

Birmingham & Black Country Local Sites Assessment Report

- Explanatory Notes (October 2010)

The following are explanatory notes for each of the fields in the Birmingham & the Black Country Local Sites Assessment Report.

Date Report Completed - the date the site report was completed/compiled.

General Information

- **EcoRec. Ref. No.** - the unique code allocated to a site by EcoRecord (the ecological records centre for Birmingham & the Black Country).
- **EcoRec .Site Name** - the default site name as allocated by EcoRecord.
- **EcoRec. Grid. Ref.** - the default British National Grid Reference as allocated by EcoRecord.
- **N.C. Designation** - national & local nature conservation designation: SAC (Special Area of Conservation), SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), NNR (National Nature Reserve), LNR (Local Nature Reserve), SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation), SLINC (Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation) or WC (Wildlife Corridor).
- **Date Notified** – the first date of notification as a Local Site.
- **Planning Authority** - the local planning authority.
- **Site Ownership** - given as either private (with owner or unknown in brackets) or name of public body (e.g. local authority or statutory agency).
- **Area/Length** - given in hectares to two decimal points or metres to one decimal point.
- **Previous Survey Dates** - dates of previous ecological surveys/reports held by EcoRecord.
- **Current Survey Dates** - date(s) of current survey.

Meets LS Criteria - the finding of the assessment: either SINC, SLINC or None.

Type – of Local Site - either Wildlife, Geological or Wildlife & Geological.

Amendment – either New Site, Upgrade (SLINC to SINC), Downgrade (SINC to SLINC), Extension or Whole/Part Deletion.

Citation – A short description of the main ecological, geological and social value (as appropriate) of the site.

Local Site Selection Criteria – here the Birmingham & Black Country Local Site Selection Criteria are listed. Against each criteria* a value (either High, Medium or Low) must be given (written as H, M, L). A short written justification of the value given must also be given.

*If the site has not been assessed for either Ecological or Geological value then the criteria can be removed and replaced with an n/a. All sites must be assessed against the Social criteria.

Site Description - a summary description of the site to include features such as location, historic associations, habitats, land use, topography, social use etc.

Habitats - habitats are listed according to which Phase 1 Habitat [1] category they are classified under (respective names and codes are given in columns one and two).

- Where the habitat meets the description of any UK or European legislation an acronym of the legislation is given in column three (e.g. **EHD** = European Habitats Directive).
- Where the habitat meets the description of any UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat of Principal Importance [2] the name of this is given in column four.
- Where the habitat meets the description of any NERC Act (2006) (Section 41) Habitat of Principal Importance [3] a Y is given in column five.
- Where habitats meet the description of those included on the B&BC list of locally rare habitats (administered by EcoRecord) a Y is given (this is currently in draft only & must therefore be left blank at present).
- Below each habitat category a concise description of this must be given. This should include amongst other information location, physical characteristics, dominant species and species of note.

[1] The Phase 1 Habitat Classification and associated field survey technique provide a standardised system to record semi-natural vegetation. The approach is designed to cover large areas relatively rapidly. It presents the user with a basic assessment of habitat type and potential importance for nature conservation. Each habitat type/feature is identified by way of a brief description of its defining features. It is then allocated a specific name, an alpha-numeric code, and unique mapping colour.

[2] In England there are 56 habitats listed as Habitat Types of Principal Importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Of these, 22 have to date been recorded in Birmingham and the Black Country. As of 2006 BAP Priority Habitats were as those listed under the NERC Act. However, BAP Priority Habitats are subject to more regular review than those listed under the NERC Act and may change prior to amendments to this.

[3] Section 41 (S41) of The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The list has been drawn up in consultation with Natural England, as required by the Act. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the Act 'to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions'.

Fifty-six habitats of principal importance are included on the S41 list. These are all the habitats in England that have been identified as requiring action in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). There are 943 species of principal importance included on the S41 list. These are the species found in England which have been identified as requiring action under the UK BAP. In addition, the Hen Harrier has also been included on the list because without continued conservation action it is unlikely that the Hen Harrier population will increase from its current very low levels in England. In accordance with Section 41(4) the Secretary of State will, in consultation with Natural England, keep this list under review and will publish a revised list if necessary.

Species of Note –

(see *Notes on Species Status Tables for more details on definitions).

Flora - 'notable' flora species that have been recorded at the site are listed:

- **Species** - scientific name.
- **Common Name** - English name.
- **Statutory** – for the those species protected by UK and European legislation an acronym of the legislation is given (e.g. **WCA S8** = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 8 (higher and lower plants with various levels of protection)).
- **BAP P.S.** – Y is entered if the species is included on the current national list of Species of Principal Importance.
- **NERC P.I.** - Y is entered if the species is included on Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) as of Principal Importance [3].
- **RL** – Y is entered if the species is included on Global IUCN or British Red Lists (Red Data Books).
- **Rarity** – a U, R or VR is entered for those flora species classified as being Uncommon, Rare or Very Rare in Birmingham & The Black Country by EcoRecord.
- **Date** - the most recent year the species has been recorded at the site.

