



**CARAVAN CLUB ECOLOGICAL
SITE APPRAISAL**



Broomfield Farm Caravan Club Site
Stalkers Lane
East Hoathly
Lewes
BN8 6QS



General Information

Site Name and County: Broomfield Farm Caravan Club Site, East Sussex

Grid Reference: TQ543163

Area: 4.45 hectares

Date: 20/07/05

Recorder: Jon Mellings, Just Ecology

Weather Conditions: Warm, sunny, brisk southwest wind (F3-4)

Site Description

The site comprises of two distinct areas. The first is a largish, rectangular caravanning field nearest the site entrance. The grassland here is an improved Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne* dominated sward, mown to about 5cm. This area is bordered on all sides by a mature hedgerow with standards. The site entrance, reception building and warden's accommodation is situated in the easternmost corner of this area and a tarmac track loops around the field with caravan berths arranged evenly around outside edge of the track. A footpath traverses the southwest boundary of this area and just southeast of the entrance gate is a fenced-off pond, which is heavily silted and very shaded by mature trees.

The second area is divided from the first area by a Hornbeam *Carpinus betulae* and Field Maple *Acer campestre* dominated hedgerow/woodland edge along the first field's northwest margin. This area is elongated and rectangular in form (the longest axis running in a southeast to northwest orientation). In comparison to field one this area is largely wooded with old Hornbeam, Hazel *Corylus avellana* and Sweet Chestnut *Castanea sativa* coppice woodland surrounding the area on all sides. The caravan berths within this area essentially occupy two to three grassed woodland clearings. These are accessible via a tarmac track connected to the looped track in the first field. A single track persists to the northwesternmost caravan berth clearing and loops back on itself at this point. The grassland at this end of the site though improved is slightly more diverse than in the first field due to herbs colonizing from the woodland edge.

Context

Broomfield Farm Caravan Club Site is located in a natural area occupying both East Sussex and West Kent, known as the Weald. Situated between the North and South Downs, the Weald, comprising the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Low Weald, remains as the area with the most woodland cover in Britain. Much of the broadleaved woodland in this area is ancient in origin, frequently comprising Pedunculate Oak standards with an understorey of Hazel and or Hornbeam. Traditionally, Hazel and Hornbeam were managed as coppice woodland, however, this form of management declined during the 20th century. The woodlands subsequently became overgrown and shaded leading to the decline of many woodland plant and animal species requiring the more open conditions provided by coppice management.

Woodland species on the East Sussex Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) include: The Dormouse, a species associated with old Hazel coppice and hedgerow, where it benefits from hazelnuts as well as the resources of Bramble and Honeysuckle. The Pearl-bordered Fritillary Butterfly *Boloria euphrosyne* (a species associated with warm sunny, flower-rich woodland clearings. The Black-headed Cardinal Beetle *Pyrochroa coccinea* (a species associated with veteran trees and old-growth woodland). Broomfield Farm Caravan Club Site supports broadleaved Oak, Hornbeam and Hazel woodland characteristic of the Weald and in a landscape context, the site is located within close proximity to other broadleaved woodland sites, being within one hundred metres from Gray Wood to the west and within five hundred metres of Summersbrook Wood (a Site of Nature Conservation Interest SNCI) to the northeast. There are small areas of woodland within a kilometre at most aspects.



Habitat Information

Broad Habitats Present: Broad-leaved woodland; Improved amenity grassland

BAP Priority Habitats Present: Native Broadleaved Woodland; Native Hedgerows

Subsidiary Habitats Present: Hedgerow; Pond

Plant Communities Present:

Grassland Communities:

The grassland throughout most of the caravanning area was species-poor, improved amenity grassland. The sward was generally very short (<5cm) with taller grassland at the extreme wooded edges and beneath the hedgerows. As a general rule, the more diverse grassland occurred in the more wooded, northwest section of the site, where species had spread from the woodland margins. The more open camping field closest to the site entrance was typical Perennial Rye-grass dominated improved grassland. The dominant species was Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne* with Rough Meadow-grass *Poa trivialis*, Timothy Grass *Phleum pratensis* being frequent and Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Creeping Bent-grass *Agrostis stolonifera*, Common Bent-grass *A. capillaris* and Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* achieving local dominance. Cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata* was recorded only occasionally in the mown sward.

Grasses more or less confined to the taller sward of the woodland edge/hedgerow included Wood False-brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, False Oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* and to a lesser extent Meadow Fescue *Festuca pratensis* and Hairy Brome *Bromus ramosa*.

