

Fosse Meadows Nature Area Management Plan 2014 – 2019

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1.0 Where are we now?

1.1 Introduction

This document is the five year Management Plan for the Fosse Meadows Nature Area and has been produced by the Green Infrastructure Team of Leicestershire County Council on behalf of Blaby District Council. This Management Plan has been developed to ensure that the future vision for the site is clearly set out and to ensure that the Fosse Meadows Nature Area is managed effectively to work towards this vision.

This Management Plan has been produced based upon the guidelines of 'A Guide to Producing Park and Green Space Management Plans' published by CABI Space (2004) and informed by a Quality Audit carried out in July 2013 (See Appendix 2).

This Management Plan follows on from and expands the Management Plan 2003-2008 for the Fosse Meadows Nature Area.

1.2 Policy context

The key policy document relevant to this Management Plan is the **Blaby District Green Space Strategy 2012**

1.2.1 The Strategy's vision is:

To provide green spaces that make a positive contribution to the quality and diversity of the local environment and to the health and well-being of our residents. Our green spaces can be used, valued, and enjoyed by everyone.

1.2.2 The purpose of the Strategy is to:

- Provide a shared vision for the future and ensure the linkages are evident
- Provide a framework for parish/town councils and community groups
- Help to identify improvements required and to set priorities
- Help make the case for funding opportunities and planning obligations
- Be responsive to the changing financial, planning and policy environment
- Understand and manage public expectations in relation to green space issues
- Improve access and usage

1.2.3. Within the Strategy Blaby District Council identifies nine sites of strategic importance:

- **Fosse Meadows (Sharnford)**
- Bouskell Park (Blaby)
- Glen Parva Nature Reserve (Glen Parva)
- Crow Mills Way (South Wigston)

- Osiers Nature Reserve (Braunstone)
- Jubilee Park (Enderby)
- Whetstone Way (Whetstone Way)
- Whistle Way (Narborough/Enderby)
- Countesthorpe Country Park (Countesthorpe)

1.2.4. This Management Plan has also been influenced by the following documents:

Blaby District PPG17 Study (June 2009)

A district-wide community survey was carried out as part of this open space, sport and recreation audit and assessment. In terms of the most important features of open space the 280 respondents identified clean, litter and graffiti-free environments and freedom from noise and antisocial behaviour as most important. Safety and security were next most important, followed by the control of dogs and dog fouling. The most important facilities were identified as bins/dog bins, followed by seats and trees.

The study identified a lack of signage and information within parks and recreation grounds generally within the district. It recommended the development of a house style for signage to facilitate a consistent quality of provision.

The study also recommended the preparation of a green infrastructure plan, outlining a clear network of footpaths and green corridors, and identified a need to improve information about the footpath and bridleway network, particularly on the ground signage showing routes and links.

Space for Wildlife - the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan (LLRBAP) 2010-2015 notes the lack of high quality nationally important habitats in Leicestershire and Rutland generally. Whilst it recognises the importance of such sites, it also focuses on the value of local habitat creation schemes. One of its aims are, 'to increase the area of land managed in a wildlife friendly way in Leicestershire and Rutland.'

It also acknowledges the benefits of access to natural green space to people's health and well-being. Alongside this are aims to increase public understanding of wildlife issues and to increase people's participation in wildlife conservation and recording.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 40 of this Act relates to the 'Duty to conserve biodiversity'. Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. In complying with this, a Minister of the Crown, government department or the National Assembly for Wales must in particular have regard to the United Nations Environmental Programme Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992. Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

1.3. Site description

1.3.1. Location and area

The site is located on the South edge of Sharnford in South Leicestershire. The central grid reference for the site is SP 485 912. A Site Location Plan is given in Appendix 1.

The site covers 57.0 ha (142 acres).

The site lies within the Soar Meadows character area, as identified by the Blaby District Landscape Character Assessment (2008).

1.3.2. Designations

There are currently no designations covering this site.

1.3.3. Ownership

The site is owned by Blaby District Council.

1.3.4. General site

The main landscape features are shown in the Masterplan in Appendix 1

History

Fosse Meadows was once part of a commercial farm up until it was purchased by Blaby District Council in 1987, on the understanding it was used by the public for recreation purposes. A design for the site was drawn up to give a diverse site and to date over 49,000 trees have been planted in various woodlands, ponds and lakes created, footpaths constructed and a car park laid out.

Landscape

The site is in a rural location and is bordered on the east by the Old Fosse Way (Roman Road) and by a brook which feeds into the River Soar. The rest of the site is bordered by agricultural land, both arable and pastoral. The site slopes down from the west and these lower areas in the east are generally wetter in character. To the south east of the site is a lake which was created in 2002 making use of a naturally wet area. A scrape was constructed at the same time adjacent to the lake. The lake area is fenced off and is a no-go area for people and dogs.

1.3.5. Access and linkages

The site is not easily accessed by public transport and due to its rural location most visitors arrive by car. The rural location is a barrier to some using the site, some finding it difficult to travel to without a car and others not feeling comfortable with the apparent isolation of the site.

The site has a main car park off Fosse Way which is constructed of compacted stone, edged with sleepers, grass and bollards. Although the main car park is closed at dusk the site remains open to pedestrians at all times. There is a grassed area in the middle of the car park acting as a

roundabout to keep traffic moving. The car park has current capacity for 30 vehicles and 3 Bicycle racks. The car park contains a disabled events toilet which is on long term lease for the public to use.

From the car park two kissing gates fitted with RADAR locks allow disabled access when required and also prevent access for motorbikes and horses. A hard surfaced path leads from the car park into the picnic area and into the middle of the site where it links into informal mown paths. The path in the picnic area is susceptible to flooding, which in turn causes damage and excessive mud. An overflow car park provides an additional 30 spaces.

There are additional pedestrian access gates at the north-west corner of the site from an informal path through pastureland from nearby Sharnford village. There is also informal access on the eastern boundary of the site from Fosse Way.

Public rights of way, (See Public Rights of Way Plan in Appendix 1) lead to and cross the site, the Leicestershire Round being one of them. Footpaths are accessed by a wooden stile, a wooden kissing gate and a footbridge. The Leicestershire Round leads from the village of Sharnford close to a bus stop to Fosse Meadows.

There is a permissive bridle route marked by white topped posts which runs through part of the site. An informal horse box car park linked to the bridle route, is located in the area of hard standing towards the southern edge of the site. This car park is permanently locked and users need to rent a key from the Council at a small charge, to use it.

1.3.6. Facilities, uses and activities

Natural Play Trail

An informal natural play trail was installed in 2010 which provides low level timber equipment within a bark surfaced area

Orienteering

Fosse Meadows has a permanent orienteering course which was originally designed by the Leicestershire Orienteering Club. The orienteering posts are maintained by the club

Site Furniture (See Site Furniture Plan in Appendix 1)

There are 4No litter bins and 2No dog waste bins, 6No interpretation boards, 10No Picture posts, 5No Picnic benches, 4No seats, 3No benches and 4No orienteering posts located within the site.

Bird Hide (See Masterplan in Appendix 1)

There is a brick bird hide on the west side of the lake which can be reached by a hard surfaced path from the picnic area. Sharnford Primary School painted the mural on the hide for an arts project regarding what can be seen at Fosse Meadows. From the hide a brick sand martin nesting wall can be seen on the edge of the lake. This was erected in 2006 in response to sand martins being seen over the lake and nesting elsewhere locally. Sand martins are a target species in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Bio-diversity Action Plan. The construction was part funded by the Veolia Environmental Trust.

Construction for a new bird hide started in January 2014 and is being erected in response to feedback from users and after consultation with the LROS. The funding for this project has been sought by the Friends of Fosse Meadows group and their successful applications to the Stepping Stones Project Connecting People and Wildlife Grant, Community Forum Budget and Blaby District Council.

Waymarking

There are two way marked paths within the site but many of the posts are missing and it is difficult to follow.

1.3.7. Stakeholders and user groups

a) General

The majority of the details within this section have been formulated from observations whilst on the site and conversations with site users. However there have been 2 small surveys conducted during the summer of 2009 and autumn 2013 in the form of a feedback questionnaire of users on site.

In 2009, 61 surveys were returned and there was a clear split between the number of people surveyed who were visiting the site from within Blaby District and those visiting from outside the district as the site is very close the border of Northamptonshire and is well signposted on the B4114 to help visitors locate the car park for the site.

In 2013 a user survey was undertaken over a weekend in October by the Green Space Engagement Officer. Out of the total 49 surveys returned, a clear majority lived outside of the Parish of Sharnford and were visiting Fosse Meadows on those days, although it is unclear if they lived within the District of Blaby. The majority 63% of respondents had travelled by car and the remaining 37% had walked, making use of the good network of footpaths in the area.

As with the 2009 survey those visiting in 2013 were mainly using the site for dog walking, 71%, with 40% saying their main reason for visiting the site is to exercise and 32% to relax. Watching wildlife and spending time with children both came out as popular choices with 22%.

The main users of the site are dog walkers and walkers. There is a wide range of visitors from families with young children to people of retirement age. Anecdotal evidence shows that there are a good number of retired people on their own or in small groups using the site during the day and younger adults on their own using the site at the beginning and the end of the day. Dog walkers tend to visit the site at the same time each visit. The weekend sees an increase in families and there are more families in the school holidays. The families tend to use the picnic area but also walk the rest of the site. Visitors do tend to use the whole site. Some walk the perimeter and some walk in and out of the wooded areas.

Both surveys showed that people stay for longer than 30minutes or even over an hour, this could be a reflection of the location of the site and the fact that the site is quite large and so lends itself to longer walks as well as the bird hides allowing visitors the opportunity to spend time watching

birds and other wildlife from these viewpoints

The template used for the 2013 survey and the results tally of the 2013 survey are both shown in Appendix 3

Other stakeholders and users include the following:

b) Ornithological group

Bird watching is a popular activity on this site and links have been made with the Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society, The site will benefit from 2 permanent bird hides from early 2014.

c) Play

The natural play trail enhances the play value of the site, encourages visitors to venture deeper into the site and encourages families to stay longer. The facility has been designed as natural play to help children who visit the site to use their imagination and feel closer to nature.

Blaby District Council undertakes a thorough inspection regime of all play equipment which comprises of weekly and six monthly inspections. In addition, the Council commission an annual inspection from an independent provider such as ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents).

d) Orienteering club

Leicestershire Orienteering Club hold at least 2 events in Fosse Meadows each year. Maps are available from Blaby District Council or from the club's website:

www.leioc.org.uk

e) Schools

Fosse Meadows is a site included in the Council's guided walks programme. Previous walks have included dawn chorus walk, bat walk, evensong walk. During the school holidays several family countryside walks have been organised to encourage families with young children (under 12s) to all come along and learn about the nature of Fosse Meadows. A very successful pilot Forest Schools Project was carried out at Fosse Meadows with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils from Sharnford Primary School in 2012/13. The project was funded by Blaby DC and led by a Forest School's qualified company. Blaby District Council is currently liaising with Sharnford Primary School and is hoping to run one Forest Schools event per year.

f) Hinckley Running Club

Fosse Meadows provides the venue for an annual cross country event organised by Hinckley Running Club.

g) Events held once a year

- Love Parks Week

Love Parks day is celebrated in line with the national Love Parks Week which has a simple aim to encourage people to visit, enjoy and take pride in their local parks and green spaces. The annual

event held during summer is aimed at families and attracts around 300 people each year. There are lots of activities for all to enjoy.

- Halloween Spooktacular

The annual Halloween Spooktacular is family event held at Halloween. There are activities for all of the family including spooky story walks, dance and games; the event attracts around 300 of the districts residents each year

h) Tenant Farmer

A tenant farmer rents four fields for grazing and hay making. This agreement is ongoing and due for renewal in 2014.

