

Site Improvement Plan

Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk, or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)

UK0013696 Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC

Site description

Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods is one of two outstanding examples in England of a type of oak-hornbeam forest mainly found in central Europe. Sessile and pedunculate oaks are key components of the canopy. Hornbeam is mixed with oaks and other trees in areas of high forest and is also present as almost pure stands of stored coppice, some of which are being brought back into a coppice cycle. Over 95% of the site is ancient woodland. It includes areas of wood-pasture and many veteran pollards and coppice stools. Distinctive features of the ground flora include stands of great wood-rush and an unusual moss community more typical of continental Europe.

Plan Summary

This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.

Priority & Issue	Pressure or Threat	Feature(s) affected	Measure	Delivery Bodies
1 Disease	Threat	H9160 Oak-hornbeam forests	Survey SAC and adjacent woodlands for disease, and advise owners	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust
2 Invasive species	Threat	H9160 Oak-hornbeam forests	Survey SAC and adjacent woodlands for invasive species, advise owners	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust, Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre, Hertfordshire Natural History Society
3 Air Pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Threat	H9160 Oak-hornbeam forests	Further investigate the impacts of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust, Hertfordshire Natural History Society

4 Deer	Threat	H9160 Oak-hornbeam forests	Improve and extend monitoring of deer impacts, advise owners	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust
5 Vehicles: illicit	Pressure	H9160 Oak-hornbeam forests	Identify areas still being damaged and take remedial action	Broxbourne Borough Council, East Hertfordshire District Council, Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust
6 Forestry and woodland management	Threat	H9160 Oak-hornbeam forests	Promote Countryside Stewardship Scheme woodland management options for units requiring active management	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust
7 Public Access/Disturbance	Threat	H9160 Oak-hornbeam forests	Monitor site features sensitive to disturbance and take remedial action	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust

Issues and Actions

This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.

1 Disease

Acute Oak Decline (AOD) is present in at least two parts of the site and affects both native oak species, which are key components of this woodland type. Oaks can be killed by AOD within 5 years of symptoms appearing. Research is underway on the causal agents and spread of the disease. Based on current knowledge AOD has the potential in the long-term to cause high oak mortality right across the site.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Carry out a comprehensive survey for Acute Oak Decline, including privately-owned land and woods outside but close to the SAC boundary.	£7,500	2015-17	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Forestry Commission	Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust
Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1B	Inform all owners/managers of the local distribution and symptoms of Acute Oak Decline and, where necessary, of control recommendations.	£1,000	2015-18	Advice: Education & awareness raising	Not yet determined	Forestry Commission	Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust

2 Invasive species

Several tree and shrub species not native to the site are present. Where they are not being actively controlled, they are gradually spreading. The more invasive of these include sycamore, turkey oak, rhododendron and snowberry.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
2A	Carry out a comprehensive survey of non-native invasive plant species, including privately-owned land and woods outside but close to the SAC boundary.	£5,000	2015-17	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Natural England	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Woodland Trust, Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre, Hertfordshire Natural History Society
<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
2B	Inform all owners/managers of the local distribution and identification of the main invasive species and, where necessary, of control recommendations and funding options under Countryside Stewardship.	£1,000	2015-18	Advice: Education & awareness raising	Not yet determined	Natural England	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Woodland Trust

3 Air Pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Nitrogen deposition exceeds the site-relevant critical load for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects, but the sensitive features are currently considered to be in favourable condition on the site. This requires further investigation.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
3A	Further investigate the impacts of atmospheric nitrogen deposition, based on the application of guidance from the Chief Scientist's Group Nitrogen Task and Finish Group.	Not yet determined	2015-17	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
3B	Establish a 'lightweight' monitoring system for species or other site features likely to be sensitive to N deposition (eg. N-sensitive bryophytes at selected locations).	£5,000	2015-18	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Natural England	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Woodland Trust, Hertfordshire Natural History Society

