

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Monday 16 December 2019
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors M Burton, Joy, Khadka, Mortimer (Chairman), Powell (Vice-Chairman), Purle, D Rose, M Rose and Young

The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.

AGENDA

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| 1. Apologies for Absence | |
| 2. Notification of Substitute Members | |
| 3. Urgent Items | |
| 4. Notification of Visiting Members | |
| 5. Disclosures by Members and Officers | |
| 6. Disclosures of Lobbying | |
| 7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information. | |
| 8. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 12 November 2019 | 1 - 9 |
| 9. Presentation of Petitions (if any) | |
| 10. Questions and answer session for members of the public (if any) | |
| 11. Committee Work Programme | 10 - 11 |
| 12. Presentation on Age UK by Councillor B Vizzard | |
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Issued on Friday 6 December 2019

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk.

In order to speak at this meeting, please contact Democratic Services using the contact details above, by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting, i.e. by 5 p.m. on Thursday, 12 December 2019. If asking a question, you will need to provide the full text in writing. If making a statement, you will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk.

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to the **Policy and Resources Committee**, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by **three** Councillors, to the **Head of Policy and Communications** by: **25 November 2019**.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2019

Present: Councillors Kimmance, Mortimer (Chairman), Perry, Powell, Purle, Mrs Robertson, D Rose, M Rose and Young

Also Present: Councillors B Hinder and McKay

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor M Burton
- Councillor Mrs Joy
- Councillor Khadka

28. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that the following Substitute Members were present:

- Councillor Perry for Councillor M Burton
- Councillor Kimmance for Councillor Mrs Joy
- Councillor Mrs Robertson for Councillor Khadka

29. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman informed the Committee that he had agreed to take an urgent update to Item 17 – Draft Bio-diversity Strategy. The reason for urgency was that the document provided an update to the Strategy already on the agenda and it was important that Members had the definitive document when considering that item.

30. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman indicated that he intended to change the order of business to take Agenda Item 18 – Request for Village Green application after Agenda Item 10 - Questions and Answer Session for Members of the Public.

31. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor B Hinder was present as a Visiting Member, and indicated that he would like to speak on Agenda Item 18 – Request for Village Green application.

Councillor McKay indicated that he was present to support the questioner, Ms Bonnet.

32. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

33. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillor M Rose stated that she had been lobbied on Item 12 – Member Agenda Item Request – GP Surgery Provision.

34. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

35. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2019

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

36. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

37. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Ms Dee Bonett asked the following question of the Chairman:-

"Would the Chairman consider changing the clause in the Pet Policy, as it stands currently, to enable those who are residing in Temporary Accommodation, to continue to do so with their pets, until permanent accommodation can be found with their pets?"

The clause in the Pet Policy currently states:

"..... Whilst under this policy you have been permitted to home your pet(s) with you in your temporary accommodation. You may be offered accommodation to end the Council's housing duty to you where the landlord is a housing association or private landlord. The housing provider is likely to have their own policy as to whether pets are permitted in their accommodation and the Council does not have the authority to overrule their decision. In normal circumstances if you were to be

offered accommodation where pets are not permitted, the offer of accommodation would not be considered as an unsuitable offer on the basis that your pet could not join you... "

The Chairman asked the Head of Housing and Community Services to respond and he commented as follows:-

- That he had reviewed the last six months of lettings and there had been no refusals from applicants leaving temporary accommodation on the basis that they could not take their pets with them.
- Looking at the number of offers made generally through the housing register, in particular to homeless households, Officers had observed that just over 50% of those lettings had restrictions around pets. So to introduce the change being proposed, this may have a significant impact but it was an unknown factor as there had not been any refusals on those grounds. The Head of Housing and Communities suggested that the Council would put their efforts into persuading landlords and housing associations who make those offers to come more in line with the Council's position then hopefully the situation described would not become a problem in the future.

Ms Bonett then asked a supplementary question:-

"As you are aware the pet policy for those in temporary accommodation was connected to the suicide of a very best friend of mine, are you willing to take the risk that this could happen again as my friend was only given one offer of permanent accommodation, he could not take his pets to temporary accommodation before the policy or to permanent after the policy. He killed himself after 10 days. What would happen if someone was offered permanent accommodation and they were only given one offer and they could not take their pets. The clause, I feel, should be changed to prevent this tragic situation happening again, which is why I am continuing to campaign. Thank you for meeting with me tonight.

The Chairman thanked Ms Bonnet and stated that Officers would be in touch to set up a meeting with her.

38. REQUEST FOR VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATION

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement, in presenting the report on the Village Green application, apologised for the time taken for this matter to be dealt with.

The Committee noted that under the Council's Constitution, the Policy and Resources Committee was responsible for making decisions regarding land and property and therefore it was recommended that the matter be referred to that Committee.

Councillor B Hinder addressed the Committee and advised that the original petition was the result of the residents' enormous depth of feeling to protect the area known as Weaving Heath and to illustrate the significance of the area of green space, he reiterated a Planning Officer's comment in relation to a recent planning application in the area which stated that it was important to consider the landscaping around Weaving Heath.

In response to questions from Members, the Chairman advised that:-

- Councillor B Hinder had been kept informed of developments since the initial petition had come to Committee in June.
- He would find out about whether any progress had been made in regard to other potential green spaces that could be given the protection of village green status.

RESOLVED: That Members refer the petitioners' request to Policy and Resources Committee.

39. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the work programme and noted that the agenda for December was very busy and if any items could be deferred to another meeting then they would.

Councillor M Rose requested that an item be brought to a future meeting on the RSPCA's fireworks safety code on the use of fireworks and their detrimental effect on animals.

In response to a request from a Member, the Chairman stated that he would try to move the meeting in December from Tuesday, 10th December to Monday, 16th December to avoid the week of the General Election.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee Work Programme be noted.
2. That the Committee meeting scheduled for 10th December be moved to 16th December subject to the agreement of the Proper Officer.

40. MEMBER AGENDA ITEM REQUEST - GP SURGERY PROVISION

The Chairman referred to the agenda item request from Councillors Purle and D Rose for an item to come before the Committee on GP surgery provision.

The Committee were advised that the Chief Executive would be pleased to provide a report to the January 2020 meeting on this issue.

RESOLVED: That a report on GP provision would be produced for the January Committee meeting.

41. 2ND QUARTER PERFORMANCE AND BUDGET MONITORING

The Interim Head of Finance presented the highlights of the Second Quarter Budget Monitoring for 2019/20 as follows:-

- The Revenue Budget indicated an under spend of £605,000 and was forecast to have a small under spend of £126,000 at year end.
- Parks and Open Spaces and the Crematorium both had adverse variances.
- Recycling Collection, Community Environmental Engagement, Homeless Temporary Accommodation, Homelessness Prevention, Housing First Project, Depot Services. Fleet Workshop and Management and Grounds Maintenance Commercial all showed a positive variance.
- There was a salary slippage of £40,000 which was expected to be offset by service underspends by year end.

The Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer presented the highlights for the second quarter performance monitoring 2019/20 as follows:-

- 9 out of 15 targetable quarterly Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) reportable to the Committee had achieved their Quarter 2 target.
- 4 of the targets were for information only.
- The Clean Street consultation concluded with a total of 1,785 responses which showed that 44% of respondents thought that their local area was fairly clean or very clean.
- Three of the Five targeted KPIs that related to the priority 'Homes and Communities' had been rated green as they had achieved their quarterly targets, 2 had been rated amber and had missed their target by less than 10%.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Revenue position as at the end of Quarter 2 for 2019/20, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted.
2. The Capital position at the end of Quarter 2 be noted; and
3. The Performance position as at Quarter 2 for 2019/20, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant issues had been identified, be noted.

42. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2020/21-2024/25

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement, in presenting his report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2020/21 – 2024/25, explained that the report set out how the Council would deliver the Strategic Plan in financial terms.

The Committee noted that:-

- A budget for action on climate change would need to be built into next year's budget.
- Central government planned to roll forward the existing funding settlement to 2020/21 which would provide some stability next year. However, after 2021 there remains considerable uncertainty.
- The government planned to set a limit of 2% to increases of Council tax, above which a referendum would be required.

In response to questions from Members, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement advised that:-

- In the event that self funding capital bids could not be found, the Council would be looking for new proposals to meet the strategy and would welcome suggestions from Members.
- Assuming that Council tax goes up by 2% then further savings for 2020/21 would not be required and the existing services that the Council provided would not be affected if all other variables remained constant.
- If there was a deficit in subsequent years post 2020/21 then further savings would need to be made.
- Given the fact that growth of 2% per annum in the Council Tax base had not been achieved in previous years, it was prudent to assume that the Council Tax base increase for 2020/21 would be 1.5%.

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25 and provided comments to be taken to the Policy and Resources Committee.

43. HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME REVIEW

The Committee considered the report of the Homechoice and Strategy Team Leader which detailed proposed changes to the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme.

It was proposed to rename the Housing Register bands to greater reflect the qualifying criteria as the current banding criteria had been wrongly

interpreted as denoting priority. Therefore the new banding would be as follows:-

Band C – Community Contribution and Homeless Prevention
Band H - Homeless
Band M – Medical and Health Assistance
Band R – Reasonable Preference

It was noted that the amendments to the proposed scheme were being proposed to support homelessness prevention by encouraging applicants to remain in their current accommodation and avoid the use of temporary accommodation. By applying a new band criteria households there would be less 'Direct Lettings' and those put into the Band C – Community Contribution and Homeless Prevention would have opportunity to secure affordable housing.

In response to questions from Members, Officers advised that:-

- The amendments to the scheme were seen as the fairest and simplest way of allocation.
- Officers tried to match the applicant's requirements with the type of properties available. However if the applicant did not want to progress with the property after viewing it, Officers would email the applicant to find out the reasons why they refused it and reset the priority date if the motive specified was assessed as unreasonable. This process could take up to 56 days but was normally dealt with in a short period of time.
- There are very few refusals and Officers would not amend the priority date if a valid reason for refusal was given. However, there was an appeal process.
- Mutual exchanges operate outside of the Council's allocation scheme are dependent on the type of tenancy held. In the main, local housing associations do permit their tenants to explore mutual exchanges as a means of enabling transfers between consenting parties.
- On certain schemes priority was given to those with a local connection to a parish area for new builds in rural areas.
- That if a homeless person has a pet, that would be taken into consideration when trying to match them up.

RESOLVED: That the Committee agrees the proposed changes to the Council's Allocations Scheme.

44. MAIDSTONE APPROACH IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

The Head of Environment and Public Realm introduced the report which provided an update on the Maidstone Approach Improvement Project

which sought approval for the final designs to the street scene and landscaping improvements on a key arterial route.

The Committee commented as follows:-

- That the Maidstone Sign be accepted although it was felt that the coat of arms could be a little larger.
- Ensure that the memorial by the bus stop opposite Weaving Street was not touched or removed.
- That the silhouettes for the railings should be smoothed down so that there were no sharp edges
- That the design for the dinosaur should be changed to better reflect the Iguanodon.

The Head of Environment and Public Realm advised that KCC would have the final approval on the designs for the railings as they need to ensure that they would not compromise the safety of the railings.

It was noted that the dinosaur would be put on a plinth on the area by where the bus lane starts at New Cut Road.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Environment and Public Realm stated that the stone wall would continue to be maintained out of existing budgets and was subject to an annual inspection programme.

RESOLVED: That

1. The installation of a new heritage-style 'Welcome to Maidstone' sign on the A20 with the words "The County Town of Kent" be approved.
2. The four installations to celebrate the heritage and history of Maidstone, specifically an Iguanodon silhouette, bicycle silhouettes, hop frame and planting as well as Go Green Go Wild inspired tree carving be approved; and
3. The concept of a townscape silhouette attached to safety railings be approved, pending further operational exploration.

45. DRAFT BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

The Parks and Open Spaces Manager gave an introduction to the Committee on the Draft Bio-diversity Strategy.

The Committee noted that previously the Council had adopted its Local Biodiversity Action Plan in 2011 which covered the period 2009-2014. This was jointly produced by the Council's Parks and Leisure Team and Medway Valley Countryside Partnership.

Due to a number of significant changes to the approach to conservation management and the political environment the Committee in 2018 agreed to fund a refresh of the Biodiversity Action Plan. Medway Valley Countryside Partnership was tasked with preparing this as a new Biodiversity Strategy which has now been completed.

The Committee felt that the document was considerably long and there was a depth of detail within the Strategy and to enable it to be given their full attention, a Workshop should be held in the new year where all Members of the Council could attend to enable that understanding to be had. Then the Committee could receive a report after that time for consideration.

RESOLVED: That the report related to the draft Biodiversity Strategy be deferred to enable a Workshop to take place in January 2020 where all Members would be invited.

46. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

2019/20 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Age UK - Presentation	CHE	16-Dec-19	Cllr Vizzard	Cllr Vizzard
Charging for Discretionary Environmental Health Services	CHE	16-Dec-19	John Littlemore	Tracey Beattie
Mid Kent Environmental Health Annual Report 2018-19	CHE	16-Dec-19	John Littlemore	Tracey Beattie
Local Nature Reserves - Feasibility Study	CHE	16-Dec-19	Rob Jarman	Deanne Cunningham
Mobile CCTV - Update	CHE	14-Jan-20	John Littlemore	Martyn Jeynes
Draft Budget Proposals 2020/21	CHE	14-Jan-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Q3 Budget and Performance Monitoring	CHE	11-Feb-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove/ Anna Collier
Annual Reports of Outside Bodies and Consideration of Outside Bodies for the Next Municipal Year	CHE	11-Feb-20	Angela Woodhouse	Mike Nash
Crime and Disorder Committee	CHE	24-Mar-20	John Littlemore	Martyn Jeynes
Biodiversity Strategy	CHE	TBC	Jennifer Shepherd	Andrew Williams
MBC Provided Gypsy and Traveller Sites - requested by Cllr Harwood	CHE	TBC	William Cornall	John Littlemore
Review of Accessibility to Services for Residents - Scoping Report and Working Group Set Up	CHE	TBC	Angela Woodhouse	Orla Sweeney
Waste and Street Cleansing - Future Provision	CHE	TBC	Jennifer Shepherd	John Edwards
Advertising and Selling Pesticides	CHE	TBC	Item Requested by Cllr Purle & Cllr	

2019/20 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Environmental Services - Commercial developments	CHE	TBC	Jennifer Shepherd	Jennifer Shepherd
Local Care Hubs	CHE	TBC	Alison Broom	
MBC Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	CHE	TBC	William Cornall	Mark Egerton

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Agenda Item 13

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE 16 December 2019

Local Nature Reserves- Feasibility Study

Final Decision-Maker	Communities, Housing and Environment Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Deanne Cunningham, Team Leader (Heritage, Landscape and Design)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report considers the process and resource implications for creating new Local Nature Reserves in the context of the Evaluation of Potential Local Nature Reserves (LNR) study.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise this Committee on the outcome of the Evaluation of Potential Local Nature Reserves (LNR) study and consider the options for creating new, or extending existing, LNRs.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee note the report and agree a programme for creating new, or extending existing, Local Nature Reserve (LNR) sites subject to funding and resources; and
2. That the Committee **Recommend to Policy and Resources Committee** that funding and resources be considered to bring the agreed programme for LNRs forward.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	16 December 2019

Local Nature Reserves- Feasibility Study

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p><i>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure</i> • <i>Safe, Clean and Green</i> • <i>Homes and Communities</i> • <i>A Thriving Place</i> <p><i>The recommendations will support the Council's achievement of its aims of 'safe, clean and green'.</i></p>	Head of Planning and Development
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p><i>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Heritage is Respected</i> • <i>Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced</i> • <i>Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved</i> • <i>Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected</i> <p><i>The report recommendations support the achievement of the cross cutting objective: respecting biodiversity and environmental sustainability by adding a level of designation and providing recognition for areas of land which fulfil the criteria for a LNR.</i></p>	Head of Planning and Development
Risk Management	<i>Refer to the risk section of the report.</i>	Head of Planning and Development
Financial	Accepting the recommendations will demand new spending as set out in section 2, amounting to a one-off spend of around £8,000 per site and ongoing funding for staffing resources as set out in paragraph 2.6 No funding has been identified at this stage. Any proposal for new	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

	funding would have to be considered by this Committee and then Policy and Resources Committee as part of the annual budget process.	
Staffing	<i>There will be staffing implications and these are set out in section 2.</i>	Head of Planning and Development
Legal	Relevant statutory provisions and requirements are set out in the body of the report. The purpose of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee is to take the lead in ensuring the Council delivers its strategic objectives with regard to parks, green spaces and biodiversity. As such it is for the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee to note the report and consider the recommendations.	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	<i>Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.</i>	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	<i>The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment.</i>	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Public Health	<i>We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals.</i>	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	<i>If new LNRs are declared and byelaws put in place there are likely to be resource implications in enforcing the byelaws as set out at paragraph 2.8.</i>	Head of Planning and Development
Procurement	<i>On accepting the recommendations, the Council will then follow procurement exercises for completion of management plans where necessary. We will complete those exercises in line with financial procedure rules.</i>	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 LNRs are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal local authorities. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally and are a natural resource which makes an important contribution to England's biodiversity.
- 2.2 There are currently three formally adopted LNRs in the borough: Vinters Valley Park (declared 1 April 1993), Boxley Warren (declared 27 April 2005) and River Len (declared 29 October 2014).
- 2.3 On 30 October 2018 Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee considered a report scoping the requirements for making new LNRs and setting out a list of sites identified in a Member survey sent to all ward Members on 10 September 2018. At this meeting Committee resolved that a more detailed evaluation and feasibility assessment of LNR sites be carried out.
- 2.4 The report, entitled 'Evaluation of Potential Local Nature Reserves Study', has been completed. The main report is attached at **Appendix 1** to this report and the supporting document, sites evaluation, is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.5 The implications for creating LNRs are outlined below:
 1. A legal agreement with the land owner to be secured if not a Council-owned site
 2. Management plan to be reviewed or drafted and approved by the Council.
 3. Council to authorise declaration to make a LNR.
 4. Draft documents submitted to Natural England with consultation
 5. Representations considered and Council to make final declaration of LNR
 6. Declaration to be sent to Natural England. LNR announced in local paper and copy of documents to be made available for public inspection and site added to website.
 7. LNR officially opened.
 8. For third party owned sites with existing community groups in place, Management Committee to be set up and maintained. For Council sites with no existing Friends group, engagement with the community will be needed, potentially through the formation of a Friends group, plus a Management Committee.
 9. If required, byelaws to be drafted and formally approved by the Secretary of State. Council officers will be responsible for enforcement.
- 2.6 A legal agreement is estimated to cost £500 upwards, subject to the complexity of the case and a new management plan around £6000, depending on the size of the site. The endorsement and declaration process will take approximately 22 officer hours. Announcements and opening a new LNR will be in the region of £250. Setting up a Management

Committee and ongoing support is estimated to be equivalent to 16 hours per year of officer time.

- 2.7 The above costs do not include implementation of the management plan which it is assumed will be able to be grant funded and implemented by volunteer groups.
- 2.8 Additionally, the cost of putting byelaws in place is estimated to be in the region of £750. Ongoing enforcement will fall to one of the Council's enforcement teams and will involve supplying evidence of any alleged breaches to Legal Services. Such cases would be dealt with by the Magistrates Court by way of summary conviction, usually resulting in a monetary fine if the offender is found guilty.
- 2.9 Historically, the declaration of new LNRs has been a responsibility of the Parks and Open Spaces Manager for Council-owned sites and the Team Leader for Heritage, Landscape and Design for sites on private land. It is not proposed to change this accountability.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 If Members decide not to progress a programme for LNR sites it means that sites which fulfil the criteria for an LNR, identified as a natural resource with wildlife or geological features of special local interest and making an important contribution to biodiversity are not formally recognised and, on private sites, their long term prospects are not assured.
- 3.2 That Committee agrees the proposed priority list for progressing LNR sites so that they can then start being brought forward as funding allows. The proposed list as outlined in the Evaluation of Local Nature Reserves report is as follows:
 - Fant Wildlife Area
 - Hayle Park Nature Reserve
 - Cuckoo Wood
 - Mote Park
 - Wimpey Field
 - Allington Millenium Green
 - High Level Bridge
 - Weaving Heath
- 3.3 That Committee approves the Fant Wildlife Area as a LNR so the declaration process can be progressed as soon as resources are identified. This is the only site which has no constraints to address and could be designated immediately, with the fewest resource implications.
- 3.4 Where new, or revisions to existing, management plans for council-owned sites with the potential to be declared LNRs are being commissioned they should meet the objectives for the creation of LNRs. The sites in question are:
 - Weaving Heath- LNR appropriate management plan in progress
 - River Len Reserve, Downswood (Spot Lane Nature Area)
 - Senacre Wood
 - Bell Lane Nature Area

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 If funding is identified, the preferred option is 2 (3.2 above) in parallel with option 3 (3.3), to progress the Fant Wildlife Area LNR as this is ready to proceed and will involve minimal cost and resource implications.
- 4.2 Alongside this, to enable further LNRs to be progressed more rapidly with the least resource implications, option 4 (3.4 above) is recommended.

5. RISK

- 5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 The report to Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee on 30 October 2018 considered the results of a survey sent to all Ward Members in September 2018 which asked for the details of any local sites that Members were aware of that could potentially meet the criteria for new or extended LNRs. Following consideration of the results of the survey the Committee resolved that this, more detailed evaluation and feasibility assessment of potential LNR sites, be carried out.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

There is a specific process that must be followed in order to designate a LNR. Natural England has to be consulted on each candidate site and the details of the reserve will be included on the LNR database. Any consultation responses will be considered. If the Council formally declares an LNR it will inform the relevant authorities including Natural England and an announcement will be published in the local paper, with a copy of the declaration made available for public inspection. Any new reserve will then be marked on the Local Plan proposals map and an official opening ceremony held.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Evaluation of Potential Local Nature Reserves: Main Report
- Appendix 2: Evaluation of Potential Local Nature Reserves: Supporting Document, Sites Evaluation

BACKGROUND PAPERS - None

Appendix 1

Evaluation of Potential Local Nature Reserves

Main Report

For Maidstone Borough Council
September 2019



Wimpey Field, Staplehurst

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Introduction

Background to this Report

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal local authorities. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally and are a natural resource which makes an important contribution to England's biodiversity.

There are currently three formally adopted Local Nature Reserves in the borough: Vinters Valley Park (declared 1 April 1993), Boxley Warren (declared 27 April 2005), and River Len (declared 29 October 2014). The Maidstone Borough Council Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2017 states that additional reserves are being considered for Fant Wildlife Area and Cross Keys, Bearsted, with Sandling Park and Cuckoo Wood also offering potential for designation. The AMR 31 March 2012 to 1 April 2013 included a more extensive list of potential sites but little progress had been made in bringing these forward.

In order to scope which further sites might be suitable to be designated as LNRs, a survey was sent to Ward Councillors asking for suggestions of possible new LNRs or existing sites which could be extended. Maidstone Borough Council officers also proposed some sites. This exercise, along with the original sites included in the AMR report, resulted in 38 sites.

The Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee of the 30th October 2018 determined that a robust evidence base was required with a framework of assessment to evaluate the suitability of these potential sites and to progress the project. This report provides a summary of the findings of the evaluation exercise. The full evaluation for each site is provided in the Supporting Document – Sites Evaluation.



Crisbrook Mill Pond

Selecting Local Nature Reserves

Legislative Requirements

Schedule 11 (12) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, which replaced Section 15 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, describes a 'nature reserve' as:

- a. Land managed solely for a conservation purpose, or
- b. Land managed not only for a conservation purpose but also for a recreational purpose, if the management of the land for the recreational purpose does not compromise its management for the conservation purpose.

Land is managed for a conservation purpose if it is managed for:

- a. Providing, under suitable conditions and control, special opportunities for the study of, and research into, matters relating to the fauna and flora of Great Britain and the physical conditions in which they live, and for the study of geological and physiographical features of special interest in the area;
- b. Or preserving flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features of special interest in the area;
- c. Or for both these purposes.

Land is managed for a recreational purpose if it provides opportunities for the enjoyment of nature or for open-air recreation.

Natural England Recommendations

Natural England recommends that LNRs should be:

- a. Of high value locally for environmental education and/or research.
 - People are more likely to be aware of and value the natural environment when they can experience it at first hand in places such as LNRs.

Natural England Criteria

- Is the site the focus of local community interest and concern, or does it have the potential to capture people's imagination? Have local people (both those living and working nearby, and interested groups and users) been involved in the selection process?
- Will interested communities be involved in steering the site's development, management and monitoring?
- Is the site reasonably close to schools, community education centres and/or field study centres?
- Will there be opportunities for local schools to get involved and for schemes such as the Forest School programme or a Watch group to be set up?
- Are there areas where children are welcome to play?
- Is the site in an area generally lacking in publicly accessible natural heritage?
- Is there some public access – rights of approach, entry or use that are legally defined or established through long-standing use? Is the site linked to wider public access networks, green networks, other open spaces, etc?
- Is it safe and physically easy to get into and around the site, accepting that access to highly sensitive areas may need to be restricted wholly or periodically?
- Can people enjoy the access rights and feel comfortable about using the site, for example without fear of crime?
- Can people get to the site by active and public transport?
- Does the site have, or could it have, car parking, and provision for safe delivery and pick-up for educational visits?
- Does the site lend itself to being a safe educational resource, for example with good site interpretation, without adversely affecting its special interest?
- Is the site safeguarded, notably through the development plan process, or can safeguarding be included in the next Local Plan revision?
- Has the site been (or is it likely to be) identified of local importance in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan or Local Geodiversity Action Plan?
- Are there any implications for neighbouring areas, or other sites or facilities?
- Is the site's future secured for some time? There is limited benefit in investing resources in an LNR that will be de-declared and subsumed into the development cycle in the short, or perhaps even medium-term.
- What is the existing use of the site and how can this be taken into account when planning the LNR development? Will alternative provision have to be made, and will there be an overall public benefit?
- Is the site a viable management unit with appropriate access for management, etc?
- What are the likely costs to be incurred during the life-cycle of the LNR (including initial developmental, establishment, staffing costs, etc), and has provision been made for these?

- b. Of high natural interest locally.
 - LNRs can help safeguard not just rare but also more common, locally valued species, habitats and geodiversity. They can play an important part in Local Biodiversity Action Plans and Local Geodiversity Action Plans.
- c. Of reasonable natural interest and of high value locally for enjoyment of nature by the public.

Lack of public access does not preclude the site from becoming a Local Nature Reserve if it passes the core test of being managed for conservation, but Natural England recommends that in this instance the site should be of high local natural interest, reflecting its priority for public access to and enjoyment of Local Nature Reserves.

Natural England also recommends that the reserve is of a minimum size to support a viable ecological interest and have the capacity to support public use. It suggests that any site less than 2 hectares is probably unable to withstand heavy, multiple uses but that this will be affected by adjacent land uses and the site's isolation from other sites of similar character. Conversely, small sites can be very important if no larger sites are available in the local neighbourhood.

Setting up a Local Nature Reserve

Under the 1949 Act, the local authority must have or acquire a legal interest in the land through ownership, lease or an agreement with the owners and occupiers. Some of the sites in this evaluation are not owned by Maidstone Borough Council and therefore a lease agreement will be required with the landowner.

The local authority making the declaration must also have jurisdiction over the area in which the proposed reserve lies. A local authority owning land in a second local authority's area can only declare an LNR if powers are delegated to it by the second local authority. For sites that extend across a local authority boundary, a joint declaration may be made by two local authorities. Some of the sites in this evaluation are within Tonbridge and Malling Borough council area.



Hollingbourne Meadows

The main steps to setting up a Local Nature Reserve, as advised by Natural England, are shown to the right. An important element is a costed management plan. Several of the sites in this evaluation do not have a management plan or, if they do, it would require modification or updating to make it suitable to underpin an LNR designation. Some of the community groups may require support to produce a suitable management plan and may not have the resources to do this. Several Maidstone Borough Council owned sites also need suitable management plans.

There may also be additional resource implications arising from designating LNRs. For third party owned sites, MBC may wish to take more of an active interest in the management of the site. Natural England suggests

that the parties involved in identifying, evaluating, declaring and managing the LNR may form a group to help steer the process through a management advisory committee. Maidstone Borough Council should at least, as the designating authority, set up processes to monitor management of the third-party LNR to ensure that it continues to be managed appropriately.

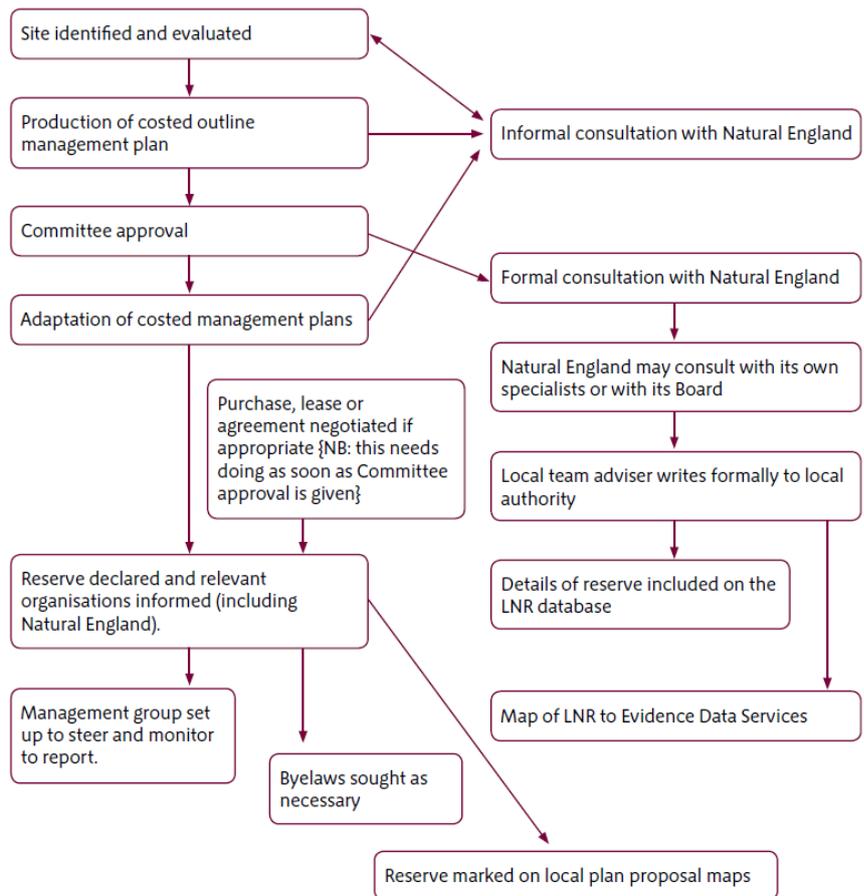
Some of the sites require bringing into appropriate management before they could be designated as LNRs. This includes several Maidstone Borough Council owned sites.

Approach to Evaluation

LNRs should not just be designated to protect areas of land. They are a positive designation, requiring future commitment to managing the site for nature conservation and, ideally, for public benefit.

The evaluation framework developed for this project considers the core legislative requirements and Natural England’s recommendations and additional criteria. In order to provide objectivity to the evaluation, criteria were developed to assess the core elements of local natural interest and public value. An additional evaluation category encompasses management structure, effectiveness and security, to assess the confidence with which the suitability of the site as an LNR could be secured into the future. This is summarised in the figure on the next page.

Main steps in setting up an LNR

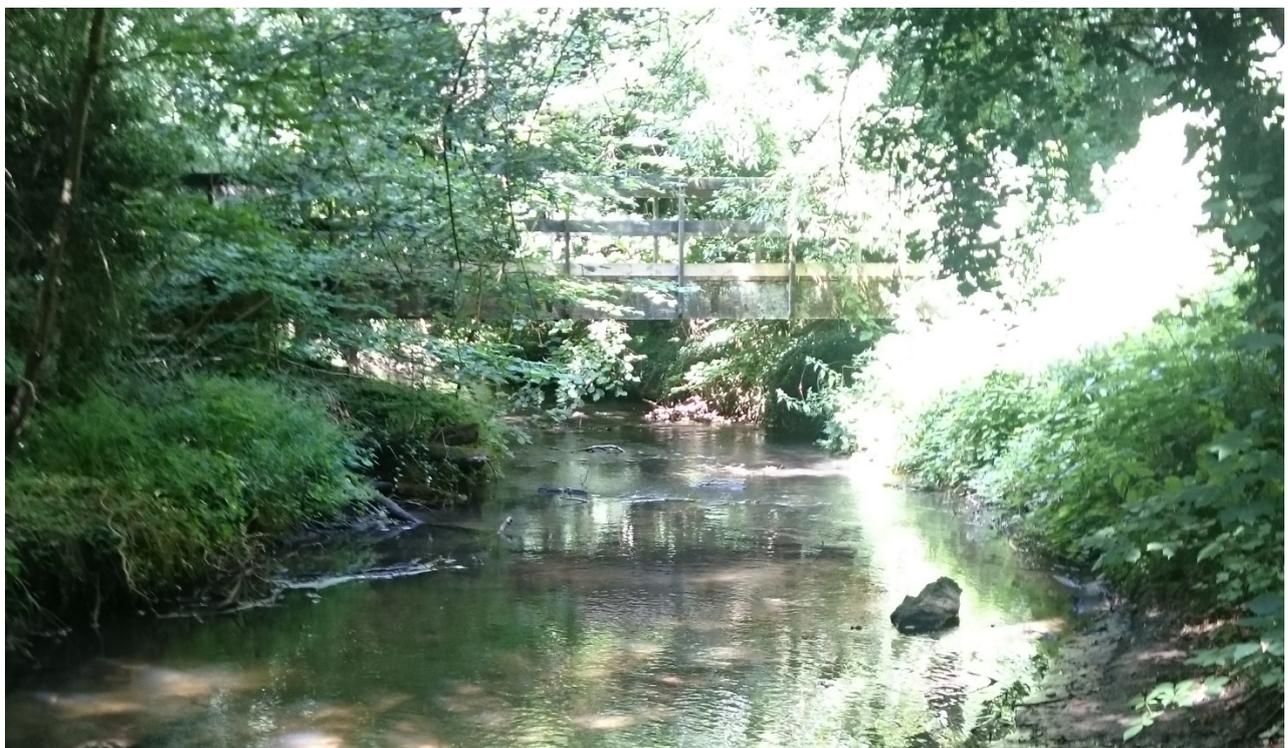


Although the evaluation process necessarily has a degree of subjectivity, scoring provides a quantitative guide to show how well each site meets the core tests and Natural England’s recommendations. The sites scoring highest can therefore be considered to be the strongest candidates for taking forward as Local Nature Reserves.

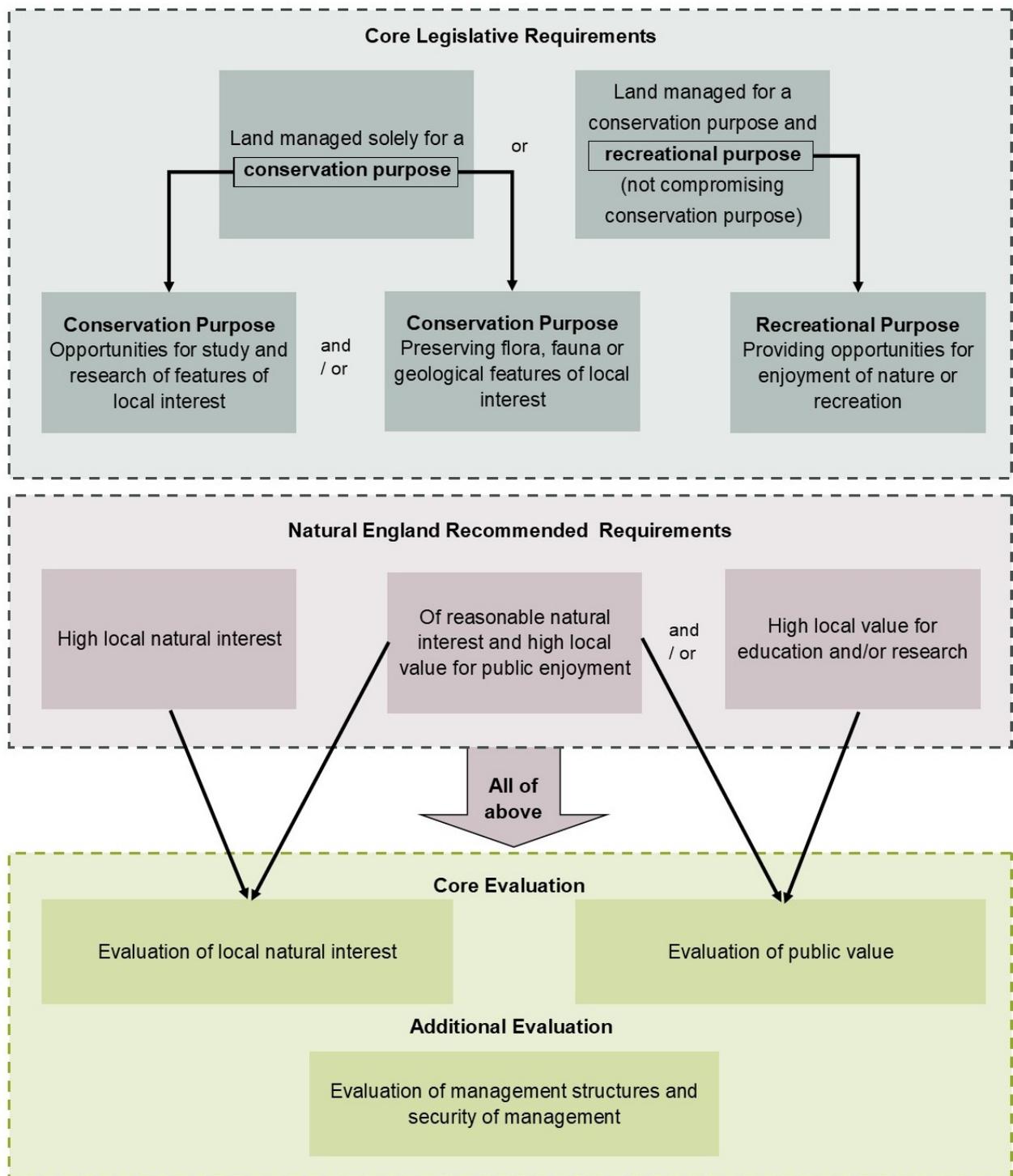
An outline of the elements considered in each evaluation category is shown below. The full evaluation tables are contained in Supporting Document – Sites Evaluation.