1.3.8. Habitats and Connectivity

Woodlands (See Woodland Plan in Appendix 1)

Extensive woodland planting covers approximately 23.7 hectares, over 41% of the site. This valuable habitat comprises the following woodland types:

- 9.1ha Native Woodland, planted in 1988 - species including ash, field maple, oak, wild cherry, silver birch, small leaved lime, rowan, crab apple, hazel and juniper.
- 10.46ha Mixed Woodland, planted in 1996 - species including hybrid poplar, ash, field maple, oak, wild cherry, silver birch and hazel.
- 3.13ha Arboretum, planted in 1999 - (See Arboretum Plan in Appendix 1) which includes a mix of conifer and broadleaved trees demonstrating forest types from Europe and North America. (See Arboretum Species List in Appendix 5).
- 1.04ha Mixed Broadleaved and Conifer Woodland, planted in 1980.

Grassland (See Masterplan in Appendix 1)

There are four fields to the west of the site which are old hay meadows and are currently rented under a Farm Business Tenancy by a local farmer and managed in accordance with the Countryside Stewardship Agreement, (Higher Level Stewardship Scheme). This agreement is scheduled to run for a further 10 years.

The field farthest north-west is locally known as Long or North Meadow and it is possible to see the old stream meanders within this field. There are 3 large open areas of grassland which are to be managed as hay meadows. It may be difficult to graze these meadows without undertaking stock proof fencing around the site.

Hedgerows (See Hedgerows Plan in Appendix 1)

There are many hedges across the site, which provide good connectivity within the site and with the surrounding countryside for wildlife movement. Many of the hedges are flailed, some have been layered and some have had no management since planting, which has led to the provision of tall hedges/linear woods which in themselves are a good habitat for bats and insect feeding birds. The RSPB recommend flailing hedges should only take place at biannual intervals and where possible hedges should be left to form a linear wood, which could be coppiced at 20 year intervals to

allow rejuvenation of the hedge.

Lakes and ponds (See Masterplan in Appendix 1)

The lakes, ponds and islands provide valuable and diverse habitats for the wide range of species that are present. Limited information has been gathered regarding species, including birds, bird song, fish, frog and toad spawn and invertebrates is held by Blaby District Council and Leicestershire Environmental Records Office. Existing records require updating.

In order to maintain the habitat quality LROS have advised that scrub clearance on the islands and pond restoration is carried out. It has been recognised that a full pond survey needs to be carried out for water quality and species inventory in 2014-15 and this will then help plan out restoration activities for the ponds, lakes and islands.

1.3.9. Environmental issues

Drainage/water quality

In heavy rainfall water levels have risen in the lake and perimeter ditches causing localised flooding and path damage. The Environment Agency is scheduled to visit the site in 2014 to advise on actions with regards to drainage and also to assess water quality.

Dog related Issues

Although dog walkers are one of the main users of the site, irresponsible dog owners have an adverse effect on Fosse Meadows by allowing dog fouling, by not keeping their dogs on leads around play areas and by allowing their dogs in the water bodies which disturbs wildlife, especially during the spawning and nesting season. Blaby District Council is trying to employ a dedicated Dog Warden to influence and educate users.

Wildlife Control

Continue to monitor deer and grey squirrel damage and take control measures should damage to trees become excessive.

1.3.10 Current site management and resources

Blaby District Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of Fosse Meadows.

Budget

Blaby District Council has a budget of £66k allocated across nine strategic green space sites. Expenditure on Fosse Meadows for the last year is as follows:

Fosse Meadows	
	£23,375.29
	£2,800

Blaby District Council has no byelaws covering the site.

a) Routine site management comprises the following actions:

- Grass cutting to 1.50m either side of paths - up to 15no cuts between March and October, depending on weather conditions, (See Mowing Patterns Plan in Appendix 1)
- Autumn/winter cutting of grass on some banks with side arm flail and Grillo climber – on an ad hoc basis
- Pond maintenance works on an ad hoc basis and has mainly been carried out by volunteers. There has been little maintenance to date and the aspiration is to have a programme of maintenance and care for the ponds, lakes and islands.
- Litter and dog waste bins emptied twice weekly
- condition of boundaries and entrances monitored on a casual basis and issues responded to as they arise
- Play area – regular inspections and issues responded to as they arise
- Car park and stone surfaced paths monitored on a casual basis and issues responded to as they arise
- Notifiable weed control
- Hedgerow management (See Hedgerows Plan in Appendix 1)
- **NOTE:** The management of the extensive woodland areas within the Fosse Meadows Nature Area is covered by a separate Woodland Management Plan which is under preparation. This will include a detailed schedule of woodland management requirements. It is understood that a felling licence would need to be obtained from the Forestry Commission if the amount of timber being removed is over 5 m³ per quarter.

A weekly whole site health and safety inspection is carried out at Fosse Meadows to identify any existing or potential hazards which need addressing. Blaby District Council is in the process of developing a checklist to record hazards and to improve the effectiveness of the weekly inspections.

There is a network of departments involved in the management of the Fosse Meadows site and it has been recognised that in going forward with this management plan an internal working group is to be established with the following key Managers having an involvement in the working group or sending a relevant representative.

- Routine site management works including play areas are the responsibility of the Waste Operations Manager
- Tree works and asset management such as bridges is the responsibility of the Asset Manager
- Development projects and volunteering is the responsibility of the Health & Leisure Services Manager
- Health & safety matters is the responsibility of the Corporate Health & Safety Manager

More complex or specialist works may be carried out by external contractors working under the supervision of the relevant Manager depending on the nature of the works.

b) Specialist site management comprises the following;

- Tree surveys (re-inspection and update) of individual trees are undertaken every three to four years by the Leicestershire County Council Forestry and Arboriculture Group. The survey captures data that identifies the location/positioning, common name, height, spread, age class, general condition along with, where appropriate any recommendations for individual trees. Work identified as a result of the survey is then prioritised into categories dependant on the nature and risk of the work required. The survey does not take account of mature hedges or woodlands as these areas are managed and maintained in accordance with the site specific Management Plan.
- A tenant farmer is responsible for maintaining the four rented fields. The maintenance is set out in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme relating to the four fields and is agreed in the Farm Business Tenancy Agreement signed by both parties. As this management plan is being drawn up negotiations are taking place for the farmer to mow and bale the other meadow areas on the site at the end of the summer every year. The bales will be utilised by the farmer on the rest of his land.

c) Volunteer Work.

There is a strong group of Volunteer Rangers at Fosse Meadows. They carry out a variety of tasks depending on their ability and these include walking the site and monitoring the infrastructure, surveying wildlife, leading guided walks and carrying out small maintenance tasks on the infrastructure of the site such as river bank repairs, cleaning out ditches and coppicing. There is a storage cabin in the car park for tools and other items for the volunteer rangers to use.

The volunteer rangers report back to the Green Space Engagement Officer using a site monitoring form, email or phone messages. They log their individual time spent on site and have the opportunity to report work needed to be carried out and suggest projects for the site. Volunteers also report vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Working all year round the Green Space Engagement Officer runs conservation volunteer days. These days are open to all comers and not just volunteer rangers and the work carried out includes a range of conservation works.

In addition to the volunteer rangers, the Friends of Fosse Meadows is a constituted group who meet every three months to plan proposed work within Fosse Meadows. The group primarily source funding, liaise with the volunteers and help support the work of Blaby District Council.

d) Surveys

There used to be several different types of surveys carried out on Fosse Meadows albeit on an ad hoc basis depending on officer time and

resources, although the Grounds Maintenance Team does carry out a dedicated site inspection every month to monitor the condition, maintenance and use of the site.

In order to better understand the functioning of the site it is important to conduct ecological surveys. This has been programmed into the Action Plan and will be achieved through a variety of methods: using volunteers, paid ecologists and community events such as Bioblitz.

e) Photographic Record

Although there is no formal photographic record of the site, informal photographic records are held with the landowning authorities and it is the intention through the Action Plan to formalise this with fixed point photography at set intervals.

1.3.11 Marketing

Blaby District Council has produced a 'Fosse Meadows' leaflet and also mentions the site in a general Blaby District Council leaflet 'Visit your local Countryside' which is due to be revised in early 2014.

The site is listed on Blaby District Council's website as one of nine strategic sites within the district - <http://www.blaby.gov.uk/resident/leisure-and-parks/countryside-areas>

There is a link on the web page to the leaflets above.

The site also appears on the Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society Website.

The site also appears on the Orienteering Society website

The site also appears on the Hinckley Running Club website
<http://www.hinckleyrunningclub.com/>

Volunteer Rangers promote the site as part of their volunteering duties.

The site is signposted from the B4114, Coventry Road with brown Tourism signs and the signs lead you to the main car park on Fosse Way.

1.3.12 Issues and challenges summary

The issues and challenges facing the site are covered by the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis in the next section.

2.0 Where do we want to get to?

2.1 Vision for Fosse Meadows Nature Area

Fosse Meadows Nature Area will be managed to provide an attractive and varied nature area for the enjoyment of all.

2.2. Assessment and analysis

This section consists of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis covering the three main aspects of site management - Volunteering and Community Involvement, Biodiversity and Landscape, and Access and Interpretation.

2.2.1 Volunteering and Community Involvement SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active Volunteer Rangers and Friends of Group• High visitor numbers• Diverse usage of site• Positive sense of community and place• Valued by public• Green Space Engagement Officer• Positive community activity on site e.g. 'Love parks' events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of connection to wider community facilities• Only one part time dedicated member of staff who also has responsibilities for volunteering across other sites• Lack of direction for Volunteer group• Increased dog mess on site can be concern to volunteers working on the site
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scope to develop volunteer working and wardening further• Scope to develop the community involvement in the management of the site further• Educational opportunities for all• Establish a higher profile of dog wardens to encourage owners to pick up dog mess• Green Flag application	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial cuts would limit support available for volunteering and community involvement• Anti social behaviour• Users lack of knowledge of land management techniques• Political change

2.2.2 Biodiversity and Landscape SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good mix of habitats • Habitats large enough to sustain substantial wildlife habitats • Lack of intensive site management has resulted in plant species diversity • Positively connects with the wider green networks • Generally flat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor balance between habitat protection and access • Little evidence of recycling • Poor viewing facilities for nature area • Dogs disturb wildlife especially during the nesting or frog and toad spawning season • There has been a lack of sufficient monitoring of the woodlands which has led to the significant bark damage by grey squirrels
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to monitor and record development of brook vegetation following watercourse realignment • Scope to develop volunteer biological recording • Scope to develop volunteer site management work • Improve viewing facilities/ To establish a new bird hide • Fence off vulnerable habitats • Working with neighbouring landowners to create wildlife corridors and connectivity to other sites • Develop a detailed woodland management plan for the woodland blocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial cuts would limit support available for volunteering and funding for site management works • Invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed need to be controlled • Lack of woodland thinning will result in poorly formed trees which will affect public safety and consequently access to the site. • Squirrel damage – in particular within mixed woodland areas which could affect public access • Scrub encroachment and silting up of open water • Diseases such as ash dieback (<i>Chalara fraxinea</i>) • Climate change • Seasonal flooding

2.2.3 Access and Interpretation SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free access for visitors to the whole site • Walking distance for local residents • Footpaths and bridges in good condition • Provision of valuable bridle route to compensate for lack elsewhere in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of site information and interpretation • Existing signage is old and dated • Main entrance needs more emphasis • Narrow access road to car park • Other entrances lack interpretation • Lack of public transport to the site • Small car park • Lack of hard surfaced paths • Remote location • Access not available to all • Lack of site based staff • Trim trail in need of maintenance
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New map-based signage showing pedestrian linkages could encourage greater use • Site could be better promoted through Blaby DC website • Site could be promoted via adjoining hotel and business park • Greater involvement of schools might lead to more out of school visits • Improve car park and access • Revenue increase by car park charging • Increase length of surfaced paths • Production of new leaflets • Investigate commercial opportunities e.g. development of a café/ visitor centre • Extend trim trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial cuts would limit funding available to pursue identified opportunities • Anti social behaviour damaging on site interpretation • Seasonal flooding

2.3 Aims and objectives

Aims

To ensure that Fosse Meadows Nature Area provides a wide range of quality habitats that can be enjoyed and well-used by all.