The only herbs occurring with any consistency throughout the sward were White Clover *Trifolium repens*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and Daisy *Bellis perennis*. Self Heal *Prunella vulgaris*, and Silverweed *Potentilla anserina* were locally abundant, usually in the slightly more diverse areas of the mown sward. Other frequently recorded species recorded included Greater Plantain *Plantago major*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg. and Field Speedwell *Veronica persica*, with Bugle *Ajuga reptans* occurring occasionally. Smooth Hawk's-beard *Crepis capillaris*, Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre*, Prickly Sow-thistle *Sonchus asper* and Creeping Cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans* were all rare on the site and another species recorded infrequently at the grassland edges was Ground Ivy *Glechoma hederacea*.

Woodland:

The northwest end of the site, occupying an area approximately 1.3 times larger than the main camping field, was largely wooded, with the camping areas occupying two well-defined clearings and additional pitching bays situated along the tracks leading to and from this area. The total area of broadleaved woodland occupied about two-thirds of the total area of this section of the site (about two-fifths of the site in total). Running through the woodland from southeast to southwest, skirting the northeast border of the site was a track designated as a dog walking area.

Structurally the woodland consisted of a partial canopy, over-standing a dense understorey of smaller tree species, many of which were multi-stemmed indicating a history of coppice management. The scrub and ground flora were impoverished over much of the woodland area, Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. forming a low, patchy scrub layer in places, mainly in the peripheral areas close to the outer boundaries, which were less disturbed by trampling. Of the recorded woodland vegetation, fourteen species are considered to be indicators of ancient woodland habitat. These indicator species are denoted in the text with an asterisk. The edges of the wood were locally delineated by a fairly substantial, albeit, straight-edged wood-bank. These features are further indications that the woodland has a long history and may well date back to medieval times.

The bank running from the westernmost extremity of the site in a south-easterly direction along the southwest boundary of the woodland comprised a particularly broad, flat-topped bank with ditches on either side. Such broad-topped banks were popular in Saxon times, however, the linear edge of the boundary is more typical of boundaries dating from after the Norman conquest.

The dominant tree species of the canopy was Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*, with occasional Sweet Chestnut *Castanea sativa*, *Aspen *Populus tremula*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and rarely Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*. The denser understorey included mature, multi-stemmed species, *Hornbeam *Carpinus betulae* was dominant and Silver Birch abundant (Figure 1). Of the remainder, smaller Sweet Chestnut were frequent and Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, sapling Ash, sapling *Aspen, *Holly *Ilex aquilinum* and Elder *Sambucus nigra* were all occasional.



Figure 1: Hornbeam dominated woodland

As mentioned above Bramble was the most consistent scrub component, achieving local dominance in the less densely shaded and more undisturbed parts of the

woodland. Other species contributing to the scrub layer included Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* and Ivy *Hedera helix* both being locally abundant *Aspen (suckers) clones of the mature trees, which spread by means of an underground root system occurred more frequently than the mature trees. Aspen suckers were often found at the grassland edges of the woodland areas (Figure 2). Other incidentally recorded scrub species included Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and Snowberry *Symphoricarpos rivularis*.



Figure 2: Woodland edge Aspen sucker

Much of the woodland floor was devoid of vegetation at the time of survey. This may be due to a combination of low light levels and trampling by campers using the wood, but it is also likely to be due to the fact that the dominant spring species, *Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* had already seeded and withered by the time of the survey and there was clear evidence of Bluebell seed-heads throughout the site.

Locally abundant species included Ivy and Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*, which frequently occurred together with Stinging Nettle *Urtica dioica* amongst the low bramble scrub. Other locally abundant species included Yorkshire Fog, False Oat-grass, Bryophyte spp., Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and *Wood Millet *Milium effusum*, which was abundant amongst the above mentioned Bramble community in a small area close to the northeast boundary by the dog walking path.

Frequent species included Hedge Woundwort *Stachys sylvatica*, Wood Dock *Rumex sanguineus*, Rough Meadow-grass and Wood Sage *Teucrium scorodonia*. Nipplewort *Lapsana communis*, *Wood Sedge *Carex sylvatica*, Foxglove *Digitalis purpurea*, Common Dog-violet *Viola riviniana*, Creeping Buttercup, Creeping Jenny *Lysimachia nummularium*, Chickweed *Stellaria media*, Cock's-foot, Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, *Pendulous sedge *Carex pendula* and Wood Avens *Geum urbanum* were all occasional whilst *Hairy Brome and Compact Rush *Juncus conglomeratus* were only rarely seen on the site.