Natural Interest Evaluation	Public Value Evaluation	Management Structures and Security Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing recognition of being of local importance (Local Wildlife Site or other designation) • Evidence of priority habitats or species • Place in ecological unit – within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or linking to priority habitats • Size and function as an ecological unit • Condition of habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access • Proximity to people and role as accessible greenspace • Educational and community use • Levels of community interest and activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of management plan • Management organisation • Implementation of management • Balance of recreation and nature conservation – recreation well-managed

- The maximum score for each of the categories was 10 (100%)
- Some of the criteria are ‘pass or fail’ – scoring 1 point if the site meets the criteria or zero if it does not
- Some of the criteria are ranked with more points scored for how well the site meets the criteria



Spot Lane Nature Area



The sites in this evaluation encompass a wide range of sites, both urban and rural, consisting of a range of habitats and a wide range of sizes. It is difficult to compare the natural interest value across these sites. For example, a sweet chestnut woodland may be less diverse than a mixed ancient woodland, even if it is on a former ancient woodland site, but it may be of a large size and or important connecting site. The evaluation scores should therefore be viewed as a guide to help prioritise designation, rather than an absolute indication of the value of a site.

Desktop Research

The following desktop research was carried out:

- The location of the site was determined through reviewing the Maidstone Borough Council ownership GIS shapefile, online research, review of the management plan and contact with the landowner;
- GIS data was reviewed to determine if the site was already a designated site or a Local Wildlife Site (LWS), was within or near a Biodiversity Opportunity Area, contained or was in proximity to Natural England Priority Habitats or Kent Habitat Survey Priority Habitats and whether public rights of way crossed the site;
- Local Wildlife Site citations were obtained from Kent Wildlife Trust;
- Landowners were approached and asked to provide management plans;
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plans were reviewed for sites arising from development;
- The nominating Councillor was approached for more information where appropriate.

Condition of Habitats

A brief walk-over survey was conducted at each of the sites during the spring and summer of 2019. The aim was to provide an overview assessment of the condition of the habitats, implementation of management and the provision of public access facilities to supplement the desktop research. In several cases these visits also provided an opportunity to meet the community groups/landowner managing the site to discuss management and views on LNR designation.

Natural England's Common Standards Monitoring guidance for a range of habitats was used as the basis of the condition assessment. A summary is shown on the next page.



Cuckoo Wood

Description of site and broad habitats present

Recreational Use

Extent (whole site, rights of way only); type, evidence of illegal/anti-social use; damage from recreation; level of recreation; evidence of conflict with nature conservation management.

Management

Evidence of management – management of habitats and recreation (general); appropriateness of management; evidence of any other damage or threats to site.

Woodland Habitats

Main species and % of species; age structure; regeneration; planting - %, species used; presence of non-native or negative indicator species and extent / % of stand; ground flora and species; woodland management – currently managed or evidence of past management (e.g. age of coppice stools if present); indicator species of local distinctiveness / positive indicator species; browsing or other damage.

Scrub Habitats

Species (%); age; % of site; place within mosaic.

Grassland Habitats

Improved, semi-improved, amenity (%); calcareous, mesotrophic, wet (%); main species present (grass and herbs); grass:herb ratio, % of herbs; presence of non-native or negative indicator species and % of sward (including seeding scrub); indicator species of local distinctiveness / positive indicator species; sward description; litter or bare earth; mosaic with other habitats; evidence of management.

Open Water

Evidence of fishing or other recreation; presence of non-native or invasive species; zonation of vegetation; negative features e.g. erosion, dogs, barriers; height of water – evidence of seasonality; overhanging trees or shrubs (%); surrounding land use; water source; potential sources of pollution/evidence of pollution; approx. size and depth; base or liner; naturalness of banks, bankside vegetation.

Constraints to LNR Designation

Several of the sites are not owned by Maidstone Borough Council. Where possible the landowners were approached to determine whether they would be, in principle, willing to proceed with designation. Some landowners did not reach a conclusion; some did not reply and others rejected the proposal. The evaluation does not take this into account but notes the response as a constraint.

Where there are other constraints, such as multiple ownership making designation very difficult, lack of management plan or of implementation of conservation management and these are noted in the evaluation.

Evaluation of the Sites

The Sites

The list of sites to be evaluated was:¹

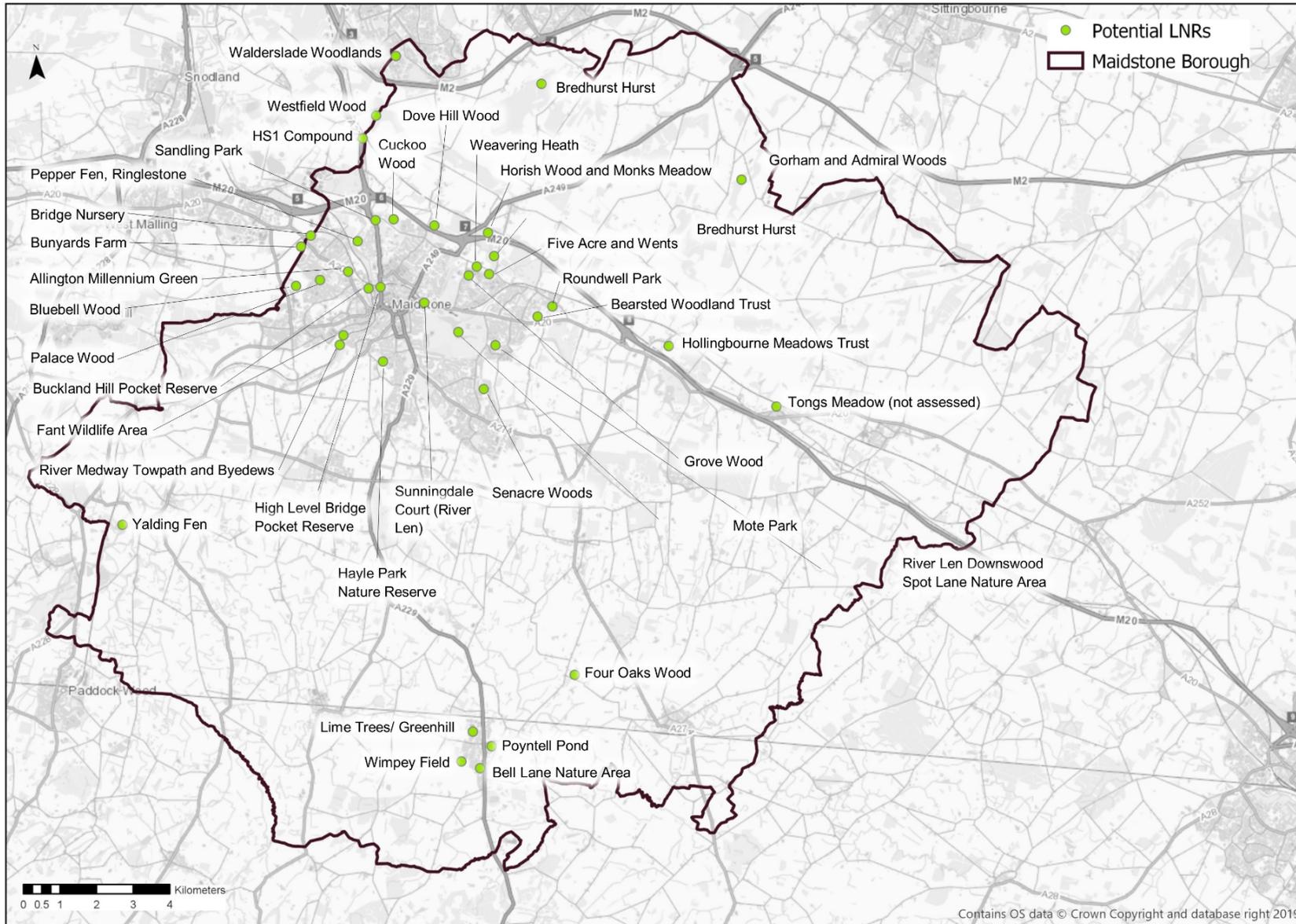
- Allington Millennium Green
- Bearsted Woodland Trust
- Bell Lane Nature Area
- Bluebell Wood
- Bredhurst Wood
- Bridge Nursery
- Buckland Hill Pocket Nature Reserve
- Bunyards Farm (Allington)
- Cuckoo Wood
- Dove Hill Wood
- Fant Wildlife Area
- Five Acre and Wents Woods
- Four Oaks Wood
- Gorham and Admiral Woods
- Grove Wood
- Hayle Place Stud Farm
- High Level Bridge Pocket Nature Reserve and Valley Conservation
- High Speed 1 Compound
- Hockers Lane Nature Reserve (Kent Medical Campus)
- Hollingbourne Meadows Trust
- Horish Wood and Monk's Meadow
- Lime Trees Open Space Ponds / Green Hill Open Space
- Mote Park
- Palace Wood
- Pepper Fen, Ringlestone
- Poyntell Pond
- River Len Reserve, Downswood (Spot Lane Nature Area)
- River Medway Towpath (land from Bower Lane to East Farleigh Lock)
- Roundwell Park
- Sandling Park
- Senacre Wood
- Sunningdale Court Woodland (River Len Reserve, Maidstone)
- Walderslade Woodlands
- Weaving Heath
- Westfield Wood
- Wimpey Field
- Yalding Fen

The location of these sites is shown in Plans 1 and 2 and their area in Plan 3.² The sites in relation to Natural England priority habitats are shown in Plan 4 and in relation to Biodiversity Opportunity Areas in Plan 5.

¹ Tongs Meadow was rejected after initial investigation revealed this is a privately owned site with no public access which has been the subject of planning applications.

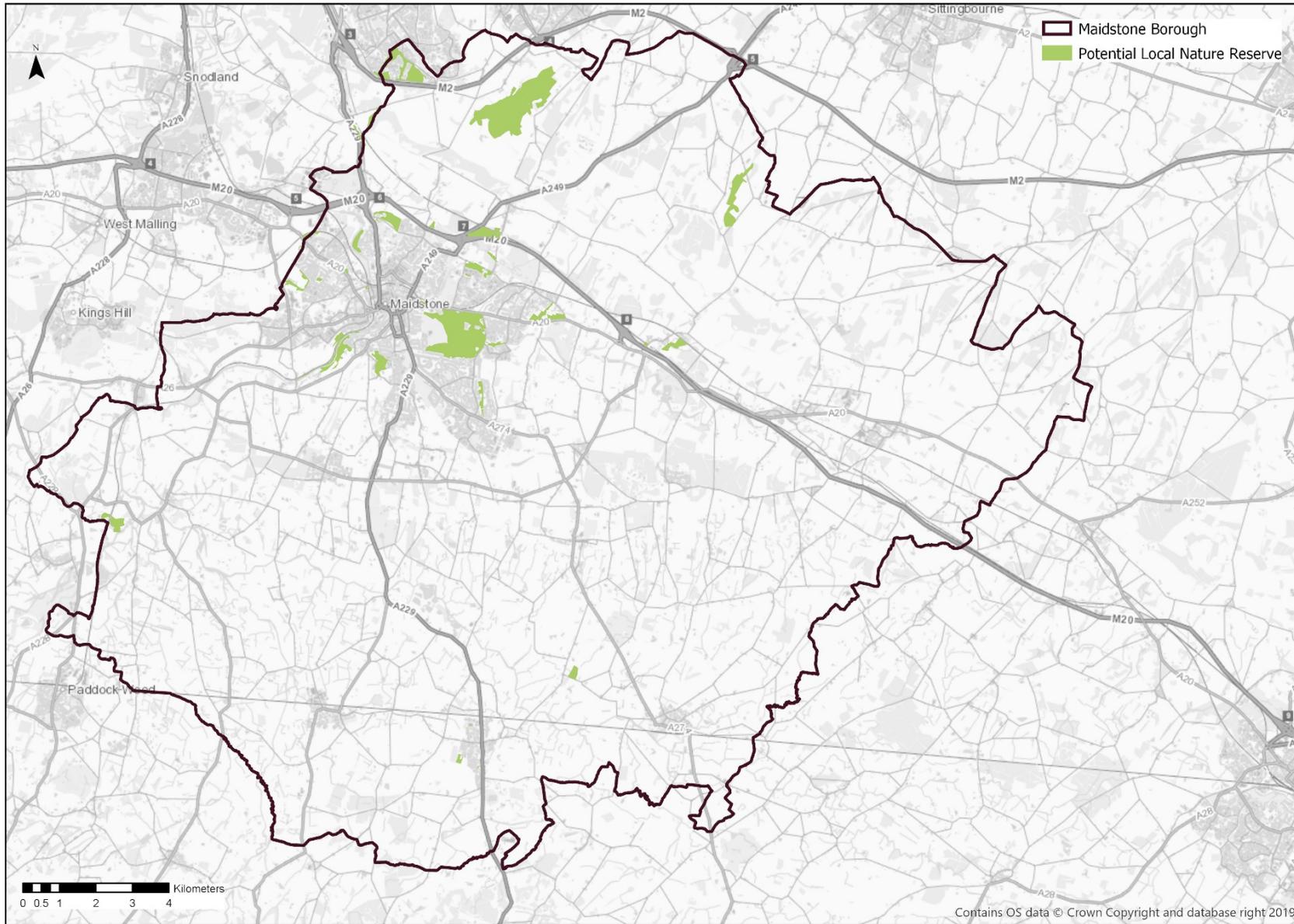
² The areas shown are approximations of the site boundary and should not be regarded as the legal or definitive boundary. Further investigation is required to determine legal boundaries prior to any designations being progressed.

Plan 2: Potential LNRs – Named



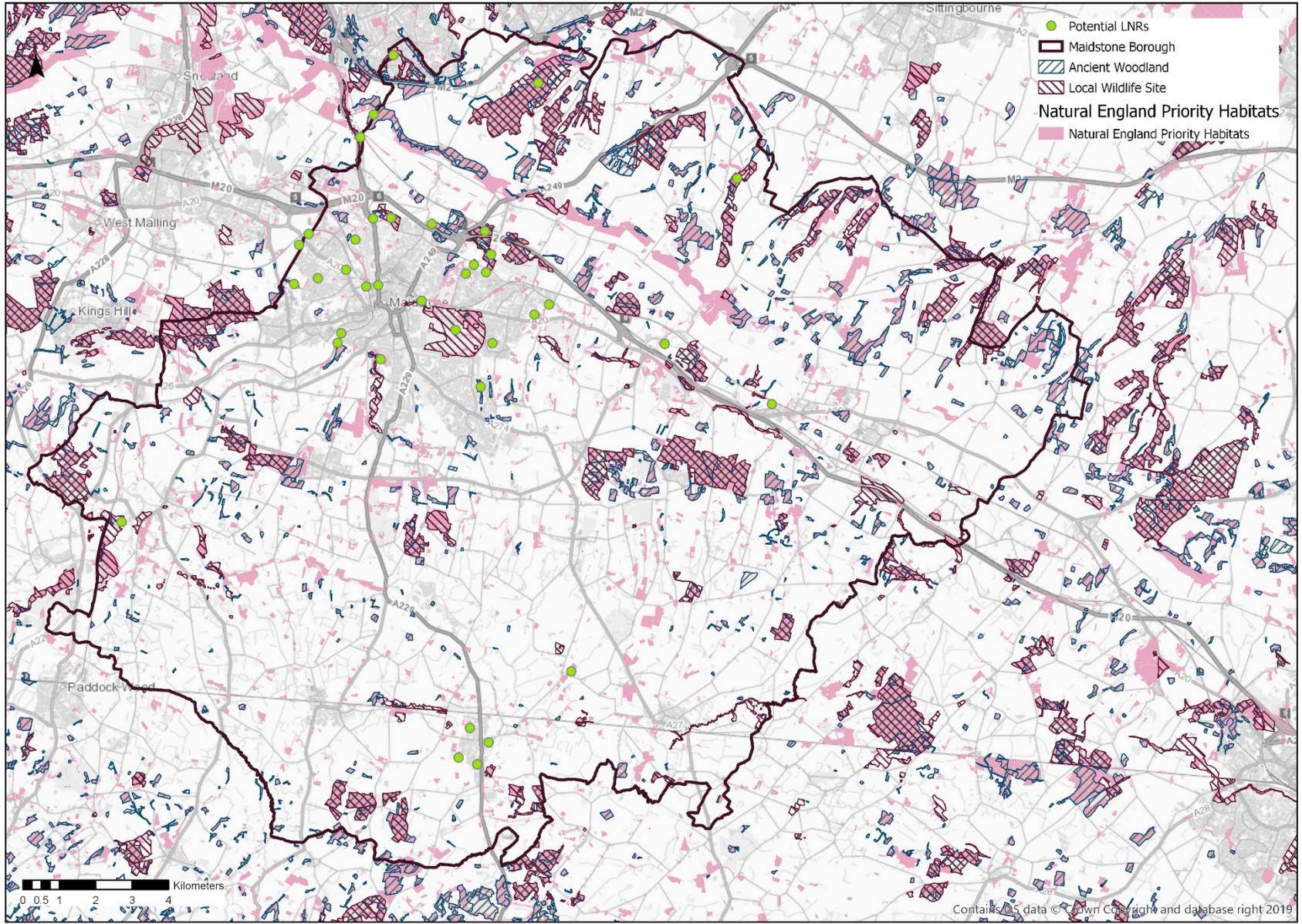
30

Plan 3: Proposed Local Nature Reserves – Extent



31

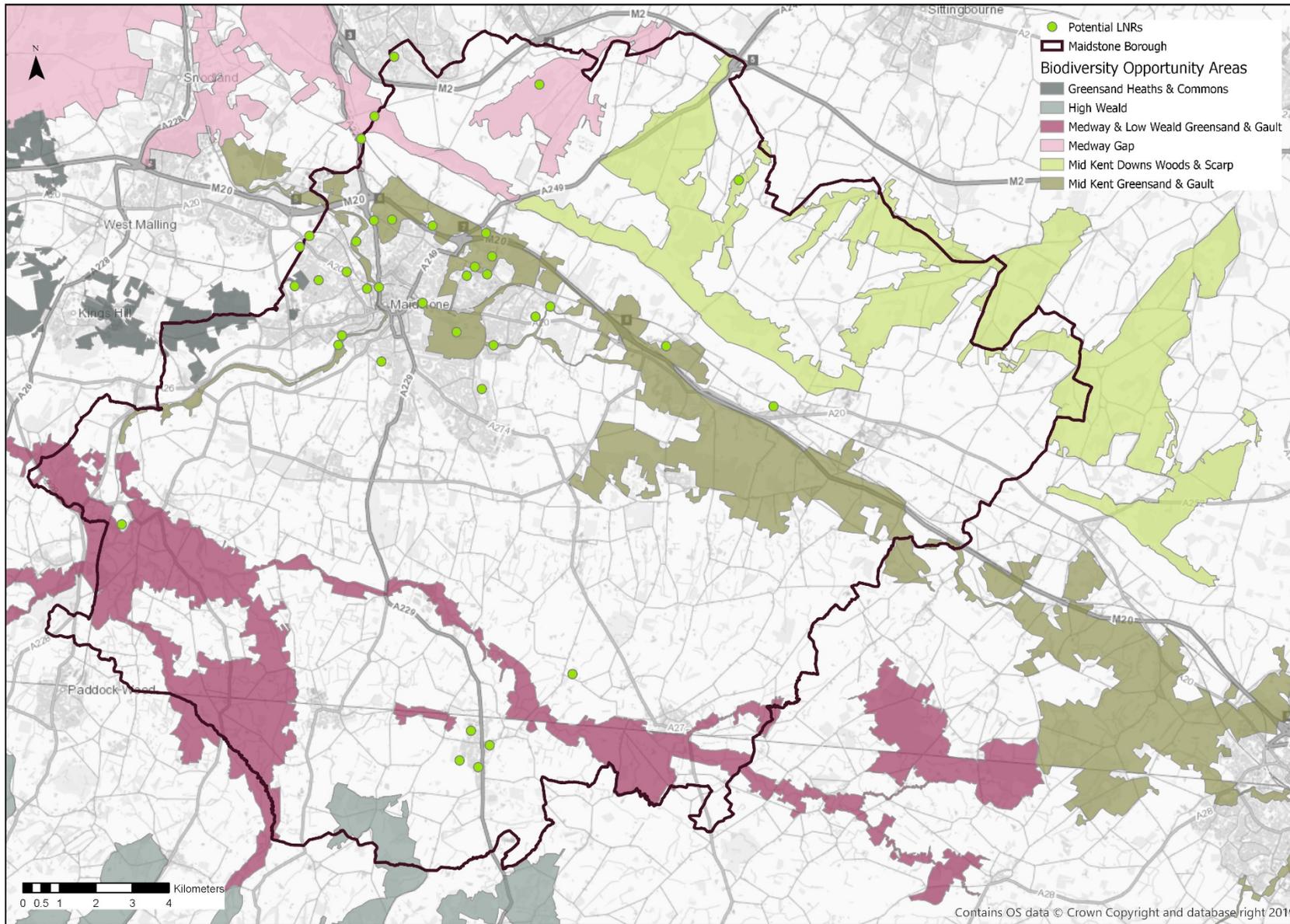
Plan 4: Potential Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats



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Plan 5: Potential Local Nature Reserves and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas



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Summary of Evaluation

Table 1 shows the summary of the evaluation ranked by the total score across all three evaluation categories.

The table also ranks the natural interest score and indicates where this is higher than the overall rank. This indicates sites where the overall suitability could be improved if the public interest or management were improved. In some cases it would be difficult to improve these aspects but for others, including some Maidstone Borough Council owned sites, a management plan and implementation of management would make the site more suitable for designation. The process of designating as an LNR could be regarded as a catalyst to bring these sites with high natural value into appropriate management. An additional benefit would be to improve the public value of these sites, for example through supporting the establishment of a community group.

There are also constraints to designating some of the sites, which will need to be overcome prior to designation. Some of these constraints may not be overcome in the short term, or at all. The table should therefore be regarded as a tool to guide designation and future actions, rather than a definitive ranking of the suitability of the sites. All the sites have a degree of potential as LNRs³ but, for some, these constraints and shortcomings will need to be addressed prior to designating.

Most landowners were approached to determine views on LNR designation. Most of the third party owners had not decided whether they wished to proceed with designation at the time of this report and further discussions will be required.

Table 2 shows the sites ordered by the number of constraints to be addressed and then by their overall rank (fewest constraints highest). Those sites which could be taken forward in the short term if the minimal constraints are addressed are as follows:

- **Fant Wildlife Area** – the only site which has no constraints to address and which could be designated immediately;
- **Hayle Park Nature Reserve** – requires some updates to management plans – plans are in place but may need further detail to fully support LNR designation. Valley Conservation and Hayle Park both support designation (Tovil Parish Council and Maidstone Borough Council not approached);
- **Cuckoo Wood** – has management plan, requires landowner agreement. This site was historically to be designated with Sandling Park (s106 agreement states the latter should be designated);
- **Mote Park** – requires further information on nature conservation management in management plan;
- **Wimpey Field** – requires landowner agreement and ‘light touch’ update of management action plan to bring up to date;
- **Allington Millennium Green** – landowner supports designation, needs updated management plan (expired plan was suitable);
- **Weaving Heath** – new management plan in preparation, the process for which will foster community engagement, requires commitment from MBC to manage as LNR;
- **High Level Bridge** – although small site, has management plan and active management, agreement required from Network Rail (initial discussions positive).

There are several sites owned by Maidstone Borough Council which would be suitable but which require a management plan and commitment to implement management suitable for an LNR (River Len Reserve, Downswood (Spot Lane Nature Area), Senacre Wood, Bell Lane Nature Area, Five Acre and Wents Woods, Poyntell Pond, Dove Hill Wood, Palace Wood, Lime Trees Open Space Ponds / Green Hill Open Space, Sandling Park, Four Oaks Wood, Grove Wood).

³ Except for Bunyards Farm, Allington.

Table 1: Summary of Evaluation Scores – Ranked by Overall Score

	Total Score	Local natural interest evaluation	Public interest, education and value evaluation	Management evaluation	Rank overall	Rank natural interest	Natural interest rank > overall rank	Landowner supports/ MBC owned	Constraints	
35	Hayle Park Nature Reserve	93%	90%	100%	90%	1	4	No	Yes	Recent management plans for Hayle Park Reserve (2014 – 2024) and Crisbrook Meadow (2019 - 2024). Crisbrook Meadow plan may require further elaboration on the management of the meadow and woodland specifically for nature conservation. Management plan will be required for Mount Ararat woodland if included in the designation.
	Cuckoo Wood	90%	100%	80%	90%	2	1	Yes	Approached - undecided	No management agreement can be entered into to encompass the 4.3 hectares with no ownership.
	Gorham and Admiral Woods	90%	100%	80%	90%	2	1	Yes	Approached - undecided	LNR management plan may be required (plan requested but not received).
	Mote Park	90%	90%	100%	80%	2	4	No	MBC	Management plan could be more reflective of natural interest, but grassland and veteran tree reports in preparation. A consolidated management statement and action plan would help to bring these together. Balance of recreation and natural interest needs to be considered more fully. Consideration of area which is suitable to be an LNR.
	Hollingbourne Meadows Trust	90%	80%	100%	90%	2	10	No	Approached - undecided	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Further information required by Trust on management agreement with Maidstone Borough Council.

	Total Score	Local natural interest evaluation	Public interest, education and value evaluation	Management evaluation	Rank overall	Rank natural interest	Natural interest rank > overall rank	Landowner supports/ MBC owned	Constraints
Walderslade Woodlands	90%	80%	90%	100%	2	10	No	Possible change of ownership	Part of land is within Medway Council area; therefore, Medway must delegate powers to MBC to designate or a joint declaration made. At present the future ownership of the land is in question and land ownership may pass to Boxley Parish Council if enabling development proceeds. Designation
Fant Wildlife Area	90%	70%	100%	100%	2	15	No	Yes	None
Bredhurst Hurst	83%	90%	80%	80%	8	4	Yes	Multiple ownership will present challenges to designation	Multiple ownership will present a challenge in constructing management agreements. Owned plots are not contiguous. Management plan for Woodland Grant Scheme – ideally updated to be more suitable for LNR designation.
Wimpey Field	83%	70%	80%	100%	8	15	No	Approached - undecided	None, although LNR designation could provide the opportunity to refresh the management action tables.
Horish Wood (and Monk's Meadow)	80%	90%	80%	70%	10	4	Yes	Approached - undecided	Issues with implementing management plan (fallen behind actions set out in management plan due to issues with contractor).
Yalding Fen	80%	90%	100%	50%	10	4	Yes	Possible change of ownership	Updated management plan will be required. New landowner, intentions not clear

	Total Score	Local natural interest evaluation	Public interest, education and value evaluation	Management evaluation	Rank overall	Rank natural interest	Natural interest rank > overall rank	Landowner supports/ MBC owned	Constraints
Westfield Wood	77%	100%	30%	100%	12	1	Yes	MBC owned?	Land is within Tonbridge and Malling District, therefore TMBC must delegate powers to MBC to designate. Management plan not viewed – need to assess suitability.
Bearsted Woodland Trust	77%	60%	100%	70%	12	22	No	No	Landowner does not wish to designate as does not wish to enter into agreement with Maidstone Borough Council. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements.
Allington Millennium Green	77%	40%	100%	90%	12	32	No	Yes	Site is also a Millennium Green which places constraints on certain activities. As well as consultation with Natural England through the LNR designation process, Natural England solicitors will need to be involved in designation. Initial discussions have taken place through the process of this scoping exercise and Natural England (Millennium Green solicitor) is favourable to designation. Updated management plan required.
Weaving Heath	73%	70%	80%	70%	15	15	Yes	MBC	Management plan required – plan in preparation 2019 which will be suitable for LNR designation. Management will need to be implemented.
High Level Bridge Pocket Nature Reserve	70%	40%	90%	80%	16	32	No	Approached - undecided	Very small site – well below minimum size threshold.
River Len Reserve, Downwood (Spot Lane Nature Area)	67%	80%	70%	50%	17	10	Yes	MBC	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

	Total Score	Local natural interest evaluation	Public interest, education and value evaluation	Management evaluation	Rank overall	Rank natural interest	Natural interest rank > overall rank	Landowner supports/ MBC owned	Constraints
Senacre Wood	67%	70%	70%	60%	17	15	Yes	MBC	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements (plan in preparation by Medway Valley Countryside Partnership). Management needs to be implemented in line with forthcoming plan.
Buckland Hill Pocket Nature Reserve	67%	50%	60%	90%	17	26	No	MBC	There is an up to date plan - management needs to be implemented in line with plan. Further detail may be required on costings and funding to demonstrate security of management.
Bell Lane Nature Area	67%	50%	70%	80%	17	26	No	MBC	Site below 2 hectare threshold. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements (previous plan dated 2001). Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Bluebell Wood	60%	80%	80%	20%	21	10	Yes	Active development - future arrangements need to be in place	Site being developed at present. Suitability will also depend on the condition of the site following establishment as part of development. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
River Medway Towpath (land from Bower Lane to East Farleigh Lock)	50%	70%	60%	20%	22	15	Yes	Multiple ownership likely to preclude designation except MBC owned	Multiple land ownership serious constraint to designation and likely to prevent designating northern bank.

	Total Score	Local natural interest evaluation	Public interest, education and value evaluation	Management evaluation	Rank overall	Rank natural interest	Natural interest rank > overall rank	Landowner supports/ MBC owned	Constraints
Roundwell Park	47%	80%	60%	0%	23	10	Yes	Active development - future arrangements need to be in place	Site being developed at present. Suitability will also depend on the condition of the site following establishment as part of development and security of management arrangements.
Five Acre and Wents Woods	47%	60%	20%	60%	23	22	Yes	MBC	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Poyntell Pond	47%	30%	60%	50%	23	36	No	MBC	Very small site – well below minimum size threshold. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Dove Hill Wood	43%	70%	20%	40%	26	15	Yes	MBC	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Palace Wood	43%	50%	40%	40%	26	26	Yes	MBC	Site below 2 hectare threshold. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Lime Trees Open Space Ponds / Green Hill Open Space	43%	40%	50%	40%	26	32	No	MBC	Site below 2 hectare threshold. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

	Total Score	Local natural interest evaluation	Public interest, education and value evaluation	Management evaluation	Rank overall	Rank natural interest	Natural interest rank > overall rank	Landowner supports/ MBC owned	Constraints
Hockers Lane Nature Reserve (Kent Medical Campus)	40%	90%	10%	20%	29	4	Yes	Active development - future arrangements need to be in place	Site being developed at present and final proposals for the nature reserve unclear. Suitability will also depend on the condition of the site following establishment as part of development. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Sandling Park	40%	60%	20%	40%	29	22	Yes	MBC	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Four Oaks Wood	37%	70%	0%	40%	31	15	Yes	MBC	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Grove Wood	37%	50%	20%	40%	31	26	Yes	MBC	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Sunningdale Court (River Len Reserve, Maidstone)	33%	60%	0%	40%	33	22	Yes	Approached - undecided	Landowner agreement required. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Bridge Nursery	33%	50%	30%	20%	33	26	Yes	Unknown	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.
Pepper Fen, Ringlestone	27%	50%	20%	10%	35	26	Yes	Unknown	No response from landowner. Assumed no management plan.

	Total Score	Local natural interest evaluation	Public interest, education and value evaluation	Management evaluation	Rank overall	Rank natural interest	Natural interest rank > overall rank	Landowner supports/ MBC owned	Constraints
High Speed 1 Compound	27%	40%	0%	40%	35	32	Yes	MBC	Most of land is within Tonbridge and Malling District, therefore TMBC must delegate powers to MBC to designate or a joint declaration made. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan. Two fields currently grazed are not suitable at present due to current management.
Bunyards Farm (Allington)	0	0	0	0	37	37	Yes	Not suitable	Site not of sufficient natural interest or size to designate as an LNR. Land is within Tonbridge and Malling District, therefore TMBC must delegate powers to MBC to designate.

Table 2: Sites Ranked by Constraints to Address

	Total Score	Rank overall	Rank natural interest	Constraints to Address
Fant Wildlife Area	90%	2	15	Has an up to date management plan, no constraints
Hayle Park Nature Reserve	93%	1	4	Management plan
Cuckoo Wood	90%	2	1	Landowner agreement
Mote Park	90%	2	4	Management plan
Wimpey Field	83%	8	15	May require update of management actions, requires landowner agreement
Allington Millennium Green	77%	12	32	Management plan
High Level Bridge Pocket Nature Reserve	70%	16	32	Landowner agreement
Gorham and Admiral Woods	90%	2	1	Landowner agreement, may require management plan (plan not received)
Hollingbourne Meadows Trust	90%	2	10	Management plan and landowner agreement
Westfield Wood	77%	12	1	In TMBC area, management plan not seen, KWT agreement if not owned by MBC
Weaving Heath	73%	15	15	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
River Len Reserve, Downswood (Spot Lane Nature Area)	67%	17	10	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Senacre Wood	67%	17	15	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Buckland Hill Pocket Nature Reserve	67%	17	26	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Bell Lane Nature Area	67%	17	26	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Five Acre and Wents Woods	47%	23	22	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Poyntell Pond	47%	23	36	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Dove Hill Wood	43%	26	15	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Palace Wood	43%	26	26	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR

Lime Trees Open Space Ponds / Green Hill Open Space	43%	26	32	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Sandling Park	40%	29	22	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Four Oaks Wood	37%	31	15	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Grove Wood	37%	31	26	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR
Sunningdale Court (River Len Reserve, Maidstone)	33%	33	22	Landowner agreement, incorporation into River Len LNR
Walderslade Woodlands	90%	2	10	Possible change of ownership, designation not possible until settled
Bredhurst Hurst	83%	8	4	Management plan, multiple ownership presents challenges
Horish Wood (and Monk's Meadow)	80%	10	4	Management plan and improved implementation and landowner agreement
Yalding Fen	80%	10	4	Possible change of ownership, designation not possible until settled, management plan
Bluebell Wood	60%	21	10	Currently active development, site likely to be suitable but risks to proceeding at present and likely change of ownership
Roundwell Park	47%	23	10	Currently active development, site likely to be suitable but risks to proceeding at present and likely change of ownership
Hockers Lane Nature Reserve (Kent Medical Campus)	40%	29	4	Currently active development, site likely to be suitable but risks to proceeding at present and likely change of ownership
Bridge Nursery	33%	33	26	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR, landowner agreement
Pepper Fen, Ringlestone	27%	35	26	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR, landowner agreement

Bearsted Woodland Trust	77%	12	22	Landowner not supportive of entering into agreement with MBC at this time
River Medway Towpath (land from Bower Lane to East Farleigh Lock)	50%	22	15	Multiple land ownership significant constraint. Smaller area may be progressed. Landowner agreement and management plan required.
High Speed 1 Compound	27%	35	32	Management plan and implementation of management/commitment to LNR, change of management
Bunyards Farm (Allington)	0	37	37	Not suitable

Evaluation of Potential Local Nature Reserves

Supporting Document Sites Evaluation

For Maidstone Borough Council
September 2019



Fant Wildlife Area

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Introduction

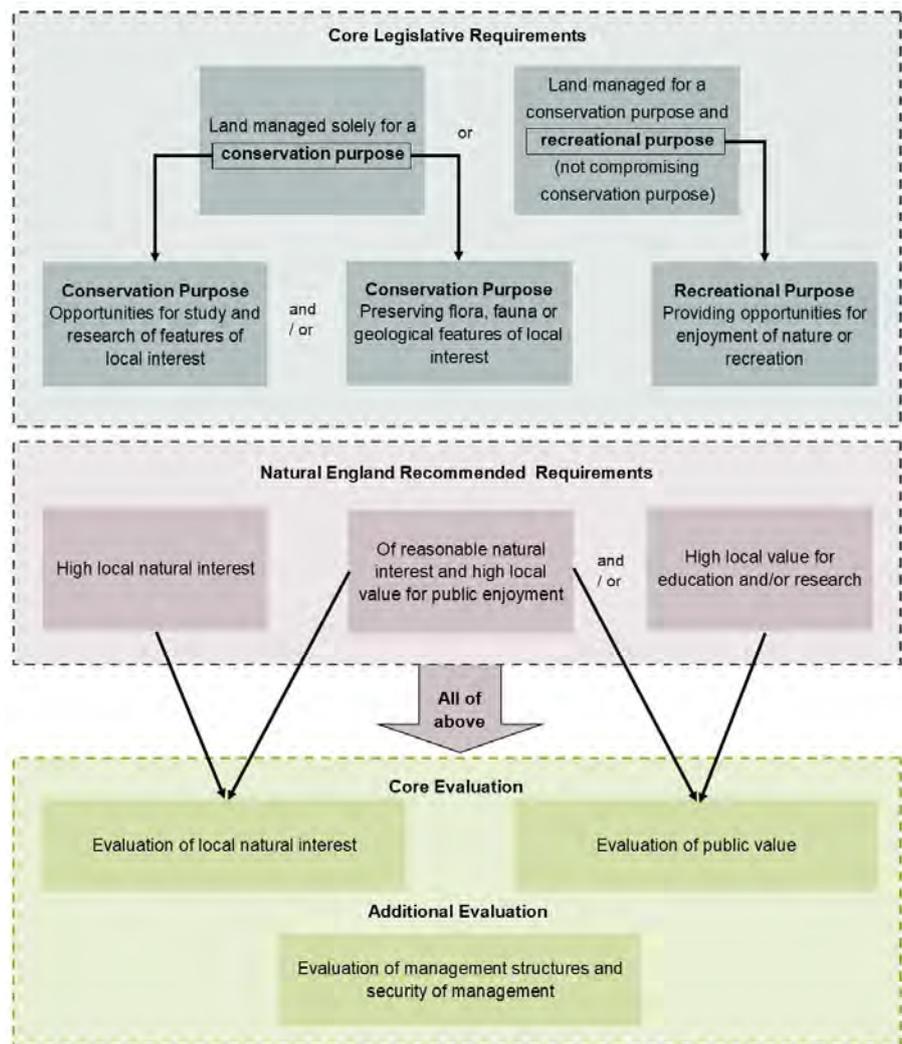
About this Report

This report contains the full site by site evaluation of potential Local Nature Reserves. It provides the evaluation to support the Main Report. Background to this report is contained in the Introduction to the Main Report.