Objectives

- 1.** Maintain and enhance the diversity and health of existing habitats
- 2.** Develop and implement a habitat monitoring programme for the site to inform future management for biodiversity. See Appendix 6 for a comprehensive outline of recommended biodiversity surveys and report as supplied by Leicestershire County Council Ecological Records Service.
- 3.** Maintain and improve visitor infrastructure
- 4.** Develop and increase the number of learning and awareness raising opportunities on the site.
- 5.** Improve local promotion of the site
- 6.** Develop the range of opportunities for training and development for volunteers
- 7.** Monitor and Review site development

3.0 How will we get there?

Action Plan

3.1 Objective 1 – Maintain and enhance the diversity and health of existing habitats

Action number	Action	Timing	Year	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding stream	Completion date	Measurable standard
3.1.1	Carry out Woodland management tasks in accordance with Woodland Management Plan once it has been finalised.	All year round	1 onwards	Green Space Engagement Officer		Grounds budget	On-going	Woodland management tasks are completed as per the woodland management plan.
3.1.2	Clear weed and willow scrub periodically around water and water courses to ensure that they do not encroach on open water habitat – care must be taken not to damage areas of marginal vegetation.	September-November	2014 and then yearly as required	Waste Services Manager				Weeds and willow scrub is kept under control

3.1.3	Carry out management to the bird islands within the main lake and other ponds. (See Masterplan in Appendix 1)	Sept/October	2014 and then yearly as required	Waste Services Manager/ Green Space Engagement Officer/				Bird islands are managed to sustain bird populations
3.1.4	Manage hedges so as to maximise biodiversity. Leave some hedgerows as linear woods and carry out selective coppicing, lay some hedges to improve visibility, biodiversity and hedge structure as per Hedgerow Management Plan once it has been finalised.	November-end January	3 year rotation	Waste Services Manager/ Green Space Engagement Officer/	£4,000 (estimate based on hedge cutting figure for 2012-13)			Hedge trimming rotational cycle is recorded and works maintained.
3.1.5	Mow open grassland areas and allow arisings to set seed on site then remove to encourage species diversity, (See Mowing Patterns Plan in Appendix 1).	Late July/August	Yearly	Waste Services Manager				Managed in line with required action

3.1.6	Mow meadow grass paths 3-4m width and open grassland areas (See Mowing Patterns Plan in Appendix 1).	Between March and October Every two weeks	yearly	Waste Services Manager	£4,435	Grounds maintenance		Managed in line with required action
3.1.7	Monitor all habitats for invasive species and plant diseases, and carry out control when required	Ongoing monitoring of Invasive species in Ponds remove between March-May or September-November	As required	Waste Services Manager				Record site visit inspections and Manage in line with required action
3.1.8	Resource efficiency – improve recycling of materials around the site, especially wood based materials such as coppiced material from woodland management. Chip wood and use on site	Ongoing	ongoing	Waste Services Manager/ Green space Engagement Officer				Managed in line with required action and record levels of recycling on site.

Development Actions								
3.1.9	Prepare a detailed woodland management plan for the woodland blocks and arboretum	By Spring 2014		Green space Engagement Officer/Health and Recreation Manager				Woodland management plan has been produced and is being used to inform actions.
3.1.10	Prepare a detailed hedgerow management plan for the whole site	By Autumn 2014		Green space Engagement Officer/Health and Recreation Manager				Hedgerow Management Plan has been produced and is being used to inform the management of the hedges.
3.1.11	Environment Agency visit to assess water quality throughout the site and carry out actions as necessary		Visit By spring 2014. As required	Waste Services Manager/ Health & Leisure Services Manager				Visit completed and site managed in line with required actions
3.1.12	Develop a campaign for educating responsible dog owners	By summer	2014	Green space Engagement Officer				At the next user survey there is a reduction in percentage of users unhappy with the levels of dog fouling on the site.

3.2 Objective 2 – Develop and implement a habitat monitoring programme for the site to inform future management for biodiversity

Action number	Action	Specific Date	Year	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding stream	Completion date	Measurable standard
3.2.1	Carry out baseline surveys of flora and fauna	All year round	2014	Green Space Engagement Officer		Grounds budget	On-going	Survey completed
3.2.2	Review site management practices in the light of baseline ecological information	All year round	2014	Waste Services Manager				Results from survey used to influence future management
3.2.3	Organise site-based wildlife recording events (e.g. RSPB Big Garden Bird watch recording event) and co-ordinate ongoing species recording by volunteers	As appropriate for the species	2014 and yearly programme of surveys	Green Space Engagement Officer				Events delivered and records maintained and used in review of the action plan
3.2.4	Carry out an annual fixed point photographic survey to monitor habitat development/change	Spring 2014, Summer 2014, Autumn 2014 and Winter 2014-15	Yearly ongoing programme	Green Space Engagement Officer				Survey carried out and records maintained and used in review of the action plan

3.2.5	Carry out user surveys to gain feedback on their opinions of the site	Between May and August	2014 and then every 2 years	Green Space Engagement Officer				Survey undertaken and results used in review of the action plan
3.2.6	Implement Woodland Management Plan	See woodland management plan for timings	See woodland management plan for details	Green Space Engagement Officer				Actions implemented
3.2.7	Carry out pond specific surveys See Details of Recommended Surveys in Appendix 6	Between February and November	Yearly	Green Space Engagement Officer				Survey completed and results used in review of the action plan
3.2.8	Involve local schools with survey work	Ongoing	2014 and then yearly programme	Green Space Engagement Officer				Number of school involved recorded and records kept

3.3 Objective 3 – Maintain and improve visitor infrastructure

Action number	Action	Specific Date	Year	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding stream	Completion date	Measurable standard
Management Actions								
3.3.1	Monitor site weekly, record findings and action maintenance works promptly when required	All year round	2014	Waste Services Manager		Grounds budget	On-going	Records kept and managed in line with required actions
3.3.2	Empty litter and dog waste bins twice weekly as per existing maintenance schedule. Replace bins if necessary. (See Site Furniture Plan in Appendix 1)	All year round	Ongoing	Waste Services Manager	£1,095	Grounds Maintenance	ongoing	The site is kept litter free and bins areas are clean and tidy.
3.3.3	Carry out grass cutting to surfaces footpath edges and open grassland areas around the car parks and picnic area as per existing schedule (See in Appendix 1)	Between March and October	Yearly	Waste Services Manager	£3,399	Grounds Maintenance		Managed in line with required actions

3.3.4.	Carry out safety checks for play equipment (ROSPA guidelines) action maintenance works promptly when required	Weekly checks all year round		Waste Services Manager	£1,326	Grounds Maintenance	ongoing	Checks carried out and records are kept and actions are taken in line with requirements.
3.3.5	Maintenance and repair to play equipment, fences, gates and benches as required	Ongoing	Ongoing	Waste Services Manager	£4,000	Grounds Maintenance		Repairs are carried out as quickly as possible
3.3.6	Carry out tree safety checks		Annual walk by, 3 yearly intervals carried out by professional	Waste Services Manager				Checks carried out and records are kept and actions are taken in line with requirements.
3.3.7	Monitor all other anti social behaviour and work in partnership to reduce it	Ongoing	Ongoing	Green Space Engagement Officer / Waste Services Manager				User survey reveals reduction in anti social behaviour

Development Actions								
3.3.8	Explore the need for new picnic tables and seating around the site. Maintain consistency of style throughout site (See Site Furniture Plan in Appendix 1).	March	2014	Green Space Engagement Officer			End April 2014	Establish a need for new picnic tables and seating and action as required.
3.3.9	Install a new bird hide. Working in partnership with the Volunteer group and the Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological group.	March	2014	Health & Leisure Services Manager				New bird hide is installed.
3.3.10	Enhance all the entrances to the site and make more inviting and welcoming to visitors especially on entrances not linked to the main car park. For instance signage, planting and general maintenance of these areas and Provide new map-		2014 and yearly as required	Green Space Engagement Officer				User survey shows improvement in visitors feeling welcome to the site and their experience and ease of moving around the site is enhanced.

	based signs at all access points (See Masterplan in Appendix 1).							
3.3.11	Renew, remove, replace or add new as necessary, all small interpretation boards around the site, (See Site Furniture Plan in Appendix 1).	All year round	2014 and yearly as required	Green Space Engagement Officer				Managed in line with required actions.
3.3.12	Replace all bridle route markers, (See Site Furniture Plan in Appendix 1).	All year round	2014 and then as required	Green Space Engagement Officer				Managed in line with required actions.
3.3.13	Improve all footpath signage. Provide maps around the site to improve visitor experience.	All year round	2014	Green Space Engagement Officer				Managed in line with required actions.
3.3.14	In partnership with Leicestershire Orienteering Club, renew, remove, replace or add new as necessary, all orienteering markers	All year round	2014	Green Space Engagement Officer				Managed in line with required actions.

	around the site, (See Site Furniture Plan in Appendix 1).							
3.3.15	Investigate extending hard surfaced path to create a circular surfaced route around the site (See Masterplan in Appendix 1)		2014-15	Green Space Engagement Officer				Investigation completed and actions carried out as required.
3.3.16	Investigate commercial opportunities e.g. development of a café/ visitor centre with permanent toilet facilities. Improve overflow car park and access, (See Masterplan in Appendix 1).		2014-15	Health & Leisure Services Manager				Investigation completed and actions carried out as required
3.3.17	Extend trim trail and natural play opportunities	Ongoing	Ongoing	Green Space Engagement Officer				Trim trail extended and natural play opportunities enhanced.

3.4 Objective 4 – Explore the opportunities for and increase the range of learning opportunities provided by the site.

Action number	Action	Specific Date	Year	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding stream	Completion date	Measurable standard
3.4.1	Investigate opportunities for a Forest Schools Programme and school visits to the site	March	2014	Green Space Engagement Officer			End April 2014	Investigation completed and actions carried out as required
3.4.2	Develop a programme of Wildlife talks and walks around the site	March to October	2014	Green Space Engagement Officer				Number of events
3.4.3	Raise awareness of the opportunities for bird watching	Ongoing	2014 onwards	Green Space Engagement Officer				User Survey carried out. Record number of activities and events.
3.4.4	Develop family countryside activities programme	Ongoing	2014 onwards	Green Space Engagement Officer				Programme established and number of activities recorded

3.5 Objective 5 – Improve local promotion of the site

Action number	Action	Specific Date	Year	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding stream	Completion date	Measurable standard
3.5.1	Ensure that notice boards are kept up to date – include updates on seasonal changes, species, volunteering, local wildlife related events	March	2014	Green Space Engagement Officer			End April 2014	Manage in line with required action
3.5.2	Produce a map-based site leaflet showing links to local routes, and distribute locally, including to local residents, local businesses, etc this should also be available on the web site for potential visitors to download	By Spring	2014	Green Space Engagement Officer				Leaflet produced and distributed widely
3.5.3	Improve site information available on BDC website	By Spring	2014	Health & Leisure Services Manager				Web site updated and user survey reveals increase in ease of access to information.

3.6 Objective 6 – Develop the range of opportunities for training and development for volunteers

Action number	Action	Specific Date	Year	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding stream	Completion date	Measurable standard
3.6.1	Offer Volunteer Rangers training opportunities in countryside management skills appropriate for the tasks they will carry out on site.	ongoing	Yearly	Green Space Engagement Officer			End April 2014	Number of training opportunities has increased
3.6.2	Develop a programme of varied volunteer tasks	Ongoing	Yearly	Green Space Engagement Officer				Feedback from Volunteers shows that they are satisfied with variety of tasks on offer
3.6.3	Liaise with local Tree Warden and Heritage Warden to ascertain local interest and opportunities	Ongoing	Yearly	Green Space Engagement Officer				Feedback from local tree wardens and heritage wardens
3.6.4	Recruit more Volunteer Rangers	Ongoing	Yearly	Green Space Engagement Officer				Number of volunteer rangers has increased.