It was clear that much of the fallen deadwood had been removed from the general woodland area and there was evidence of chipping and piles of dead branches at the north-western end of the dog walking path. Also piles of grass clippings had been deposited in several parts of the woodland.

Hedgerows:

The site's hedgerows were more or less confined to the south, north and east boundaries of the main camping field in the southwest of the site (closest to the site entrance). Structurally the hedgerows included a reasonable diversity of native woody species that were regularly punctuated with taller mature trees around the entire perimeter. Many of the woody species were clearly fairly old and there was some over-mature standing decaying wood beneficial to dead wood invertebrates and potentially, for nesting woodpeckers and certain bat species. The tall sward habitat was frequently confined to a narrow strip occupying a metre or so outwards from the hedge at the most. In some places, the grass was mowed right to the edge. Along the southwest boundary, however, a fence separating the site from a footpath running between the site and the hedge, allowed for a wider margin of taller sward allowing for greater structural variety and giving more scope for tall hedgerow species including umbellifers such as Cow Parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, Rough Chervil *Chaerophyllum temulentum* and Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium* to persist more freely.

Mature standards recorded along the hedge included Pedunculate Oak, Ash, Silver Birch and *Hornbeam. The woody species constituting the main hedge included locally dominant *Hornbeam and *Field Maple *Acer campestre*, with frequently occurring Hawthorn and to a lesser extent; Hazel, Grey Willow and *Holly. Under-scrub climbing species adding structural variation included most commonly Bramble, with frequent Dog Rose *Rosa canina*, * Field Rose *Rosa arvensis*, Ivy and Cleavers *Galium aparine*. Tall herb vegetation included Rough Chervil (in flower at the time of survey), Hogweed and Cow Parsley (both of which had finished flowering at the time of survey).

Grasses more or less confined to the taller sward of the woodland edge/hedgerow included Cocksfoot, Wood False-brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, False Oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* and to a lesser extent Meadow Fescue *Festuca pratensis*, *Hairy Brome *Bromus ramosa*. These were accompanied by the main sward dominants Perennial Rye-grass, Rough Meadow-grass, Timothy Grass, Creeping Bent-grass and Yorkshire Fog.

Herb species included The attractive legumes Tufted Vetch *Vicia cracca* and Meadow Vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* as frequents, with other locally occurring species including Wood Dock *Rumex sanguineus*, *Bluebell, Lords and Ladies *Arum maculatum* and Ground Ivy.

Wetland:

A pond about 20 metres long by 15 metres wide was located immediately south east of the site entrance. Though the pond is included within the site ownership boundary, it has been fenced off for health and safety reasons.

The pond itself was heavily silted and clogged with leaves from the surrounding trees, which also created heavy shade over much of the pond which was virtually devoid of vegetation (other than algal blooms). Some minor interest was provided by the surrounding trees and typical woodland ground vegetation. Trees included mature Pedunculate Oak with *Hornbeam, Ash, *Field Maple and Grey Willow and Weeping Willow *Salix babylonica*, overhanging the water.

Bramble was abundant, forming a low scrub with climbers such as Ivy and Honeysuckle. Ground vegetation here was locally dominated by stands of Stinging Nettle. Tussocks of *Pendulous Sedge, *Remote Sedge *Carex remota* and Wood False-brome occupying the more open areas with herbs such as Wood Dock, Nipplewort *Lapsana communis* and the naturalised alien Montbretia *Crocasmia x crocosmiflora*. A fern species *Common Polypody *Polypodium vulgare* was also recorded here.



Habitat Evaluation

The Hornbeam dominated broadleaved woodland habitat constitutes a significant proportion of the site supporting a rather sparse ground flora, which, however, comprises a reasonable diversity of characteristic woodland plants. The 14 ancient woodland indicator species together with structural features such as wood-banks and the presence of multi-stemmed trees, strongly suggests that the site has a long history as managed woodland, possibly dating back to the Norman Conquest or before.

The woodland currently has rather a dark, heavily shaded interior, favourable only to Bluebell and Dog's Mercury and other shade-tolerant plants. Woodland ground flora species typical of more open woodland rides and in particular, warmth-loving woodland invertebrates are unable to thrive in such conditions. The clearings occupied by caravan berths provide some relief to this problem, however, the transition boundaries, where the grassland of these clearings meets the woodland edge, are too abrupt to be of great benefit to woodland species such as tall, ride edge flowering plants and the warmth-loving invertebrates associated with them.