Approach to Evaluation

The evaluation framework developed for this project considers the core legislative requirements and Natural England’s recommendations and additional criteria. In order to provide objectivity to the evaluation, criteria were developed to assess the core elements of local natural interest and public value. An additional evaluation category encompasses management structure, effectiveness and security, to assess the confidence with which the suitability of the site as an LNR could be secured into the future. This is summarised in the figure to the rights.

Although the evaluation process necessarily has a degree of subjectivity, scoring provides a quantitative guide to show how well each site meets the core tests and Natural England’s recommendations. The sites scoring highest can therefore be considered to be the strongest candidates for taking forward as Local Nature Reserves.



An outline of the elements considered in each evaluation category is shown below.

Natural Interest Evaluation	Public Value Evaluation	Management Structures and Security Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing recognition of being of local importance (Local Wildlife Site or other designation) • Evidence of priority habitats or species • Place in ecological unit – within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or linking to priority habitats • Size and function as an ecological unit • Condition of habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access • Proximity to people and role as accessible greenspace • Educational and community use • Levels of community interest and activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of management plan • Management organisation • Implementation of management • Balance of recreation and nature conservation – recreation well-managed

- The maximum score for each of the categories was 10 (100%)
- Some of the criteria are ‘pass or fail’ – scoring 1 point if the site meets the criterion or zero if it does not
- Some of the criteria are ranked with more points scored for how well the site meets the criteria

Desktop Research

Desktop research carried out included:

- The location of the site was determined through reviewing the Maidstone Borough Council ownership GIS shapefile, online research, review of the management plan and contact with the landowner;
- GIS data was reviewed to determine if the site was already a designated site or a Local Wildlife Site (LWS), was within or near a Biodiversity Opportunity Area, contained or was in proximity to Natural England Priority Habitats or Kent Habitat Survey Priority Habitats and whether public rights of way crossed the site ;
- Local Wildlife Site citations were obtained from Kent Wildlife Trust;
- Landowners were approached and asked to provide management plans;
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plans were reviewed for sites arising from development;
- The nominating Councillor was approached for more information where appropriate.

Condition of Habitats

A brief walk-over survey was conducted at each of the sites during the spring and summer of 2019. The aim was to provide an overview assessment of the condition of the habitats, implementation of management and the provision of public access facilities to supplement the desktop research. In several cases these visits also provided an opportunity to meet the community groups managing the site to discuss management and their views on LNR designation.

Natural England’s Common Standards Monitoring guidance for a range of habitats was used as the basis of the condition assessment. A summary is shown next:

Description of site and broad habitats present

Recreational Use

Extent (whole site, rights of way only); type, evidence of illegal/anti-social use; damage from recreation; level of recreation; evidence of conflict with nature conservation management.

Management

Evidence of management – management of habitats and recreation (general); appropriateness of management; evidence of any other damage or threats to site.

Woodland Habitats

Main species and % of species; age structure; regeneration; planting - %, species used; presence of non-native or negative indicator species and extent / % of stand; ground flora and species; woodland management – currently managed or evidence of past management (e.g. age of coppice stools if present); indicator species of local distinctiveness / positive indicator species; browsing or other damage.

Scrub Habitats

Species (%); age; % of site; place within mosaic.

Grassland Habitats

Improved, semi-improved, amenity (%); calcareous, mesotrophic, wet (%); main species present (grass and herbs); grass:herb ratio, % of herbs; presence of non-native or negative indicator species and % of sward (including seeding scrub); indicator species of local distinctiveness / positive indicator species; sward description; litter or bare earth; mosaic with other habitats; evidence of management.

Open Water

Evidence of fishing or other recreation; presence of non-native or invasive species; zonation of vegetation; negative features e.g. erosion, ditches, barriers; height of water – evidence of seasonality; overhanging trees or shrubs (%); surrounding land use; water source; potential sources of pollution/evidence of pollution; approx. size and depth; base or liner; naturalness of banks, bankside vegetation.

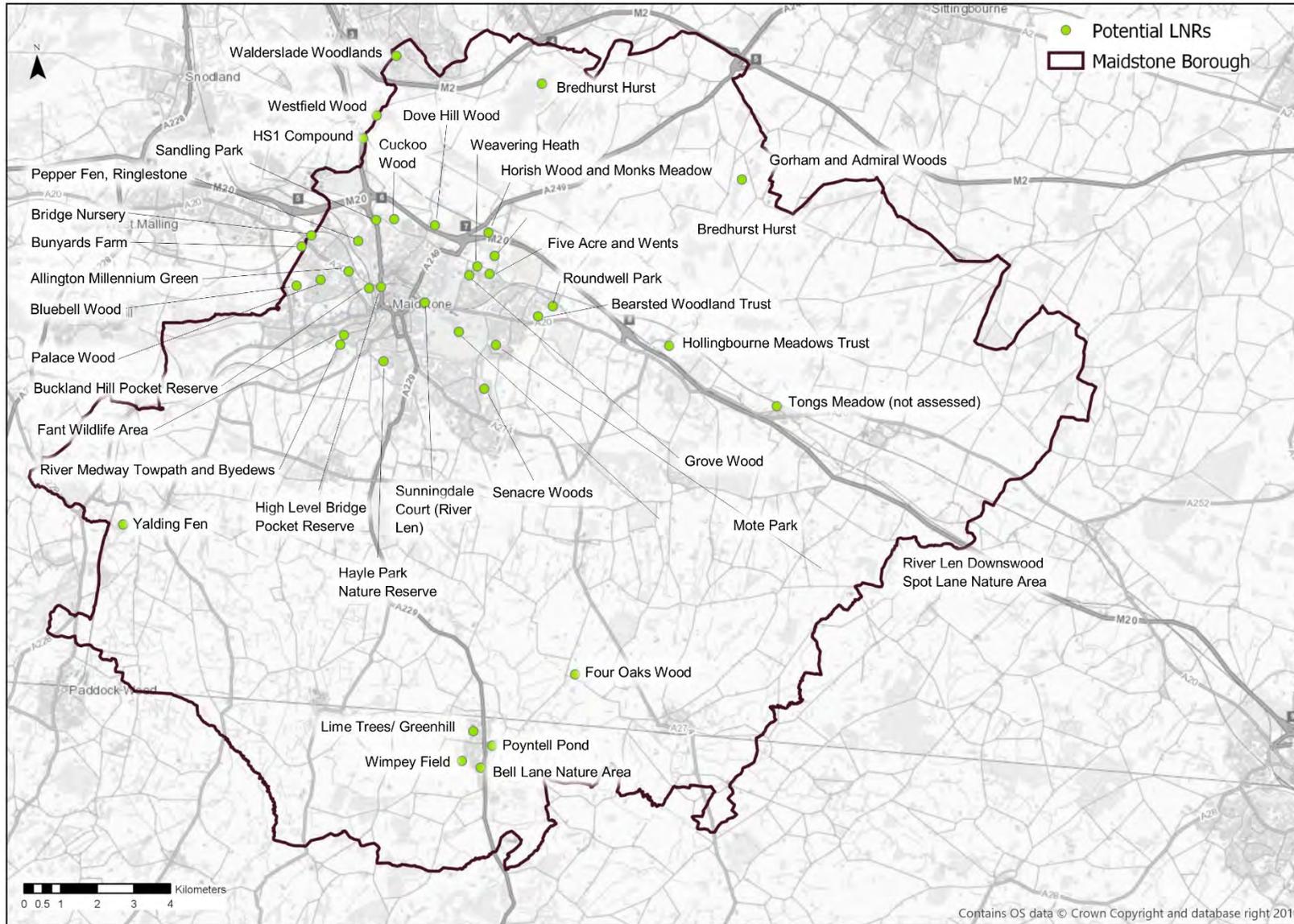
The Sites

The list of sites to be evaluated was:

- Allington Millennium Green
- Bearsted Woodland Trust
- Bell Lane Nature Area
- Bluebell Wood
- Bredhurst Wood
- Bridge Nursery
- Buckland Hill Pocket Nature Reserve
- Bunyards Farm (Allington)
- Cuckoo Wood
- Dove Hill Wood
- Fant Wildlife Area
- Five Acre and Wents Woods
- Four Oaks Wood
- Gorham and Admiral Woods
- Grove Wood
- Hayle Place Stud Farm
- High Level Bridge Pocket Nature Reserve and Valley Conservation
- High Speed 1 Compound
- Hockers Lane Nature Reserve (Kent Medical Campus)
- Hollingbourne Meadows Trust
- Horish Wood and Monk's Meadow
- Lime Trees Open Space Ponds / Green Hill Open Space
- Mote Park
- Palace Wood
- Pepper Fen, Ringlestone
- Poyntell Pond
- River Len Reserve, Downswood (Spot Lane Nature Area)
- River Medway Towpath (land from Bower Lane to East Farleigh Lock)
- Roundwell Park
- Sandling Park
- Senacre Wood
- Sunningdale Court Woodland (River Len Reserve, Maidstone)
- Walderslade Woodlands
- Weaving Heath
- Westfield Wood
- Wimpey Field
- Yalding Fen

The location of these sites is show in Plan 1.

Plan 1: Location of Sites



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Sites Evaluation

Allington Millennium Green

Location	Cloudberry Close, Allington, Maidstone TQ74845653 ME16 0YU
Ownership	Allington Millennium Green Trust
Management Organisation	Allington Millennium Green Trust
Size	Approx. 0.9 hectares
Existing Designations	No nature conservation designations. The site is a Millennium Green. Initial consultation with Natural England indicates that favourable to designate as a Local Nature Reserve with no conflict of interests with Millennium Green designation.
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Yes
Constraints	Site is also a Millennium Green which places constraints on certain activities. As well as consultation with Natural England through the LNR designation process, Natural England solicitors will need to be involved in designation. Initial discussions have taken place through the process of this scoping exercise and Natural England (Millennium Green solicitor) is favourable to designation. Updated management plan required.

Site visit conducted with community group.

Site Description

Allington Millennium Green Trust (AMGT) is a group of local residents who own and manage the site. The site was given to AMGT by Antler Homes following the building of homes on neighbouring land. The remit was to provide a quiet area for relaxation and for the benefit of wildlife and education.

The site was set up in 1998 to reflect the countryside of Kent. This included planting cobnut orchards, meadows and native species hedges. A circular community seating and events area was surrounded by a sensory garden created to reflect Roman artefacts found on the site, although the planting has now been removed. The central part of the site is grassland, with both amenity grass and conservation grassland which is left to grow to a hay meadow. Yellow rattle has been planted to suppress grasses and to increase diversity and there are flowering species such as black knapweed and meadow vetchling. A Kentish cobnut plat has been planted on the southern side of the site, with native woodland/shaw bordering the A20 and a native hedge on the northern edge of the site. The cobnut plat is coppiced on rotation. There is also an orchard with traditional varieties, with long grass left underneath the orchard trees.

Key objectives for the site are (from management plan):

- To provide a semi-natural open space for the public and residents to enjoy
- Keep maintenance and management low-level as labour resource is limited
- Maintain the cobnut plat as a screen from the road, as a haven for wildlife and a reflection of the Kent countryside and previous agricultural practices
- Manage for biodiversity while keeping the threat of vandalism to a minimum

The site is owned and managed by an active community organisation, with good support from local people.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	77%
Local natural interest evaluation	40%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	100%
Management evaluation	90%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	1	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	Small site in residential area. Although not connected to other sites, provides an urban wildlife haven.
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	Small site, no priority habitats, but well-managed.
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	Run by the community under Trust arrangement.
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1	1	Management plan expired in 2018, but appropriate and could be updated to be suitable for LNR.
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	Active management organisation, regular volunteer parties, high level of community interest.
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	Recreation is well-managed, although a small site and there are some areas where access is more difficult/not encouraged.
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Allington Millennium Green



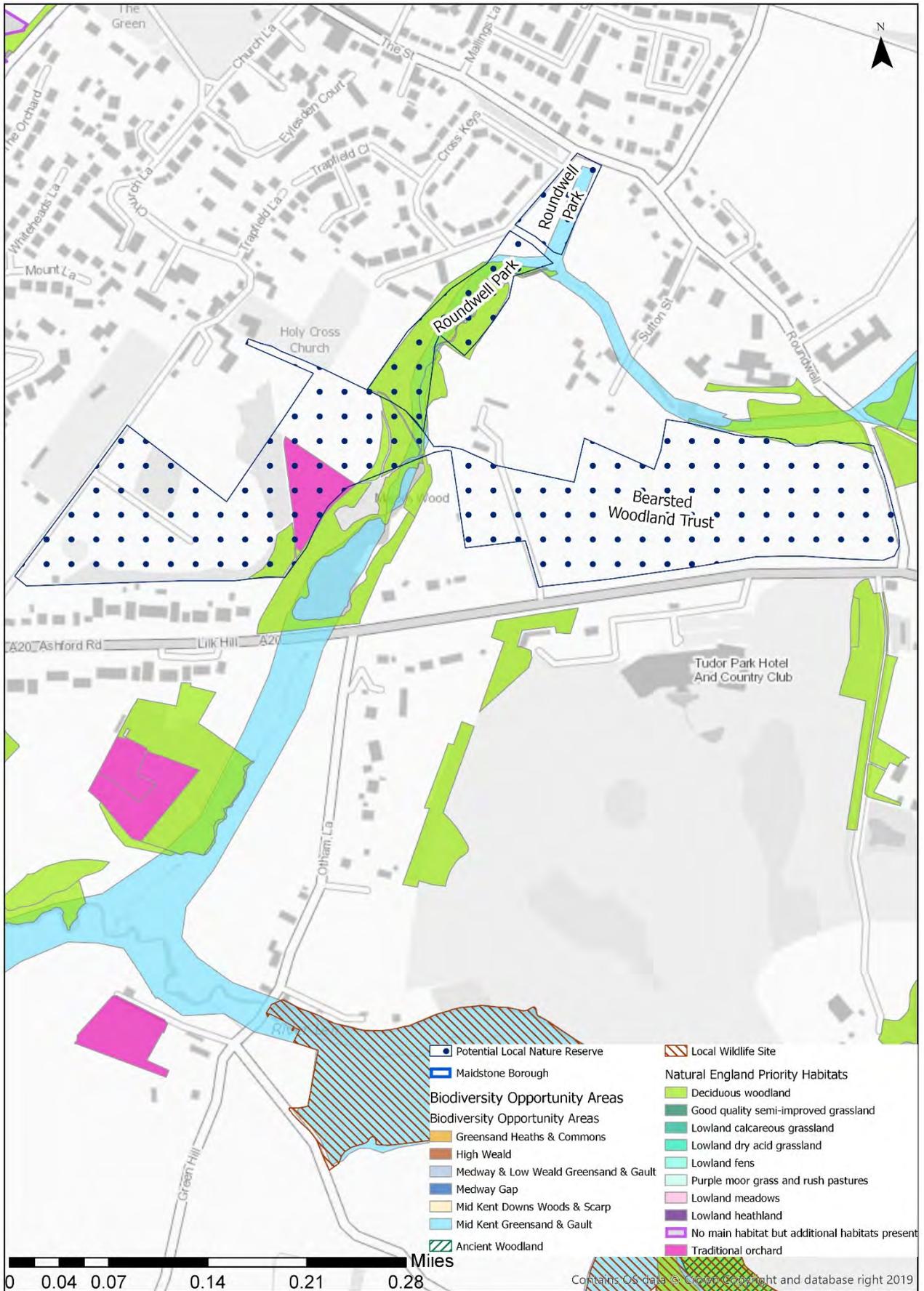
Bearsted Woodland Trust

Location	Church Landway, Bearsted, Maidstone TQ79975529 ME14 4NE
Ownership	Bearsted Woodland Trust
Management Organisation	Bearsted Woodland Trust
Size	Approx. 12 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	No, whilst conservation one of its charitable objectives, Bearsted Woodland Trust does not wish to enter into agreement with Maidstone Borough Council.
Constraints	Landowner does not wish to designate as does not wish to enter into agreement with Maidstone Borough Council. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements.

Site Description

Community-run site in Bearsted formerly held as a 'land bank' by a housing developer. Several grassland fields cut on a hay-cut regime to improve the biodiversity of formerly rank grassland. A small native woodland has been planted, with existing native ash woodland, secondary woodland and mature hedgerows. Many trees have been planted, mostly native, but some ornamental. The centre of the site dips into the Lilk Valley where there is a small area of alder woodland. Also includes area of 'parkland' with mature trees and exposed sand, which is important for invertebrates.

The site is fully accessible with some surfaced paths. The site is well used by local people, especially dog walkers.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	77%
Local natural interest evaluation	60%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	100%
Management evaluation	70%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score	1	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1	1	
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1	1	
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1	1	
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Bearsted Woodland Trust



Photos courtesy of Bearsted Woodland Trust



Bell Lane Nature Area

Location	Bell Lane/Vine Walk, Staplehurst TQ78454307 TN12 0BQ
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 0.25 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Site below 2 hectare threshold. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements (previous plan dated 2001). Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

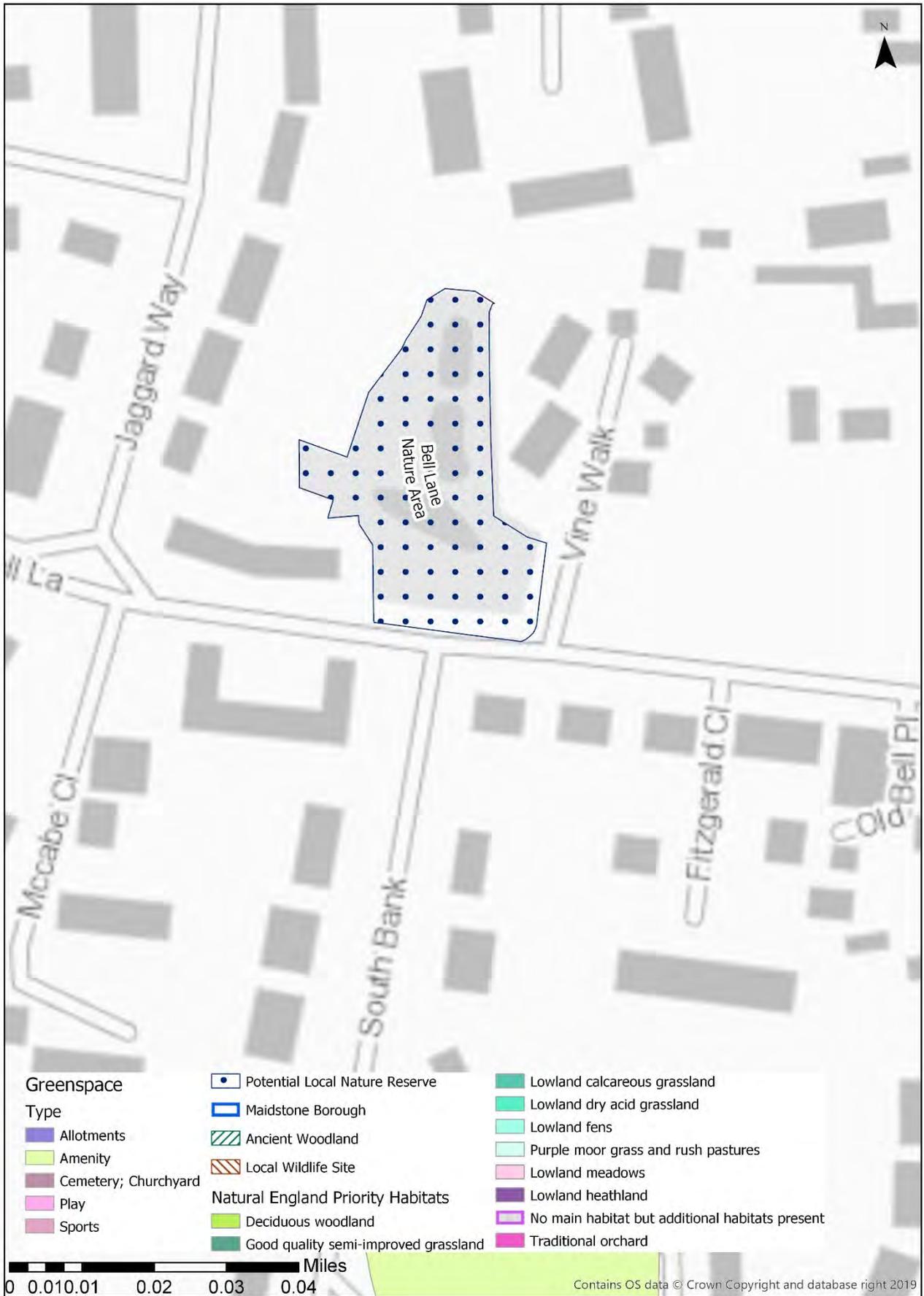
Site Description

Three ponds in a small area surrounded on three sides by residential area. The ponds are surrounded by woodland and scrub and ruderal habitats. The woodland is comprised of mixed native species including oak, goat willow, lime, yew, ash, hazel, field maple and elder with some sycamore and occasional horse chestnut. There is a mixed ground flora which includes cow parsley, ramsons, hogweed, nettle, bramble and occasional bluebell, with one stand of butcher's broom. There are some garden species.

The southern-most pond is the least shaded (c10%) and has marginal vegetation. The central pond is more shaded (c70%) but still has marginal vegetation and the northern pond is most shaded. All have natural banks.

Work to open up the ponds through pollarding and thinning trees has taken place following recommendations in the 2001 management plan. There are bat and bird boxes and log piles.

There is no public access to the site. A community group is active in managing the site with monthly work parties. There are occasional visits by guides/scouts/brownies groups.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	67%
Local natural interest evaluation	50%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	70%
Management evaluation	80%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	1	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation		Site Score	4
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4	4	
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

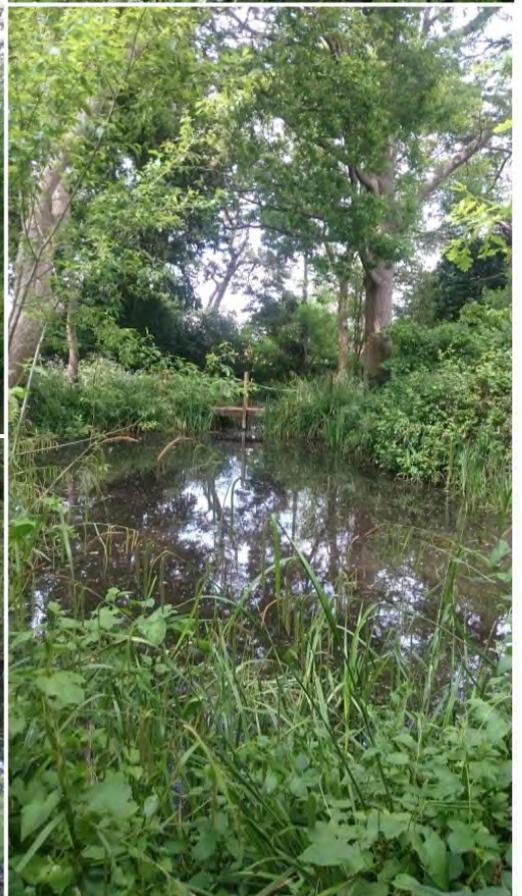
Public Value Evaluation		Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score		Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2			
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1	1		
Access is not permitted	0			
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1			
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1		
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	Occasional educational visits
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
Communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
Communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1	1	Comprehensive previous management plan dated 2001 produced by Kent Wildlife Trust. A new plan will be required for designation. However, surveys have been undertaken in interim and the community group is following management recommendations.

There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Bell Lane Nature Area



Bluebell Wood

Location	Hermitage Lane, north of Maidstone Hospital, Barming Road TQ73425614 ME16 9FR
Ownership	Croudace Ltd
Management Organisation	Unknown
Size	Approx. 7.8 hectares (total area of suitable land unclear until development has been completed)
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Site being developed at present. Suitability will also depend on the condition of the site following establishment as part of development. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

This woodland is part of a housing development, reference 18/501745/REM (and associated appeal and applications). The housing development is being built at present.

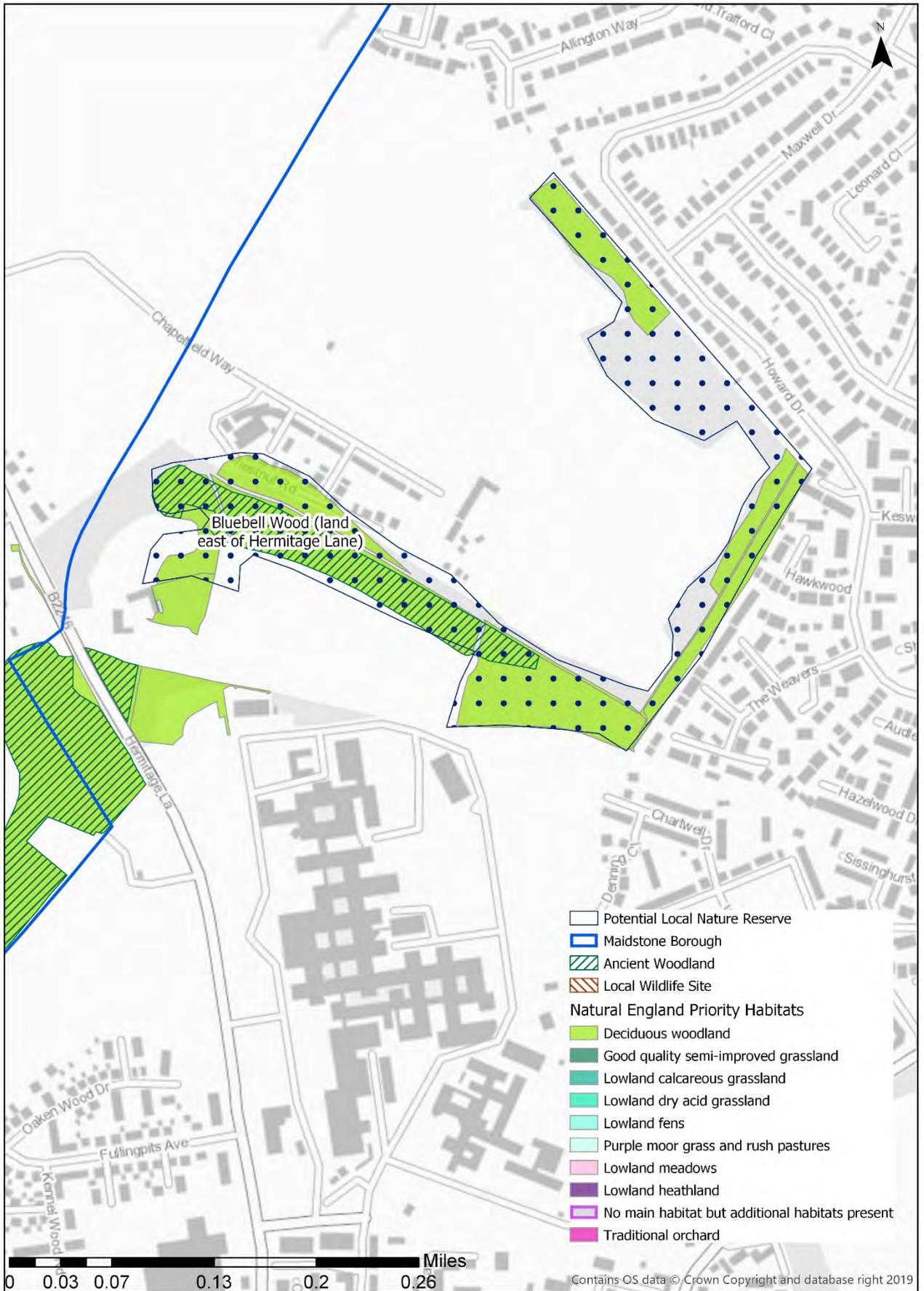
The areas used in this evaluation are detailed in the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan and include existing woodland on the southern and south eastern side of the site and a wildlife and quiet recreation area to be created on the north eastern side, as shown on page 47 of the 'Detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) Phase 1 (November 2016)' (see right).



The existing woodland to the south is mainly sweet chestnut coppice, with some oak, birch and hornbeam, with some hazel. Ground flora includes bluebell, bramble and wood anemone. The sweet chestnut also extends along the south eastern side in a narrower strip. Both areas have been visited. The third area to the north east has not been created.

There are public footpaths through both existing woodlands. As well as being important to the new residents of the housing development, the site is also important and highly valued by existing residents of Allington and Chartwell Drive and other nearby streets.

The evaluation score for this site is lower than might be expected due to uncertainty over the habitats to be created and future management arrangements.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	60%
Local natural interest evaluation	80%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	80%
Management evaluation	20%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	5	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, part is mapped as ancient woodland by Natural England.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Greensand Heaths and Commons BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	Current access through public rights of way.
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

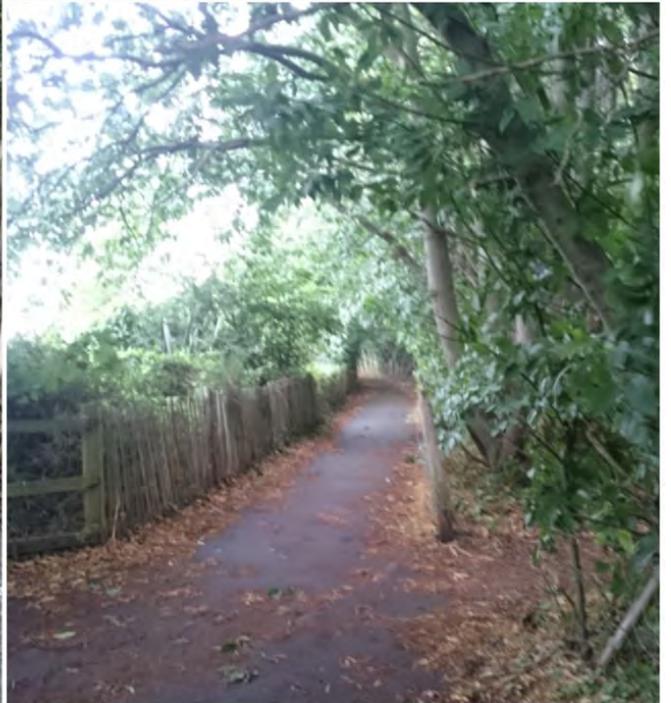
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2	2	
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		

There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	The site has a LEMP and associated ecological plans related to the housing development, but an LNR compatible management plan will be required.
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0	0	Future management arrangements not fully settled.
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	0	Future management arrangements not fully settled.
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	Future management arrangements not fully settled.

Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	Assumed recreation remains at present levels on existing public rights of way and minimal impact in new area to be created
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Bluebell Wood



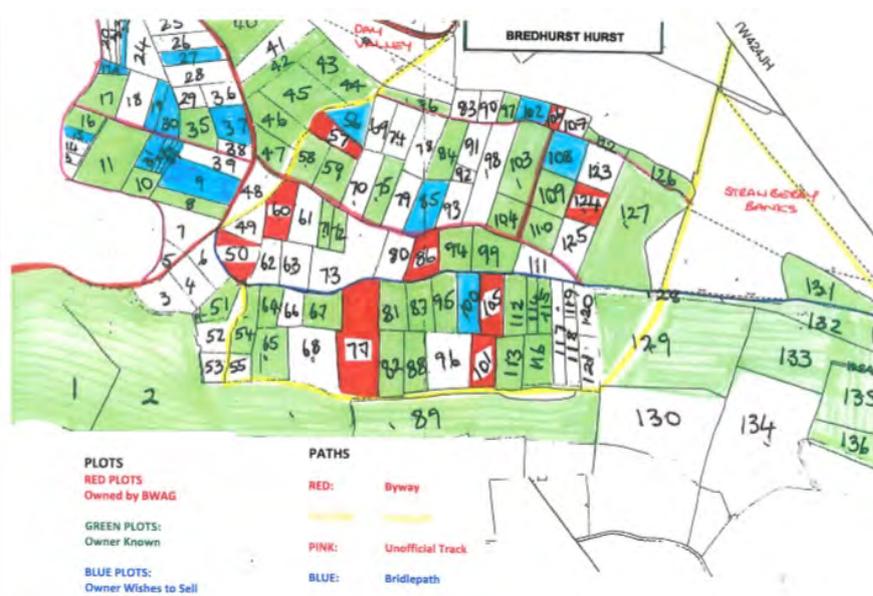
Bredhurst Hurst

Location	Bredhurst TQ80136162 ME7 3LA
Ownership	Complex ownership – see below
Management Organisation	Bredhurst Woodland Action Group
Size	Approx. 63.5 hectares
Existing Designations	Squirrel Wood, Stockbury Valley MA46
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Complex ownership – see below
Constraints	Multiple ownership will present a challenge in constructing management agreements. Owned plots are not contiguous. Management plan for Woodland Grant Scheme – ideally updated to be more suitable for LNR designation.

Site Description

Bredhurst Hurst is part of a wider woodland complex, designated as Local Wildlife Site Squirrel Wood, Stockbury Valley MA46 (the owners of the wider woodland – Monkdown Wood on the plan on next page - were approached as part of this evaluation but were not interested in progressing at this time). The part of the Local Wildlife Site under consideration is Bredhurst Hurst, managed by Bredhurst Woodland Action Group (BWAG).

This woodland has been split into smaller plots, with multiple owners. BWAG has purchased several of these and manages others on behalf of owners. The ownership of several of the plots is not known (see right). This multiple ownership will present difficulties with formulating land management agreements. Further advice should be sought from Natural England and additional legal advice may be required.



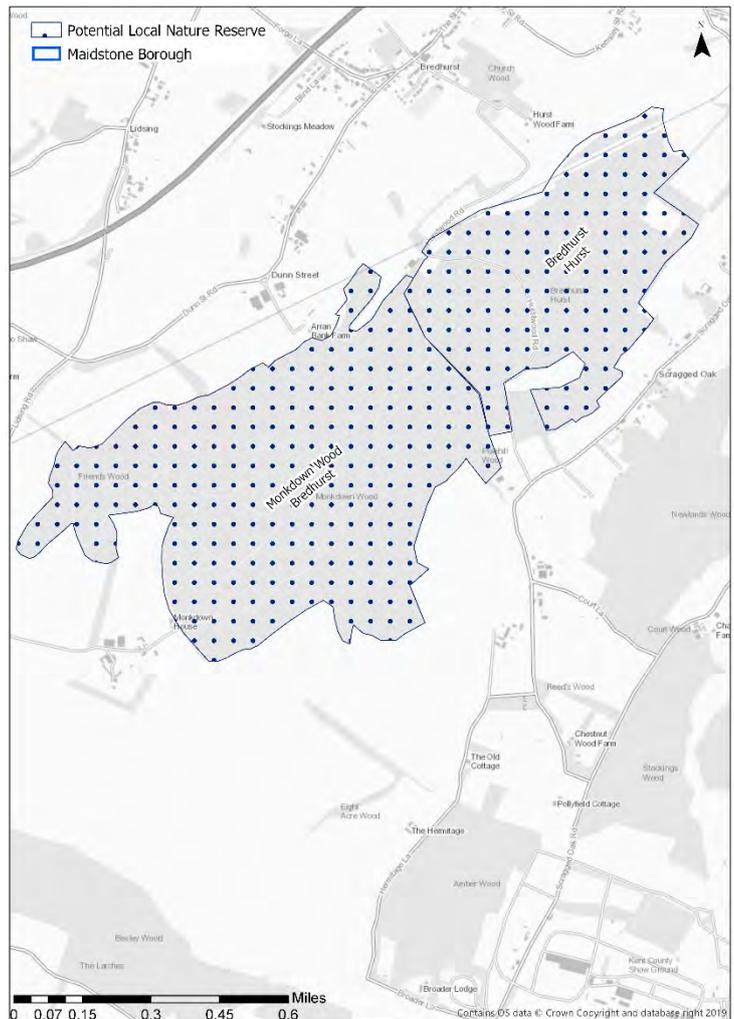
The woodland is over-mature mixed coppice with standards with hornbeam, ash, hazel and field maple, with some yew and beech.