4 Deer

Browsing and grazing by deer can reduce tree regeneration (from seedlings or coppice stools) and damage the woodland understorey and ground flora. At this site, deer damage levels are currently only moderate and do not appear to be affecting tree regeneration, habitat structure or species composition greatly. However, subtle damaging effects can be difficult to identify and monitor, and deer populations can increase rapidly.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
4A	Establish more small (4m x 4m) deer exclosures to monitor effects of deer on ground flora and tree/shrub regeneration.	Not yet determined	2015-17	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Forestry Commission	Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
4B	Improve monitoring of deer numbers and damage, extending it to include privately-owned land and woods outside but close to the SAC boundary. Identify and focus on locations, species and other site features likely to be particularly sensitive to deer damage (eg. recently coppiced areas or those with scarce, palatable ground flora species). Monitor impacts of other potentially damaging species such as squirrels, if initial findings suggest they may also be reducing natural regeneration significantly.	Not yet determined	2015-20	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Forestry Commission	Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust
<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
4C	Use monitoring results to identify areas adversely affected by deer and advise owners/managers on deer management and funding opportunities under Countryside Stewardship.	£1,000	2015-20	Advice: Education & awareness raising	Not yet determined	Forestry Commission	Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust

5 Vehicles: illicit

Illegal use of restricted byways and bridleways by off-road vehicles causes localised but sometimes severe rutting and soil compaction, damaging the woodland ground flora, shrubs and trees. Fly-tipping damages the ground flora directly and can introduce toxins and alien species.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
5A	Identify areas still being damaged and the access points/routes used.	No cost	2015-17	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	No net cost	Not yet determined	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust
<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
5B	Where necessary, construct or repair barriers to prevent illicit access by vehicles, install more signage and CCTV cameras, and pursue prosecutions.	Not yet determined	2015-17	Enforcement: Other	Not yet determined	Not yet determined	Broxbourne Borough Council, East Hertfordshire District Council, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire County Council

6 Forestry and woodland management

The larger woodland units with public access are under appropriate management but some of the smaller, privately-owned units are not. Though it is quite acceptable for a significant proportion of the site to be left as 'minimum intervention' high forest, in some circumstances a lack of active management can lead to adverse effects. These include a reduction in structural and species diversity (particularly in previously coppiced areas), the loss of temporary and permanent open space, the over-shading and deterioration of veteran pollards, and the spread of invasive species.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
6A	For units adversely affected by lack of recent management or inappropriate management, encourage production of Woodland Management Plans compatible with the SAC's conservation objectives and entry into new Countryside Stewardship Scheme agreements. Use results of surveys addressing other issues to refine priorities.	Not yet determined	2015-18	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Common Agricultural Policy 2014-20 (New Environmental Land Management Scheme)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Forestry Commission	Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust

7 Public Access/Disturbance

The site is a large, attractive area of ancient woodland with extensive public access and close to large urban centres, so it is heavily used by the public for recreational purposes. Sensitive management of access points and routes by the site's main owners has been largely successful in mitigating the potential adverse effects of this high level of use. However, visitor numbers continue to increase, the types of use can change unpredictably and less obvious adverse effects on important flora and fauna could be missed during routine, 'general purpose' monitoring.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
7A	Establish a 'light-weight' monitoring system for species or other site features likely to be sensitive to effects of public access (eg. vulnerable ground flora or veteran pollards close to main access points/routes).	£3,000	2015-17	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Not yet determined	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
7B	Regularly review monitoring results and where feasible, modify access arrangements, signage etc to remedy adverse effects.	Not yet determined	2016-20	Advice: Access Strategy	Not yet determined	Not yet determined	Forestry Commission, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire County Council, Natural England, Woodland Trust

Site details

The tables in this section contain site-relevant contextual information and links

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC	H9160 Sub-Atlantic and medio-European oak or oak-hornbeam forests of the <i>Carpinion betuli</i>
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Site location and links

Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC

Area (ha)	335.53	Grid reference	TL320059	Map link
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Local Authorities	Hertfordshire
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Site Conservation Objectives	European Site Conservation Objectives for Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC
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European Marine Site conservation advice	n/a
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Regulation 33/35 Package	n/a
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Marine Management Organisation site plan	n/a
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Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.

Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC

<i>River basin</i>	Thames RBMP
<i>WFD Management catchment</i>	London
<i>WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)</i>	n/a

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC	Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Wood North SSSI
	Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Wood South SSSI

National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC	Broxbourne Woods NNR

Ramsar	
Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC	n/a

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC	n/a

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	28/04/2015	

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