Fauna - 'notable' fauna species that have been recorded at the site are listed:

- **Species** - scientific name.
- **Common Name** - English name.
- **Statutory** – for the those species protected by UK and European legislation an acronym of the legislation is given (e.g. **WCA S1** = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 1 (birds protected at all times)).
- **BAP P.S.** – Y is entered if the species is included on the current national list of Species of Principal Importance.
- **NERC P.I.** - Y is entered if the species is included on Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) as of Principal Importance [3].
- **RL** – Y is entered if the species is included on Global IUCN or British Red Lists (Red Data Books).
- **Concern** – for those species included on relevant lists or schedules (e.g. by RSPB, the Mammal Society and Butterfly Conservation) as of concern an acronym of the list/schedule is given (e.g. **A** = RSPB's Amber List).
- **Date** - the most recent year the species has been recorded at the site.

Invasive Species – species listed on Schedule 9 pt. 1 & 2 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended.

- **Species** - scientific name.
- **Common Name** - English name.
- **Location** – grid reference of description.
- **Abundance** – recorded as a DAFOR value (Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional, Rare).

Geology (*this section requires further work*).

- **Drift/Solid Formation**
- **Description/Features of Value** - features of value listed with summary description.

Soils - a brief description of site soils (including attributes such as pH).

Comparison with Previous Survey(s) Results - a description of any physical, ecological, geological or social changes that have occurred on the site since the last known survey.

Public Access & Site Usage - information on public accessibility and current usage of the site.

- **Land Use** – e.g. Pasture, Nature Reserve, Garden, Public Open Space, Golf Course, Brownfield etc.
- **Access Level** - either Unrestricted, Restricted or None.
- **Access Type(s)** - e.g. Private, Unofficial, Local Nature Reserve, Public Footpath Only etc.

Summary of Assessment – a brief description/conclusion of the assessment with reference to recommendations for Local Site status and boundary changes etc.

Further Survey & Outline Management Recommendations - listed recommendations for appropriate further survey work (e.g. for a recorded or potential protected species) and management with brief description.

Source(s) - the source of the information (habitats, species & geology) entered into the assessment report (most usually this will be the EcoRecord database, ecological/geological survey reports or GIS layers – for example from the British Geological Society).

Google Earth Link – a .kmz (see Google Earth help section for details) link that opens Google Earth and zooms to the site location (note this will only work in MS Word files on a computer with Google Earth installed).

***Notes on Species Status Tables** - definitions of the abbreviations used in the Flora and Fauna tables.

Habitats/Species Of Note Tables – Attribute Definitions

Statutory (Protected) -

EHD = EU Habitats Directive (plus where relevant the Annexe II or IV). **PBA** = Protection of Badgers Act 1992. **WCA S1** = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 1 (birds protected at all times). **WCA S5** = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 5 (animals with various levels of protection). **WCA S8** = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 8 (higher and lower plants with various levels of protection).

BAP – Habitats/Species included on current UK BAP list of Priority Habitats/Species.

NERC P.I. - Habitats/Species included on current list of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).

RL - Species included on Global IUCN & British Red Lists (Red Data Books).

Rarity (Habitats) - Birmingham & Black Country - Habitats included on the B&BC list of locally rare habitats (administered by EcoRecord).

Rarity (Flora Species) - Birmingham & Black Country - (based on data held and managed by EcoRecord).

VR = Very Rare - a species present in less than 1.0% of 1Km squares, tetrads, or 5Km squares in B&BC.

R = Rare - a species present in 1.0% - 4.3% of 1Km squares, tetrads, or 5Km squares in B&BC.

U = Uncommon - a species present in 4.3% - 12% of 1Km squares, tetrads or 5Km squares in B&BC.

Concern (Fauna Species Of Conservation Concern) -

Birds: **R** = Red List - species that are Globally Threatened according to the International Union for Nature Conservation criteria; those whose population or range has declined rapidly in recent years; and those that have declined historically and not shown a substantial recent recovery. **A** = Amber List - species with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe; those whose population or range has declined moderately in recent years; those whose population has declined historically but made a substantial recent recovery; rare breeders; and those with internationally important or localised populations.

Mammals: **ND** = National Decline and **ED** = England Decline as measured by the Mammal Societies Table of Recent Population Changes in the Native Species of Land Mammals.

Invertebrates: **RD** = Regional Decline identified in Butterfly Conservation West Midlands Regional Action Plan.

Date - The most recent date the species has been recorded.