7. Monitor and Review site development

Action number	Action	Specific Date	Year	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding stream	Completion date	Measurable standard
3.7.1	Develop a Hazard Spotting Health and Safety checklist	Ongoing	Yearly	Health and Safety Manager				Checklist completed and being used.
3.7.2	Produce a photographic record of Fosse Meadows Nature Area to be used as a monitoring tool. Photographs should be taken at fixed points and at a minimum of 5 yearly intervals.	Ongoing	Yearly	Green Space Engagement Officer				Checklist completed and being used.

ABBREVIATIONS

BDC – Blaby District Council

LCC – Leicestershire County Council

LRWT – Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust

4.0 How will we know when we've arrived?

Monitoring and review

This Management Plan covers five years. It should be reviewed annually, noting any significant changes within or affecting the site and recording the completion or rescheduling of actions listed in the Action Plan. It is recommended that a brief summary is added to this section at the time of each review. The Management Plan should be fully revised in 2019 to cover a further five years.

It is recommended that a brief summary is added to this section at the time of each review. The Management Plan should be fully revised in 2018 to cover a further five years.

4.1.1 2014 review summary

To be completed by 31st October 2014

4.1.2 2015 review summary

To be completed by 31st October 2015

4.1.3 2016 review summary

To be completed by 31st October 2016

4.1.4 2017 review summary

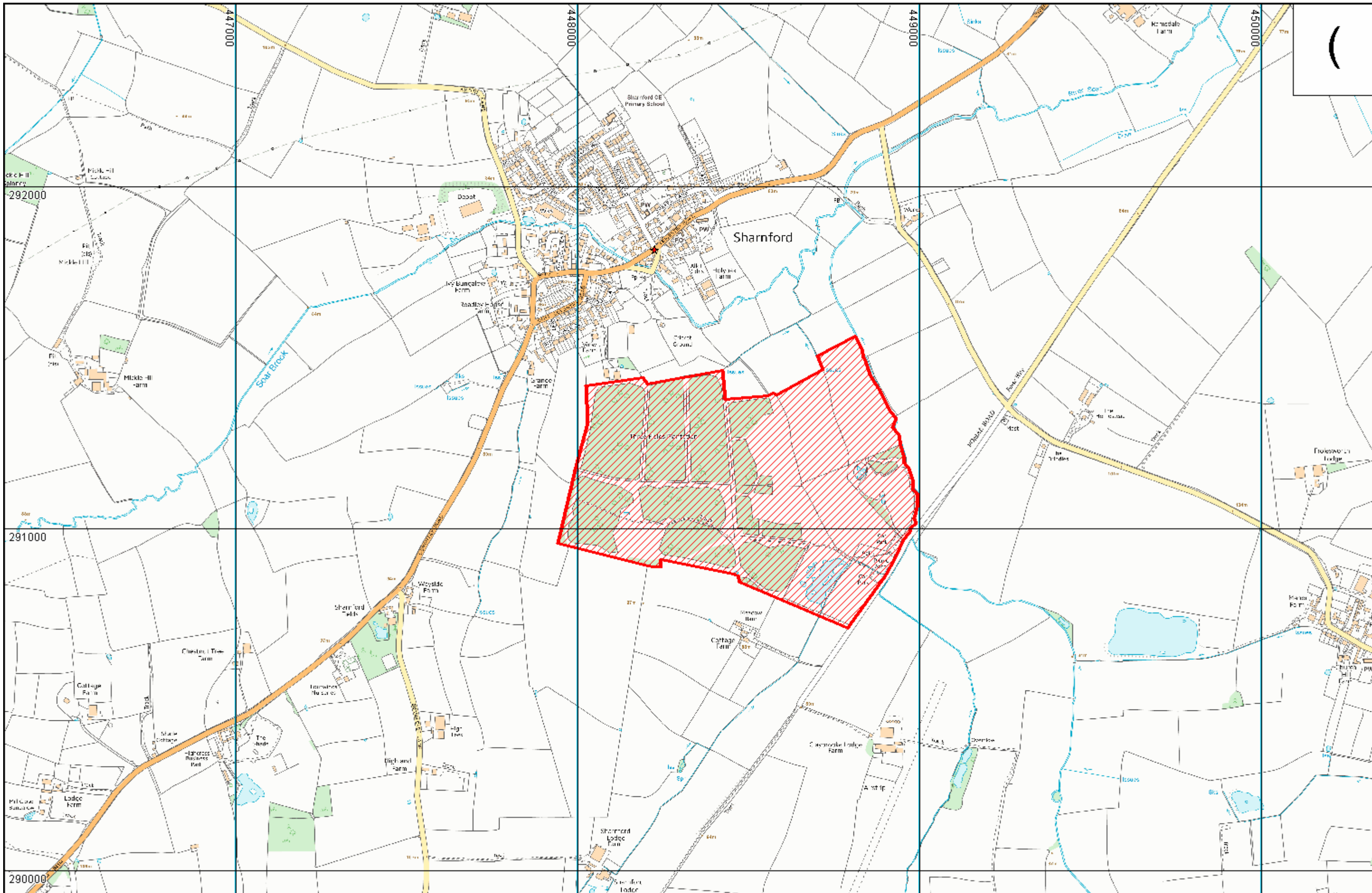
To be completed by 31st October 2017

5.0 Appendices

APPENDIX 1

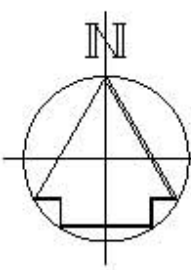
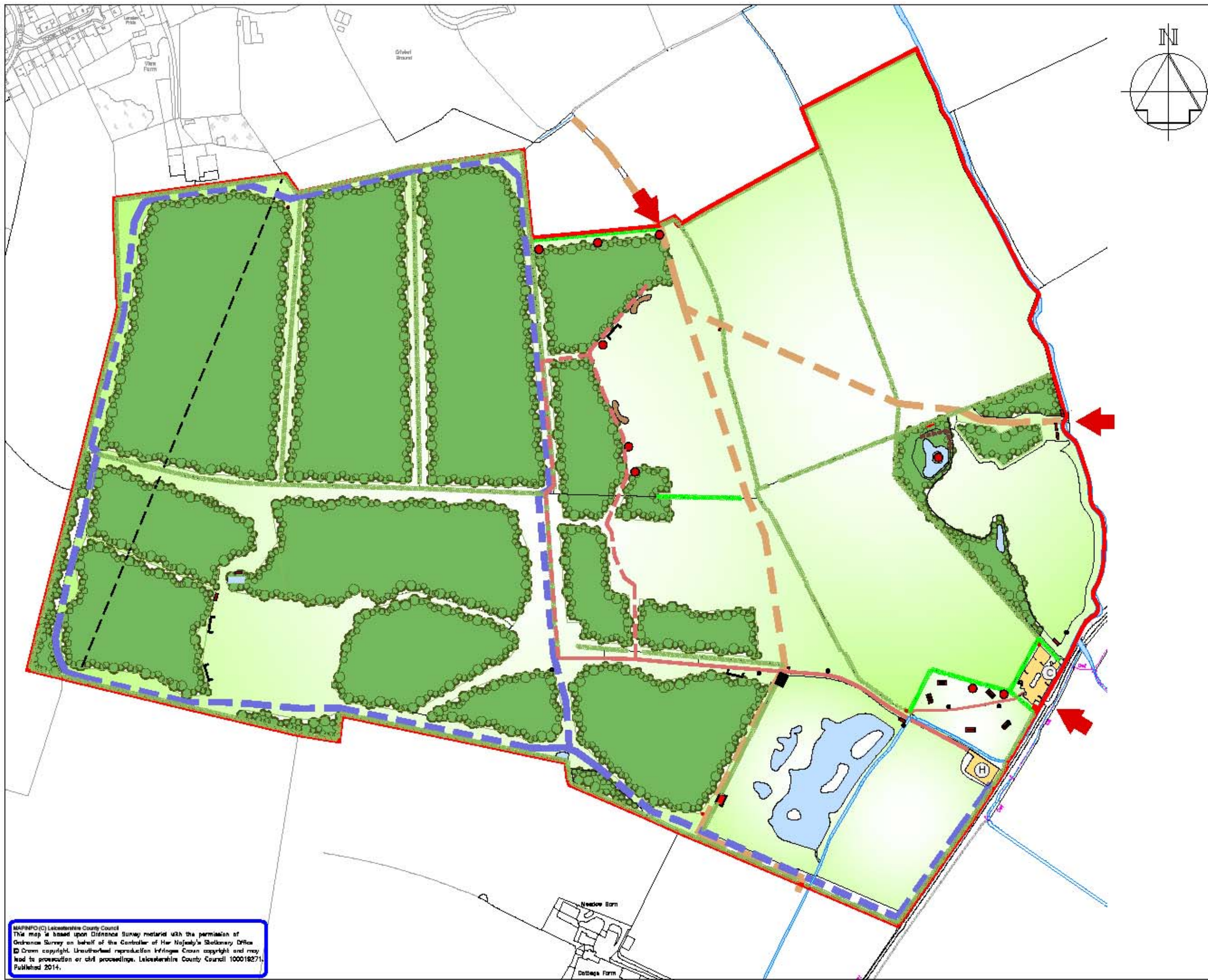
PLANS

1. Site Location Plan
2. Masterplan
3. Woodland
4. Hedgerows
5. Site Furniture
6. Public Rights of Way
7. Mowing Patterns
8. Arboretum



Fosse Meadows Nature Area - Site Location Plan

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- KEY: Masterplan**
- Site Boundary
 - Woodland
 - 11KV Overhead Electric Cable
 - Hedgerows
 - Raised Walkway
 - Car Park
 - Horse Lorry/ Trailer Car Park
 - Access Points
 - Open Water/ Water Courses
 - Grassland
 - Surfaced Paths
 - Surfaced Paths (Proposed extension)
 - Bird Hide (Spring 2014)
 - Bird Hide
 - Trim Trail
 - Public Rights Of Way
 - Permissive Bridleway
 - Proposed location for new Cafe (PROVISIONAL)



ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

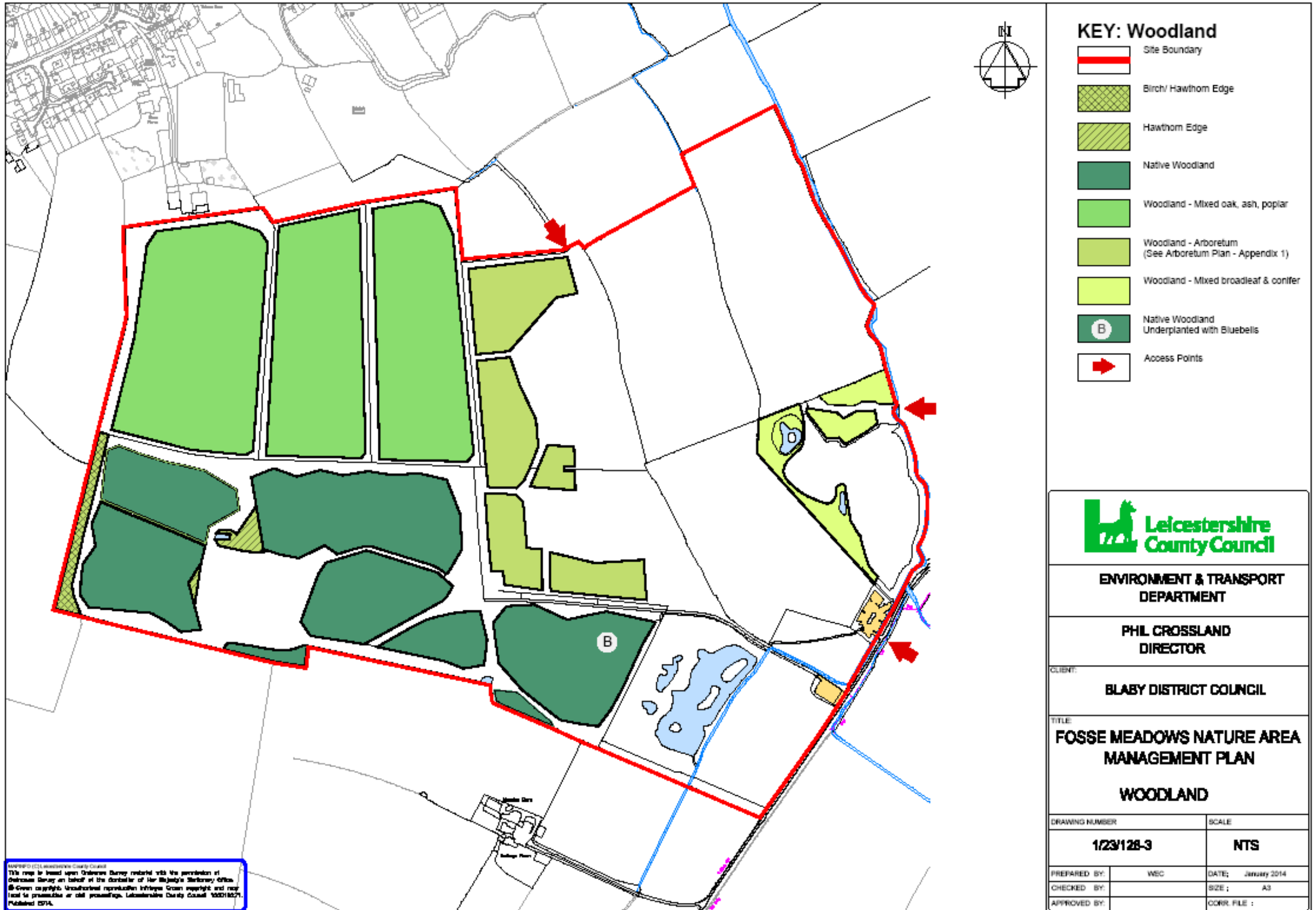
**PHIL CROSSLAND
DIRECTOR**

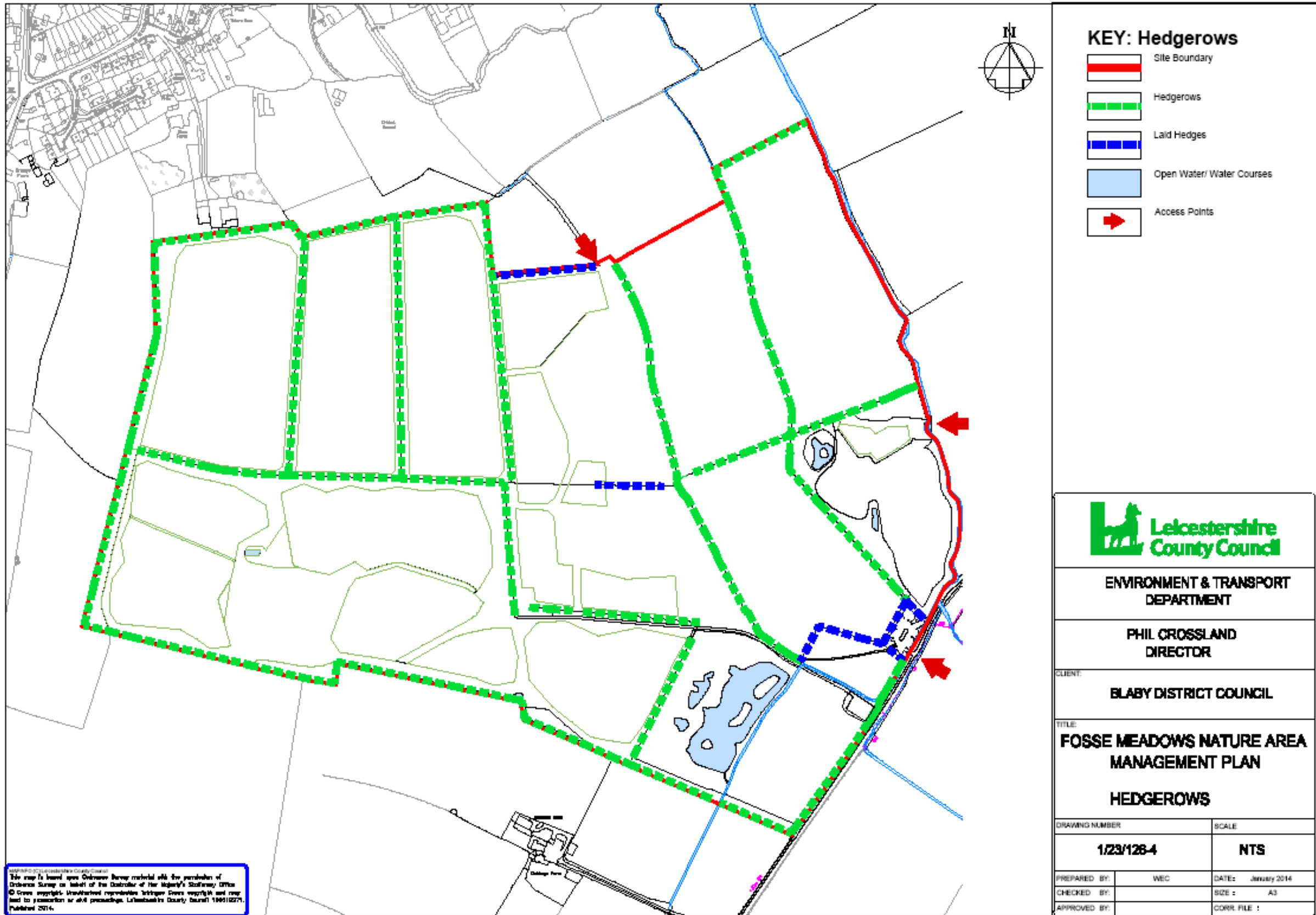
CLIENT:
BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

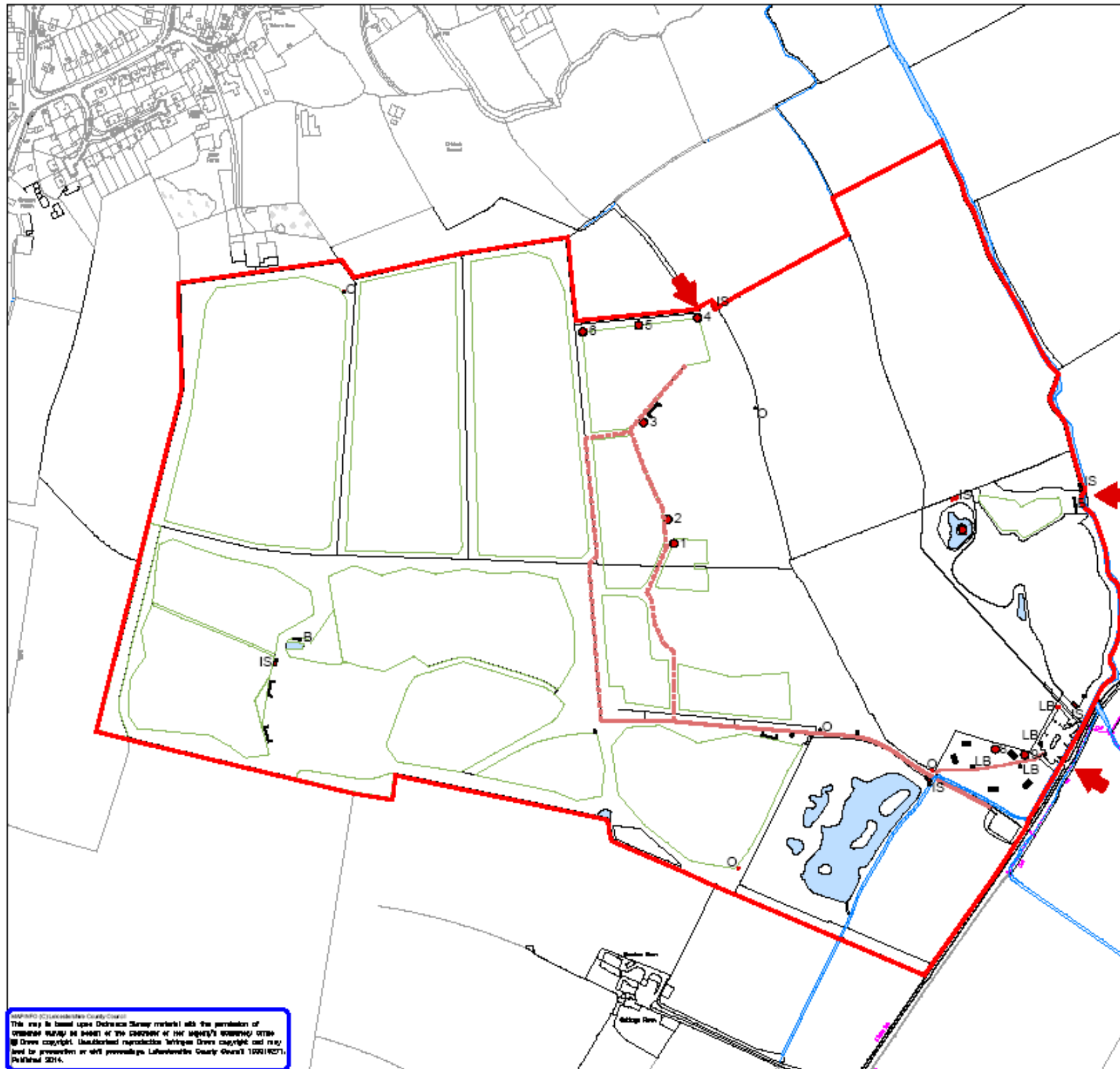
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**FOSSE MEADOWS NATURE AREA
MANAGEMENT PLAN
MASTERPLAN**

DRAWING NUMBER	SCALE
1/23/128-2	NTS
PREPARED BY: WEC	DATE: January 2014
CHECKED BY:	SIZE: A3
APPROVED BY:	CORR. FILE:

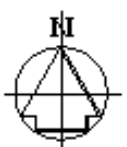
MAPP010 (C) Leicestershire County Council
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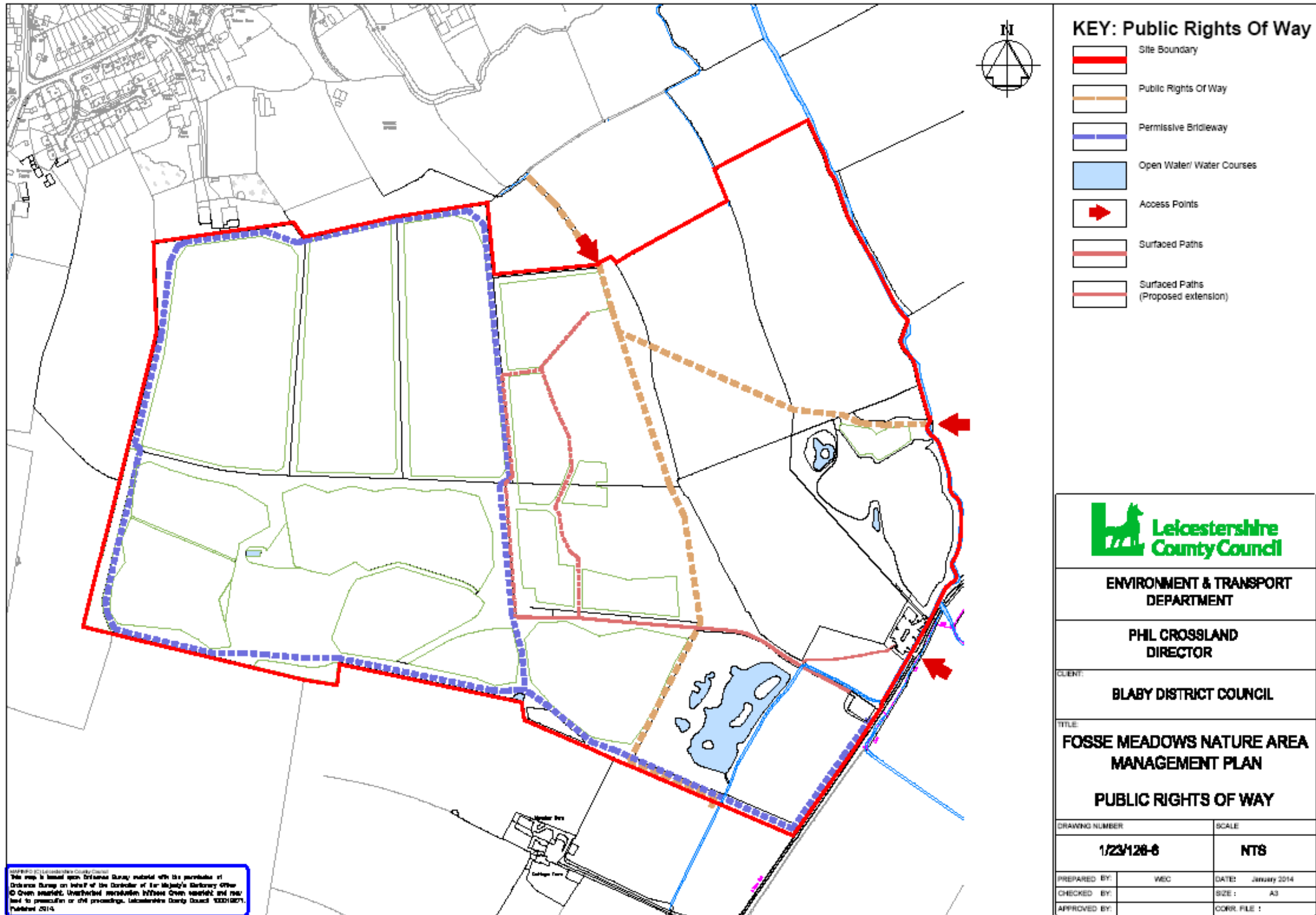
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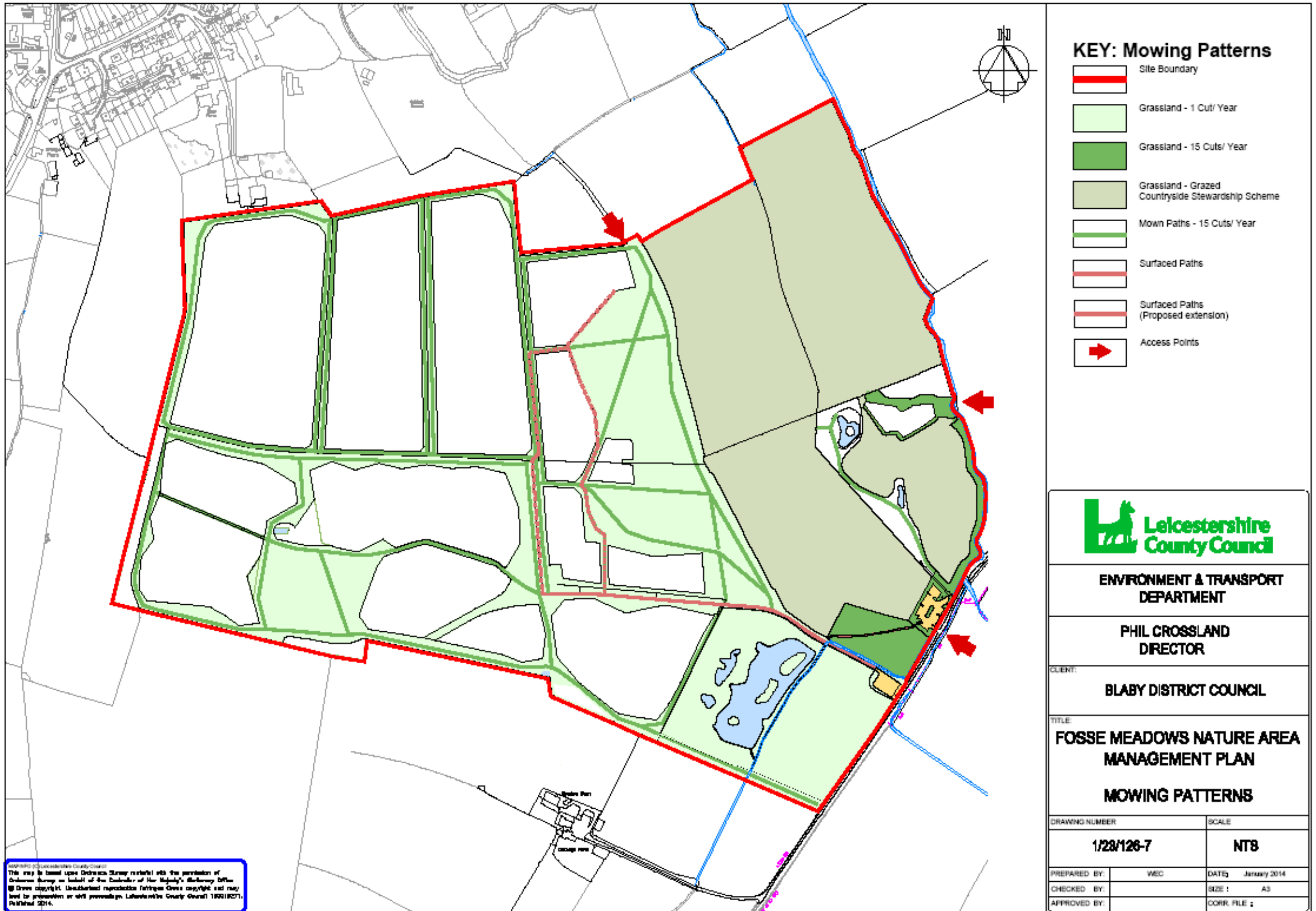


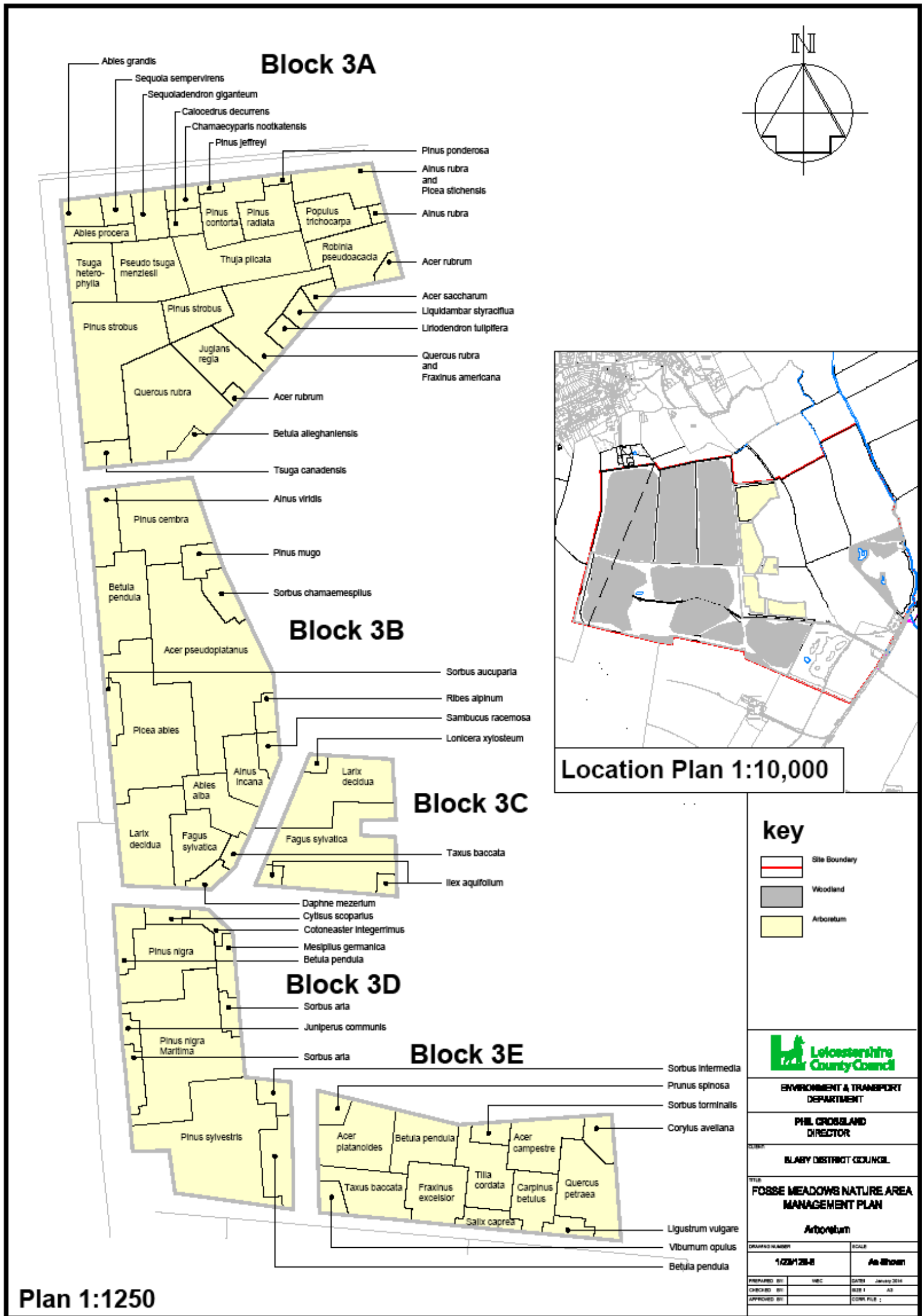
KEY: Site Furniture

	Site Boundary		Information Sign
	Seat with back		Picnic Bench
	Bench		Litter Bin
	Dog Bin		Orienteering Post
	Picture Post Larch		Picture Post Oak
	Picture Post Kestrel		Picture Post Blank
	Picture Post Barn Owl		Picture Post
	Picture Post Alder		Surfaced Paths
	Picture Post Pine		Surfaced Paths (Proposed extension)
	Picture Post Robin		Access Points
	Picture Post Dragon Fly		

ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT	
PHIL CROSSLAND DIRECTOR	
CLIENT:	
BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL	
TITLE:	
FOSSE MEADOWS NATURE AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN	
SITE FURNITURE	
DRAWING NUMBER	SCALE
1/23/128-5	NTS
PREPARED BY:	DATE: January 2014
CHECKED BY:	SIZE: A3
APPROVED BY:	CORR. FILE :







APPENDIX 2
QUALITY AUDIT

Quality Audit (July 2013)

Fosse Meadows nature area		Audit criteria	Score	Natural Green Space
1. Accessible and well connected	1.1	well located close to a community	4	good Footpath connections but the poor sign posting
	1.2	meets DDA requirements and disabled user needs	1	barriers do exist but could be removed in certain areas. Although it is recognised in certain areas this would not be appropriate.
	1.3	provide surfaces, high quality paths	2	some paths in poor condition and drainage issues - others appropriate with some maintenance needed
	1.4	connects with other transport modes	3	
	1.5	allows movement in and between places	4	
	1.6	accessible entrances in the right places	3	entrances sited in good positions but not enough emphasis - some poorly barrier and maintained.
	1.7	offers connecting path network and signage	2	

2. Attractive and appealing places	2.1	attractive, with a positive image	3	
	2.2	attractive setting for urban areas	n/a	
	2.3	quality materials, equipment and furniture	2	
	2.4	attractive plants and landscape elements	3	
	2.5	welcoming boundaries and entrance areas	3	
	2.6	facilities in clean, safe and usable condition	1	temporary portaloo - very uninviting! Wondered if it was actually for public use?
	2.7	low levels of litter and adequate bins	5	
	2.8	well maintained	3	maintenance levels challenged by years of neglect - woodland areas in particular. Areas around play area well maintained. Hedgerows mixed - some good hedgerow management across site, some hedgerows would benefit from being brought into management with hedge laying. fences etc in areas poorly maintained.

