach Vegetation

“All areas of sand dune and shingle habitat exhibiting a characteristic land form and flora will be eligible for selection”.

Habitat Criterion 26 (HC26) – Maritime Cliffs and Slopes

“Maritime Cliffs and Slopes identified on account of one or more significant species or groups of species should be of sufficient extent, either in isolation or as a clearly recognisable chain of inter-related sites, should be of sufficient extent to include habitat capable of supporting sustainable populations of the species concerned.”

Habitat Criterion 27 (HC27) – Post-industrial Sites

“Brownfield/post-industrial sites or derelict buildings/structures of high nature conservation value will be eligible for selection if they are known to support notable species or where it can be demonstrated they provide the habitat qualities necessary to support such species. The site may include sections of land that might not otherwise qualify for selection, if they provide one or more of the ecological requirements of the notable species”.

Habitat Criterion 28 (HC28) – Small-Component Mosaics

“A site comprising two or more sub-habitats, each of which just fails to be selected as a Site within its own main habitat criterion group or on species grounds, will be eligible for selection”.

Habitat Criterion 29 (HC29) – Habitat Extension Mosaics

“Where a site that would not on its own qualify for consideration as a LoWS provides a significant and clearly identifiable extension to the habitat of an adjacent LoWS, then the habitat extension area should be added to the LoWS”.

Habitat Criterion 30 (HC30) – Wildlife Corridors

“Where two or more LoWS are physically linked by additional habitat of a type that would allow the dispersal and interchange of species within each site, then these corridors should be included within the LoWS.”

Habitat Criterion 31 (HC31) – Accessible Natural Greenspace 57

“A site that comes close to qualifying under other selection criteria can be eligible for selection based upon its amenity, cultural and/or education value close to a centre of population.”

Species Criteria:

Species Criterion 1 (SC1) – Vascular Plants

“Sites supporting significant populations of ‘notable’ vascular plants will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 2 (SC2) – Bryophytes

“Sites supporting significant populations of ‘notable’ bryophytes will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 3 (SC3) – Lichens

“Sites supporting significant populations of ‘notable’ lichens will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 4 (SC4) – Fungi

“Sites supporting significant populations of ‘notable’ fungi will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 5 (SC5) – Notable Bird Species

“Discrete habitat areas known to support significant populations of notable bird species, whether breeding or over-wintering, will be eligible for selection.”

Species Criterion 6 (SC6) – Exceptional Populations of Common Bird Species

“Discrete habitat areas that regularly support exceptional breeding, feeding, roosting/resting or over-wintering populations of relatively commonplace species will be considered for selection”.

Species Criterion 7 (SC7) – Dormouse

“All sites confirmed as supporting populations of Dormouse will be eligible for selection. Sites should include all adjoining areas of suitable Dormouse habitat and important movement corridors (HC30)”.

Species Criterion 8 (SC8) – Barbastelle (and other Annex II) bats

“All sites containing a maternity roost of Barbastelle bats (or other Annex II bat species should they be recorded in Essex in the future) will be eligible for selection.”

Species Criterion 9 (SC9) – Other Bat Breeding Colonies

“All sites, except dwelling houses, regularly supporting breeding colonies of four or more bat species, or an exceptional breeding roost or colony of one or more species, will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 10 (SC10) – Bat Hibernation Sites

“All sites, except dwelling houses, supporting exceptional numbers of hibernating bats of one or more species will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 11 (SC11) – Protection of Otter Holts

“A confirmed, natural or artificial, well established and regularly used otter holt, including an appropriate buffer zone of up to 250 metres up and down stream, will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 12 (SC12) – Breeding Water Vole Colonies

“Any watercourse or wetland system supporting a viable breeding population of Water Vole will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 13 (SC13) - Hotspots for Amphibian Diversity

“Any water body, other than a garden pond, known to support significant populations of three or more species of breeding amphibian will be eligible for selection.”

Species Criterion 14 (SC14) - Palmate Newts

“Any water body, other than a garden pond, known to support a breeding population of Palmate Newt will be eligible for selection.”

Species Criterion 15 (SC15) - Great Crested Newts

“Any water body, other than a garden pond, known to support an exceptional breeding population of Great Crested Newts will be eligible for selection.”

Species Criterion 16 (SC16) - Hotspots for Reptile Diversity

“Any site supporting significant populations of three or more reptile species will be eligible for selection”.

Species Criterion 17 (SC17) – White-clawed Crayfish

“All populations of White-clawed crayfish will be eligible for selection. Any designated Site should include suitable buffering both upstream and downstream”.

Species Criterion 18 (SC18) – Invertebrates listed as Species of Principal Importance in England

“All significant populations of terrestrial and freshwater aquatic invertebrates listed as Species of Principal Importance in England will be eligible for selection.”

Species Criteria 19 (SC19) – Important invertebrate assemblages

“Significant populations of notable invertebrate species, and/or important invertebrate assemblages (i.e. unusual or uncommon assemblages, or exceptional diversity) will be eligible for selection. In deciding the significance of a species, reference should be made to any available Essex Red Data List, national Red Data Book or “Review”.

Species Criteria 20 (SC20) – Notable ‘flagship’ macro-invertebrates

“Exceptional populations or high species diversity of non-notable macro-invertebrates (e.g. dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies) will be eligible for selection”.

Place Services

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