The Kent Wildlife Trust botanical survey 2014 notes:

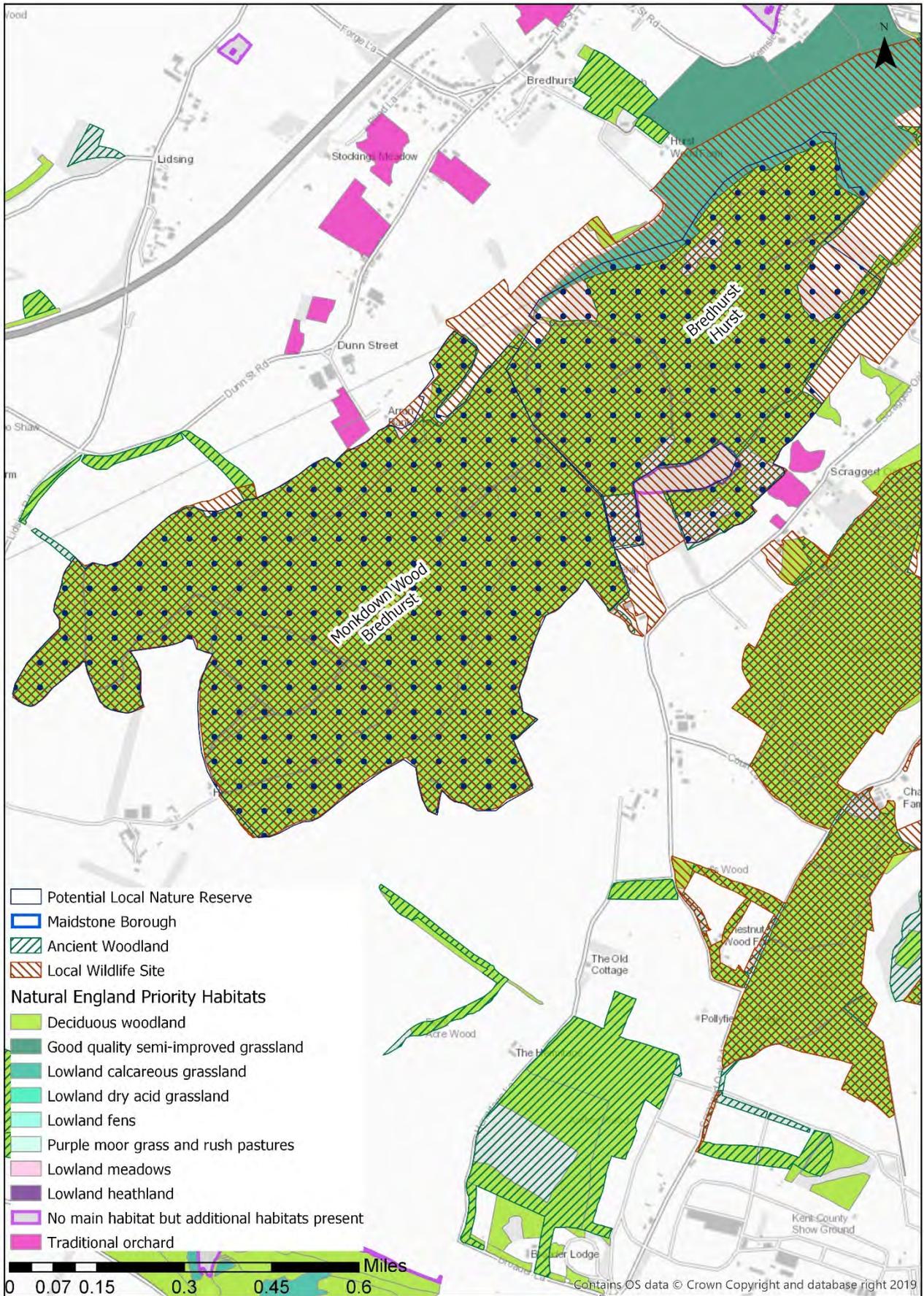
“Bredhurst Hurst is included within the Bredhurst Woods Local Wildlife Site (LWS MA34). The reason for designation is that, “The site consists of almost 200 hectares of ancient woodland with at least 47 ancient woodland indicator plants recorded. The north eastern half of the woodland is surrounded by chalk grassland, species-rich in places with 17 indicator plant species recorded.”

The eminent botanist Dr Francis Rose, has described Bredhurst Hurst as one of the seven most outstanding woods on the Kent Chalk, supporting 55 ‘old woodland’ species (Kent Wildlife Trust File Note, 26 November 1980).

In addition to its assemblage of ancient woodland vascular plant indicator species, Bredhurst Hurst is known to support several protected and / or notable plant species including bluebell Hyacinthoides non-scripta, lady orchid Orchis purpurea and the lichen Porina byssophila.”



There is access through most of the woodland through public rights of way.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	83%
Local natural interest evaluation	90%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	80%
Management evaluation	80%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Local Wildlife Site: Squirrel Wood, Stockbury Valley MA46
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Medway Gap BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1		
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1	1	Within Woodland Grant Scheme but requires a management plan which is suitable for LNR designation
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1		Partially
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Bridge Nursery

Location	Bridge Nursery estate, Allington, Maidstone TQ73855737 ME16 0XE
Ownership	Ward Homes
Management Organisation	Ward Homes appointed contractor
Size	Approx. 3.6 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

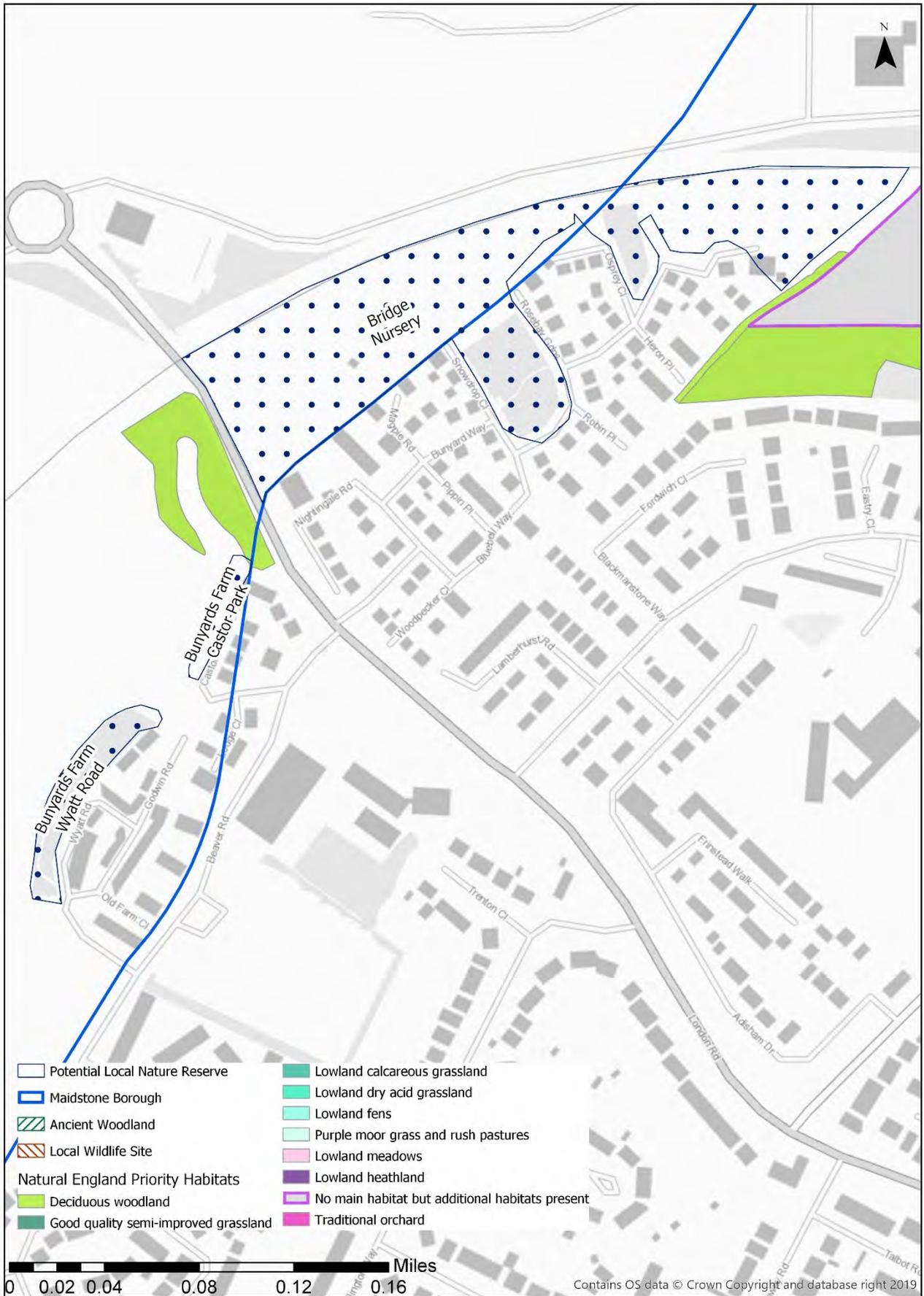
Site Description

Area of public open space, habitat creation for reptiles and SUDS pond associated with Bridge Nursery development in Allington.

Western side near London Road is accessed through a gate but does not appear to be well used. Trees are mainly sycamore, with sycamore self-seeding throughout the area. Rank vegetation including creeping thistle, ragwort and possible remnants of wildflower sowing including marjoram, poppy and oxeye daisy. In the centre is a large SUDS pond. On the eastern side is area of ruderal vegetation with oxeye daisy, dock, ragwort and creeping thistle. Access is not restricted, but neither is it an attractive place to walk. There is also a small area of existing beech woodland.

There is some public access permitted but the site is not welcoming and there is little evidence of the public frequently using the site. The SUDS pond separates two areas of open space and is not accessible.

It is not clear what the current management strategy is for the area. There is potential for this site due to its size, location near to a residential area and links to a wider corridor in neighbouring land and railway line. However, this potential is not being realised at present.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes (but limited recreation)
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	33%
Local natural interest evaluation	50%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	30%
Management evaluation	20%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	Connection to adjacent land and to railway corridor
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2	2	
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	3	30%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1	1	
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1		
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0	0	
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1		Management arrangements unclear.
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Bridge Nursery



Buckland Hill Pocket Nature Reserve

Location	At corner of Buckland Hill and Hubert Walter Drive, Maidstone
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council via High Level Bridge and Buckland Hill Pocket Nature Reserves Management Committee (which is drawn from local elected representatives, residents and stakeholders) and local volunteers.
Size	Approx. 0.5 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	There is an up to date plan - management needs to be implemented in line with plan. Further detail may be required on costings and funding to demonstrate security of management.

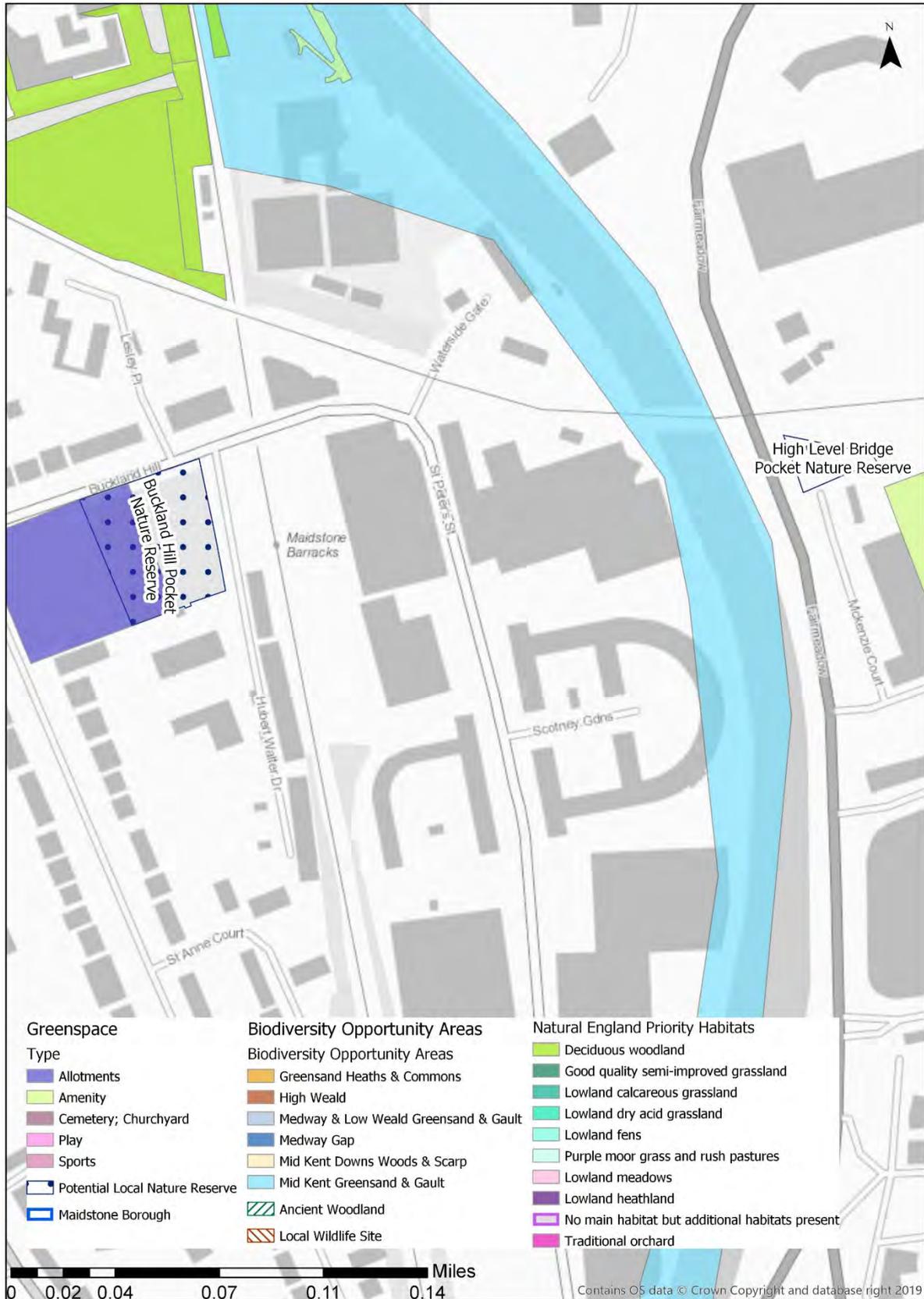
Site Description

The management plan states:

The site comprises predominantly open-structured and sycamore and ash dominated secondary woodland with an understorey of holly, common hawthorn, hazel, elder, dogwood, bramble and male fern. The impact of the fungal pathogen induced ash-decline is being felt across the site and pedunculate oak, field maple, yew and other tree seedlings are plentiful, which underlines the dynamic processes at work within secondary woodland. A stand of large and magnificent goat willows bound a broad central clearing which contains a long-established, spring-fed, shallow linear pond (and a more recently excavated pond). A narrow band of more open and disturbed sandy ground persists at the eastern edge of the site, close to where the reserve abuts the Barracks Station, and supports a rich diversity of ruderals, field weeds and uncommon relics of past cultivation such as caraway. Indeed, historic maps indicate this site was formerly farmland before its assimilation into allotment gardens and railway sidings in the mid Nineteenth Century as urban Maidstone expanded. Planted and invasive exotic shrubs are another feature of this site and include garden privet hedgerows, lilac, Portugal laurel, cherry laurel, barberry and butterfly-bush. The ruin of a large WWII era air raid shelter affords suitable conditions for lime-loving plants to flourish and accommodates mammal burrows beneath its collapsed reinforced concrete roof. The westernmost part of the reserve, bounding the allotments, is the most nutrient rich area of the site and is dominated by common nettle and much dead wood, which provides habitat for a rich diversity of invertebrates and the resident slow worm population.

The small size of the reserve, inner urban location, near residential development and a busy railway station, all present challenges for achieving sustainable public access. Further, fly-tipping, injecting drug use, street drinking, airguns, vandalism, fires, dogs and rough sleeper encampments have all proved problematic at this site. New fencing and signage will seek to reduce negative impacts such as disturbance and damage, as will outreach activity by the site management committee. The extent of the path network will be limited to less sensitive areas of the reserve and kept under review and amended as required. In the longer-term enhanced vegetation structure will be utilised to protect habitats and wildlife on the site.

The small size of the site could mean that access has a detrimental effect on its nature conservation interest. The site has a current management plan and is managed by a committee of residents and stakeholders.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes (although access is permitted, the small size and limited potential restrict access capacity)
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	67%
Local natural interest evaluation	50%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	60%
Management evaluation	90%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	Not high quality habitats but of interest due to location and lack of natural sites in the area
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1	1	Although access is not denied, there is limited access.
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	

The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		Ongoing issues with anti-social activities
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention and opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention and opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		

The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	Relies on volunteer input
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	Limited access opportunity
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Buckland Hill Pocket Nature Reserve



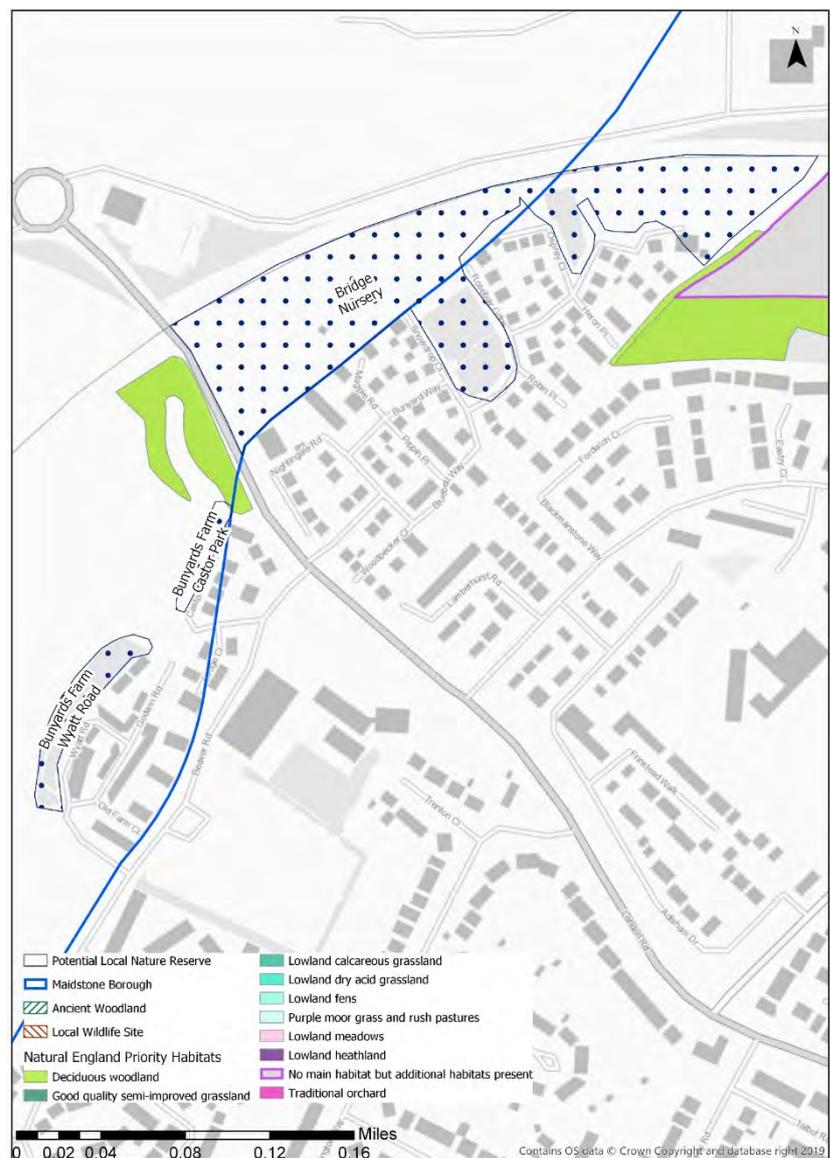
Bunyards Farm (Allington)

Location	Castor Park and Godwin Road, Allington, Maidstone TQ73565721 ME16 0XJ
Ownership	Unknown
Management Organisation	Unknown
Size	0.1 hectares and 0.3 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown.
Constraints	Site not of sufficient natural interest or size to designate as an LNR. Land is within Tonbridge and Malling District, therefore TMBC must delegate powers to MBC to designate.

Site Description

Two small areas of open space associated with two developments. Sites are not connected. Both sites very small and below the minimum threshold size. Castor Park open space is an amenity park with limited natural interest, comprising amenity grass, play equipment and planted trees. The open space adjacent to Godwin Road comprises seeded 'wildflower meadow' on previously bare earth, containing common and ruderal species including black knapweed, wild carrot, creeping thistle and oxeye daisy. Some semi-standard planted birch trees.

Neither site has sufficient natural interest or size to become an LNR.



Bunyards Farm



Cuckoo Wood

Location	Sandling Road, Maidstone TQ76055796 ME14 2JA
Ownership	Gorstyfields Limited
Management Organisation	Gorstyfields Limited
Size	12.4 hectares owned by Gorstyfields Ltd, 4.3 hectares have no ownership
Existing Designations	Local Wildlife Site: Cuckoo Wood, Sandling MA31
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Undecided
Constraints	No management agreement can be entered into to encompass the 4.3 hectares with no ownership

Site Description

Sweet chestnut coppice on formerly ancient woodland. The dominant species is sweet chestnut, but there is also some hornbeam and alder adjacent to stream. Other species include hazel, field maple, elder, cherry and silver birch. There is some sycamore and Norway maple.

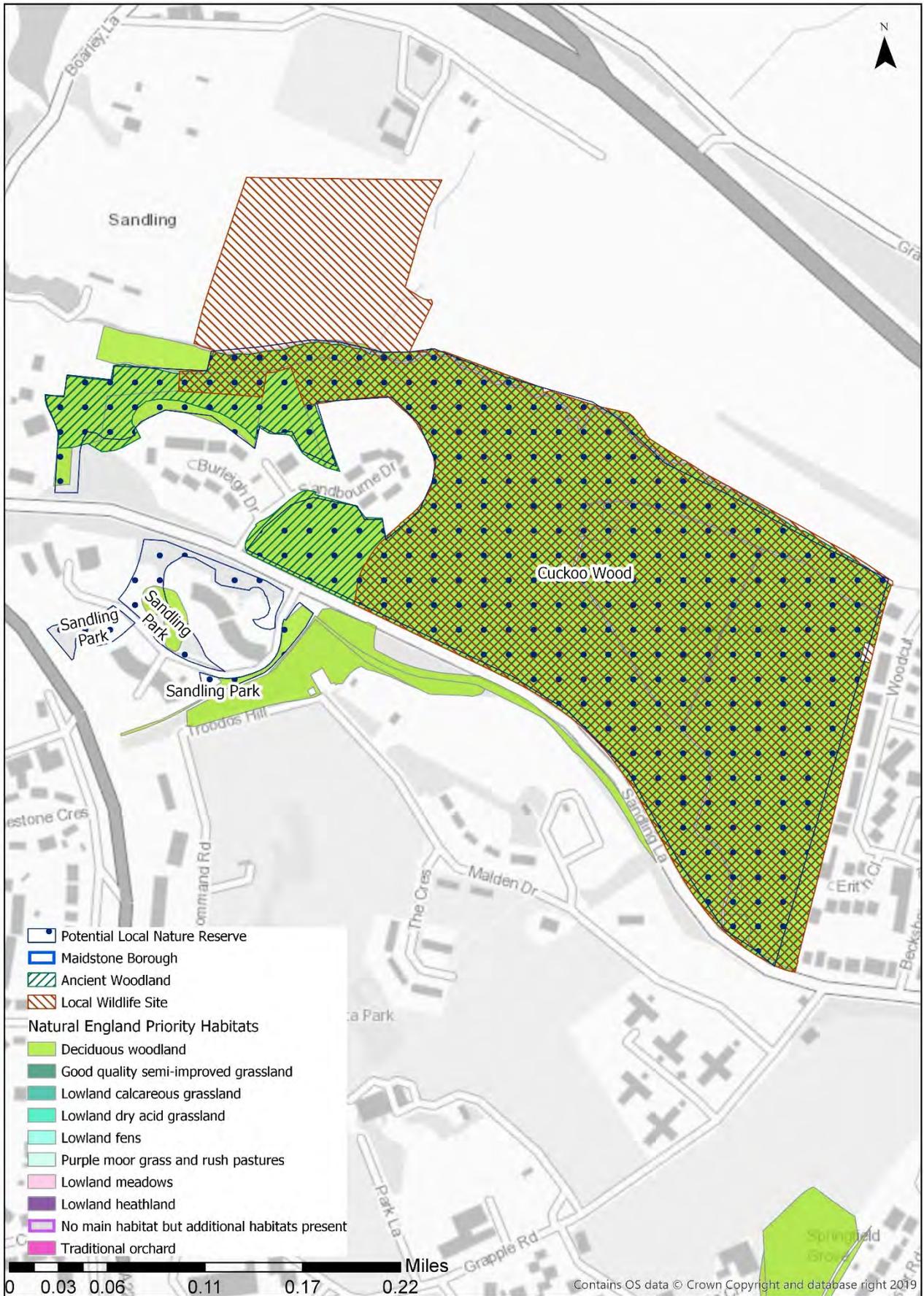
Tennyson Brook runs along the northern edge of the site, adding additional habitat to the woodland. A kingfisher was viewed during the site visit.

Despite replanting with sweet chestnut, many ancient woodland indicators remain. The Local Wildlife Site citation suggests that there are over 30 ancient woodland indicators within Cuckoo Wood including orpine and herb-paris. Star of Bethlehem and pignut were noted on the site visit.

The woodland is under a Woodland Grant scheme and management taking place between 2000 and 2005.

Several footpaths cross the woodland and there is access from nearby residential areas. There is a level of anti-social behaviour which was also occurring during the site visit – quad bikes and motorbikes, with evidence of previous fires. This activity could be intimidating and is causing erosion.

LNR designation has previously progressed and an LNR deed was drawn up in 2012 but not formalised (reasons not known).



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	90%
Local natural interest evaluation	100%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	80%
Management evaluation	90%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Local Wildlife Site: Cuckoo Wood, Sandling MA31
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Mid Kent Greensand and Gault
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation		Site Score	4
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4	4	
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation		Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%	
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	Several public rights of way	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1			
Access is not permitted	0			
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1		
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1		
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		Access by quad bikes and motorbikes, fires and vandalism can be intimidating	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	Funded through a Woodland Grant Scheme
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1	1	
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Cuckoo Wood



Dove Hill Wood

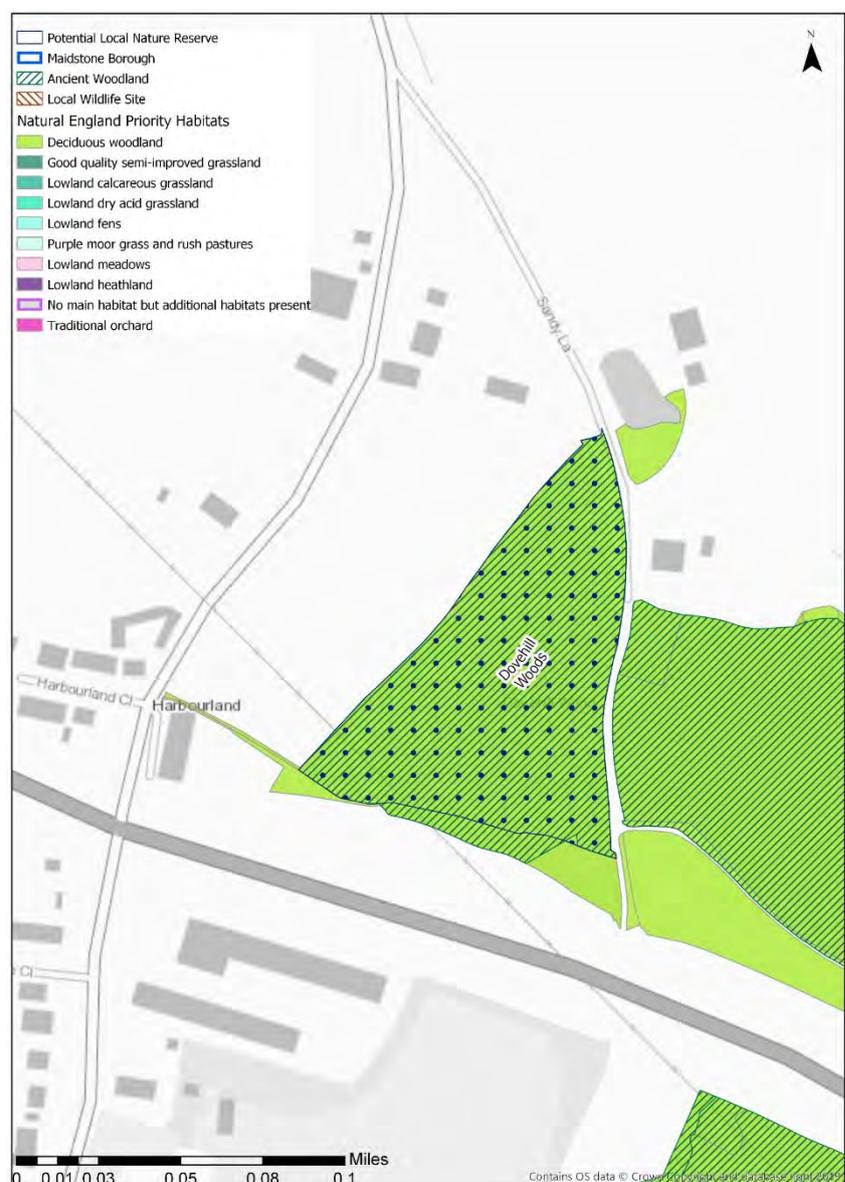
Location	Sandy Lane, off Boxley Road, Maidstone TQ77205778 ME14 3DJ
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 1.7 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

Sweet chestnut on former ancient woodland site. Northern part of the site predominantly over-mature sweet chestnut coppice with hawthorn and hazel understorey. Southern part and western edge more varied with cherry, hornbeam, beech and ash. Ground flora sparse due to shade cast by sweet chestnut, but dog's mercury commons and cuckoo pint, dog violet and bluebell present.

No sign of recent management with last coppicing c30 years ago.

Public footpath along the southern edge of the site and access from Sandy Lane, but no signs of regular use of the woodland for recreation.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	43%
Local natural interest evaluation	70%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	20%
Management evaluation	40%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Adjacent to (but not within) Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2	2	

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation		Site Score	3
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation		Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score		Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2			
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1	1	Access through public rights of way only	
Access is not permitted	0			
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1			
The site is in proximity to schools	1			
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0	0	

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		



Fant Wildlife Area

Location	Between Roseholme and Unicumbes Lane, Fant, Maidstone TQ74725480 ME16 8DH
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Fant Wildlife Group
Size	Approx. 4 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Yes (Fant Wildlife Group)
Constraints	None

Site visit conducted with community group.

Site Description

Fant Wildlife Area is owned by Maidstone Borough Council and managed on behalf of the community by the Fant Wildlife Group, a registered charity. There has been considerable change to the site since the formation of the Fant Wildlife Group in 1996.

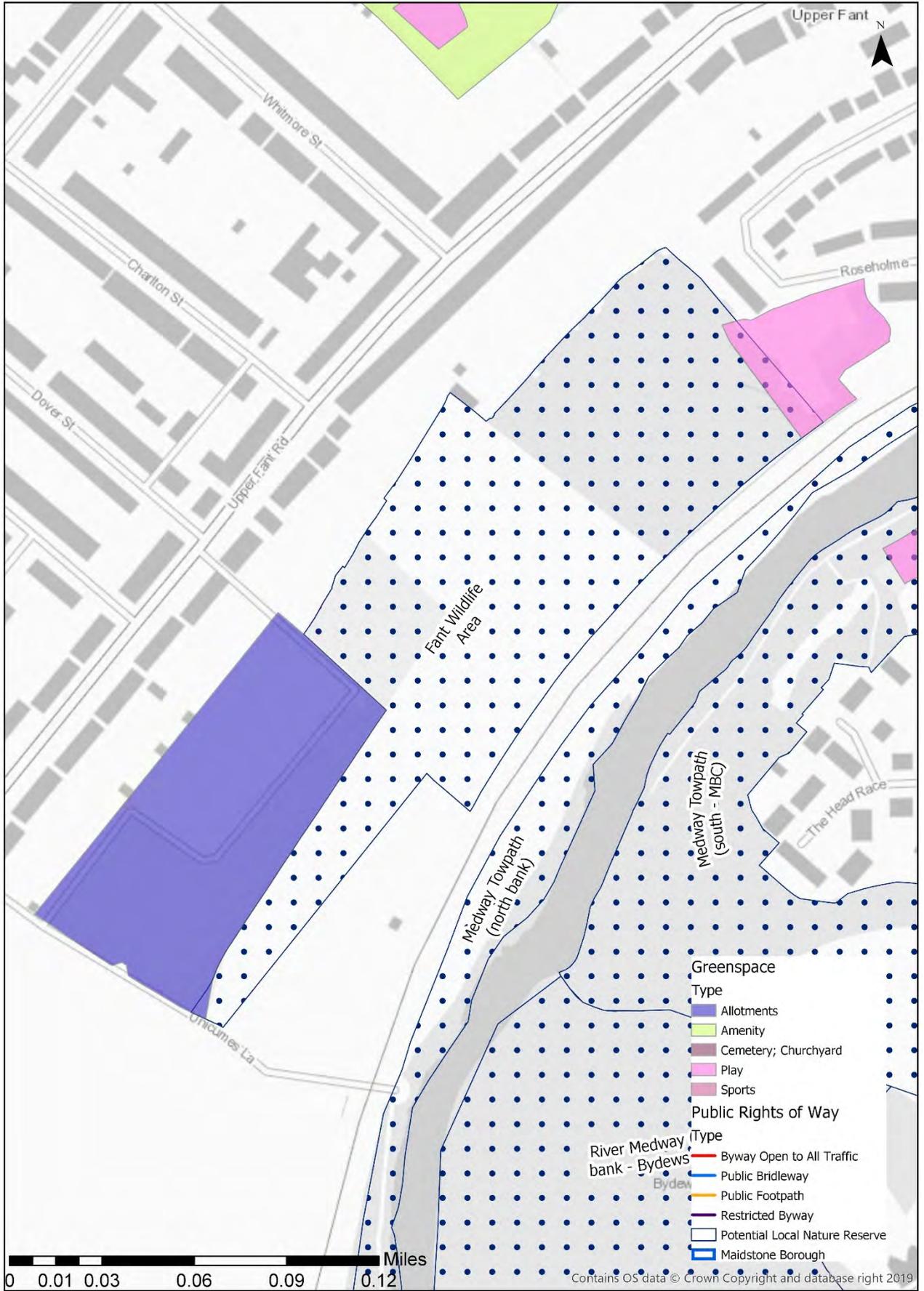
Most of the site was originally inaccessible and was in danger of becoming used for development. The first five years were largely spent gaining access to and building the infrastructure of the site (e.g. gates, paths and tool storage containers). The Fant Wildlife Group's structure was also consolidated during this time.

Work has continued on several habitat development projects including the construction of a pond, tree and hedge planting and sowing wildflower seed.

As the organisation matured, the group has increasingly focused on community engagement with links established with local schools and groups. Recent developments have included improvements to online presence and use of social media.

The group holds regular social events throughout the year to celebrate the site and promote the work of the group to the wider community.

Habitats include wet grassland and carr on fertile land, with nettle, brambles, hogweed and frequent elder. The land was formerly allotment and there are also plants originating from this former use, including fruit trees. Himalayan balsam, frequent on the banks of the nearby River Medway, has also spread into the site but is controlled. A pond near the entrance adds diversity and is used for educational visits. Some parts of the site are cut more regularly to encourage grassland habitats. Planting of native tree species also adds to the diversity of habitats and native wildflowers have been planted. Bird and bat boxes and reptile hibernacula are also present.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	90%
Local natural interest evaluation	70%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	100%
Management evaluation	100%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Adjacent to (but not within) Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	Although railway creates a barrier, the site is generally well-connected and forms a link between the urban area and the countryside.
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation		Site Score	3
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	Although no priority habitats, there is a mosaic of grassland and wet grassland, scrub, trees, ditches and a pond which creates a valuable mosaic of habitats. The site is actively managed.
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation		Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score		Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1			
Access is not permitted	0			

Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	

The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	

Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Fant Wildlife Area



Five Acre and Wents Woods

Location	Between Exton Gardens and Weaving Street (north), Grove Green, Maidstone TQ78695646 ME14 5BL
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 2.5 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

Sweet chestnut coppice, with some hazel, elder, ash and holly. South western area on formerly ancient woodland. Ground flora bramble, dog's mercury with occasional broad buckler fern, bluebell, wood anemone, moschatel and cuckoo pint. The sweet chestnut coppice is over-mature, with coppicing having taken place c30 years ago. An area close to Exton Gardens was coppiced c2015. Sweet chestnut dominates stand preventing regeneration and there is little structural diversity.