3. Biodiverse. Supporting ecological networks	3.1	contribute positively to biodiversity	4	
	3.2	large enough to sustain wildlife populations	5	
	3.3	offers diverse habitats	5	
	3.4	part of the wider landscape structure and setting	5	
	3.5	connects with wider green networks	5	
	3.6	balance between habitat protection and access	1	
	3.7	resource efficient	1	evidence of woodland recycling of materials, mainly due to the work of the volunteer rangers. Little evidence elsewhere and no opportunity for waste to be separated into recyclables and non recyclables.
4. Active. Supporting health and well-being	4.1	provides places for a range of outdoor activities	5	
	4.2	diverse play, sport and recreational opportunities	3	

	4.3	providing places for social interaction	4	
	4.4	appropriate, high quality facilities meeting needs	?	
	4.5	appropriate facilities for location and size	1	
	4.6	carefully sited facilities for range of ages	1	
	4.7	adaptable to changing needs and uses	?	
5. Community supported	5.1	safe and welcoming	3	
	5.2	good levels of natural surveillance	4	
	5.3	no evidence of anti-social behaviour	4	
	5.4	appropriate lighting levels	n/a	

5.5	sense of local identity and place	5	
5.6	good routes to wider community facilities	n/a	
5.7	distinctive and memorable places	3	
5.8	catering for a range of functions and activities	3	
5.9	community involvement in management	2	to what extent is community involved in eh volunteer rangers and there does not seem to be evidence that the community have been involved in the preparation of any management plan for the site until now

APPENDIX 3
SITE USERS SURVEY AND RESULTS TALLY

Fosse Meadows Park Blaby User Survey 2013

Do you live in Sharford Parish? Yes / No

How did you get to Fosse Meadows_Park? (Walk, cycle, car).....

How long does your journey take to get here?

Less than 5 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>
5-10mins	<input type="checkbox"/>
10-20 mins	<input type="checkbox"/>
20-30 mins	<input type="checkbox"/>
more than 30mins	<input type="checkbox"/>

How often do you visit Fosse Meadows Park?

Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>
2-3 times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once every 2 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once every 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annually	<input type="checkbox"/>

How long do you usually spend at Fosse Meadows Park?

Less than 30 mins	<input type="checkbox"/>
30-60 mins	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over an hour	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is you main reason for visiting Fosse Meadows Park?

Walk the dog	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commuter to school or work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watching wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relax	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cycling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passing by	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spend time with the children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please rate the following aspects of Fosse Meadows Park and its maintenance

PTO

Would you like more information about practical volunteer days looking after your parks and possibly becoming a volunteer with the Blaby District Council?

Yes / No

If yes to above question please leave your name and contact details here.

Name:

Postal Address:

Email if prefer to be contacted by email:

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this brief user survey. The information will be most helpful to the Blaby District Council so we can make this park an enjoyable place for all.

User Survey Tally of Results

mode of transport	walk	walk/cycle	cycle	car	car/walk	no response to mode of travel	no response to live in area	totals
numbers of completed questionnaires	17			31				49
do you live in the parish?								
Live in the Parish	17							
Live outside the Parish	29							
Left the question blank	2							
how long does your journey take to get here?								
less than 5 mins	5							
5-10mins	20							
10-20mins	16							
20-30mins	7							
More than 30 mins	2							
did not answer the question								
How long do you usually spend in the LNR?								
less than 30 mins	5							
30-60mins	22							
over an hour	23							
How often do you visit the LNR?								
Daily	20							20
2-3times a week	15							15
once a week	6							6
once every 2 weeks	5							5

monthly	5	5
once every 6 months	2	2
annually		0

What is your main reason for visiting the LNR?

Walk the dog	35	35
commute to school/work	1	1
exercise	20	20
watching wildlife	11	11
relax	16	16
cycling		0
passing by		0
picnics	5	5
spend time with the children	11	11
other		0

specify other

	very good	good	ok	poor	bad	do not know	didn't answer
Maintenance							
habitat management	16	24	7	1			48
wildlife	18	22	6	2			48
atmosphere	24	20	3				47
cleanliness	13	28	9				50
dog fouling	4	4	16	12	15		51
personal safety	9	27	11	1			48
information signs	3	10	23	11	1		48
paths	8	18	18	4	2		50

APPENDIX 4

BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Blaby District Council Risk Assessment Form

RISK 574

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR **MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC GREEN SPACES**

ASSESSED BY: Mark Alflat Sarah Pennelli Kevin Pegg Jon Wells Jon Thorpe DATE: 5th November 2013

HAZARD	UNMANAGED RISK LEVEL - NO MEASURES	MANAGED RISK LEVEL - MEASURES IMPLEMENTED
Injury to public, potential for fatality. Slips, trips, falls, drowning etc.	Quite possible major injury. Possible fatality/disablement.	Acceptable possibility of major injury. Unlikely fatality/disablement.

Public Green Spaces considered:

Strategic Sites	Ex-Countryside sites downgraded to open spaces	Open spaces
Fosse Meadows Nature Reserve Bouskell Park Glen Parva Local Nature Reserve Crow Mills Way Osiers Nature Reserve Jubilee Park Whetstone Way Whistle Way Countesthorpe Country Park	Gynsills Nature Area Gynsills Meadows Whistle Meadows Sapcote Nature Reserve	All referenced open spaces eg. EN023OV Aldeby Old Church SSI All closed Burial Grounds

BDC Roles and Responsibilities:

TASK/RESPONSIBILITY/RISK/ISSUE	RESP GM	RESP OFF	CHECKS AND BALANCES COMMENTS
Reactive maintenance on all Strategic Sites	KP	KA*	Monthly documented inspections. Plus ad hoc public, ranger and other staff reports.
Formal documented monthly site inspections of Strategic Sites plus Gynsills Nature Area, Gynsills Meadows, Whistle Meadows, Sapcote Nature Reserve.	KP	KA*	Check at staff 121s. H&S Blueprint Ch22 Audit
Maintenance and review of all site risk assessments	KP	KA*	Annual review H&S Blueprint Ch22 Audit
KA* Liaison point between Depot Environmental Maintenance activities and other BDC departments – Karen Appleby.	KP	KA*	
H&S advice, assistance, guidance, support on all sites	MA	JT	
Development of all Strategic Sites	JW	PT	Council policy and public feedback
Management Plans and Audits on all Strategic Sites	JW	PT	PT/JW Green Infrastructure Forum
Overall responsibility for the overall land asset (inc. leases etc.)	SP	PW	
Responsibility for bridges	SP	PW	H&S Blueprint Ch22 Audit
Risk Assessments for Bridges (public risk)	SP	PW	H&S Blueprint Ch22 Audit

Structural maintenance for bridges	SP	PW	SP
Foliage maintenance on bridges in accordance with agreed method statements and work risk assessments	KP	MG	PW via periodic inspection

Foliage maintenance work on bridges outside the scope of agreed BDC RAs and SMOs	SP	PW	PW to engage and monitor contractors
Undertake tree surveys on all sites and implement a programme of works for mature trees. Risk Assessments for mature trees (and derivative management plan)	SP	PW	PW to engage and monitor County Council as contractors H&S Blueprint Ch22 Audit
Ownership of plantations and woodland planting on all Strategic Sites	JW	PT	
Stepping Stones Woodland Management Plans for Strategic Sites: Woodland Management Plan owner Scheduling the works Completion of the works Monitoring safe, appropriate completion	JW JW JW JW	PT PT PT PT	Capital bids in place, when woodland management plans are implemented and complete to a point of only requiring on-going maintenance they may be passed to KP.
Disease control in mature trees Disease control in Plantations and woodland areas	SP ALL	PW ALL	Via County Council and management plans

Closed Burial Grounds Tree Surveys as above. Memorial monitoring and remedial work, as appropriate. Maintenance of closed burial ground walls. Arranging for required grounds maintenance (mowing etc.)	SP	PW	H&S Blueprint Ch22 Audit
Risk Assessments (and derivative management plans) for memorials in closed burial grounds.	SP	PW	H&S Blueprint Ch22 Audit
Play Equipment on BDC land			Play Equipment Management Plan H&S Blueprint Ch22 Audit
Pest Control on Strategic Sites Squirrels, Oak Processionary Moth, Other potential emerging pests	JW	PT	May need liaison with SP
Invasive Species on Strategic Sites Identification, removal and control - Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, Ragwort etc.	JW	PT	May need liaison with SP
Unauthorised livestock, released pets on Strategic Sites	SP	PW	Immediate response and monitoring
Line Manager for Green Spaces Engagement Officer	JW	PT	PDA 121s day to day supervision
Line Manager for Green Spaces Engagement Officer when he is acting as a Volunteer Ranger	JW	PT	Monitoring and review of works
Line Manager for Volunteer Rangers	JW via PT	JP	121s and site meetings etc.
Responsibility for Bouskell Park Ice House	JW	PT	PT self governing

ex-Countryside Parks – Routine grounds maintenance activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gynsills Meadows • Gynsills Nature Reserve • Sapcote Nature reserve • Whistle Meadows 	KP	MG	Regarded as standard open space, but subject to monthly inspections
Flood alleviation watercourses – none on BDC green spaces Risk assessment, inspection and maintenance.	JW	AF	Cyclical works by staff scheduled. Staff monitoring and 121s.
Car Parks – day to day maintenance and inspection. Jubilee Park Fosse Meadows Bouskell Park (Risk Assessment, Inspection and arranging maintenance)	JW	EW	Inspection by staff. Covered by H&S Blueprint Chapter 23.
All existing other BDC referenced open spaces to remain under current sole Environmental Maintenance management.	KP	MG	Cyclical works and reactive works.
No declared overall ‘Site Manager’ and that the responsibilities are clearly defined to a level that a site manager is not required.			YES

J Thorpe 06/11/2013

APPENDIX 5
ARBORETUM SPECIES LIST

Arboretum Species List

North American stands

Common name	Latin name	Volume per tree m ³	Estimated timber volume m ³
Grand fir	<i>Abies grandis</i>		
Noble fir	<i>Abies procera</i>		
Red maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>		
Silver maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>		
Red alder	<i>Alnus rubra</i>		
Yellow birch	<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>		
Incense cedar	<i>Calocedrus decurrens</i>		
Nootka cypress	<i>Chamycyparis nootkatensis</i>		
White ash	<i>Fraxinus americana</i>		
Black walnut	<i>Juglans nigra regia</i>		
Sweet gum	<i>Liquidamber styraciflua</i>		
Tulip tree	<i>Liriodendron tulipefera</i>		
Shore pine	<i>Pinus contorta</i>		
Jeffrey's pine	<i>Pinus jeffreyi</i>		
Western yellow pine	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>		
Monterey pine	<i>Pinus radiata</i>		
Weymouth pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i>		
Western balsam poplar	<i>Populus trichocarpa</i>		
Sitka spruce	<i>Picea stichensis</i>		
Douglas fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>		
Red oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i>		
Robinia	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>		
Coast redwood	<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>		
Wellingtonia	<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i>		
Western red cedar	<i>Thuja plicata</i>		
Eastern hemlock	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>		
Western hemlock	<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>		

Northern European stands

Common name	Latin name	Volume per tree m ³	Estimated timber volume m ³
Silver fir	<i>Abies alba</i>		
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>		
sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>		
Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>		
Grey alder	<i>Alnus incana</i>		
Green alder	<i>Alnus viridis</i>		
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>		
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>		
Common cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster integerrimus</i>		
hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>		
Common broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>		
Mezereon	<i>Daphne mezereum</i>		
beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>		
ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>		
holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>		
juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>		
Fly honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera xylosteum</i>		
European larch	<i>Larix decidua</i>		
European privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>		
Common medlar	<i>Mespilus germanica</i>		
Norway spruce	<i>Picea abies</i>		
Arolla pine	<i>Pinus cembra</i>		
Mountain pine	<i>Pinus mugo</i>		
Austrian pine	<i>Pinus nigra</i>		
Corsican pine	<i>Pinus nigra maritima</i>		
Scots pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>		
blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>		
Red elderberry	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>		
Alpine black current	<i>Ribes alpinum</i>		
oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>		
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>		
whitebeam	<i>Sorbus aria</i>		
rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>		
Dwarf whitebeam	<i>Sorbus chamaemespilus</i>		
Swedish whitebeam	<i>Sorbus intermedia</i>		
Wild service	<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>		
Gueldar rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>		

APPENDIX 6
BIODIVERSITY SURVEY AND REPORT

APPENDIX 1: Biodiversity Survey and Report / Ecological Survey / Protected Species Survey and Report

PART I LOCAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PROTECTED SPECIES

Where a proposed development is likely to affect species protected under the [Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981](#) (as amended), the [Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010](#), the [Protection of Badgers Act 1992](#), and / or species of principal importance listed under Section 41 of the [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#), the applicant must submit an up-to-date Protected Species Survey and Assessment. Please refer to [Table 1](#) (Column 1) which provides guidance on when a survey is needed for particular species. Please note that this table is intended to assist the identification of a proposal for which a protected species survey will be required. It should be noted that there may be instances which fall outside those described where a protected species survey is required.