The wildlife value of these areas could easily be enhanced by maintaining a more gentle transition zone including a two metre wide strip of longer sward between the woodland edge and shorter, amenity grassland of the general camping area.

The presence of Aspen in the site is a strong ecological positive. Aspen has been lost from many woodland sites in which it was once common, due to its relatively limited commercial value in managed woodlands.

Aspen, particularly the low growing suckers situated in sheltered, sunny, ride-edge conditions supports a range of specialist insect species which have become rare in Britain due to the decline in favourable management of the tree itself. Post war cessation of traditional coppice management, in Britain, has led to former coppice woodlands becoming neglected and subsequently becoming overgrown and shaded. Leading to the decline of many species requiring a more open, sunny habitat.

The woodland also included a resource of standing and fallen deadwood. The microhabitats provided by decaying wood support a range of declining 'deadwood'

fungi and invertebrate species and provide nesting sites, feeding grounds and refuges for species from a range of distinct taxa, including amphibians, birds and mammals such as bats. However, there was evidence that much of the site's deadwood had been removed from the woodland areas, excessive tidying of the woodland through removal of decaying wood diminishes the ecological value of the site.

Out of necessity, much of the open area of the site is maintained primarily from the general standpoint of providing comfort for the campers. The grassland is clearly mowed on a regular basis and some of the shrub borders between caravan berths are clipped. This management is not, however, altogether to the detriment of the wildlife. In many ways the openness of the site and presence of wildflowers in certain parts of the sward, provides additional habitat beneficial to certain woodland edge wildflowers and warmth-loving insects. The hedgerows surrounding the more open first field supported a good range of native hedgerow species and several species of characteristic hedgerow invertebrates including butterflies, bees and hoverflies were recorded in such habitats.

For the most part, the species composition of the grassland lacked diversity, being typical of improved grassland maintained for amenity purposes. A greater variety of grassland plant species were recorded in the woodland glades in the northwest section of the site with attractive flowering species such as Selfheal and Bugle appearing in the sward.

The site has some strong ecological assets in the presence of the Hornbeam dominated broadleaved woodland and the native hedgerows. Current management of the site has succeeded in creating an attractive and comfortable environment for the campers whilst providing valuable wildlife habitat. The results of the survey and habitat appraisal suggest that the ecological value of the Broomfield Farm Caravan Club site could be considerably enhanced by a few fairly minor adjustments to the current management regime. If undertaken, the site may attract a range of other interesting species, for example, butterflies and birds, characteristic of woodlands in this part of East Sussex, an area still supporting a wealth of native woodland habitats.



Species Information

BAP Species Seen: None

BAP Species Potential: Potential habitat for the SAP priority species the Poplar Leaf-rolling Weevil *Byctiscus populi*, Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* and Great-crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*, Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*. Bat species

Other Noteworthy Species: Aspen *Populus tremula*, Black-tailed Skimmer Dragonfly *Orthetrum cancellatum*, Hornet *Vespa crabro*, Greater-spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Flora:

No rare species of plant were found during the survey, the main ecological value of the vegetation recorded was more through the collective value of species characteristic of a particular habitat. The combined woodland and hedgerow habitats

supported a total of fourteen different species considered to be ‘ancient woodland indicators’ The ancient woodland indicators recorded included several tree species; Hornbeam, Aspen, Field Maple and Holly. Other scrub/hedgerow indicator species included Field Rose and Black Bryony. Whilst recorded ground flora indicators included Bluebell, Primrose, Remote Sedge, Pendulous Sedge, Wood Sedge, Hairy Brome, Wood Millet and Common Polypody. It is possible that certain plant species, such as certain spring flowering woodland ground flora species may have been overlooked due to the lateness of the survey and the ephemeral nature of the plants. Additional surveys during April and early May, may well turn up a greater variety of woodland species.

Avifauna:

Birds recorded included woodland species such as the Greater-spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopus major*, a species which often nests in over-mature trees or even standing deadwood. The Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*, also a tree-hole nesting species that often nests in old woodpecker holes, using mud to reduce the size of the entrance hole.

Other common bird species recorded in and around the woodland included: Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*, Chiffchaff *Pylloscopus collybita*, Great Tit *Parus major*, Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* Blackbird *Turdus merula* and Robin *Erithacus rubecula*.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* has been known to breed in the pond at the site entrance, as has Mallard Duck *Anas platyrhynchos*.