There is no access to the woodlands. There is a low level of litter, indicating some use, and some dumping of garden waste behind houses.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	47%
Local natural interest evaluation	60%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	20%
Management evaluation	60%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, Five Acre Wood (southern part) sweet chestnut on former ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Adjacent to (but not within) Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2	2	Surrounded by housing and roads so disconnected, but adjacent to woodland to the north.
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2	2	
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0	0	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	Previous management plan combined with Weaving Heath. Out of date and

			insufficient for LNR designation.
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1	1	
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Five Acre and Wents Wood



Four Oaks Wood

Location	New Barn Road, Hawkenbury TQ81034559 TN12 0ED
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 6.2 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

Ash and oak woodland, with occasional field maple and hazel, hawthorn and elder understory. Ground flora including herb Robert, hedge woundwort, ivy, stitchwort, foxglove, cuckoo pint, dog's mercury, speedwell, chickweed, bluebell, ferns and cuckoo pint. Nettles and bramble dominant in places. There is a ditch running through the site and a shaded pond close to the road.

There is no access to this woodland and it is not close to a residential area. There is some litter but this is very old.

There are no signs of recent management. Ash dieback will present a threat to this woodland due to co-dominance of ash in the canopy.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	37%
Local natural interest evaluation	70%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	0%
Management evaluation	40%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation		Site Score	3
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation		Site Score	0	0%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%	
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2			
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1			
Access is not permitted	0	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1			
The site is in proximity to schools	1			
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1			

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0	0	

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	
Management Structures and Security			

Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Four Oaks Wood



Gorham and Admiral Woods

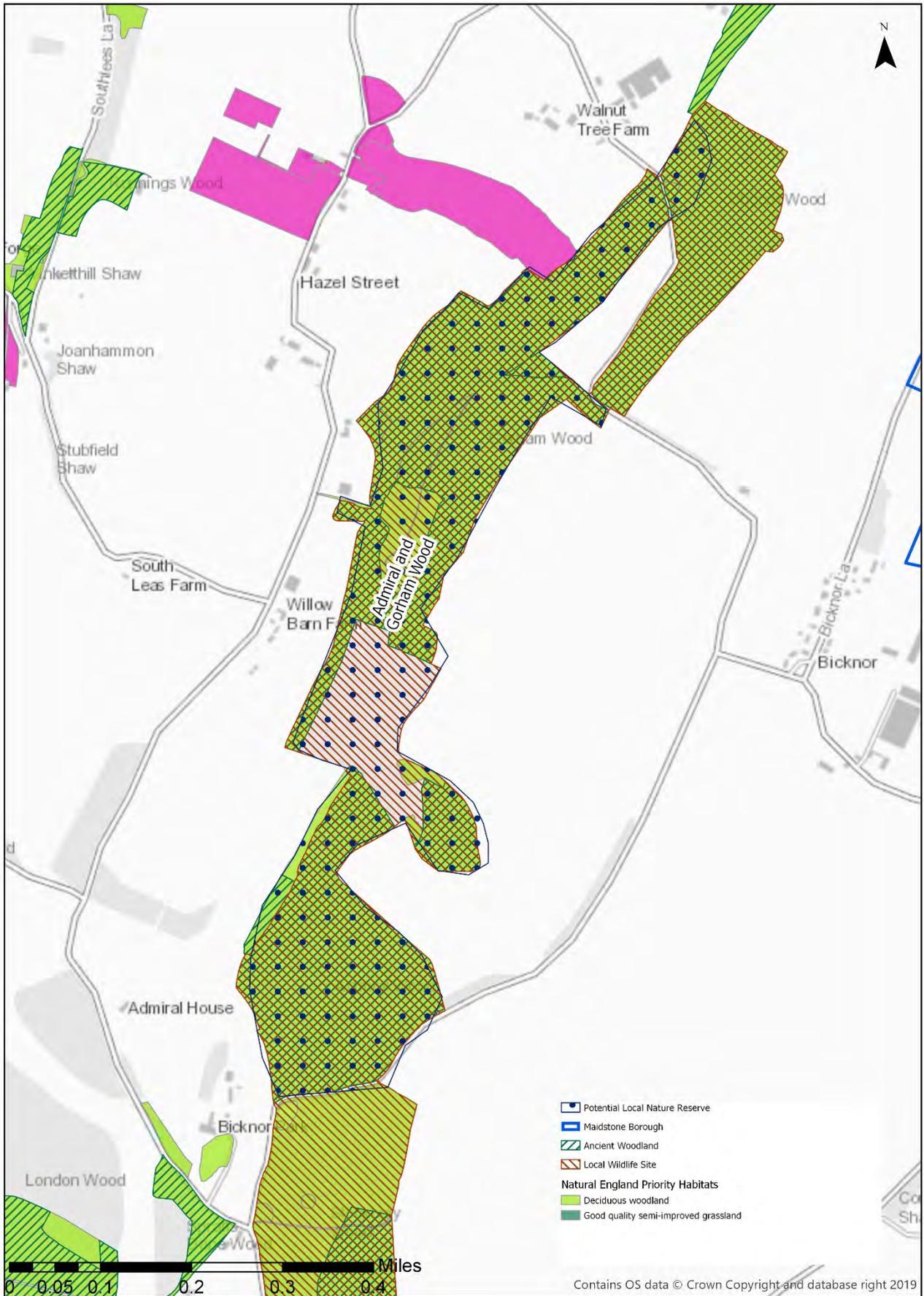
Location	Hazel Street/Bicknor TQ85595902 ME9 7SB
Ownership	Cromarty Trust
Management Organisation	Kent Woodland Employment Scheme (KWES)
Size	Approx. 35.8 hectares
Existing Designations	Local Wildlife Site: Gorham Wood, Bicknor MA21
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown (discussed with KWES, further discussions needed with Cromarty Trust)
Constraints	LNR management plan may be required (plan requested but not received)

Site Description

Ancient woodland which is particularly rich in fungi, areas of adjacent, linking secondary woodland and small patches of relict chalk grassland. At least 52 ancient woodland indicator plants have been recorded in the wider Local Wildlife Site complex.

Gorham Wood is coppice with standards, comprising ash, hornbeam and hazel. Ground flora includes dog's mercury, wood anemone, goldilocks buttercup, herb-paris Paris, toothwort and moschatel, bluebell and violet, amongst others. Woodland orchids include greater and lesser butterfly-orchids. The Local Wildlife Site citation records a stand of over 1000 flowering spikes of early-purple orchid. Admiral Wood contains more sweet chestnut, along with hazel, hornbeam and ash.

Gorham and Admiral Woodlands were purchased in 2004 by the Cromarty Trust on behalf of the parish of Bicknor. Local people raised the funds to purchase the woods and this was made possible with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The aim of the trust is to restore a management regime that is sensitive to the needs of wildlife as well as making use of the woodland produce. Some coppicing has taken place and management is being reinstated.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	90%
Local natural interest evaluation	100%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	80%
Management evaluation	90%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Local Wildlife Site: Gorham Wood, Bicknor MA21
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland much of it ancient.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Mid Kent Downs Woods and Scarp BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation		Site Score	4
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4	4	
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation		Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score		Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1			
Access is not permitted	0			
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1			
The site is in proximity to schools	1			
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1	1	Management plan requested but not received, therefore not assessed. Assumed fit for purpose but may need updating to be suitable for LNR designation.
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		

There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Gorham and Admiral Woods



Photo courtesy of Gorham and Admiral Community Woodlands



Photo courtesy of Gorham and Admiral Community Woodlands



Grove Wood

Location	North of Grovewood Drive, Grove Green, Maidstone TQ78145642 ME14 5UZ
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 0.75 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

Small remnant of the former large ancient woodland of Grove Wood which was cleared to create the Grove Green housing estate. Mainly sweet chestnut, with occasional hornbeam, birch and ash with understory of hawthorn, elm and holly with occasional willow. Mixed ground flora of herb robert, cow parsley, wood spurge, bramble, bluebell and other woodland flora. Some of the sweet chestnut have been coppiced (c15 to 20 years ago) but no evidence of recent management. Some invasive species including Norway maple and laurel, with occasional sycamore which will require control. To the northern end the woodland is more open with a variety of species which could have been planted.

There is no formalised access to the woodland and the wood could be damaged through access provision due to its small size. There is some dumping of garden waste and small amounts of litter.

Although its small size, lack of management and lack of access means this site does not score highly in the evaluation for an LNR, as a remnant of ancient woodland it is an important site.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	37%
Local natural interest evaluation	50%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	20%
Management evaluation	40%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0	0	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention and opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention and opportunity	0	0	Site is small and therefore educational use and visits would be limited.
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	
Management Structures and Security			

Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	Small site, recreational access could be detrimental to nature conservation interest.
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Grove Wood



Hayle Park Nature Reserve and Valley Conservation

Location	Area between Hayle Mill Road/Cave Hill and Fieldfare Drive, Maidstone TQ75805409 ME15 6DU
Ownership	Tovil Parish Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Hayle Park Ltd and Valley Conservation Ltd.
Management Organisation	Tovil Parish Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Hayle Park Ltd and Valley Conservation Ltd.
Size	Approx. 13.5 hectares
Existing Designations	Part Local Wildlife Site: Loose Valley, MA20
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Yes
Constraints	Recent management plans for Hayle Park Reserve (2014 – 2024) and Crisbrook Meadow (2019 - 2024). Crisbrook Meadow plan may require further elaboration on the management of the meadow and woodland specifically for nature conservation. Management plan will be required for Mount Ararat woodland if included in the designation.

Site visit conducted with community group.

Site Description

Includes Hayle Park Nature Reserve (owned by Hayle Park Ltd), Crisbrook Pond and Meadow, Mount Ararat cliff and Treacle Wood (owned by Valley Conservation Ltd) and Mount Ararat Woodland (owned by Maidstone Borough Council).

Hayle Park Nature Reserve is part of the former grounds and parkland of Hayle Place, a Grade II listed residential property built during the mid-15th century and renovated around 1750. The following elements of the historic landscape are still present:

- Remnants of a double hedgerow flank the original access drive to Hayle Place;
- Mature standard trees (including several pines located within the grassland areas);
- An avenue of horse chestnut and red-horse chestnut trees in the east of the site;
- A high ragstone wall adjoining Hayle Mill Road along the western boundary of the site;
- A low ragstone wall (potentially forming part of a former ha-ha adjacent to the site) adjoining the footpath in the north west of the site which runs down to the Mill Pool.

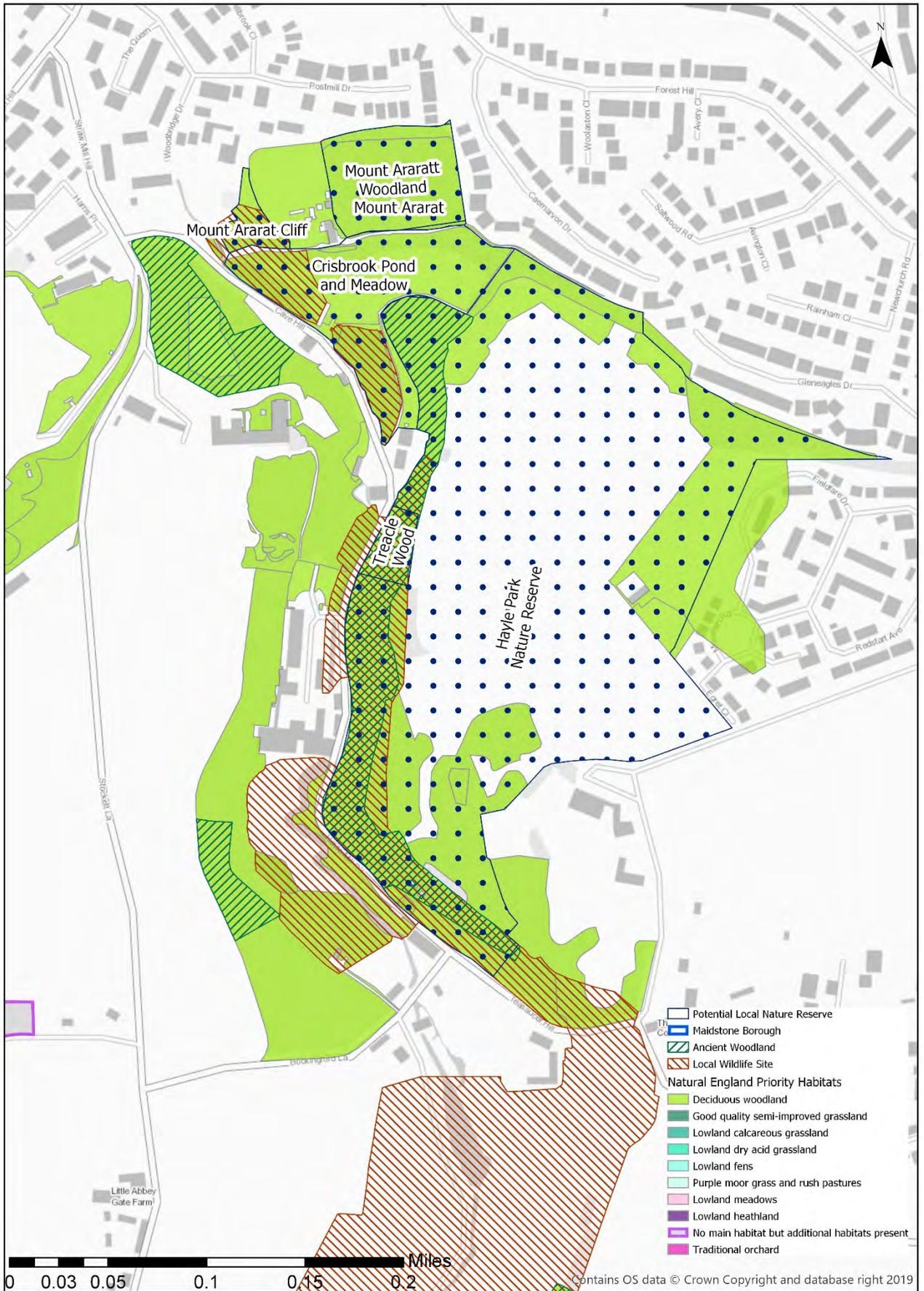
The fields in the south of the reserve are generally less botanically diverse than those to the north, with the sward dominated by common grasses including perennial ryegrass, cock's-foot, false-oat grass, crested dog's-tail, Timothy grass and some couch. The herb content is species-poor and comprises common species such as ribwort plantain, creeping buttercup, yarrow, white clover, red clover, hogweed, bristly and common nettle. The grassland of the northern fields is also semi-improved species poor but with areas of greater diversity with species such as field scabious, black knapweed, common bird's-foot trefoil, agrimony, ivy-leaved speedwell, common field speedwell, creeping cinquefoil, field wood-rush, dove's-foot crane's-bill and cut-leaved cranesbill. The fields are managed under a hay-cutting regime with the aim of increasing species diversity.

Surrounding the central fields are woodlands, some of which are ancient. The woodlands are comprised of ash, beech, pedunculate oak, and lime, with sycamore common and dominant in some areas. The understorey varies in composition but includes hazel, elder, hawthorn and blackthorn all dominant in places. A variety of other species occur on an occasional basis.

The ground flora varies. Some areas support a diverse range of species including, bluebell, cow parsley, wood anemone, lords-and-ladies, wood avens, early dog-violet, wood meadow-grass, wood, yellow archangel, hart's-tongue fern and red currant. A single stand of toothwort has also been recorded and previous surveys have recorded wood melick and wood millet within the Loose Valley woodland.

Crisbrook Mill Pond and Meadow lie within the Loose Valley. The pond and associated race and streams are remnants of former water mill. The meadow adjoins the pond. The meadow was sown with wildflowers seeds but these were out-competed by more dominant species. The management plan for the meadow states that the area will be enhanced by the cutting and removal of growth to reduce nutrient levels in the soil and the spreading of locally sourced wildflower seed.

Mount Ararat woodland is largely sycamore woodland.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	93%
Local natural interest evaluation	90%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	100%
Management evaluation	90%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Part Local Wildlife Site: Loose Valley, MA20
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, areas of ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention and opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention and opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	Run by two community organisations working in collaboration.
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		
Management Structures and Security			

Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	Management plan may be required for Mount Ararat and Valley Conservation areas if included in the designation.
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1	1	Generally, impacts well-managed, but dog walking users limiting scope to graze grassland areas, which would help to restore the grassland and improve biodiversity.
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Hayle Park Nature Reserve and Valley Conservation



High Level Bridge Pocket Nature Reserve

Location	Fairmeadow, Maidstone TQ75745612 ME14 1JU
Ownership	Network Rail
Management Organisation	High Level Bridge and Buckland Hill Pocket Nature Reserves Management Committee (which is drawn from local elected representatives, residents and stakeholders) and local volunteers.
Size	0.08 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Network Rail interested in designating LNRs; further discussion required
Constraints	Very small site – well below minimum size threshold.

The management plan (2019) states:

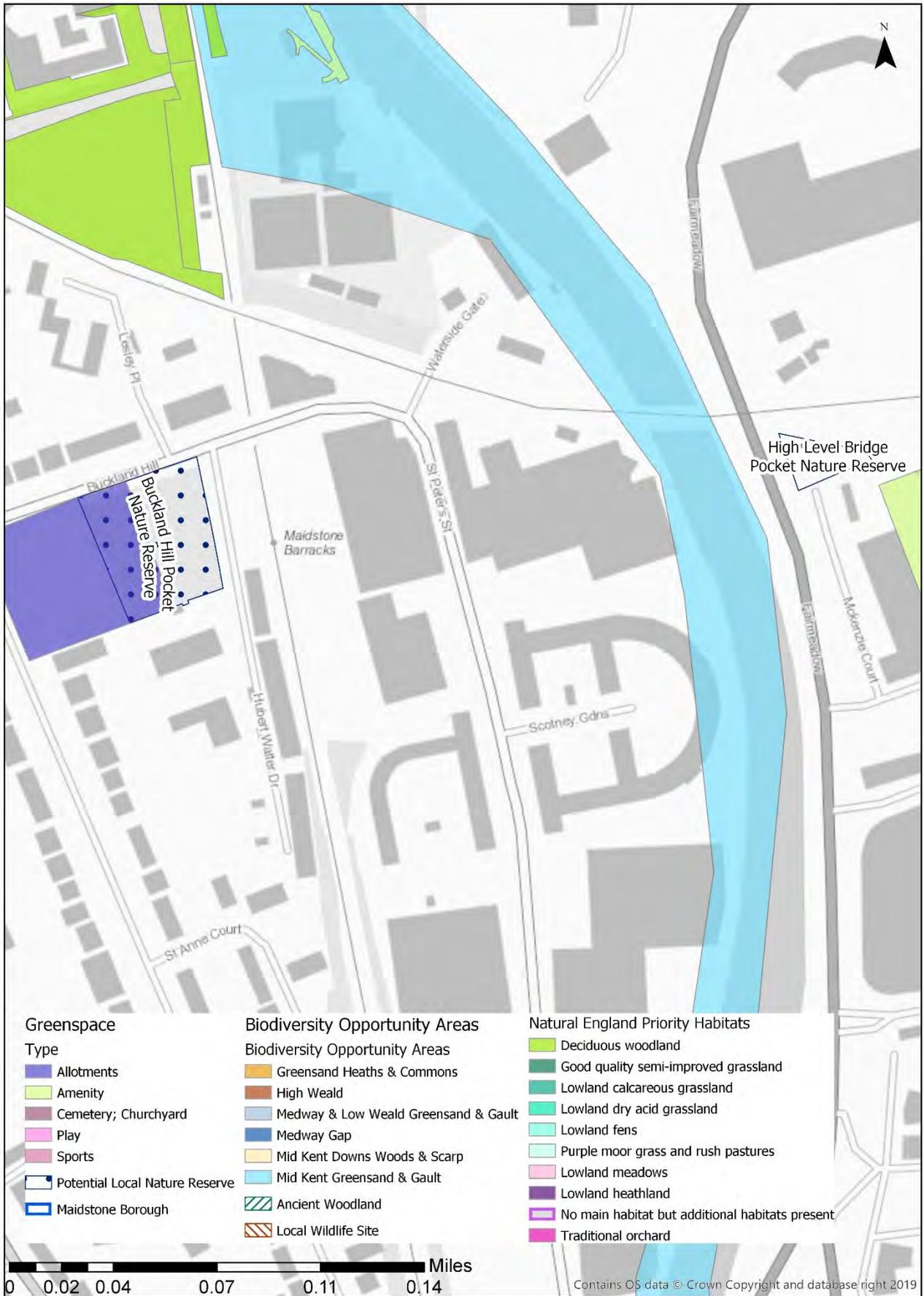
“... predominantly open-structured and sycamore dominated secondary woodland with a mixed understorey including holly, common hawthorn, butterfly bush, Japanese spindle, pheasant berry, hazel, elder, wild plum, dogwood, bramble, raspberry and wild privet.

A small (0.2 acres) Network Rail owned inner-urban semi-natural site comprising open-structured secondary woodland. The reserve exhibits a remarkable floristic diversity for such a compact site which stems from its history, topography, aspect and location.

A heavily used footway runs along the northern edge of the reserve and another bisects the site linking the High Level Bridge footway to the spine road and Fairmeadow.”

Photos courtesy of High Level Bridge Management Committee





Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	70%
Local natural interest evaluation	40%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	90%
Management evaluation	80%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	1	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		
Management Structures and Security			

Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	Relies on volunteer input
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1	1	High levels of though traffic, litter etc. although managed by community group
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

High Speed 1 Compound

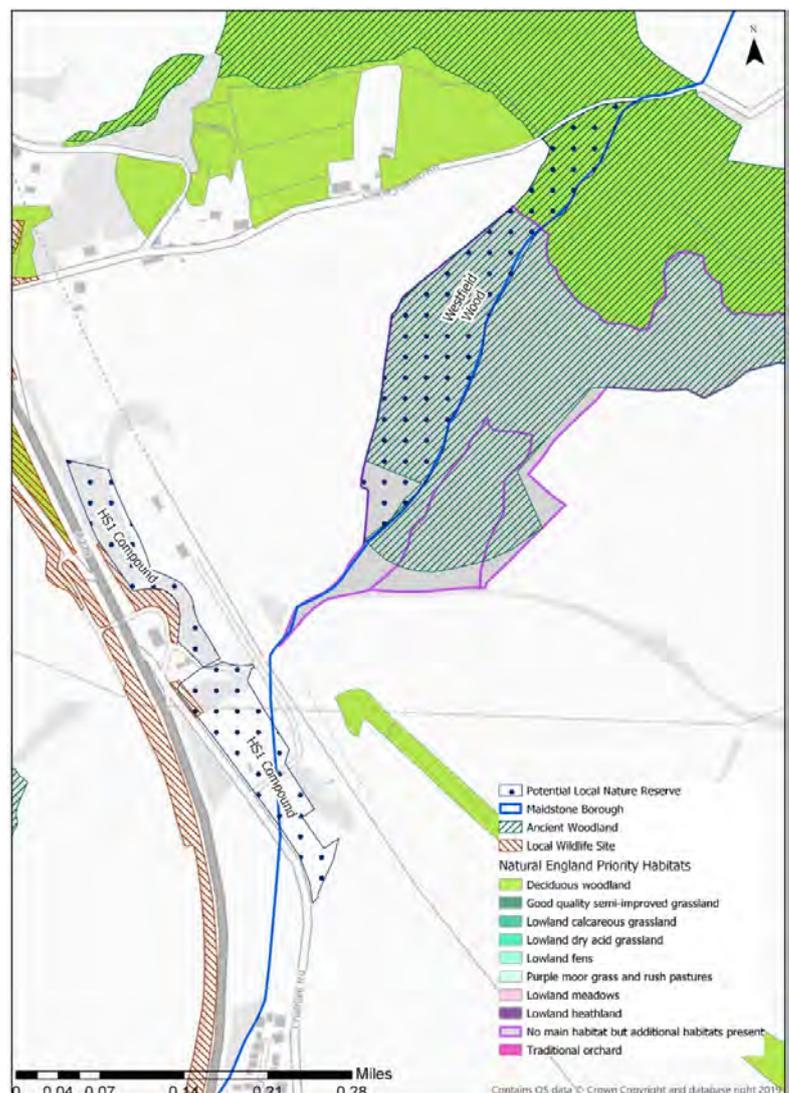
Location	North east of A229, Bluebell Hill, Old Chatham Road near garage TQ75745612 ME14 1JU
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 3.3 hectares over two land parcels
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Most of land is within Tonbridge and Malling District, therefore TMBC must delegate powers to MBC to designate or a joint declaration made. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan. Two fields currently grazed are not suitable at present due to current management.

Site Description

This site is in two parcels adjacent to the High Speed 1. The northern parcel (approx. 1.2 hectares) is on a bank overlooking the High Speed 1 line and is planted mixed native woodland, with hawthorn, ash, field maple, goat willow, hornbeam and other species.

The southern parcel is two paddocks. One is grazed by horses. The second was not being grazed at the time of the site visit. There is a small area adjacent to the High Speed 1 bridge which has native young trees and scrub. There is more interesting flora in this area including marjoram, St John's Wort and yellow wort.

The chalk substrate and thin soils offers potential for greater nature conservation interest which is not being realised at present.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	27%
Local natural interest evaluation	40%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	0%
Management evaluation	40%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	Small but not significant area in LWS
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Partly within Medway Gap BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2	2	Each parcel is less than 2 hectares

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation		Site Score	1
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1	1	

Public Value Evaluation		Site Score	0	0%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%	
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2			
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1			
Access is not permitted	0	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1			
The site is in proximity to schools	1			
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1			

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0	0	

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	
Management Structures and Security			

Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

High Speed 1 Compound



Hockers Lane Nature Reserve (Kent Medical Campus)

Location	West of Hockers Lane, Delting TQ78835695 ME14 5JZ
Ownership	Kent Medical Campus Ltd
Management Organisation	Kent Medical Campus Ltd and subsequent management organisation to be determined
Size	Approx. 2.3 hectares
Existing Designations	Part is Local Wildlife Site: Horish Wood etc., Weaving Street MA30
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Site being developed at present and final proposals for the nature reserve unclear. Suitability will also depend on the condition of the site following establishment as part of development. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

This site is not accessible at present and was not visited. Evaluation carried out using the draft Landscape and Ecology Management Plan May 2019 and associated information related to the planning application. The evaluation does not include any assessment of planning-related issues or decisions.

Site Description

The land under evaluation is 'the land to the west of Hockers Lane'. The LEMP states the land will be managed as a nature reserve with some areas of species rich grassland. It is understood that there will not be public access to the area (contrary to the May 2019 version of the LEMP). Details of the LEMP are evolving and there may be further changes subsequent to this evaluation.

The LEMP describes the land:

Within the area of land to the west of Hockers Lane, the dominant habitat is semi-improved grassland, and the diversity within this grassland differs across the area. To the west the grassland is longer and supports species including common knapweed, common sorrel, creeping buttercup and creeping cinquefoil Potentilla reptans. In damper areas to the north some creeping jenny Lysimachia nummularia and silverweed Potentilla anserina was noted, with bristly ox-tongue noted occasionally. The grasses in this area are cock's-foot and Yorkshire fog, with common bent and red fescue also recorded. To the east, there is an area of shorter grassland which is not particularly species rich but has a higher density of herbs to grasses. In this area there are swathes of creeping cinquefoil and red clover with self-heal Prunella vulgaris, dove's foot cranesbill Geranium molle and dog violet also recorded. The grasses in this area were dominated by the finer leaved species such as common bent and red fescue.

2.3.11 There is an area of woodland along the northern boundary of this area, surrounding three ponds. The western section of woodland is dominated by willow

with some blackthorn and field maple. To the east the woodland comprises hawthorn, sycamore and field maple with occasional larger oak trees. Elder was noted in the shrub layer with extensive black bryony Tamus communis and bramble also present. A stand of stinking iris Iris foetidissima was also recorded.

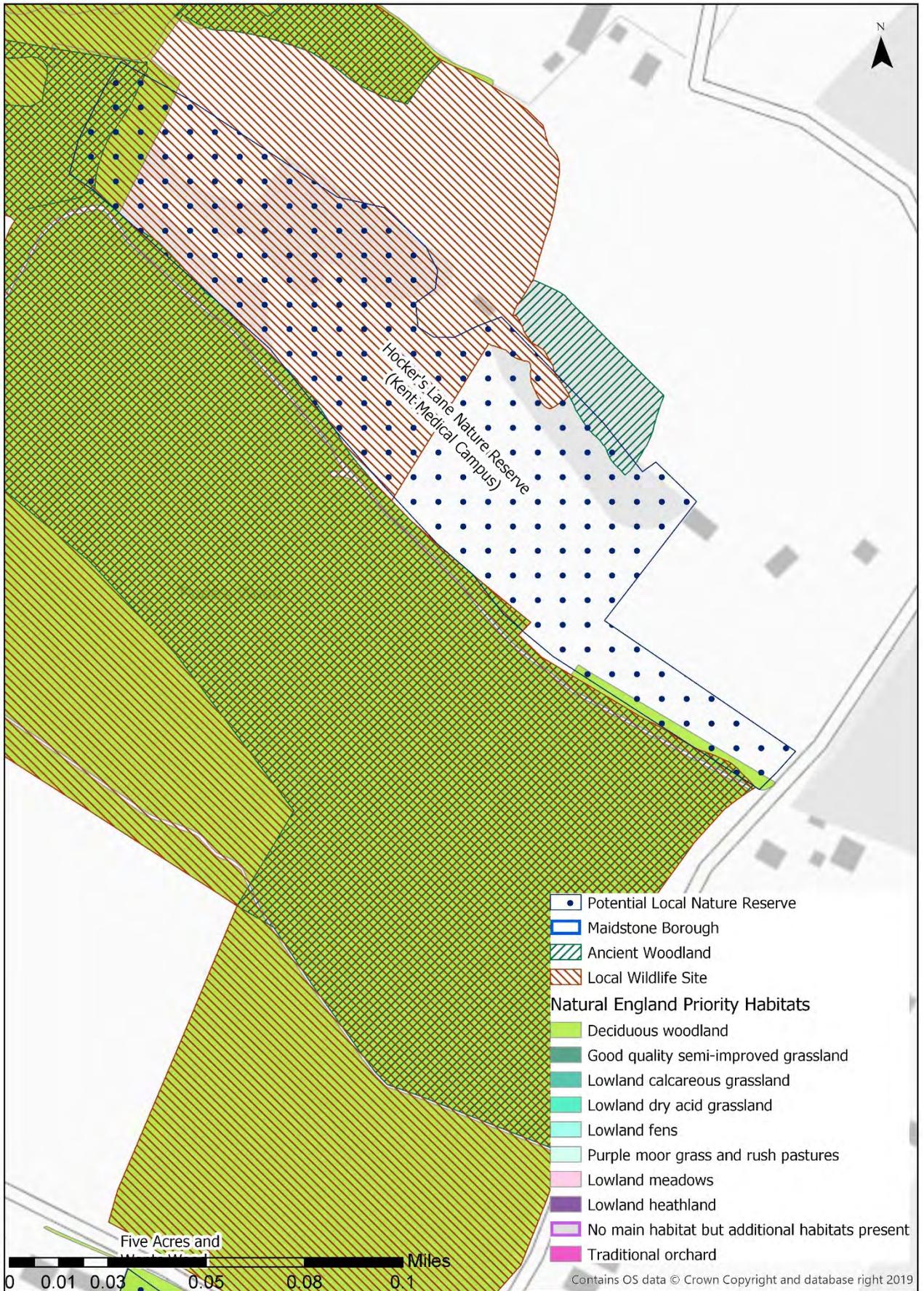
2.3.12 There is also a line of trees along the length of Pope's Wood. These are standard trees dominated by sycamore but with some ash, oak and hawthorn also present. The ground layer has woodland species including false wood brome, dog's mercury and bluebell. Other species which occur in disturbed and edge habitat include common nettle, green alkanet Pentaglottis sempervirens and occasional stems of figwort Scrophularia nodosa. Some honeysuckle has started to develop, coming into the Site from the adjacent woodland.

2.3.13 Within this area there are also a single functioning pond and two further dry ponds. The functioning pond (P8 - western pond) was recorded in 2012 as being heavily silted with a large amount of emergent vegetation and relatively limited open water. Dense spike rush was found throughout the pond with patches of *Typha* also noted. In 2018 the pond was noted as having no open water and was completely vegetated. Pond P9 (central pond) in 2015 held some water but no emergent vegetation was present. In 2018 in November the pond was almost completely dry and surrounded by dense willow scrub with fallen willow all around. A third pond alongside the boundary is present further to the east, this is a functioning pond, though the water quality in the pond appeared to be affected by localised pollution.

2.3.20 The proposals as set out in the following sections of this document aim in general to maximise the biodiversity of the Site, and for the land to the west of Hockers Lane the intention is that the landowner will use reasonable endeavours to explore with the Council the possibility of achieving Local Nature Reserve status in due course.

Work is planned as part of the development:

- Creation of species-rich grassland
- Hibernacula and log piles
- Clearance of willows around two of the ponds, with subsequent re-coppicing in years 7 and 14
- Creation of small seasonally wet depressions
- Mowing of grassland that has not been disturbed once a year in September, with all arisings removed. The LEMP states that appropriately timed grazing would be an alternative method of management, but in the absence of suitable stock being currently available, it has been assumed that management will be by mowing for at least the first few years





From LEMP version May 2019

Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	40%
Local natural interest evaluation	90%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	10%
Management evaluation	20%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Part is Local Wildlife Site: Horish Wood etc., Weaving Street MA30
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, small area of ancient woodland
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	In Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		

Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	Not possible to score this section until works complete, assumed that habitats will be in good condition as a condition of the planning permission
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	1	10%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0	0	Access not permitted
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		
The site is in proximity to schools	1		
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	

Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	Management plan required which complies with LNR designation requirements
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		

No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0	0	Long-term management arrangements unclear at present - cannot be scored.
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	0	Future management arrangements not fully settled.
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	Future management arrangements not fully settled.
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Hollingbourne Meadows Trust

Location	Main site to east of Eyhorne Street, with Eyhorne Meadow separate site near CTRL bridge
Ownership	Hollingbourne Meadows Trust
Management Organisation	Hollingbourne Meadows Trust
Size	Approx. 10.8 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Undecided – further information required on management agreement with Maidstone Borough Council including options for break clause.
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Further information required by Trust on management agreement with Maidstone Borough Council.

Site visit conducted with community group.

Site Description

Several fields of former farmland adjacent to Eyhorne Street. Semi-improved/improved grassland, some of which has been seeded for agriculture by previous landowner. Currently managed by hay cut and collection which is gradually reducing fertility and native species and flowers are establishing. Eyhorne Meadow is separated from the main site and was the original land acquired in 2004 from the CTRL and was reseeded. This meadow has greater diversity with pyramidal and bee orchid, ox-eye daisy, sainfoin and grass vetchling.

Many native trees and hedgerows have been planted which are establishing well. Margins are left around the edges of the site and adjacent to hedges.

The site is run by a community trust with charitable objectives to protect the environment of Hollingbourne and to encourage wildlife. Events and educational visits are held on the site. The site is fully accessible, but access is well controlled through the provision of mown paths.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	90%
Local natural interest evaluation	80%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	100%
Management evaluation	90%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	5	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	In Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA.
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1	1	Trust has management objectives but not a plan which would support LNR designation.
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	Despite lack of formalised management plan, site is being managed appropriately for LNR and habitats present.
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	Recreational access well-managed through clear paths cut through grassland.
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Hollingbourne Meadows Trust



Horish Wood and Monk's Meadow

Location	Hockers Lane, Detling TQ78665758 ME14 3ES
Ownership	Detling Parish Council
Management Organisation	Detling Parish Council
Size	Horish Wood approx. 15.5 hectares Monk's Meadow approx. 2 hectares
Existing Designations	Part of Horish Wood Local Wildlife Site: Horish Wood etc., Weaving Street MA30
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Undecided
Constraints	Issues with implementing management plan (fallen behind actions set out in management plan due to issues with contractor)

Site visit conducted with parish council representatives and parish council meeting attended.