Protected species surveys and assessments must be submitted up-front with a planning application. Planning applications cannot be determined until surveys have been done to an acceptable standard, in accordance with paragraph 99 of ODPM Circular 06/2005. Further guidance is available in Government Circular: [Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact Within the Planning System \(ODPM Circular 06/2005, Defra Circular 01/2005\)](#) and [Planning for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: A Guide to Good Practice](#).

The **Survey** should be undertaken and prepared by competent persons with suitable qualifications and experience and must be carried out at an appropriate time and month of year, in suitable weather conditions and using nationally recognised survey guidelines/methods where available. See [Table 4](#) for more information on survey times for different species.

Where surveys involve disturbance, capture or handling of a protected species, only a licensed person can undertake such surveys. Licences are issued by Natural England; see the Wildlife Management and Licensing Service <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/default.aspx>.

Further advice on bat surveys, assessment and mitigation is available in the *Bat Protocol*, published by Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (<http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/naturaleenvironment.htm>).

The survey may be informed by the results of a search for ecological data from the local environmental records centre. The survey must be to an appropriate level of scope and detail and must:

- Record which species are present and identify their numbers (may be approximate);
- Map their distribution and use of the area, site, structure or feature (e.g. for feeding, shelter, breeding).

Data searches can be carried out by Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (<http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/naturaleenvironment.htm>).

Information on species distribution may also be obtained from the National Biodiversity Network (NBN): www.nbn.org.uk.

The **Assessment** must identify and describe potential development impacts likely to harm the protected species and/or their habitats identified by the survey (these should include both direct and indirect effects both during construction and afterwards). Where harm is likely, evidence must be submitted to show:

- How alternative designs or locations have been considered;
- How adverse effects will be avoided wherever possible;
- How unavoidable impacts will be mitigated or reduced;
- How impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated will be compensated;
- How species numbers are likely to change, if at all, after development e.g. whether there will be a net loss or gain;
- How features or habitats used by protected species can be enhanced, restored or added to.

It is illegal to disturb protected species or the places in which they live; further information is available from www.incc.gov.uk. Licences may be needed to carry out work that could affect protected species – further information and downloadable forms are available from the Wildlife Management and Licensing Service of Natural England at <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/default.aspx>. The information provided in response to the above requirements should be consistent with that required for an application to Natural England for a European Protected Species Licence. A protected species survey and assessment may form part of a wider Ecological Assessment and/or part of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

TABLE 1 Local Requirement for Protected Species: Criteria and Indicative Thresholds (Trigger List) for when a Survey and Assessment is Required

Column 1 Proposals for Development That Will Trigger a Protected Species Survey	Species Likely To Be Affected And For Which A Survey Will Be Required										
	Bats	Barn Owls	Breeding	G C Newt	Otters	*Dormouse	Kingfisher	Water Vole	Badger	Reptiles	WC Crayfish
Proposed development which includes the modification, conversion, demolition or removal of buildings and structures (especially roof voids) involving the following:											
▪ all agricultural buildings (e.g. farmhouses and barns) particularly of traditional brick or stone construction and/or with wooden beams;	Y	Y	Y								
▪ buildings and structures close to woodland, trees and/or water, particularly those with weather boarding, hanging tiles and/or gable ends;	Y		Y								
▪ all tunnels, mines, kilns, ice-houses, adits, military fortifications, air raid shelters, cellars and similar underground ducts and structures;	Y										
▪ all bridge structures, aqueducts and viaducts (especially over water and wet ground).	Y		Y								
Proposals involving lighting of churches and listed buildings or flood lighting of green space close to woodland, water, field hedgerows or lines of trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water.	Y	Y	Y								
Proposals affecting woodland, parkland, large gardens with trees or field hedgerows and/or lines of trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water bodies.	Y		Y			Y			Y		
Proposed tree work (felling or lopping) and/or development affecting:											
▪ mature and veteran trees;	Y		Y								
▪ trees with obvious holes, cracks or cavities.	Y		Y								
Proposals affecting gravel pits or quarries and natural cliff faces and rock outcrops with crevices or caves.	Y		Y							Y	Y
Major proposals within 500m of a pond or Minor proposals within 100m of pond (Note: A major proposals is one that is more than 10 dwellings or more than 0.5 hectares or for non-residential development is more than 1000m ² floor area or more than 1 hectare)				Y							

Proposals adjacent to or affecting rivers, streams, canals, lakes, or other aquatic habitats.	Y		Y		Y		Y	Y			Y
Proposals affecting 'derelict' land (brownfield sites), allotments and railway land.			Y	Y					Y	Y	
Proposed development affecting any buildings, structures, feature or locations where <u>protected species are known to be present</u> **	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Bats	Barn Owls	Breeding	G C Newt	Otters	* Dormouse	Kingfisher	Water Vole	Badger	Reptiles	WC Crayfish

* Note that Dormice are very rare in Leicestershire and Rutland, and the only recent confirmed records are from a few woodlands to the south of the two Counties.

** Confirmed as present by either a data search (for instance via the local environmental records centre) or as notified to the developer by the local planning authority, and/or by Natural England, the Environment Agency or other nature conservation organisation.

Exceptions for When a Full Species Survey and Assessment may not be Required

- Following consultation by the applicant at the pre-application stage, the LPA has stated in writing that no protected species surveys and assessments are required.
- Evidence is provided in e.g. the form of a letter or brief report from a suitably qualified and experienced person, or a relevant local nature conservation organisation, that no protected species are present.

PART II LOCAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGNATED SITES AND PRIORITY HABITATS

Where a proposed development is likely to affect designated sites and priority habitats, the applicant must submit an *Ecological/Geological Survey and Assessment*.

Please refer to [Table 2](#) and [Table 3](#).

The **Survey** should be undertaken and prepared by competent persons with suitable qualifications and experience and must be carried out at an appropriate time and month of year (see [Table 4](#)), in suitable weather conditions and using locally or nationally recognised survey guidelines/methods where available.

Further information on appropriate survey methods can be found in *Sources of Survey Methods* compiled by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management; available at: <http://www.ieem.net/surveymethods.asp>.

The survey may be informed by the results of a search for ecological and/or geological data from a local environmental records centre. The survey must be to an appropriate level of scope and detail and must:

- Record which habitats and features are present on and, where appropriate, around the site;
- Identify the extent/area/length present;
- Map their distribution on site and/or in the surrounding area shown on an appropriate scale plan.

The **Assessment** should identify and describe potential development impacts likely to harm designated sites and priority habitats (these should include both direct and indirect effects both during construction and afterwards). Where harm is likely, evidence must be submitted to show:

- How alternatives designs or locations have been considered;
- How adverse effects will be avoided wherever possible;
- How unavoidable impacts will be mitigated or reduced;
- How impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated will be compensated;

- How area (hectares) of priority habitat on the site are likely to change after development e.g. whether there will be a net loss or gain;
- How designated sites and priority habitats can be enhanced, restored or added to.

Information on **Local Wildlife Site criteria** for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland is available from Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (<http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/naturalenvironment.htm>). Existing environmental information may be available from Local Record Centres, Wildlife Trusts, and Local RIGS Groups etc. Also online information on internationally and nationally designated sites can be found at: www.natureonthemap.org.uk

TABLE 2 Local Requirements for Designated Sites and Priority Habitats Criteria (Trigger List) for When a Survey and Assessment are Required

1. DESIGNATED SITES	
Internationally designated sites	Special Protection Area (SPA) Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Ramsar Site
Nationally designated sites	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) National Nature Reserve (NNR)
Regionally and locally designated sites	Local Wildlife Site (formerly known as Site of Importance for Nature Conservation) Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
2. PRIORITY HABITATS (Habitats of Principal Importance for Biodiversity under S.41 of the NERC Act 2006)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arable field margins • Eutrophic standing waters • Hedgerows • Inland rock outcrop • Floodplain grazing marsh • Lowland calcareous grassland • Lowland dry acid grassland • Lowland fens • Lowland heathland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowland meadows • Lowland mixed deciduous woodland • Mesotrophic lakes • Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land • Ponds • Reedbeds • Rivers • Wet woodland • Wood-pasture and parkland
3. OTHER BIODIVERSITY HABITATS (as identified by the Local Biodiversity Partnership - see paragraph 84 ODPM Circular 06/2005)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mature Trees ▪ Fast-flowing streams ▪ Spring and flushes ▪ Sphagnum ponds 	

Exceptions When a Full Survey and Assessment May Not Be Required

International and National Sites: A survey and assessment will not be required where the applicant is able to provide copies of pre-application correspondence with Natural England, where the latter confirms in writing that they are satisfied that the proposed development will not affect any statutory sites designated for their national or international importance.
Regional and Local Sites and Priority Habitats: A survey and assessment will not be required where the applicant is able to provide copies of pre-application correspondence with the Local Planning Authority's ecologist (where employed), or ecological advisor and/or the local Wildlife Trust that they are satisfied that the proposed development will not affect any regional or local sites designated for their local nature conservation importance or any other priority habitats or listed features.

TABLE 4 - ECOLOGICAL SURVEY SEASONS

Optimal Survey Time	
Extending into	

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Badgers												
Bats Hibernation Roosts												
Bats Summer Roosts												
Bats Foraging/ Commuting												
Birds Breeding												
Birds Over Wintering												
Dormice												
Great-Crested Newts												
			AQUATIC			TERRESTRIAL						
Otters												
Reptiles												
Water Voles												
White-Clawed Crayfish												
Habitats/Vegetation												

Points to note regarding surveys are as follows:

- For certain species and habitats surveys can be carried out at any time of year, but for other species, particular times of year are required to give the most reliable results, as indicated in Figure 2
- Surveys conducted outside of optimal times (Figure 2) may be unreliable. For certain species (e.g. Great Crested Newt) surveys over the winter period are unlikely to yield any useful information. Similarly negative results gained outside the optimal period should not be interpreted as absence of a species and further survey work maybe required during the optimal survey season. This is especially important where existing surveys and records show the species has been found previously on site or in the surrounding area. An application may not be valid until survey information is gathered from an optimum time of year.
- Species surveys are also very weather dependent so it may be necessary to delay a survey or to carry out more than one survey if the weather is not suitable, e.g. heavy rain is not good for surveying for otters, as it washes away their spraint (droppings). Likewise bat surveys carried out in wet or cold weather may not yield accurate results.
- Absence of evidence of a species does not necessarily mean that the species is not there, nor that its habitat is not protected (e.g. a bat roost is protected whether any bats are present or not).
- Local Biological / Environmental Records Centre may have useful existing information and records.