Invertebrates:

The allocated survey time meant that invertebrates recorded are representative of a tiny proportion of the true invertebrate population of the site only. Furthermore, many invertebrate taxa include species that are only active in an accessible, adult form for perhaps a few weeks in an entire year. Consequently, any invertebrate species recorded during the survey are those whose adult stage coincided with the survey time.

No rarities were recorded during the survey; however, some species of interest were recorded, most noteworthy of these being a Black-tailed Skimmer Dragonfly *Orthetrum cancellatum*, a striking powder-blue dragonfly with a black tail recorded at the edge of a wooded clearing to the northwest of the site and Hornet *Vespa crabro*, a local species, typically found in broadleaved woodland, where they live in large nests, often in old hollow trees. Hornet colonies often use the same area for nesting over a number of years. (NB: Despite their large size and menacing appearance, Hornets are not an aggressive species) one individual was recorded in the vicinity of the hedgerow, separating the main caravanning field from the wooded northwest area. Other species recorded were as follows: Common Green Grasshopper *Omocestus viridulus* and Field Grasshopper *Chorthippus brunneus* were recorded from the pasture adjoining the extreme, northwest end of the site. It is likely that the field grasshopper occurs on the site itself, since it favours short sward, however the Common Green Grasshopper, which has been cited as an indicator of old pasture, prefers longer sward and would require wider margins of taller sward than the site currently offers.

The only Heteropteran Bug recorded was the Common Green Shieldbug *Palomina prasina* nymphs of which were recorded on hedgerow vegetation.

Butterflies recorded included common grassland/hedgerow species the Large Skipper Butterfly *Ochlodes venatus*, Meadow Brown Butterfly *Maniola jurtina*, Gatekeeper Butterfly *Pyronia tithonus*, Large White Butterfly *Pieris brassicae* and Red Admiral Butterfly *Vanessa atalanta*. A common woodland edge species the Speckled Wood Butterfly *Parage aegeria* was also recorded. The only moth recorded at the site was the Mother of Pearl Moth *Pleuroptya ruralis* the larvae of which feed in rolled up Nettle leaves.

Two common species of hoverfly were recorded on hedgerow and wood edge flowers such as Bramble: Marmalade Hoverfly *Episyrphus balteatus* and the hoverfly *Zonaria pellucens* (Figure 3).



Figure 3: A Hoverfly *Zonaria pellucens*

A typical beetle found on hedgerow umbellifers the common Bloodsucker Soldier Beetle *Rhagonycha fulva* was found frequently throughout the site. The locally common Cream-spot Ladybird *Calvia quattuordecimguttata* was also recorded.

Three species of bumblebee were recorded The Buff-tailed Bumblebee *Bombus terrestris*, Common Carder Bee *B. pascuorum* and the Early Bumblebee *B. pratorum*. Though these species are all common, bumblebees are declining in the UK, due largely to the decline in the number and variety of flowering plants in hedgerows and grasslands. Another genus of bee recorded was a mining bee *Andrena* sp. recorded nectaring on Bramble in the hedgerow. All of the bee species recorded nest usually nest in the ground (Early Bumblebee may also nest above the ground in nest boxes, hollow trees etc.). Solitary bees and wasps are generally shy and harmless to man, ground nesting species such as these often benefit from the presence of patches of bare earth amidst grassland.

Herptofauna:

No reptile or amphibian species were recorded during the survey. The habitat is unlikely to be suitable for any of the British Reptiles other than possibly Slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*, Common Lizard *Lacerta vivipara* (only along the grassy hedgerow edge by the footpath running along the south-eastern part of the site's southwest boundary) and to a lesser extent, Grass Snake *Natrix natrix*. The proximity to waterbodies, such as the pond immediately east of the site entrance, coupled with the presence of fallen deadwood, logs and other recesses in the woodland area, gives the site reasonable potential to provide supplementary habitat for several amphibians.

Great-crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* spends much of its life on land, utilizing logs and crevices in tree roots etc. as refuges. Other commoner species such as the Common Toad *Bufo bufo*, Common Frog *Rana temporaria*, Smooth Newt *Triturus vulgaris* and Palmate Newt *T. helveticus*, could all theoretically utilise the habitats available on the site.

Mammals:

The only mammals recorded during the survey were Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* and Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*. The ex-coppice structure, juxtaposition with other coppice woodlands and abundance of Hazel at the site, provides potentially suitable habitat for Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*. No bats were recorded as the survey was conducted by day; however, the site provides suitable foraging habitat and potential roosting sites for certain bat species.