Site Description

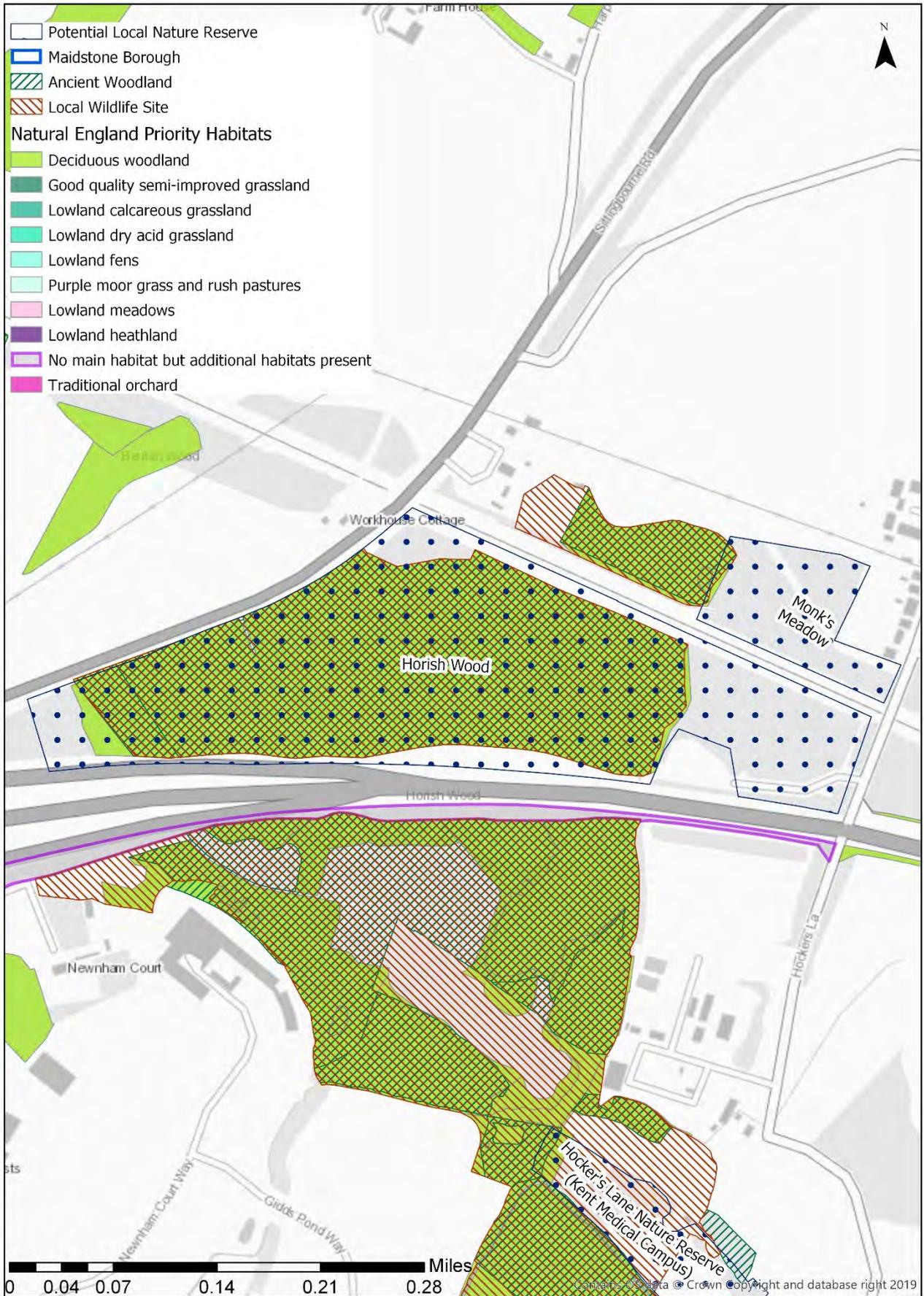
Horish Wood is one of a sequence of 'wet woodlands' situated on soils derived from gault clay that outcrops along the M20 corridor at the foot of the North Downs. The wood lies within the Kent Downs AONB, is a designated Local Wildlife Site and an ancient woodland. It has become isolated from the rest of Horish Wood to the south by the M20 motorway and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL).

The woodland is coppice with standards. In the east is hazel coppice under oak standards. To the west is hornbeam coppice. Other trees include ash, birch, alder and aspen. Ground flora includes bramble, bluebell, primrose, lady's smock, pendulous sedge, dog's mercury, herb paris, wood anemone, dog violet, ramsons (wild garlic), early purple orchid and greater butterfly orchid. A small seasonal stream on the eastern side contains marsh marigold and moschatel.

Some areas have been coppiced in line with the 2007 management plan and a significant amount of work carried out to create rides. However, implementation has slowed in recent years. Management needs to resume, including maintaining paths, control of some potentially invasive species (e.g. aspen, which has benefitted from the coppicing) and to resume with coppicing coupes of woodland.

The eastern extent is planted and regenerating scrub and trees on what was disturbed ground following CTRL construction. There are mixed native species including ash, field maple, dogwood, hazel and whitebeam with pyramidal and common spotted orchids.

Monk's Meadow was included in the assessment at the request of the parish council. It is a smaller area to the north of the CTRL, with planted trees and grassland areas on land which was disturbed by the CTRL. The area is fully accessible, with benches and easy access paths and is a very popular site for local access. Although created habitat, Monk's Meadow has sufficient natural interest and access provision to qualify as an LNR (it meets the 2 hectare threshold) or could be included in a designation with Horish Wood.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	80%
Local natural interest evaluation	90%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	80%
Management evaluation	70%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Local Wildlife Site: Horish Wood etc., Weaving Street MA30
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland and ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Partly in Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA. Although now disconnected from wider area of woodland to the south, corridor through CTRL.
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation		Site Score	3
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation		Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%	
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1			
Access is not permitted	0			
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments	
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1		
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1		

The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	Site could be used for education and events but no intention expressed.
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2	2	
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1	1	Management plan dated 2007, would require refreshing prior to designation.
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		

There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	Some management carried out, but currently issues with implementation.
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1	1	Some management carried out, but currently issues with implementation.
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	Popular with local residents but generally low levels of recreation which does not compromise natural interest.
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Horish Wood



Monk's Meadow



Lime Trees Open Space Ponds / Green Hill Open Space

Location	Greenhill, Staplehurst TQ78254405 TN12 0SU
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	0.25 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Site below 2 hectare threshold. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

Small area with two ponds to the north of Lime Trees/Greenhill Public Open Space.

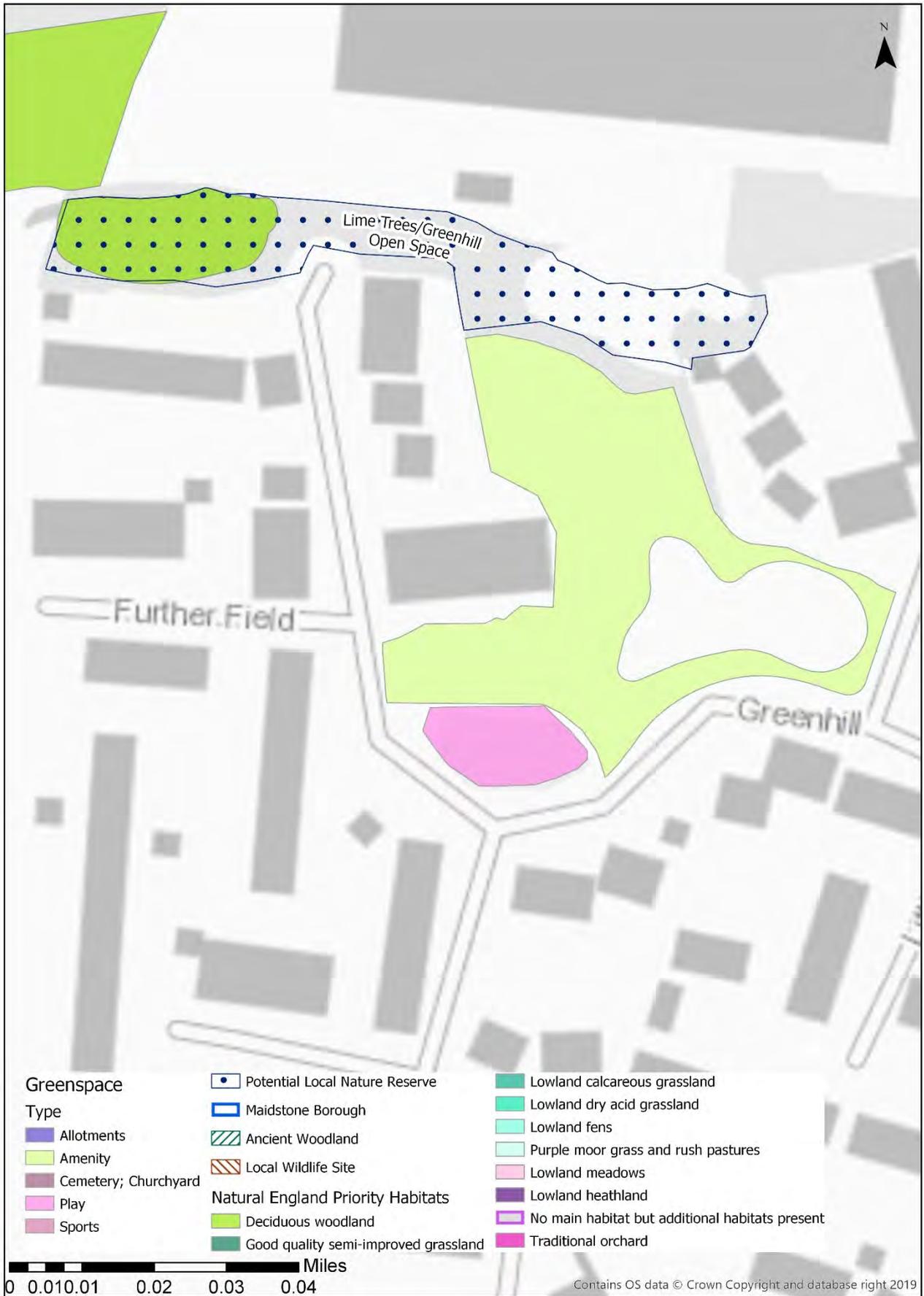
The eastern ponds are shaded, with low water levels at the time of visit (spring 2019). Water depth <15cm, 100% shaded with trees and ponds containing large amounts of leaf litter, no bankside vegetation and no zonation of plants. A few specimens of celery-leaved buttercup but little other vegetation. Surrounded by mature oak, field maple, blackthorn and hawthorn scrub. There is no access to this pond and the area is fenced.

The western ponds are less shaded, c80% shaded, the eastern of the two ponds less so. The ponds are surrounded by oak, goat willow, hawthorn, holly, blackthorn and field maple. There is leaf litter in both ponds and water level was low at time of visit. There appears to be access to the western ponds through a gate from Greenhill and a path from the industrial area to the north. There are some bat boxes.

The ponds may benefit from some selective opening to increase light, although it is not recommended to completely open shaded ponds.

There is a low level of litter, garden rubbish and litter from the industrial estate.

There is a SUDs pond in the main Greenhill Public Open Space but this has not been included in the calculation of area. This pond, although largely dry, does provide additional semi-natural habitat, but is disconnected from the other ponds included in this assessment. The larger area of amenity grassland is not suitable as an LNR.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	43%
Local natural interest evaluation	40%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	50%
Management evaluation	40%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Small area is deciduous woodland priority habitat
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2	2	
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1	1	
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Lime Trees / Greenhill Public Open Space



Mote Park

Location	Mote Avenue, Maidstone TQ77265519 ME15 7SX
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 144 hectares (excluding some areas of pitches)
Existing Designations	Local Wildlife Site: Mote Park and River Len, Maidstone MA61
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan could be more reflective of natural interest, but grassland and veteran tree reports in preparation. A consolidated management statement and action plan would help to bring these together. Balance of recreation and natural interest needs to be considered more fully. Consideration of area which is suitable to be an LNR.

Site Description

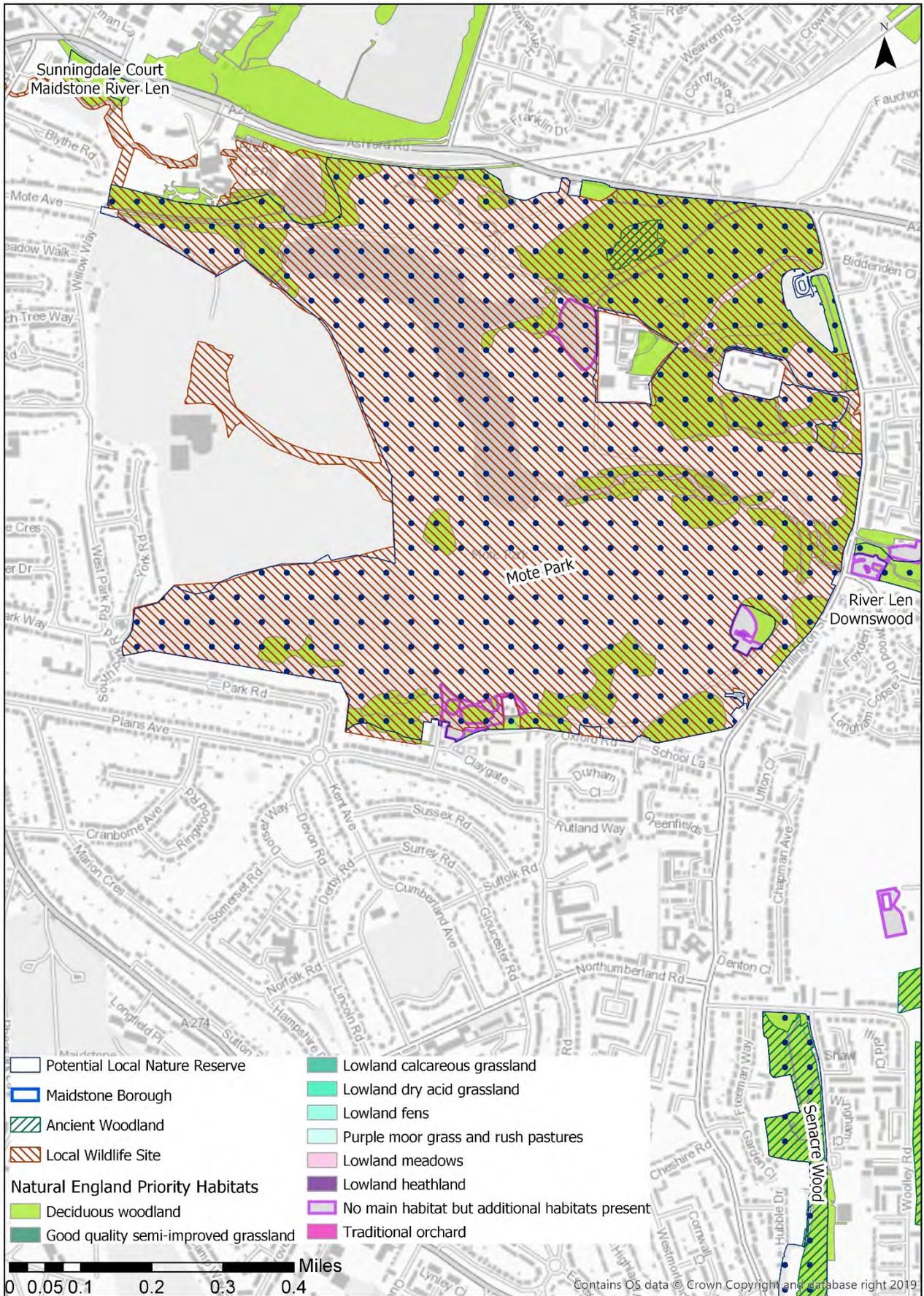
Mote Park is a large site in the centre of Maidstone. There are pitches, play area, café, leisure facilities, lakes and streams. The park has undergone significant investment in recent years to improve visitor facilities and to provide sport and leisure attractions.

In terms of natural interest, the park is a former parkland and has many associated habitats and veteran trees. The Local Wildlife Site citation states:

“The site is recorded as being a parkland estate since the 13th century. It was a deer park for much of this time, until the Second World War. It has ancient trees displaying many features such as rot holes and dead wood which have potential to be used by a variety of wildlife such as birds, bats, invertebrates and lower plants. It also includes areas characteristic of old wood pasture, such as on the south side where a scattered mature oak community exists. The stretch of the River Len to the west of Mote Park is included as it supports Desmoulin’s whorl snail, a UK BAP priority species.

The main habitats found in the Park include: the parkland, the lake, the River Len and environs, the Jenner’s Bank stream and environs, the pond and waterfall, the trees, the wet woodland and an old garden area with ancient yews.”

The park receives around 1.4 million visitors each year. It also hosts several large events, festivals and charity events. The site is a considerable size for an urban site.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	90%
Local natural interest evaluation	90%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	100%
Management evaluation	80%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Local Wildlife Site: Mote Park and River Len, Maidstone MA61
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, small area of ancient woodland, plus additional habitats.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	In Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1	1	Green Flag management plan - further information on natural interest required (grassland and veteran tree reports in progress).
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1		
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Palace Wood

Location	Adjacent to open space at Gatcombe Close/Keswick Drive, Allington, Maidstone TQ74075630 ME16 0EF
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 1.2 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Site below 2 hectare threshold. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

Coppiced ash woodland with varied ground flora. Canopy predominantly ash (70-90%) with some sweet chestnut and occasional birch, cherry, yew, hornbeam and oak. Understorey of hazel, elm and holly. Ash previously coppiced but now over-mature with some stools showing signs of decay. Some ash showing signs of ash dieback, which will be a threat to this woodland due to the high proportion of this species. Laurel present and spreading which will require removal. Varied ground flora including wood sorrel, wood anemone, yellow archangel, cuckoo pint, cow parsley, herb bennet, occasional bluebell, as well as bramble and nettle.

There appears to be a low level of recreational use despite being adjacent to a public open space and although there are signs of people entering the wood there are no well-worn paths.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	43%
Local natural interest evaluation	50%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	40%
Management evaluation	40%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous ancient woodland
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

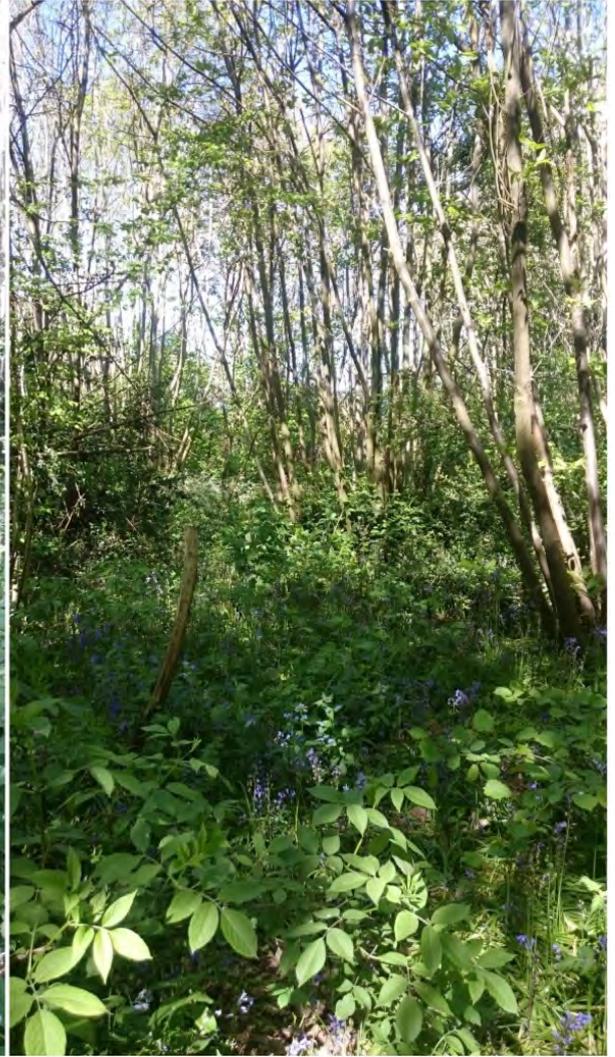
Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1	1	Unclear whether access is permitted, some paths but seems to be low usage.
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	

The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	Due to proximity to schools
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		

There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Palace Wood



Pepper Fen, Ringlestone

Location	The Mallows, Egerton Road, Ringlestone, Maidstone TQ75105735 ME14 2QY
Ownership	GE Healthcare
Management Organisation	GE Healthcare
Size	Approx. 7.8 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	No response from landowner. Assumed no management plan.

Site Description

Rank grassland on site next to River Medway (false oat grass, cocksfoot, creeping thistle, hogweed, bindweed nettle, rosebay willow etc. with invasive Himalayan balsam). Self-sown native trees and scrub across the site – ash, cherry, blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel and goat willow. No signs of any recent management.

The land is privately owned and there is no formal access. However, there is a mown path leading from the steps at the end of The Mallows leading around the eastern side of the site to Foxglove Drive and several desire line paths. There is informal access from Egerton Road. There are camps in the scrub areas.

The size of this site in an urban area, close to the River Medway and part of a significant landscape and wildlife corridor makes this an important site, the potential of which is not being realised at present.

Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	27%
Local natural interest evaluation	50%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	20%
Management evaluation	10%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2	2	Although size of site makes this important area.
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1	1	Private land, but some desire line paths indicating use by local people and a mown path around eastern edge of site.
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		Private land although some recreational use
The site is in proximity to schools	1		

The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		Dens and camps
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	1	10%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0	0	
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1		KCC Minerals Safeguarding Area but not specifically protected in MBC Local Plan 2017 and landowner intention unknown.
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1	1	Litter, anti-social behaviour, camps
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Pepper Fen, Ringlestone

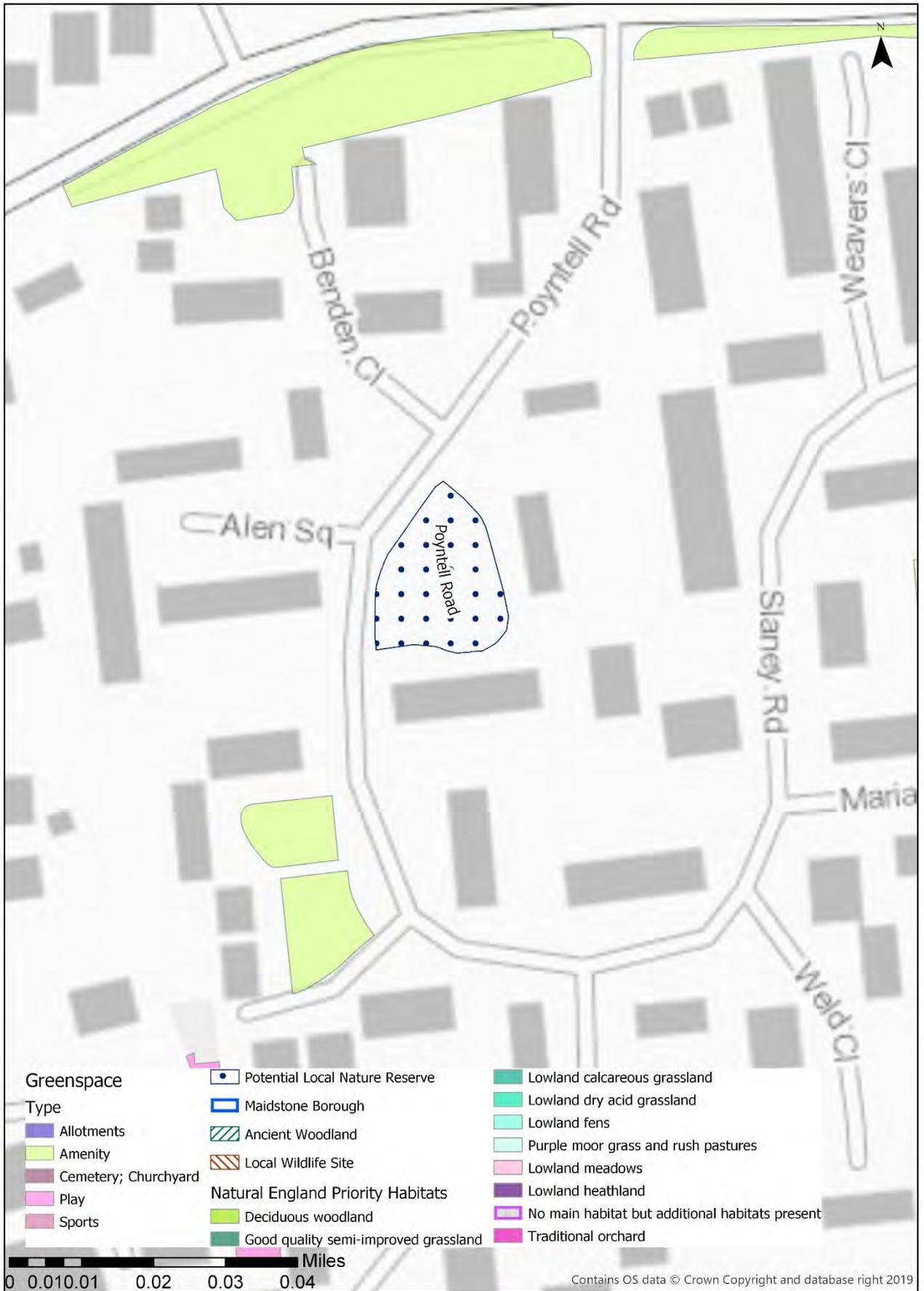


Poyntell Pond

Location	Poyntell Road, Staplehurst TQ78764366 TN12 0SA
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 0.08 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Very small site – well below minimum size threshold. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

Pond surrounded by trees and amenity grassland. Pond is 90% shaded, with shade-casting trees all around, including two oak trees. Some of the willows have been pollarded in the past. The pond was shallow at time of visit (spring 2019) and the water level c2m below the top of the bank. Water depth <30cm. No emergent vegetation, evidence of oil on water. Unclear whether this is from road or from decomposing leaf litter. It is unclear where the water source is. Some marginal plants. Pond is surrounded by houses, paths, road and amenity cut grassland. Generally, pond is in less than ideal condition and would require investigation of water source to increase water. The pond may be improved through selective opening of the canopy through re-pollarding the willows, although it is not recommended to completely open shaded ponds.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	47%
Local natural interest evaluation	30%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	60%
Management evaluation	50%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	3	30%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	1	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	-	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2	2	
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	However, not of sufficient size to withstand recreational use
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		Not of sufficient size to withstand recreational use
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	There is potential due to location but pond not in good condition to provide education use.
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2	2	Some community interest in the site.
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	Some management is taking place but not optimal for LNR
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1	1	Some management is taking place but not optimal for LNR
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0	1	Not of sufficient size to withstand recreational use. Amenity grass around site removes buffer to this small pond.

Poyntell Pond



River Len Reserve, Downswood (Spot Lane Nature Area)

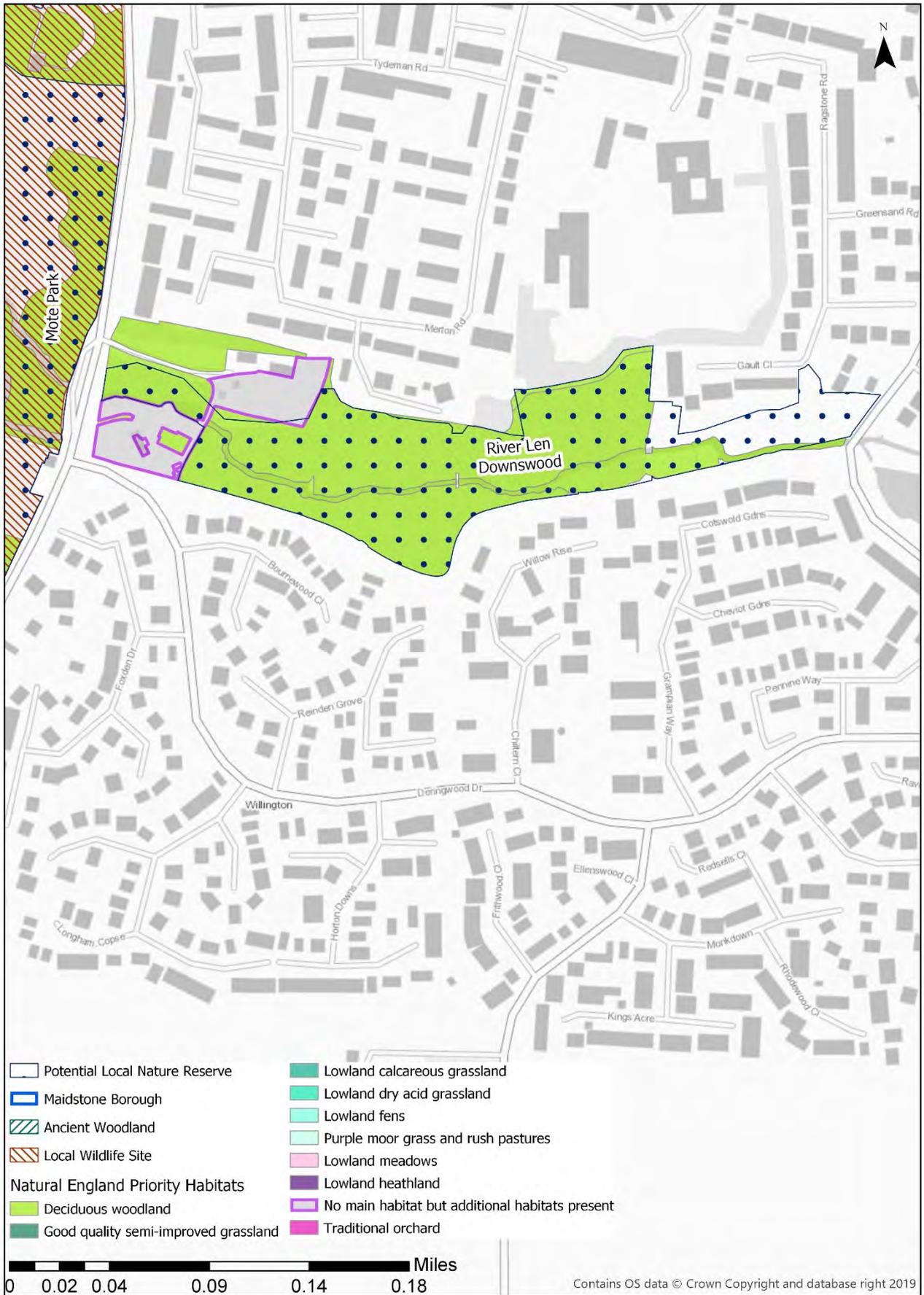
Location	Between Willington Street and Spot Lane, Bearsted TQ789545 ME15 8GR
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 3.5 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

A small area of semi-natural woodland in the Len Valley, forming a buffer to the river and a wildlife corridor to the Len Valley. The site is in the Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Mixed native woodland, with canopy predominantly alder, ash, sycamore and field maple, with occasional hornbeam and sweet chestnut, with an understory of hazel, elder, hawthorn and occasional elm. There is regeneration taking place, with some fallen trees creating glades and adding diversity. There are some larger sycamore on the northern side with potential for seeding into the woodland and some early signs of ash dieback. Mixed ground flora including bramble, nettle, herb Robert, herb bent, dog's mercury, pendulous sedge, ferns and other species. The previous management plan records possible water vole, water shrew and white-clawed crayfish. Bat boxes are present on some of the trees.

There is access to the site from the surrounding residential area. The main through route is Old Spot Lane with additional informal paths and a bridge over the river. There are low levels of litter. One area is used as a bike jump area.

There is a previous management plan (2010), which is too brief for LNR designation. Some of the actions have been implemented (installing bat boxes and regular amenity maintenance) but others, such as coppicing bankside trees, have not.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	67%
Local natural interest evaluation	80%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	70%
Management evaluation	50%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland and other habitats. Possible water vole, water shrew and white-clawed crayfish
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	In Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	2	2	Although within urban area and small site, the site itself provides very important connectivity to the adjacent Mote Park to the west and the River Len corridor to the east.

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4	4	
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	

The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention and opportunity	1	1	
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention and opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		

There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	There is a brief management plan dated 2010 but this is insufficient for LNR designation.
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	Management plan states little management taking place - annual grass cutting and no other conservation management.
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1	1	Minimal management taking place. Management plan insufficient for LNR.
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	Recreation contained to main paths, little sign of anti-social behaviour, littering etc. Some desire lines.

Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

River Len Downswood (Spot Lane Nature Area)



Malden Borough Council **Spot Lane Nature Area**

Spot Lane Nature Area
 Welcome to the Spot Lane Nature Area which at this location in the Len Valley. The area is a public open space and is maintained as a public green space, offering opportunities for recreation, conservation, education and education.

At approximately 1.6 miles in length, the River Len rises at a spring at Sibley's Wood to the south-east of the village of Lenham and enters the River Malling at Mudding. The river meanders an industrial hub with its banks from 27 miles used to grow corn and make paper and cloth. A large mill about on the south side of the River Len at the junction of the old Spot Lane and Wellington Street with facing into the river in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The area is predominantly a broad-leaved woodland area with species of Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and Willow (*Salix spp.*) commonly associated with river banks. (together with Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hornbeam (*Cornus avellana*) and Field Maple (*Acer campestre*). The eastern part of the reserve is predominantly meadow grass.

Ward to get involved?
 If you would like to volunteer to help with the work we are doing in the Spot Lane Nature Area, please contact:
 01432 207147
 or email: volunteers@spotlane.org.uk

Visiting Spot Lane Nature Area
 • Please don't smoke.
 • Please respect the site.
 • Please don't feed the animals.
 • Please do not use the dog bins in the car park.

Spot Lane Nature Area
 Lenham Street
 Old Spot Lane
 Lenham
 Mudding
 Wellington Street
 Lenham
 Old Spot Lane
 Old Spot Lane
 Old Spot Lane
 Old Spot Lane
 Old Spot Lane

Spot Lane Nature Area
 Spot Lane Nature Area
 Spot Lane Nature Area
 Spot Lane Nature Area
 Spot Lane Nature Area

River Medway Towpath (land from Bower Lane to East Farleigh Lock)

Location	Bower Lane, Fant, Maidstone TQ74615454 ME16 8FT
Ownership	Multiple owners (see below)
Management Organisation	Multiple including Maidstone Borough Council (part)
Size	Approx. 20.5 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Multiple land ownership serious constraint to designation and likely to prevent designating northern bank.

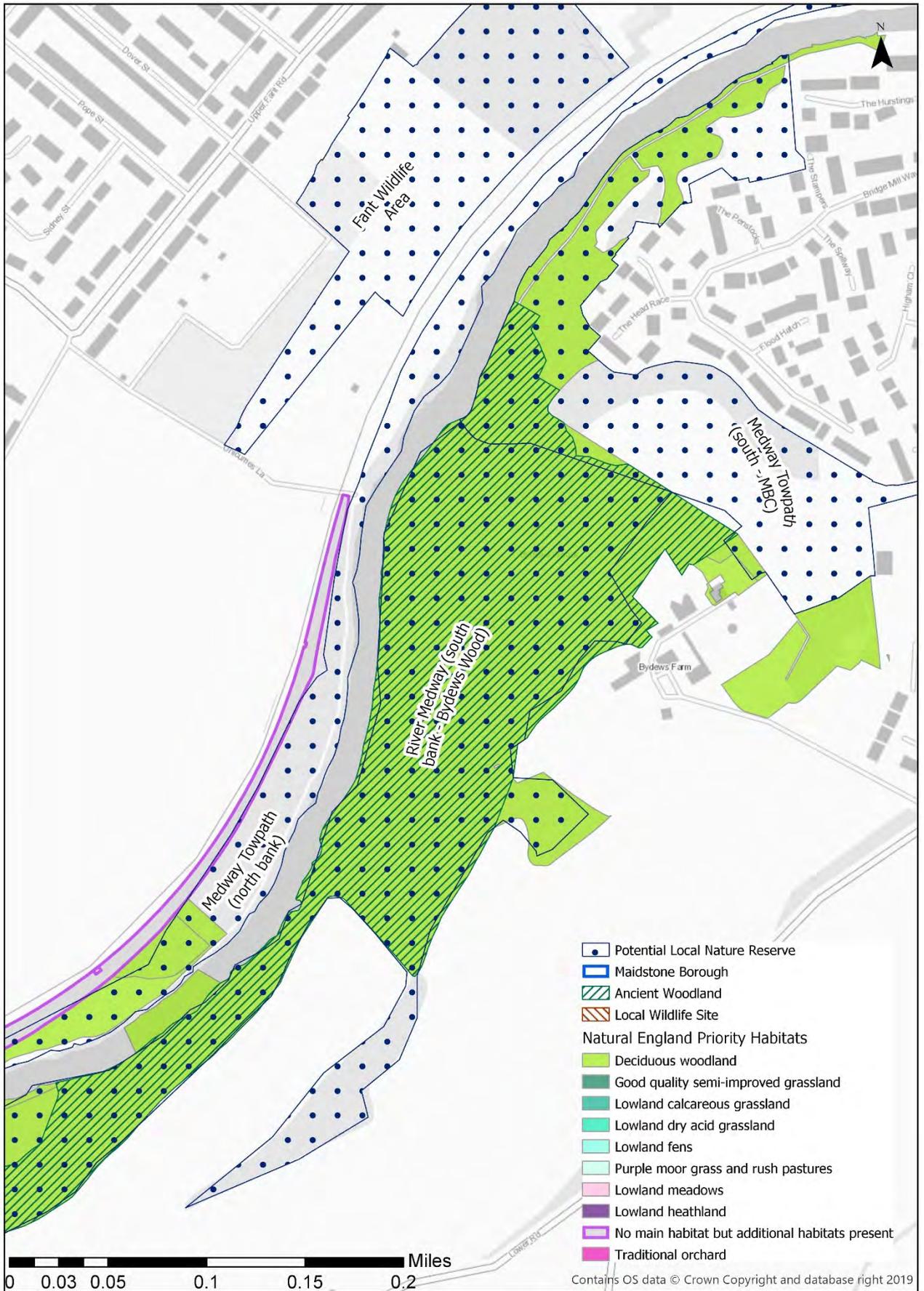
Site Description

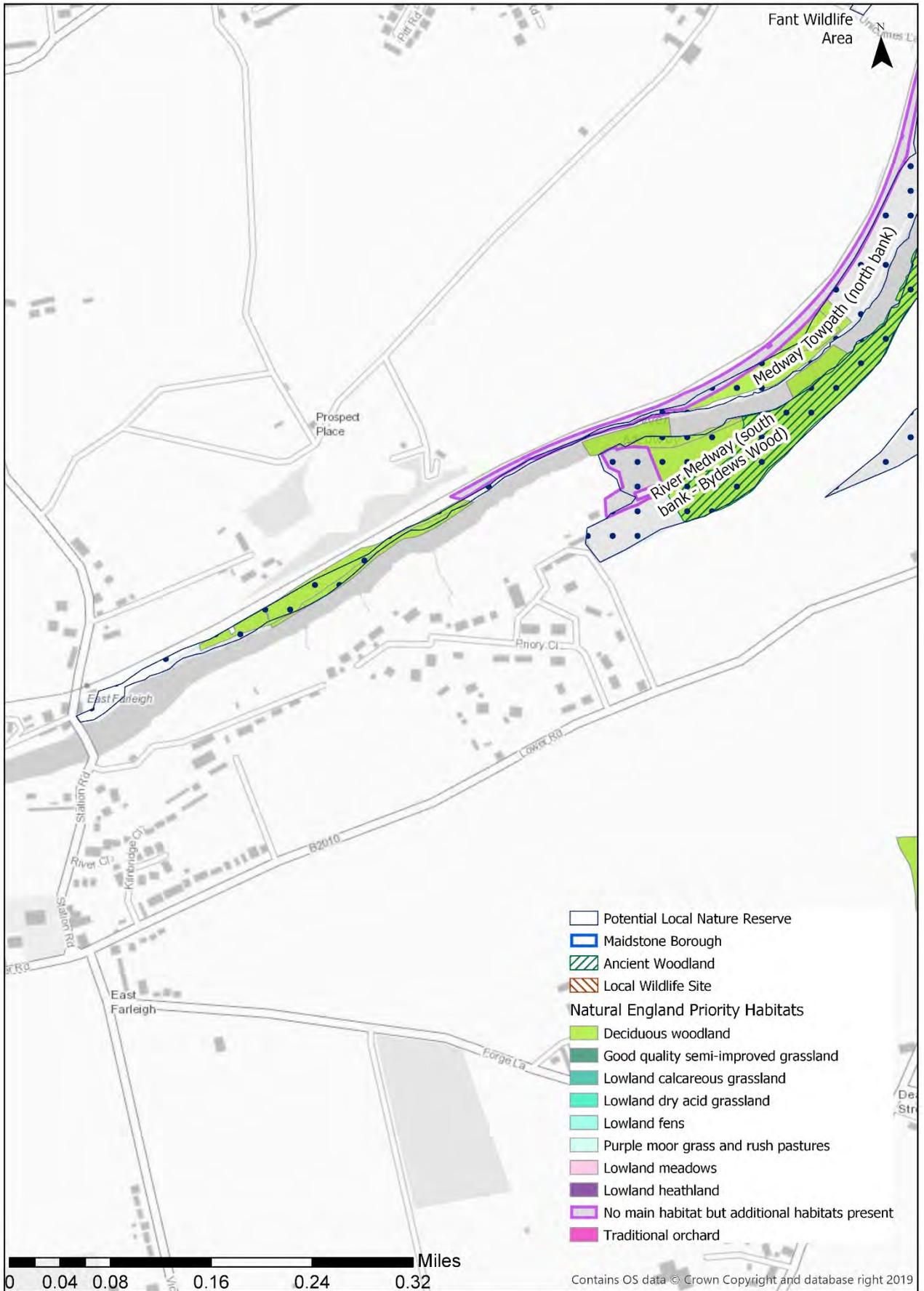
The towpath on the northern side of the River Medway between Bower Lane and East Farleigh Lock was originally proposed as a potential LNR. After further discussion with ward councillors, the area for consideration was extended to include sites on the southern bank, including an area owned by Maidstone Borough Council and the privately owned Bydews Wood.

The land on the northern bank is a strip between the railway to the north and the river to the south. There is a mixture of scrub, trees, grass and ruderal vegetation along the entire stretch. There are a range of bankside species and kingfisher are often seen. Himalayan balsam is common and giant hogweed also present but controlled by the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership. There is a public footpath which also runs along this section and is part of the Medway Valley Walk promoted route. There are several houseboat moorings. The land has multiple owners (c36), many of which hold very small titles in a 'plotlands' arrangement. The Environment Agency owns a larger stretch of land near East Farleigh Lock. Network Rail believes it owns some small areas. The area near Bower Lane has no registered ownership. The multiple ownership presents a significant difficulty in designation the site as an LNR – not only would each of the owners need to be party to an agreement with Maidstone Borough Council, they would need to commit to managing the landholding as an LNR. It is unlikely that this could be achieved. It may be possible to designate a smaller area near Farleigh Lock if the Environment Agency (EA) agreed. The EA was not approached during this project. Network Rail is willing to investigate designation but is unclear on current land ownership as has divested land over recent years.

To the south of the river are two land parcels. Adjacent to the residential area is an amenity area, play area and woodland owned by Maidstone Borough Council. Adjacent to this, further south along the river, is Bydews Wood which is in private ownership (owner not approached).

The woodland in both Maidstone Borough Council and private ownership is similar in type. The woodland is almost pure sycamore stand, with occasional ash and oak, with some hazel and elm. There is more ash to the south/west of Bydews Wood, but sycamore still comprises 50-60% of the stand. There is some regeneration but limited mainly to sycamore seedlings and little variation in structure due to poorly developed understorey layer. Ground flora includes red campion, nettle, ivy, herb Robert, bramble and dog's mercury. A surfaced path leads from the play area and along the river, stopping at the boundary with Bydews Wood. However, an informal path continues which is clearly well used despite notices indicating that access is not permitted on private land. There are rope swings and areas of erosion.





Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	50%
Local natural interest evaluation	70%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	60%
Management evaluation	20%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	5	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2	2	Very mixed quality of habitat
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	Access not permitted in Bydews Wood but well-used nonetheless
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0	0	
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	0	Multiple ownership, security cannot be guaranteed
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	Signs of anti-social access in Bydews Wood.
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

River Medway Towpath and Bydews Wood



Roundwell Park

Location	Roundwell/Cross Keys, Bearsted TQ80425558 ME14 4HR
Ownership	Proposed that site is developer retained and leased to Maidstone Borough Council on completion
Management Organisation	Proposed to be adopted by the River Len Nature Reserve Management Committee
Size	Approx. 2.3 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Site being developed at present. Suitability will also depend on the condition of the site following establishment as part of development and security of management arrangements.

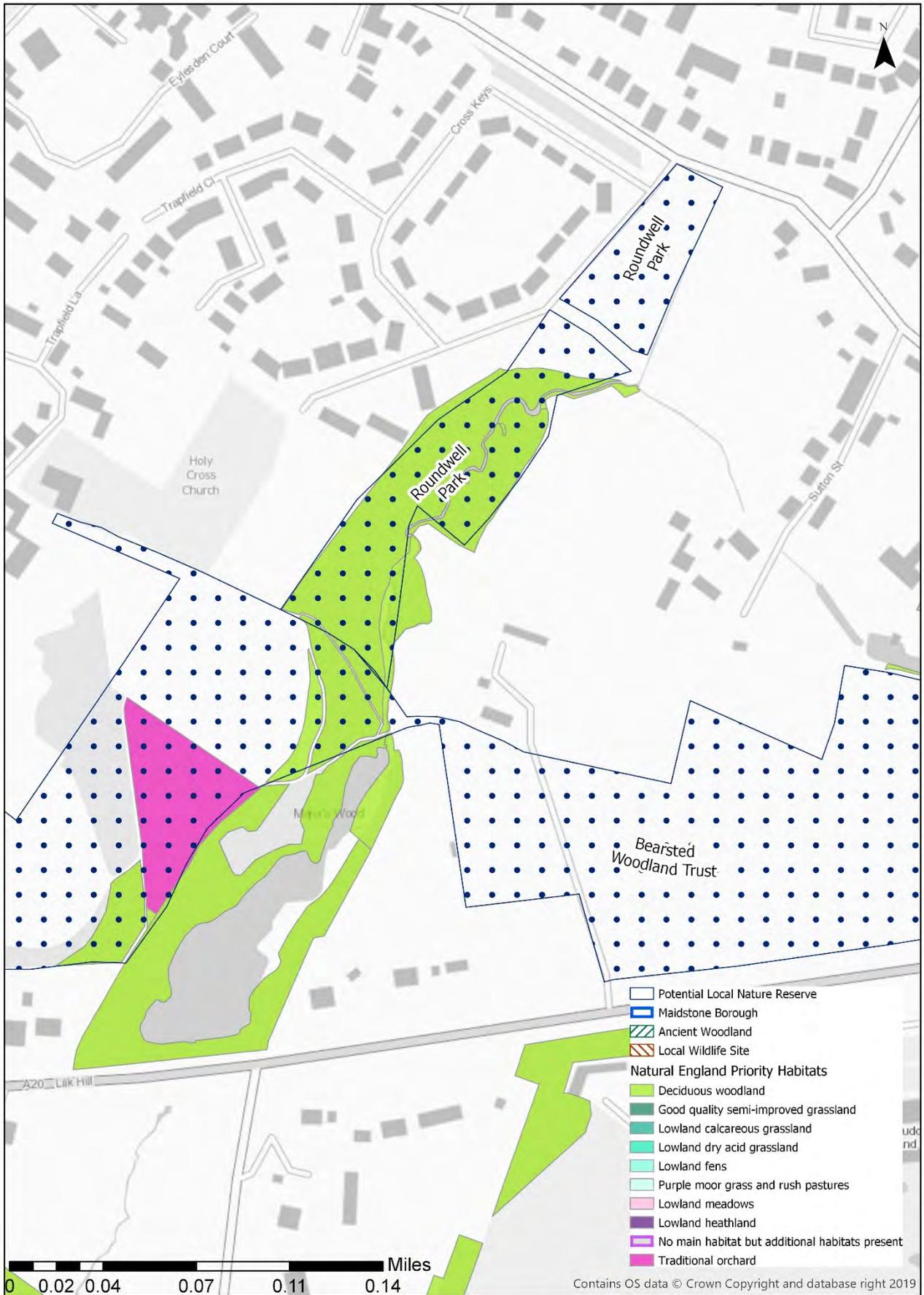
Site Description

The Management Plan (2015) submitted as part of the planning permission states the intention that the site will become a Local Nature Reserve.

The southern part of the site is alder woodland. The trees are over-mature coppice and many will need to be re-coppiced. The ground flora is dominated by nettles and hogweed with some male fern. The Lilk Stream runs through the wooded valley. The woodland is habitat for bats and reptiles. The northern part of the site is proposed to be a SUDS pond surrounded by

The evaluation score for this site is lower than might be expected due to uncertainty over the condition of habitats when the site is handed over as a nature reserve and future management arrangements.





Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	47%
Local natural interest evaluation	80%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	60%
Management evaluation	0%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	5	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland priority habitat
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	Not possible to score this section until works complete, assumed that habitats will be in good condition as a condition of the planning permission
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	Path shown linking to Bearsted Woodland Trust
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	

The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		Cannot be scored
Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	0	0%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		

There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	Management plan required which complies with LNR designation requirements and sets out future management.
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0	0	Long-term management arrangements set out in LEMP but not yet in place
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	0	Future management arrangements not fully settled.
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		Future management arrangements not fully settled, cannot be scored

Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		No recreational access at present, future management arrangements not in place, cannot be evaluated
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Sandling Park

Location	Sandling Court, Sandling Road, Maidstone TQ75595792 ME14 3AD
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	0.8 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

Mixed native woodland with ash, beech, sycamore and elm in small parcels. Woodlands incorporated into landscaping for residential area, with some ornamental planting. There is no public access into this private development and the woodlands can only be accessed by residents.

Conditions attached to planning permission MA/03/2067 state that the woodlands should be designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

APPLICATION: MA/03/2067

DATE RECEIVED: 20 February 2004 DATE VALID: 20 February 2004

APPLICANT: Enclosure Ltd

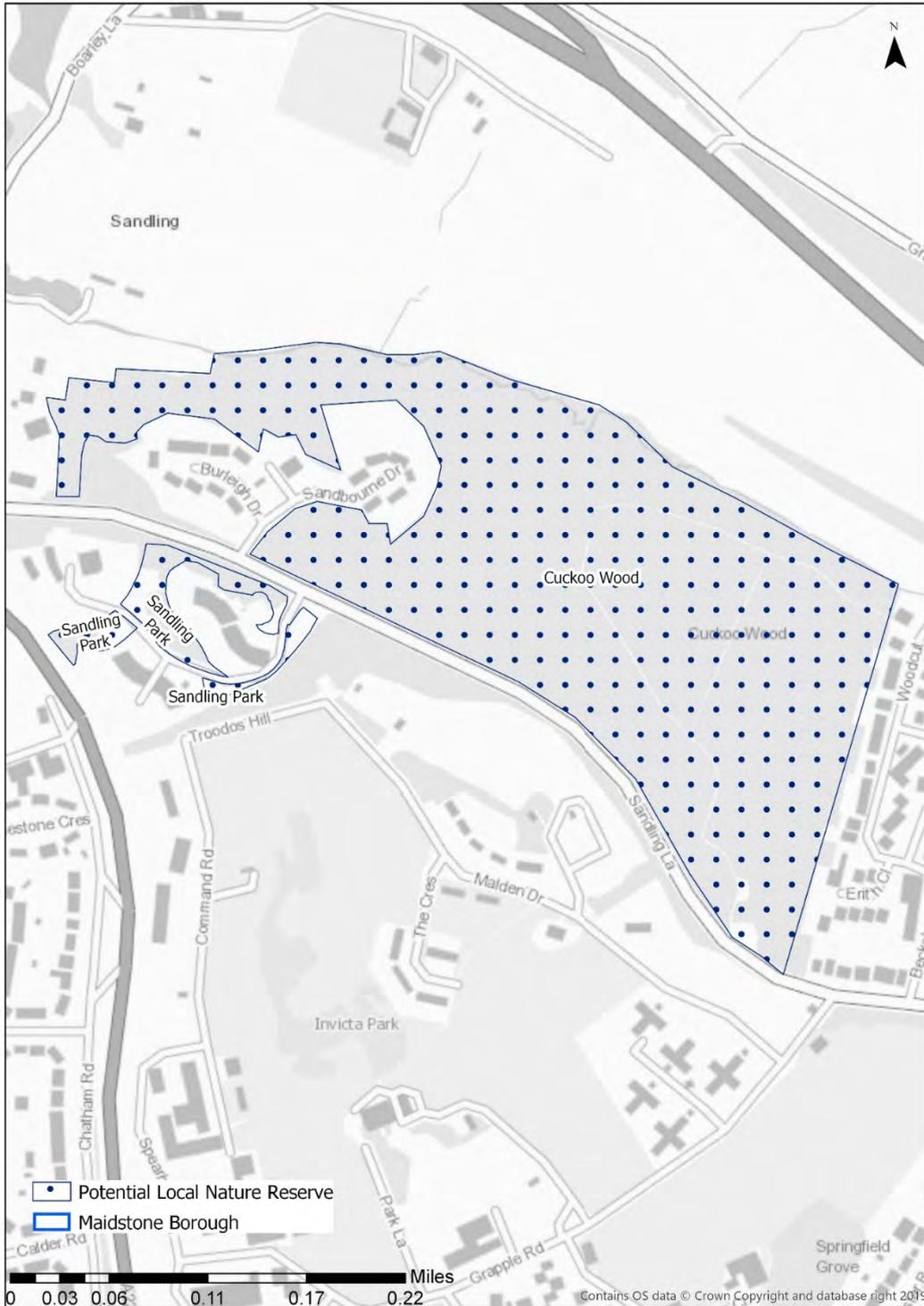
PROPOSAL: Construction of 90No. apartments being 2No. three bed, 53No. two bed and 35No. one bed, with associated parking and landscaping (Resubmission of MA/03/0050).

LOCATION: Former TAVR Centre Sandling Lane MAIDSTONE
GRID REF: 575708, 157898

2. No development shall commence until an arrangement, through an appropriate legal mechanism, has been made to transfer at no cost to the Maidstone Borough Council all that land outlined in green upon the plan attached to this Decision Notice to the Maidstone

Borough Council to be used as informal public open space and to be managed by the Maidstone Borough Council (or an organisation appointed by the Maidstone Borough Council) in consultation with English Nature and the Kent Wildlife Trust as a Local Nature Reserve;

Reason: To ensure that adequate open space is provided to the occupiers of the development hereby permitted and to ensure appropriate long-term management of an area of nature conservation interest which provides a wildlife habitat in accordance with policy H37 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000, to ensure compliance with policy ENV22 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	40%
Local natural interest evaluation	60%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	20%
Management evaluation	40%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation		Site Score	3
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland priority habitat
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1	1	
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	Some areas planted with ornamental species and managed as 'landscaped' area for flats
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	2	20%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1	1	Only accessible to residents
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		Does not provide access to a wider population
The site is in proximity to schools	1		Not available for school visits
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	Some interest from local residents which could be developed further.
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	Unclear what management is taking place
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Sandling Park



Senacre Woods

Location	Woolley Road, Maidstone TQ78555334 ME15 8QJ
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 7 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements (plan in preparation by Medway Valley Countryside Partnership). Management needs to be implemented in line with forthcoming plan.

Site Description

Senacre Woods is a broadleaved woodland, much of which is ancient woodland. It is in an urban location and is surrounded by houses. A small area of the woodland at the southern extent is separated from the main woodland by Woolley Road.

In the northern extent, the woodland is largely over-mature hornbeam coppice. The dense shade cast by the hornbeam limits the range of ground flora (common with hornbeam woodland), with ivy being the dominant species, but bluebell, common spotted orchid, herb bennet and other woodland ground flora are present. There is little regeneration where the shade is deepest. There are occasional ash and a few large oak standards. There is more diversity on the eastern edge of the woodland, with a few sweet chestnut, hazel, ash and hawthorn.

Further south, there is a higher proportion of ash and in these areas there is more diversity. To the southern part of the main woodland block is an area of wet grassland.

The woodland slopes to the west to a stream. In the valley bottom, in some places the ditch is lined to form a storm drain, removing the natural banks of the stream.

There are informal routes throughout the wood and it is used for dog walking. There are some signs of anti-social behaviour (fires, litter, vandalism and a tree house) but this is largely to be expected as the site is surrounded by housing.

The existing management plan has the following aims:

1. To maintain the integrity of the woodland habitats through a formalised programme of habitat works so that the site acts as a wildlife refuge;
2. Encourage wider public use of the site;
3. Ensure that the site is fully operational for drainage purposes;
4. Ensure the site is clean and safe for visitors.

Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	67%
Local natural interest evaluation	70%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	70%
Management evaluation	60%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Priority habitat deciduous woodland, the majority ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	Although some signs of litter and vandalism, camp-making etc.

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	No educational use at present and no clear intention, but scores 1 as has the potential to be a valuable site.
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1	1	
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1	1	New management plan being written, ensure this is suitable for LNR designation.
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	Owned and managed by Maidstone Borough Council so site is secure. New management plan being written, but management minimal.
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1	1	
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1	1	
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Senacre Woods



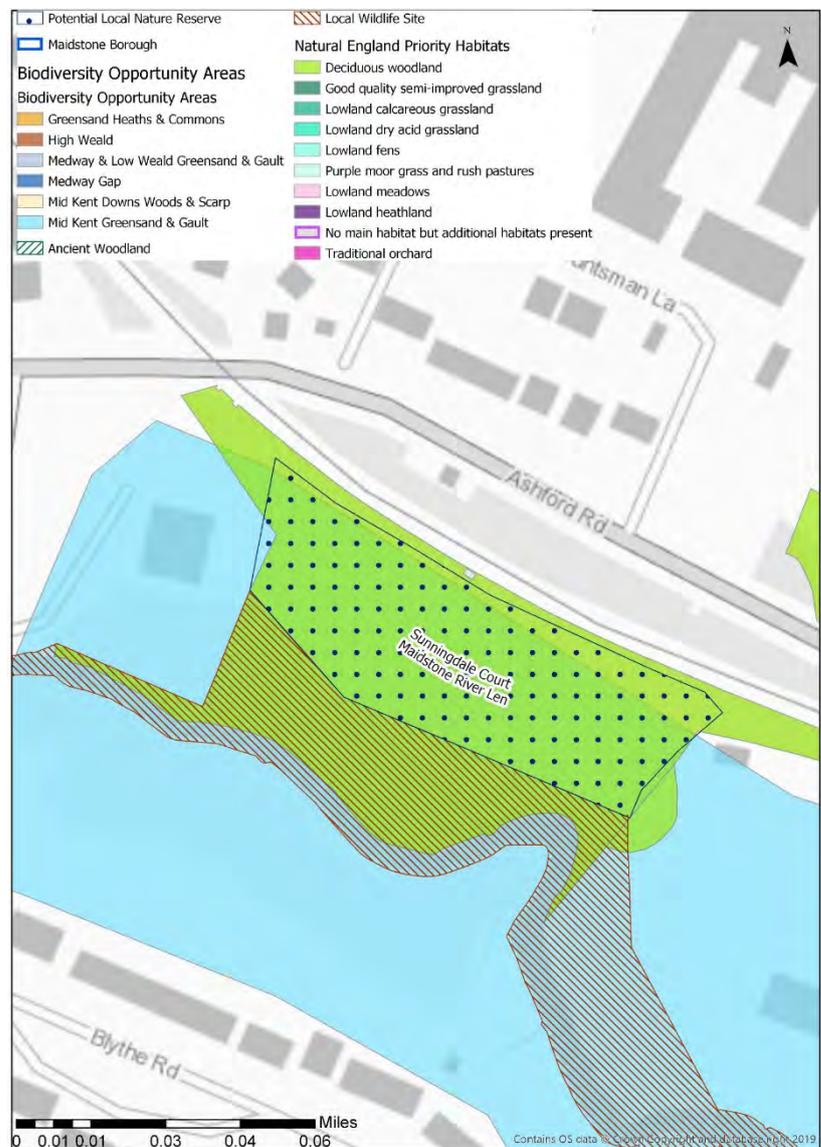
Sunningdale Court Woodland (River Len Reserve, Maidstone)

Location	Between Sunningdale Court, Square Hill Road and Turkey Mill, Maidstone TQ78875455 ME15 8GR
Ownership	Network Rail
Management Organisation	Network Rail
Size	Approx. 0.7 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Network Rail interested in designating LNRs; further discussion required
Constraints	Landowner agreement required. Management plan required which complies with LNR requirements. Management needs to be implemented in line with plan.

Site Description

The woodland adjacent to Sunningdale Court is included as a potential extension to the existing River Len LNR.

Small area of primarily sycamore woodland with some ash. There is no access to the woodland. The woodland could form a buffer area and extension to the existing River Len Local Nature Reserve.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	Yes
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	33%
Local natural interest evaluation	60%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	0%
Management evaluation	40%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	6	60%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA and site within Len Valley corridor
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3		
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2	2	

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2	2	
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	0	0%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2		
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0	0	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		
The site is in proximity to schools	1		
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0	0	

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	4	40%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1	1	Line side management
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0	0	
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Walderslade Woodlands

Location	Adjacent to various roads in Walderslade TQ76156237 ME5 9DE
Ownership	Kent County Council
Management Organisation	Boxley Parish Council under licence from Kent County Council and Walderslade Woodlands Group
Size	Approx. 42 hectares
Existing Designations	Local Wildlife Site: Walderslade Woods, MA67
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Kent County Council did not reply to enquiry; see below for potential changes in ownership. Boxley Parish Council/Walderslade Woodlands Group supportive in principle, subject to further information on legal agreement.
Constraints	Part of land is within Medway Council area; therefore Medway must delegate powers to MBC to designate or a joint declaration made. At present the future ownership of the land is in question and land ownership may pass to Boxley Parish Council if enabling development proceeds. Designation

Site Description

Ancient broadleaved woodland listed on the ancient woodland inventory; the Local Wildlife Site citation notes that over 30 ancient woodland indicator plants have been recorded. Also, within the site are several unimproved grassland clearings.

From the citation for LWS:

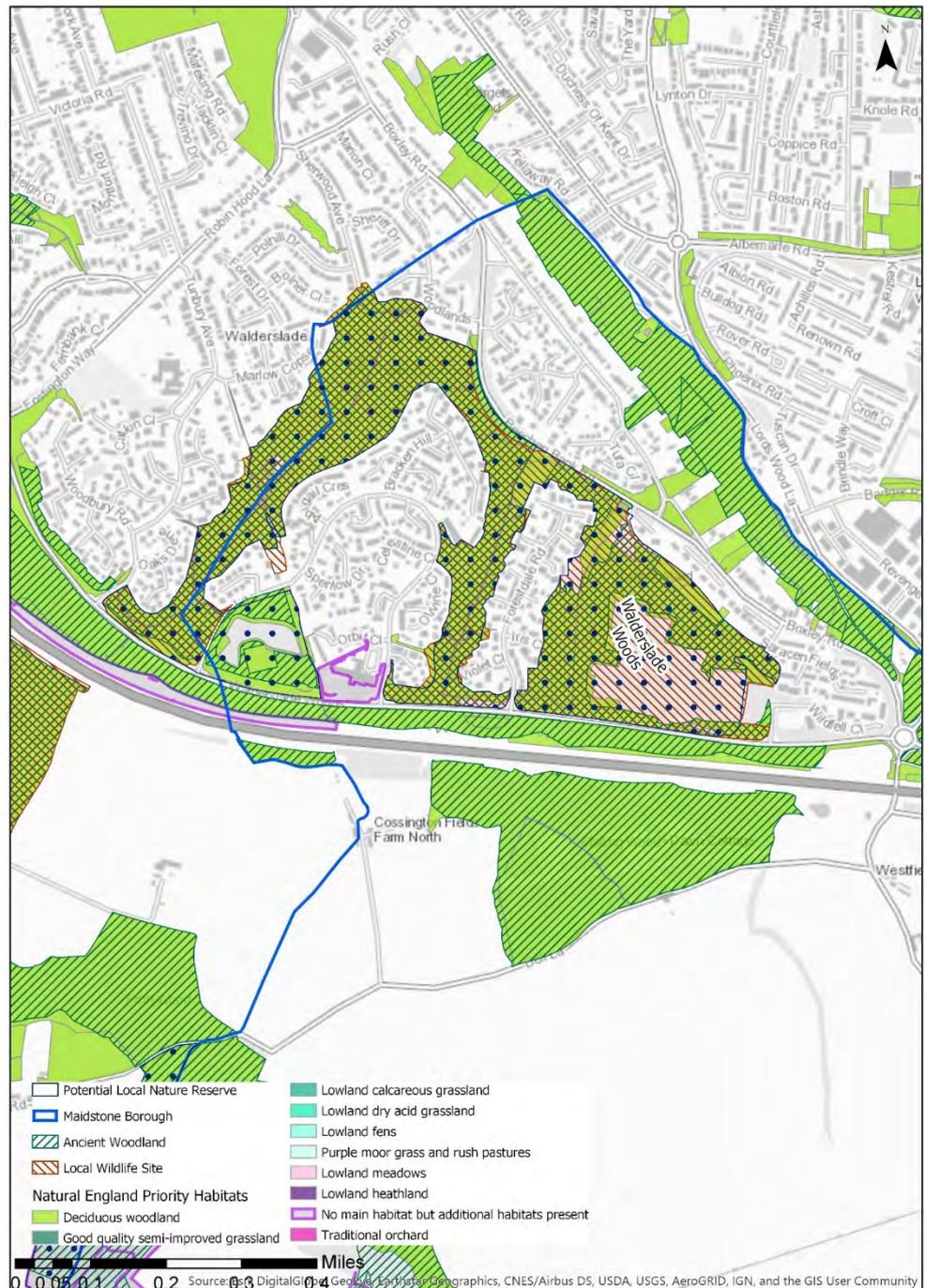
The site consists of three relict wooded dip slope dry valleys cut into the North Downs. Formerly, the woodland covered a much larger area including much of the plateau area between the valleys. The unmanaged semi-natural ancient woodland, once managed as coppice with standards, supports a typical chalk dip slope woodland flora.

There is a variety of woodland habitats associated with soils that vary from acidic on the plateau and upper slopes to highly calcareous on the lower slopes and valley floors, including sweet chestnut Castanea sativa / sessile oak Quercus petraea, on the plateau, hornbeam Carpinus betulus / hazel Corylus avellana on the middle slopes, and ash Fraxinus excelsior / hazel / field maple Acer campestre in the valley bottoms. In addition there is a small area of albeit damaged beech Fagus sylvatica woodland on the slopes in part of the complex, and scrubby grassland (former woodland) at the north eastern end of the area. Dense secondary ash/hornbeam Carpinus betulus woodland has colonised areas that were damaged in the Great Storm of 1987.

The ground flora is diverse and reflects the diversity of soil types with bluebell Hyacinthoides nonscripta and bramble dominating the plateau and upper slopes, and dog's mercury Mercurialis perennis dominating the lowest slopes and valley floors. The varied woodland habitats support 30+ ancient woodland indicator plants including wood anemone nemorosa, moschatel Adoxa moschatellina, wood sorrel

Oxalis acetosa, herb paris *Paris quadrifolia*, early purple orchid *Orchis mascula*, narrow buckler fern and scaly malefern *Dryopteris carthusiana* and *D. affinis*, sweet woodruff *Galium odoratum*, sanicle *Sanicula europaea*, pignut *Conopodium majus*, and goldilocks buttercup *Ranunculus auricomus*.

At present (2019) the future ownership of the land is in question. An enabling development has been proposed at Beechen Hall which, if it proceeds, could result in the woodlands passing to Boxley Parish Council with a management fund. The timescale of this is not known. It is unlikely therefore that Kent County Council would support designation of an LNR at this time, but the parish council would be interested in investigating further if the land passes to them.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	90%
Local natural interest evaluation	80%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	90%
Management evaluation	100%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	5	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Local Wildlife Site: Walderslade Woods, MA67
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland majority ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	Some, due to urban location, but generally safe and welcoming.

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1	1	There is opportunity
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	Landscape and Ecological Management Plan dated 2019, written by Kent Wildlife Trust.
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	Active community group with support from parish council, successful in seeking funds from various sources.
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	Likely to be passed to Boxley Parish Council.
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		



Weaving Heath

Location	South of Bearsted Road and north of Grove Green estate (Shepherds Gate Drive), Maidstone TQ78355666 ME14 5LE
Ownership	Maidstone Borough Council
Management Organisation	Maidstone Borough Council
Size	Approx. 8 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Management plan required – plan in preparation 2019 which will be suitable for LNR designation. Management will need to be implemented.

Site Description

Weaving Heath was created from land comprising part of the 1980s Grove Green housing development. Prior to its clearance for development related purposes the site was occupied by an extensive tract of semi-natural ancient woodland (Grove and Five Acre Woods), the former DuPont sand quarry, gorse and broom thickets and a cricket pitch serving the historic hamlet of Weaving.

The central plateau area is on quarry infill and re-profiled subsoil and debris left over from the adjacent housing development. The previous management plan states that the periphery is managed as 'conservation cut' grass with the central grass area maintained as amenity grass for informal recreation. Much of the 'conservation cut' grassland is now rank grassland dominated by false oat grass, cocksfoot, hogweed, mare's tail and other coarse species and some areas are bramble. However, some areas with tormentil, sweet vernal grass and bird's foot trefoil remain and there is a small population of pyramidal orchid.

The southern boundary consists of planted blocks of mixed species trees and shrubs, forming part of the landscaping scheme for the Grove Green Housing estate. The northern fringe retains small relic patches of the original semi-natural ancient woodland, with oak, sweet chestnut, willow, birch, elder, hawthorn, gorse and broom scrub, dwarf shrub heath and lichen heath with occasional common spotted orchid. The extreme north western extent of the site is bisected by a small damp woodland and willow herb thicket fringed stream, with its source within Horish Wood to the north and flowing into the River Len to the south.

There is public access across the site and two public footpaths cross the site. There is a trim trail on the central amenity area.

Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	73%
Local natural interest evaluation	70%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	80%
Management evaluation	70%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	5	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Relic heath habitats uncommon in area, although limited in area.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Within Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	2	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2	2	Habitat management requires improvement and central area mown for amenity use.
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention and opportunity	1	1	
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention and opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2	2	Interest from community which could develop into greater involvement in the site.
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan	Site Score		
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	New management plan due to be complete in 2019.
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	Management for nature conservation of the site could be enhanced. New management plan in preparation which will provide further objectives for nature conservation.
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1	1	
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2		
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1	1	
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Weaving Heath



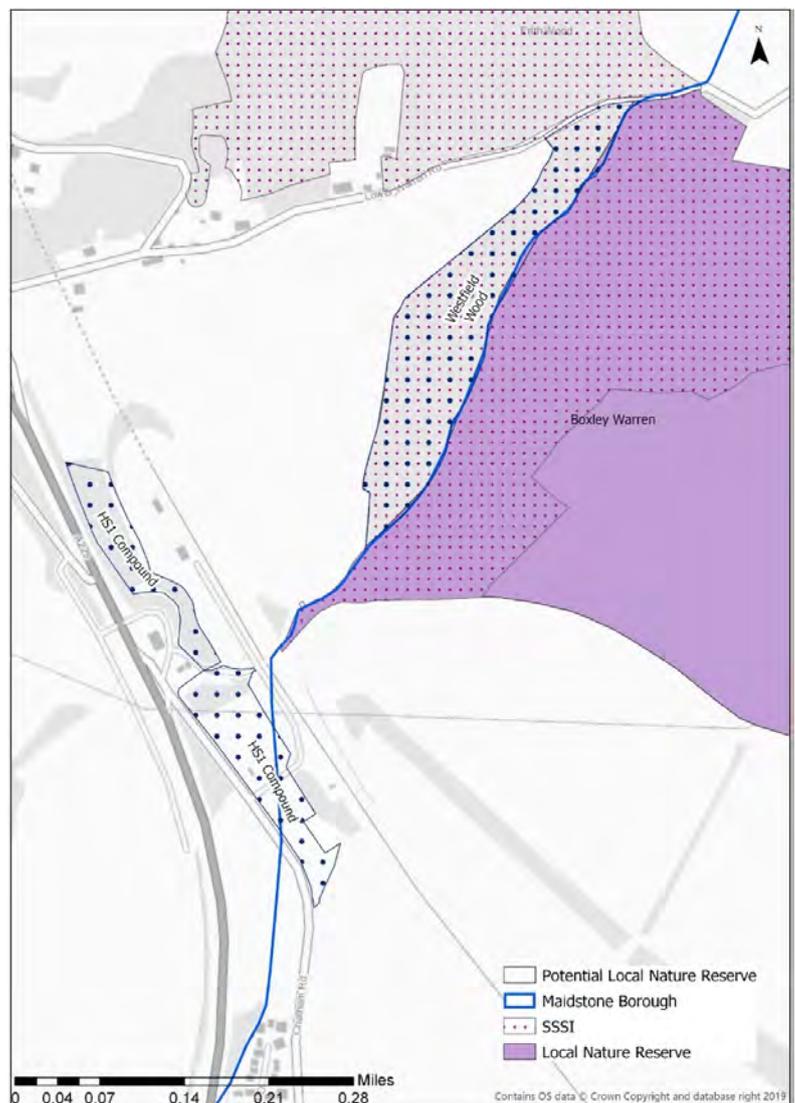
Westfield Wood

Location	North east of A229, Bluebell Hill, Old Chatham Road near garage TQ75616076 ME20 7EH
Ownership	Kent Wildlife Trust Reserve – also shown on Maidstone Borough Council property register (K363284)
Management Organisation	Kent Wildlife Trust
Size	Approx. 5.3 hectares
Existing Designations	Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown
Constraints	Land is within Tonbridge and Malling District, therefore TMBC must delegate powers to MBC to designate. Management plan not viewed – need to assess suitability.

Site Description

Part of the internationally important yew woodland on the chalky slopes of the Kent Downs. Yew overtopped by ash and beech with hazel understorey. Many of the mature beech trees were affected by the 1987 storm. The woodland has been left to regenerate naturally. The storm damage allowed sycamore to enter the woodland, which is frequent in places. On deeper soils to the north can be found crab apple and oak. Ground flora includes butcher's broom, stinking iris, green hellebore and stinking hellebore.

Shown as owned by Maidstone Borough Council but listed as a Kent Wildlife Trust Reserve. Adjacent to Boxley Warren LNR. The site is already internationally and nationally designated.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	77%
Local natural interest evaluation	100%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	30%
Management evaluation	100%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4	4	
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3		
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	3	30%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1		
The site is in proximity to schools	1		
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2		
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0	0	
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3		
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0	0	

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	Not seen but assumed appropriate management for nature reserve by Kent Wildlife Trust.
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Westfield Wood



Wimpey Field

Location	South of The Bartons, Staplehurst TQ77944324 TN12 0EH
Ownership	Staplehurst Parish Council
Management Organisation	Staplehurst Parish Council
Size	Approx. 2.7 hectares
Existing Designations	None
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Undecided
Constraints	None

Site visit conducted with Staplehurst Parish Council representatives.

Site Description

Two fields with developing secondary woodland. Owned and managed by Staplehurst Parish Council following development of the adjacent housing estate. The SUDS pond close to the housing estate is retained by Taylor Wimpey and is excluded from the potential LNR.