Species Evaluation

Whilst no rarities or Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species were recorded during the survey, the site was found to support an encouraging range of species, indicating that the site has potential, with the right management, to provide resources necessary for supporting interesting species characteristic of ancient woodland habitats in the broader, surrounding landscape, such as Dormouse and insects including butterflies such as the White Admiral and Silver-washed Fritillary *Argynnis paphia*.

The most ecologically important species assemblages recorded during the survey included the range of native woodland trees and inclusion of species such as Aspen and Hornbeam and dominance of ground flora species such as Bluebell, and presence of the grasses Wood Millet and Hairy Brome.

The invertebrate fauna would probably be greatly enhanced by minor changes in terms of habitat management such as leaving wider margins of taller grassland at the ride edges, and leaving more fallen and standing decaying wood *in situ*. Greater degrees of improvement could be affected by resurrecting coppice management in part of the woodland, to encourage more open areas.

Such management would enhance the habitat for woodland bird species and may encourage species such as Nightingale, Wood Warbler and Whitethroat to colonise the site. The site currently provides habitat for woodland birds such as Great-spotted Woodpecker and Nuthatch.

Management Recommendations

- Hedgerows increase width of tall grassland strip at the edge of woodland and hedgerows to at least two metres, allow at least some standing dead-wood to remain in hedgerows for the benefit of dead wood invertebrates, nesting birds and as potential bat roosts.
- Consider creating additional clearings/rides in the woodland, to provide greater structural diversity beneficial to woodland plants and animals requiring a more open habitat. This may be achieved by resurrecting a coppice system in

part of the woodland, ideally in an area where there are fewer mature or ancient trees. (besides the ecological benefits of coppicing, the wood produced from coppicing can be used in the production of coppice products). Several organisations have been set up in recent years to promote the revival of interest in traditional woodland management such as coppice. One such organisation, operating in the local area is the Sussex and Surrey Coppice Group contactable at their website at: <http://www.woodnet.org.uk/sscg/>

- Thinning of woodland: Selective felling of trees, especially dense new growth of trees such as Birch and Sycamore. This would enable greater light levels to penetrate the canopy in some areas of the site. Ideally management should be undertaken between October and early February, to minimise impact on nesting birds and other wildlife.
- Maintain at least some Aspen suckers in sunny positions at woodland edges and by hedgerows. These should ideally be allowed to grow for two to four years, and then cut. This should be done on rotation so that there is always some 1-4 year old Aspen growth available on the site in any given year. Several rare insect species depend on suckering Aspen, including the attractive Aspen Leaf-rolling Weevil *Byctiscus populi*, which has been recorded within a kilometre or two from the site.
- Consider creating/promoting some small patches of exposed bare ground in sunny, sheltered locations in the grassed areas of the woodland.
- Leave at least some fallen and standing deadwood *in situ*, this provides habitat for dead wood invertebrates, which, in turn provides a valuable food resource for insectivorous woodland birds such as woodpeckers and warblers. Outside of the breeding season in spring, fallen dead wood also provides shelter for amphibians such as Great-crested Newts *Triturus cristatus* and Common Toad *Bufo bufo*.
- Avoid depositing heaps of grass within the woodland area, decomposition of such material may have an adverse affect on the woodland ground flora, by acting as a mulch and also causing nutrient enrichment in the woodland soil, thus encouraging weed species such as docks, thistles and nettles to flourish at the expense of more sensitive woodland species.
- Consider dredging and replanting existing pond with native aquatic-plants, ideally of local provenance. Some branches of trees overhanging the pond would also need to be removed to allow greater light levels to reach the pond surface.

Further Suggestions to Enhance the Wildlife Value of the Site

- Consider positioning nest boxes in suitable locations both in the open caravan park and along the woodland rides, to provide nesting sites for birds and enhance the site's interest for campers.
- Consider positioning bat boxes within the woodland area to provide roosts (to compliment the existing roosts) and encourage bats in the woodland.
- Consider positioning bug boxes (i.e. boxes containing bamboo tubes, providing an artificial nesting site for solitary bee species and other insects.)
- Consider promoting the wildlife value of the site as a feature by providing interpretation material (leaflets /posters) and /or setting up a nature trail through the woodland.

Further Survey or Information Requirements

- More detailed surveys of ground flora in April/May.
- A survey to establish whether or not Dormice occur on the site and provision of management recommendations.
- A survey of bats on the site.
- Invertebrate surveys. To establish more detailed invertebrate records useful for informing management.