The secondary woodland is comprised of oak, up to c20 years old. There is older woodland on the edges of the site and in the northern area with some mature oak trees. Other species include ash, hawthorn, blackthorn and field maple. Ground flora includes stitchwort, brambles, pendulous sedge, herb Robert and bluebell. A community orchard has been planted with traditional and heritage varieties. A few orchard trees remain in the older northern section which was formerly orchard. Some areas have been thinned and, in these areas, and alongside rides, the grass is cut on rotation, with 1/3 cut short, 1/3 cut to medium length and 1/3 left uncut each year. Banks of bramble and younger scrub add to habitat variety.

Adders are present on the site. The young woodland supports warblers and nightingales. Bird and bat boxes have been installed and there are log piles.

A newt mitigation pond has been created, which will be a receptor area for newts translocated from development sites. The SUDS pond owned by Taylor Wimpey is also a valuable habitat, but there are issues with managing reed cover (currently too much coverage) and there are marsh frogs. It will be important that these do not spread to the translocation pond.

The site is well-used by local people for recreation. The site is also used for education with an education area, including visits from scouts/guides/brownies, and a 'BioBlitz' event. There is some evidence of burning and low-level damage but this is well-managed by the parish council.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	83%
Local natural interest evaluation	70%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	80%
Management evaluation	100%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	7	70%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	4	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	-	
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Deciduous woodland, traditional orchard mapped but not present
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	-	
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	8	80%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1		
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1		

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	Landscape and Ecology Management Plan 2012 provided at time of housing development. Suitable for purpose, but LNR designation could provide an opportunity to refresh action table to reflect works undertaken.
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		

The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0		
Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3	3	
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2		
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1	1	
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2	2	
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1		
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Wimpey Field



Yalding Fen

Location	Hampstead Lane, Yalding
Ownership	Progen Land
Management Organisation	Yalding Parish Council and Medway Valley Countryside Partnership
Size	Approx. 14.5 hectares
Existing Designations	Local Wildlife Site: Hale Street Ponds and Pasture, MA18
Landowner supportive of designating as LNR?	Unknown, see below. Yalding Parish Council very supportive of the fen becoming an LNR
Constraints	Updated management plan will be required. New landowner, intentions not clear

Site Description

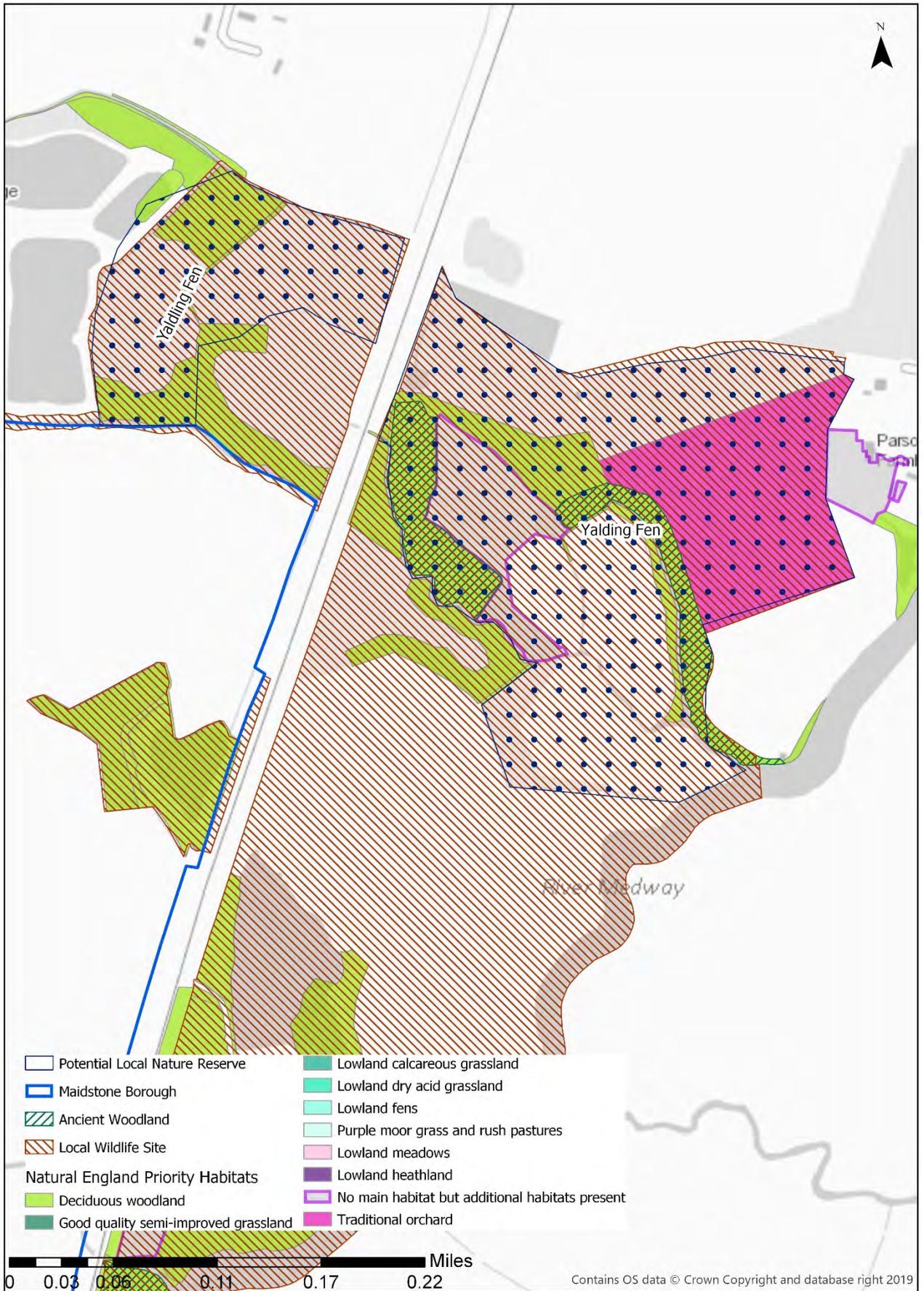
Within Yalding Fen there are three areas; water, fen meadow and fen grassland. The site is notable for its diversity of wetland habitats, including undisturbed damp grassland, wetland and wet woodland, and its range of scarce damp-loving plants. It also includes a traditional orchard, with grazed grassland under the trees, which adds interest to the site.

Fen grassland which varies in quality. Some areas are drier, allowing false oat-grass sward to dominate. Other areas remain wetter and have a greater range of wetland species and, where litter has not accumulated, small marsh plants like skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata*, greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, water figwort *Scrophularia auriculata*, water forget-me-not *Myosotis scorpioides*, marsh marigold *Caltha palustris* and gipsywort *Lycopus europaeus* are present. One nationally scarce species is also present – narrow-leaved water dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia* and one Red Data Book species fox sedge *Carex vulpina*. Wet woodland and willow carr is frequent across the site, adding diversity.

The site requires management through cutting or grazing and the water level and accumulation of litter will have a significant impact on the quality of the fen habitat.

There is access across the site, through public footpaths and permissive paths, with a series of boardwalks and bridges. The orchard is used for an annual apple harvesting festival.

The fen was previously owned by ICI/Syngenta until they vacated the adjacent works c12/13 years ago. The land has subsequently changed ownership to St Modwen Ltd who stopped all management after a longstanding involvement by the Medway Valley Partnership and Yalding Council. Management was improved again after a lapse in management activity and the site is now grazed. The land has changed ownership again, with the latest owner being Progen Land. Funding remains an issue. Yalding Parish Council would be ideal future owner and would offer security for the site but the intentions of current landowner unclear at present and it probably premature for the landowner to be willing to designate at this stage.



Core Legislative Tests	
The site is managed solely for a conservation purpose (no recreation)	
The site is managed for both a conservation purpose and for recreation, and recreation does not compromise its management for a conservation purpose.	Yes
Summary of Score - all evaluation areas	80%
Local natural interest evaluation	90%
Public interest, education and value evaluation	100%
Management evaluation	50%

Natural Interest Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	9	90%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Place in Ecological Unit Evaluation	Site Score	6	
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
The site is already recognised as being of local importance as a Local Wildlife Site (or has a higher designation)	1	1	Local Wildlife Site: Hale Street Ponds and Pasture, MA18
The site contains priority habitats (mapped by Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey) or species, or the management plan, survey or local knowledge indicates their presence.	1	1	Traditional orchard, small area of ancient woodland.
Connectivity to other sites - within or adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area or connected to a Natural England or Kent Habitat Survey priority habitat, Local Wildlife Site or other area of natural interest	1	1	Partly in Medway and Low Weald Greensand and Gault
Criteria - Size and Surrounding Land Use - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering OR important large site in urban area	3	3	
Site above 2 hectare minimum threshold, surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering OR important site in urban area	2		
Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold, but surrounding land offers good connectivity and buffering and there is low recreational pressure	2		

Site below 2 hectare minimum threshold and surrounding land lacks connectivity and buffering but is an important semi-natural site in an urban area	1		
Site less than 2 hectare minimum threshold, isolated site, surrounding land offers little connectivity and buffering to the site and/or there is recreational pressure	0		
Condition of Habitats Evaluation	Site Score	3	
Criteria - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes	4		
Habitats generally good across primary quality attributes, however, may be some small areas of lower quality habitat	3	3	
Habitats generally poor across primary quality attributes, however, may be some areas of better quality habitat	2		
Habitats of conservation interest but generally poor across primary quality attributes	1		

Public Value Evaluation	Site Score	10	100%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Criteria - Access - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Access is permitted to most of the site, either in full or in part, through public rights of way or through permitted access which is longstanding/will remain	2	2	
Access is permitted to only a small part of the site, or restricted in some way	1		
Access is not permitted	0		
Criteria - Score 1 for each criterion attained	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site provides accessible natural greenspace for nearby population (within 1km)	1	1	
The site is in proximity to schools	1	1	
The site is generally safe and welcoming to the public, with low levels of vandalism and litter, for example.	1	1	

Criteria - Education and Community Events - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
The site is used for education and events (which do not compromise natural interest)	2	2	
The site is not currently used for education and events but there is interest/intention or opportunity	1		
The site is not currently used for education and events and there is minimal interest/intention or opportunity	0		
Criteria - Community Interest - Ranked Score	Score by Criterion	Site Score	Comments
Communities are interested and actively involved in the management of the site, or it is a community owned or run site	3	3	
communities are interested with the potential to become involved in the management of the site in the short term (e.g. with interested residents or emerging group)	2		
communities are not involved but there may be potential e.g. the site is close to residential area	1		
Communities are not involved and there is limited potential in the short term	0		

Management Evaluation - Site Score	Site Score	5	50%
Potential Score	Maximum score	10	100%
Management Plan		Site Score	
Criteria	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
The site has an up-to-date management plan which is appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
The site has a management plan which has lapsed in the last 1 to 5 years, but which was appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve	1		
The site has a current management plan but this is not wholly appropriate for a Local Nature Reserve or the site has management objectives appropriate for Local Nature Reserve but not a full management plan	1		
There is no management plan in place or previous plan lapsed over 5 years ago	0	0	Five year management plan dated 2007, expired 2012. New management plan will be required.

Management Structures and Security			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management organisation/structure in place, funded, actively managing the site	3		
Management organisation/structure in place, but issues with funding or in implementing management	2	2	
Management organisation/structure in place but the site is not being managed	1		
No management organisation/structure and no management taking place	0		
Criteria - score 1 if criterion attained			
The future of the site is secure and safeguarded	1		Site has changed ownership several times, hopefully secure.
Management effectiveness			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	This Site	Comments
Management plan being followed and site managed appropriately and/or effectively for a Local Nature Reserve	2		
Management plan partially followed and site being managed, but sub-optimally for a Local Nature Reserve e.g. issues with appropriateness of management for habitats or effectiveness	1	1	Management taking place but insecurity of management and ownership
No management taking place	0		
Balance of Recreation and Nature Conservation			
Criteria - Ranked	Score by Criterion	Site	Comments
No recreation or recreation is well-managed and has no detrimental impact	2	2	
Recreation has some detrimental impact, e.g. trampling, disturbance or inability to fulfil appropriate conservation management	1		
Recreation has a severe detrimental impact to the conservation status of the site	0		

Yalding Fen



COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE 16 December 2019

Charging for Discretionary Environmental Health Services

Final Decision-Maker	COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Lead Head of Service	John Littlemore, Head Housing and Community Services
Lead Officer and Report Author	Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	<i>All</i>

Executive Summary

This report sets out three new discretionary charges for Environmental Health; enhanced contaminated land reports, Pre-application advice for Acoustics, Contaminated Land and Air Quality and advice visits and reports to businesses (new and material changes). Currently this advice is provided free of charge but does impact on the work of the service and is discretionary rather than part of the statutory functions required.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. Approve the adoption of discretionary charges for pre-application planning advice on acoustic, air quality and contaminated land assessments.
2. Approve the adoption of discretionary charges for Enhanced Contaminated Land reports.
3. Approve the adoption of discretionary charges for advice to businesses for food hygiene.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Corporate Leadership Team	3 December 2019
Communities, Housing & Environment Committee	16 December 2019

Charging for Discretionary Environmental Health Services

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>Accepting the recommendations will support the following Strategic Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe, Clean and Green • A Thriving Place 	Head of Housing & Community Services
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p><i>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Heritage is Respected</i> • <i>Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced</i> • <i>Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved</i> • <i>Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected</i> 	[Head of Service or Manager]
Risk Management	Considered in paragraph 5.1	[Head of Service or Manager]
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is appropriate to recover the cost of providing general advice as proposed in this report. • The recommendations are expected to result in net extra income in the region of £1,500. This income is in addition to amounts already accounted for within the Council's financial planning. 	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Service
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has 	Team Leader (Corporate

	<p>power to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions. Additionally, the Council has a general power of competence pursuant to Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which enables it to do anything that individuals generally may do. The proposed discretionary services are in exercise of these powers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 permits best value authorities to charge for discretionary services provided the authority has the power to provide that service and the recipient agrees to take it up on those terms. The authority has a duty to ensure that taking one financial year with another, income does not exceed the costs of providing the service. 	Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	No impact on groups with protected characteristics identified as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations may have varying impacts on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	There are no implications for Crime and Disorder in this report	Manager
Procurement	There are no implications for Procurement from this report	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The work of the Environmental Health Service falls into two distinct areas. Statutory duties which the local authority are legally bound to do and discretionary services which support and assist businesses, commercial developers and the public, this includes advice and guidance. Some discretionary advice overlaps with commercially available advice, other advice and guidance is for public health purposes. The public health aspect of environmental health and advice provided as part of any regulatory situations (inspections, visits and audits, complaints investigations) sit outside the scope of this report.
- 2.2 The demands placed on statutory Environmental Health services are increasing. There are, rightly, more requirements to document officer decisions, and there are expectations that processes should be adhered to and audited by management, as well as internal and external audits by the Food Standards Agency. All of which lengthen processes and absorb officer time and capacity. In addition, Environmental Health is, in part, a demand lead service, with new business churn and development applications placing claims on officer time, over and above programmed work.
- 2.3 As the service reaches capacity we will be faced with decisions relating to the continuation of these discretionary services. We can choose to draw away from them, as some authorities have, to focus resource to pure statutory functions. Or we can implement a cost recovery charge to enable businesses, developers and private individuals to access a professional service. This also enables us to control the resource we use for such work.
- 2.4 As mentioned in paragraph 2.1 in many situations the advice and guidance businesses and developers request from us is available from commercial services, but at a cost. Where as environmental health within Mid Kent Environmental Health provide appropriate and timely information free. In addition, as regulators we are in a position to explain how and what compliance can look like, where there is discretion or where we have adopted standards we can specify conditions required.
- 2.5 The principle of charging for discretionary services has been established under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 to charge for discretionary services and members of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee will recall that in 2018 they agreed to implement charges for Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Rescores for food businesses. The service also charges for the discretionary Food Hygiene Training Courses run for food businesses. Both are based on cost recovery, with a minimum number of candidates required for each training course run and rescore charges applied on application by the food business operator.
- 2.6 Income from charging for current discretionary services in environmental health is modest. Other service fees are set by government and covers pollution prevention charges and private water supply fees. The current

contaminated land search fee is based on £25 per hour based on legal guidance obtained in 2013-14.

Table 1

Discretionary Charges for Services	2018/19 (£)	To date 2019/20 (£)
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Re-score Charge	2,080	2,560
Food Hygiene Training	455	715
Contaminated Land Searches (land charge search)	400	400

2.7 The aspects of discretionary work under consideration for the new charges are;

- Provision of pre-application advice for noise controls, air quality assessment advice and contaminated land mitigation
- Enhanced advice for contaminated land enquiries
- Advice to businesses on compliance with regulatory requirements.

The service has always provided advice to those who approach the service but this isn't uniformly made by all businesses and developers. Requests can be 'niche' and require in depth research from the officer before responding. Such work is professionally rewarding and plays to the core of our role of environmental health in supporting people, businesses or developers.

2.8 The purpose of introducing a range of charges for these discretionary services has three purposes;

- Establish consistency and fairness to all businesses
- Ensure consistency of approach by officers and enable targeting of professional resource
- Provide a cost recovery structure for the discretionary work currently provided by the service.

2.9 The discretionary charges proposed in this report are currently implemented by other Kent local authorities such as Canterbury, Dartford, Sevenoaks and many London authorities.

2.10 The proposed charges are set out below with indicative income from each area.

Table 2

Service	Specific element	Cost	Potential Demand & Income
Contaminated land searches	Basic Environmental Information Regulation Request Factual report, maps, list of planning applications, locations of requested features such as private water supplies etc. if we hold that data.	To remain at current rate £25 /hr	4 – 6 per year (£200)
	Enhancement 1 Additional research into planning history to identify any contaminated land reports that may be connected to the site.	£55 /hr	2 – 4 per year (£500)
	Enhancement 2 Additional to either above elements, to include officers professional opinion on likelihood of site being subject to further investigation under P2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. A view based upon the information available to the council at the time of the request.	£55 /hr	1 – 3 per year (£500)
Pre Application Consultation	Pre-app advice via the planning team as part of their overall service	No charge	
	Direct approach from consultant to review and approve either scope of works or completed report prior to submission. Written response and advice provided.	£55 /hr	3 per year (£350 – 450)
	Site visits as part of the above	Hourly Rate plus mileage	2 per year (£500)
	Any visit as part of regulation to check up compliance and progress	No Charge	

Service	Specific element	Cost	Potential Demand & Income
Business Advice	Advice given during routine inspections or in response to service requests purposes	No Charge	
	Direct approach by a food business to give advice on plans and layout of the food business. (including approved premises)	£55 /hour Rate plus mileage for site visits	2 per year (£500)
	Direct approach for advice on setting up a new food business (pre start up advice)		
	Direct approach for kitchen design advice or expanding an existing business		

Financial Consideration

2.11 Charging for discretionary services aligns with the conclusions made in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21- 2024/25 (paragraph 3.11) which stated that although largely self sufficient the Council needed to assume a continued reliance on self-generated resources.

2.12 Charges are based on cost recovery including 'back office' costs.

2.13 Charging for services will allow managers to control demand. Although the charge is based on a cost recovery it may deter some from using the service, conversely release pressure on officer time. It will enable managers to manage their professional resources by prioritising statutory functions and urgent matters, through applying time frames for responding to these discretionary requests. This will enable businesses to plan and seek alternative commercial providers rather than service responses.

Pre- Planning Application Advice

2.14 Officers in Environmental Protection provide professional detailed advice for some often complex developments. It is only direct requests by consultants, acoustic, contaminated land and air quality that would be charged, rather than a duplication of the existing pre-application advice system which comes via the planning portal process. Environmental Protection officer work closely with developers and specialist consultants to explore the standard of work required to overcome noise concerns, or mitigation measure required for air quality assessments before the applications are submitted through the planning portal. This pre application work enables developers to submit their application and reduce the pathway

to approval by committee. This does not, and would not predetermine the approval process at committee.

- 2.15 Often consultants will approach Environmental Protection to confirm satisfaction with the scope of an investigation or assessment prior to providing a quote to a potential client or to ensure that this is not rejected. Consultants will also ask for officer approval before it is finalised to the client.

Enhanced Advice for Contaminated Land Enquiries

- 2.16 The service has a duty to supply baseline information for contaminated land searches; the current fee is based on legal advice. However we are aware that there is potential to provide an enhanced, more detailed response which we could charge more for to bring us in line with other local authorities in Kent.
- 2.17 However there is often a request to provide more detailed information, such as that contained in planning records, which can be accessed by anyone via the planning portal. For a site with a lengthy development history this can take many hours. This additional information is currently provided on request by developers or home owners, yet commercial firms also provide and charge for the same service. The professional opinion of the contaminated land officer is often sought, as to whether a particular site is likely to be investigated further by the council. This opinion is not subject to the same price regulation as basic Environmental Information Regulation details and could be charged for as part of an enhanced package. Currently it is provided free of charge with other information supplied mainly to developers.

Business Advice and Support

- 2.18 Primarily focused at new food businesses that request pre-opening advice visits or discuss with officers the range of facilities their businesses will need. Such advice is positive for both the business and the service by providing a clear understanding of their legal responsibilities and dispel myths, there-by save the businesses time and money. And for the service the visit can save time at later inspections and foster good officer/business relationships. Not all businesses seek out advice before they open, some have access to commercial advisors, and others rely on their own experience and knowledge.
- 2.19 Other common advisory situations may involve changes to process for manufacturers or expansion of premises. Important as this work is, it is not a statutory requirement, it can take hours of officer time researching, writing emails/letters and working with other agencies.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 Option 1

To approve the application of discretionary charges for all service areas identified in the report; pre application planning advice for environmental health, enhanced advice for contaminated land enquiries, and for advise to businesses. Although charging may drive some businesses to seek advice from the private sector there are many that would prefer to seek advice from the regulatory authority. Over all these measure will generate some income for the authority and should this be an increasing area of work it may support service delivery in the future. Through adopting a charging scheme managers can control demand for the services, focus time and resource where needed, whether this is on statutory functions or towards advice and enable the Council to recover income on a cost recovery basis.

3.2 Option 2

To approve one or two of the proposed charges of the three areas identified in the report. This may raise questions of inconsistency of application, such as why one area has been approved for discretionary charge and another not applied. This will provide the service with a clear indication of whether the service continues to provide the discretionary service should demand for statutory functions continue to grow.

3.3 Option 3

Not to approve the adoption of any charges for discretionary services. This will retain the current position. This will impact on whether the discretionary service is delivered in the future.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is Option 1, to approve all three discretionary charges to enable the service to continue to provide discretionary advice. It will confirm a commitment to providing important services on a cost recovery basis.

5. RISK

- 5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this report at paragraphs 2.2 – 2.13. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 No consultation is proposed.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 If adopted the charges will be included in the fees and charges report for 2020-21.

Communities, Housing & Environment Committee

16 December 2019

Mid Kent Environmental Health Annual Report 2018-19

Final Decision-Maker	Communities Housing & Environment
Lead Head of Service	John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services
Lead Officer and Report Author	Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Service
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

This report is to update the members of the Communities, Housing and Environment on the work of the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service for Maidstone during 2018-19.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee note the content of the report.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	16 December 2019

Mid Kent Environmental Health Annual Report 2018-19

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The report is for information only. The Service contributes towards 'keeping Maidstone an attractive place for all' and 'securing a successful economy for Maidstone'.	Tracey Beattie Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Risk Management	No risk management implications have been identified.	Tracey Beattie Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Financial	The information set out in the report are all already within approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Head of Housing & Community Services
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Housing & Community Services
Legal	This report is for information only. Regular reports on the Service's work and performance in relation to the Council's statutory functions as mentioned in the report assist in demonstrating best value and compliance with the statutory duty.	Keith Trowell, Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	There is no specific privacy or data protection issue to address.	Keith Trowell, Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS

Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals. .	Tracey Beattie Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Crime and Disorder	No implications have been identified	Tracey Beattie Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Procurement	None identified	Head of Housing & Community
Cross Cutting Objectives	The two of the four cross-cutting objectives are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected 	Tracey Beattie Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 Mid Kent Environmental Health (MKEH) are responsible for delivering the following functions for Maidstone Borough Council; Food Safety, Health & Safety, Infectious Disease control, Contaminated Land, Pollution Prevention Control, Private Water Supplies and Air Quality. Other reactive environmental work for example, noise and other nuisance complaints are delivered by the Community Protection Team.

2.2 The purpose of establishing a shared service for delivering these environmental health functions was to provide professional resilience to meet the demands of the highly regulated areas of work and protect public health in its widest context.

2.3 This report provides an update to committee on the work achieved by the service since 1 April 2018.

2.4 Officer Training and Professional Development

MKEH places a strong emphasis on developing all individuals within its teams. This year we have seen a food officer pass the rigorous Environmental Health Officers Board (EHORB) with a Distinction in her professional interview and for her log book. We gave her the time to complete her portfolio of experience. She trained with other colleagues across all the environmental health disciplines and the public health team in Tunbridge Wells, but the hard work of writing the reports was down to her.

In 2018-19 we provided student placements for 3 Student EHOs; one left for a position in Bath and North Somerset, another obtained a position with Swale B C Housing Service and the third is currently completing his portfolio and exams for completion in early summer 2019.

We provide 'in house' learning opportunities for all officers through joint team meetings; this allows us to provide low cost training for the Continuing Professional Development requirements of 20 hours (30 hours for Chartered status) each professional officer is required to retain their membership of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

There is a programme of mentoring and coaching by senior officers who have specialised in aspects of environmental health to allow less experienced officers opportunities to develop expert knowledge. For example, officers working with Air Quality specialists to gain expertise, as well as undertaking external training and professional development courses. We have committed to development programmes for two officers over 2019-20 to provide continuity and transition within Air Quality specialist roles that have been extremely difficult to recruit in the wider recruitment market during 2017-18.

We have promoted internally from EHO to senior EHO roles and the Team Leader role in the Sittingbourne Food & Safety Team. We have also been fortunate to recruit a number of highly experienced officers to MKEH over the year.

Looking forward we intend to recruit to a Regulatory Compliance Officer Apprentice who will undertake the newly approved training programme in the summer of 2019. This is a long term programme intended to help develop our own talent from the communities we work within and we will also continue with our student placements for graduate EHOs to complete the new qualification route into the profession.

2.5 Food Safety

The annual local authority enforcement (LAEMS) return to the Food Standards Agency for the year ending March 2019 has been completed. It shows that Maidstone have completed 1018 out of 1033 interventions due in the year, 98.5%.

With public awareness of food safety increasing with the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) we have seen a steady number of businesses wishing to improve their already satisfactory scores from 3. 13 requests

for rescoring were made to the team within the first year of the charging fee being applied. Overall 98.5% of food businesses eligible for the scheme in Maidstone achieve a 3 or more score.

There have been 2 appeals against the Food officer's scores following inspection and we have adopted a rigorous process of assessment for such appeals by both Food & Safety Team Leaders who review the inspection reports and take into account the evidence provided by the food business operator. This is to confirm that the Food Standards Agency Brand Standard for the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme has been followed and scoring has been fairly applied by the inspecting officer.

We understand that food businesses need to access good quality food hygiene training for their staff; however we have noticed a decline in numbers of attendees which reflects the growing trend in online training.

We have joined with Kent Trading Standards to develop a new course for businesses which seeks to inform them of the importance and need for allergen information for menus, labelling etc (trading standards). The environmental health element will focus on how to gain and maintain a '5' rating in the FHRS. This is being piloted and administered through Maidstone BID and should be operational in early summer.

Further data from the Local Authority Enforcement Management System (LAEMS) for Maidstone during 2018-19 is included in Appendix 1

2.6 Health & Safety

Health and safety enforcement is divided between the HSE and local authorities, with our enforcement primarily in the leisure and service industries. Our work is delivered through targeted projects identified at a national level by the HSE, based on risk analysis of national accident data and other factors to determine areas considered to present higher risk for local authorities' enforcement. Using local knowledge officers then identify the project they consider most suited to our needs in Mid Kent.

This year the team have undertaken a project on safety in care homes. Again officers were provided with an initial training event and a carefully organised programme of joint inspections using information from the database and geographical knowledge to ensure best use of resources.

As well as project work the team have a duty to investigate complaints and accident notifications through the HSE RIDDOR website. RIDDOR is the official method for businesses to notify authorities of accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences. Not all RIDDOR reported accidents or complaints require investigation but all notifications are assessed by professional officers, for example, an incident where no work activity has occurred does not warrant investigation.

Table 1: Reactive Health & Safety (Maidstone B C)

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
H&S prosecutions	1	0	0
Improvement Notices	2	0	6
Prohibition Notices	1	1	1
Non Reportable Accidents	44	24	4
Reportable Accidents	92	53	51
H&S Advice Requests	2	8	6
Complaints of H&S	15	22	32
LOLER notifications*	3	6	8
Asbestos Notifications	0	1	11
Total Number	84	61	61

*Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998

The reduction in non reportable accidents between 2016 -17 (44) 2017-18 (24) and 2018-19 (4) has been due to better 'triaging' and recording of reported accidents at the initial stage of contact. We have achieved this by training and advising contact centre staff and environmental health administration officers during the course of the year.

The significant reduction in Reportable Accidents between 2016/17 (92) and the subsequent years is due to reduced reporting through the HSE RIDDOR system.

2.7 **Special Treatments – tattoo, cosmetic piercing, semi-permanent beauty treatments, acupuncture, electrolysis**

The purpose of registering businesses for tattooing and other treatments is to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and protect public health.

Maidstone Tattoo Extravaganza at Easter attracts tattoo artists from around the world who give demonstrations of their skills and offer tattoos to the public. The popularity of this event has expanded since 2017 although there has been a slight reduction in the total number of tattooists attending this year, this may be due to the exceptionally good weather we had this Easter. Our role is to work with the organiser to ensure all stalls meet the Bye-Laws adopted by Maidstone.

Table 2: Special Treatment Registrations

Special Treatment	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Tattooing	5	9	16
Acupuncture	2	1	0
Semi Permanent Make-Up	2	8	8
Cosmetic Piercing	0	10	5
Extravaganza Event	59	137	105

Once registered, there is no requirement within the legislation to undertake routine inspections of businesses and yet we know that practitioners would appreciate more contact from us. With this in mind

the health and safety project for 2019-20 will be focused on health and safety practices in the tattoo studios with a significant element of advice and guidance for the control of infection provided to businesses.

2.8 Infectious Disease Control

The purpose of infectious disease notification is to control the spread of infection and prevent further cases of food poisoning.

The Food & Safety team investigate individual cases of notifiable disease, such as Campylobacter, E.coli or Legionella. Cases are referred from a person's GP for laboratory confirmation via Public Health England to the local authority where we screen individual cases by questionnaire or investigation. Should we have a food poisoning outbreak we work closely with the PHE to control the outbreak and identify the source of the problem, this may be bacterial or viral, food borne or person to person contact.

Table 3: Infectious Disease Reports

Causative Organism	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Campylobacter	208	174	231	230
Vibrio Cholera	1	0	1	0
Cryptosporidium	27	16	20	15
Cyclospora	0	1	0	0
Dysentery (Shigella)	2	2	4	2
E.coli	6	6	6	3
Unconfirmed Food Poisoning Outbreak (no organism identified)	2	0	1	1
Giardia	6	11	13	2
Hepatitis E	2	1	1	3
Infectious Hepatitis	2	0	1	0
Legionella	1	1	2	2
Leptospirosis	0	0	2	0
Listeria	0	0	1	0
Paratyphoid	1	0	0	0
Salmonella sp.	13	16	15	22

2.9 Environmental Protection

One of the main functions of the Mid Kent Service the Environmental Protection Team is to prevent future environmental problems arising from new developments. We work closely with the Planning Service and with the Community Protection Team to ensure that consultation responses to planning applications include appropriate mitigation to potential noise, air quality or contaminated land issues. The team also implement the pollution prevention regime through by inspecting and issuing permits, contaminated land enquiries and the private water supply legislation.

2.10 **Pollution Prevention Control**

The pollution prevention regime is operated by DEFRA for the control of industrial/commercial processes which have the potential to pollute our environment. As a local authority we issue permits with conditions, to ensure the businesses achieve the required environmental standards. We inspect these processes under a risk based scheme with an annual inspection programme.

Maidstone have 42 premises with permits under this scheme, which range from complex processes associated with Vinters Park Crematorium to more straight forward controls at petrol stations and dry cleaners.

2.11 **Air Quality**

Work on implementing the Low Emissions Strategy 2017 remains a priority for the team, with the outcome of the feasibility study undertaken in the winter of 2018 being reported to committee in July 2019. The work on the Clean Air for Schools project also continues with a total of 11 schools in the scheme and in February Archbishop Courtenay School, Tovil won the Kent Messenger 'Green Schools' Award 2019 for their work on air quality.

The team have completed the DEFRA funded project to improve air quality jointly made in 2013 to Tonbridge & Malling and Maidstone Borough Councils. The £206,000 grant fund was transferred from TMBC to Maidstone to deliver in November 2016. May 2019 saw the last of the seventeen retro fitted buses, fitted with Selective, Catalytic Reduction and particulate traps, for NuVenture and an additional four Arriva buses become operational. The grant was to improved emissions for bus routes between Maidstone High Street and Kings Hill.

The number of buses falling into the category requiring Retro fitting to meet Euro VI standards is reducing significantly due the bus companies' business model to replace older and less efficient buses. The precise number of buses currently below Euro IV emissions standards and operating in Maidstone is not known at the time of writing this report.

For the last two years we have prepared and submitted the Annual Status Reports to DEFRA and the return for 2018 data (submission completed by end of June). Information on much of the air quality work in the borough can be accessed at www.kentair.org.uk.

2.12 **Planning Consultations, Contaminated Land and Private Water Supplies**

A large part of the work the team provide is the Development Management Service with consultation responses on air quality, noise, potentially contaminated land and lighting. This work is important to resolve current and future environmental issues through design or mitigation controls. Table 4 demonstrates a significant increase in planning consultations during the year.

New Private Water (Amendment) Regulations 2018 have been introduced and officers are reviewing the impact that the new risk rating will have on the six private water supplies in the Maidstone district for the coming year. Maidstone has three private residences, two commercial sites and one combined commercial and residential system on private water supplies. There appears to be some scope to reduce sampling based on a new risk assessment process, for example, certain parameters can be eliminated where a minimum of three years results is available. However we are committed to ensuring that each system is safe and water quality satisfactory.

Table 4: Consultation and Reactive Work undertaken by Environmental Protection in Maidstone.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Planning Consultations	649	646	740
Planning Appeals	64	68	47
Contaminated Land Enquiries	40	28	19
Private Water Enquiries	2	5	2

The team have struggled to absorb the increased workload during the past year and we will be monitoring whether the demand is a trend a peak in planning consultations.

2.13 In October 2018 the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee requested a member briefing on the work of Environmental Health. This has been arranged for 12 September 2019.

2.14 **The Next Steps**

2019-20 will bring new opportunities to identify potential for income across the service and we work with legal services to ensure that any proposals are within the Council's constitutional standards. The Food & Safety Team will inevitably deal with the implications of Brexit on food import and exporting food to the EU to ensure that we support businesses within Maidstone. They will also deliver the new business training course with Trading Standards in the Maidstone BID area.

The service are also working closely with Mid Kent ICT on a mobile working platform.

3. **RISK**

3.1 This report has been presented for information only and has no risk management implications.

4. **CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

4.1 No consultation is required.

5. REPORT APPENDICES

[The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- **Appendix 1:** Summary Data from Maidstone Borough Council Local Authority Enforcement Management Scheme Return 2018-19

Appendix 1

Data from Maidstone Borough Council Local Authority Enforcement Management Scheme Return 2018-19

Table 1: Interventions by Risk Rating – Due & Completed

Premises Rating	Interventions Achieved	Outstanding at 31 March 2019
A	4	0
B	48	0
C	126	3
D	443	5
E	225	7
Unrated	172	0
Outside Programme	0	0
Total	1018	15

Table 2: Interventions carried by type of business

	Primary Producer	Manuf'r & Packer	Importer Exporter	Distrib'r Transporter	Retailer	Restau'ts Caterer	Total
Total Premises	25	35	4	21	232	1034	1351
Inspections and Audits	0	18	0	5	48	472	543
Verification & Surveillance	0	3	0	1	1	28	33
Sampling	0	5	0	0	3	12	20
Advice & Education	0	5	0	1	9	19	34
Information & Intelligence gathering	0	15	1	18	91	263	388
Total Premises subject to Official Controls	0	12	0	5	47	396	460

Table 3: Premises by Profile

Risk Rating	Primary Producers	Manuf'r & Packer	Importer Exporter	Distrib'r Transporter	Retailer	Restaur't Caterer	Total
A	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
B	0	1	0	0	2	17	20
C	0	6	0	0	5	136	147
D	0	6	0	1	51	460	518
E	0	19	1	18	165	378	581
Unrated	0	2	1	0	4	33	40
Outside	25	1	2	2	4	7	41
Total	25	35	4	21	232	1034	1351

Table 4: Enforcement Actions

Action	Manuf'r & Packer	Distrib'r Transp'r	Retailer	Restaur't & Caterer	Total
Voluntary Closure	0	0	0	0	0
Seizure, detention	0	0	0	0	0
Suspension/Revocation	0	0	0	0	0
Emergency Prohibition	0	0	0	0	0
Prohibition Order	0	0	0	0	0
Simple Caution	0	0	0	0	
Improvement Notice	0	0	1	2	3
Remedial Action	0	0	0	0	0
Written Warning	7	2	24	254	287
Prosecutions Concl'd					
Total			25	256	290