

LNR SUMMARY PLAN  
LIMEKILN HILL AND WEST PIT LNR

Cambridge City Council  
May 2001

## **SITE DETAILS**

Name: Limekiln Close (The Spinney) and West Pit are two parts of the reserve on either side of Limekiln Road

Local Planning Authority: Cambridge City Council

Nature of Legal Interest: Owned by Cambridge City Council. Lease of Limekiln Hill held by Wildlife Trust for Cambridgeshire (WT). Leasehold of West Pit - part by Wildlife Trust and part by the Caravan Club.

### **LIME KILN PIT (The Spinney)**

Area: 2.7 Hectares

Grid Ref: TL 486 562

Warden: David Seilley (excuse me if I have spelt it wrong)

Conservation Status: Statutory LNR declared 1992. City Wildlife Site which qualifies as a County Wildlife Site. It is within a Wildlife Corridor in Cambridge Local Plan. Lime Kiln Close was previously part of the SSSI (1949-1986)

Bye Laws: No Bye Laws are in force

Access: The site has free open access throughout. There are pedestrian access points from Lime Kiln Hill.

### **WEST PIT**

Area: 4.4 Hectares

Grid Ref: TL 483 557

Warden: David Seilley for the areas leased by the WT.

Conservation Status: Part of the site is an SSSI (Wildlife Trust lease). The site is within a Wildlife Corridor in Cambridge Local Plan.

Bye Laws: No Bye Laws are in force.

Access: The site is effectively split in two. The Caravan Club Site is private; the WT site has free, open access. Access to both sites is from Lime Kiln Hill. Only pedestrian access to WT site.

# Lime Kiln Close

## Site Description

Lime Kiln Close is a medieval chalk quarry on the south east outskirts of Cambridge. To the south and southwest lie two more recent and larger pits that comprise part of an SSSI. The residential area of Cherry Hinton lies to the north, east and west.

The site lies on the Cretaceous Lower Chalk.

Five vegetation communities have been identified; bare chalk; calcicolous grassland, ruderal vegetation; scrub and high ash woodland. The Ash woodland contains a high proportion of mature Field Maple and Wild Cherry. A few of the trees are at least 150 years old. The Wild Cherry was first recorded on the site in 1685. Shrub species typical of chalk occur - Wayfaring Tree, Common Dogwood and Common Privet. Some very old Traveller's Joy and Ivy festoon the trees. The woods on this site together with those on West Pit are the only examples of this woodland community in the area.

Calcicolous grassland of the type is increasingly rare in the region. *Lonicera caprifolium* (introduced Honeysuckle type), Milk Vetch, and Meadow Cranesbill are found on the site. The remaining chalk grassland at Lime Kiln Close takes its place alongside similar vegetation in the neighbouring pits and on road verges in the immediate vicinity that together are home to a number of nationally scarce plants including bryophyte species. The amount of chalk grassland habitat is declining in the general area.

The coarse grassland/ruderal vegetation is of importance to some birds and many insect species. The elder scrub is dominated by Traveller's Joy. It is a key habitat for nesting birds.

The species diversity within the woodland and coarse grassland is relatively low but much greater in the chalk grassland. The mosaic of 5 distinct communities encourages diversity of fauna as well as flora.

The areas of chalk grassland, in the absence of grazing or grassland management, undergo successional change to coarse grasses, scrub and eventually trees. The denotification of the site from SSSI status was due in part to the development of natural succession from chalk grassland to areas of scrub and mature Ash woodland.

The site is important for birds and 27 were recorded as probably breeding within the reserve, and although none of these were rare, the high density on a small urban area is unusual. Sparrowhawks successfully bred in 1990. No reptiles have been recorded. Notable Lepidoptera species (butterflies and moths) have been recorded.

## Objectives

The key objective of the urban Local Nature Reserves is to conserve and enhance the existing wildlife habitat and species for the continued enjoyment of the community.

## Site Objectives

- 1 To maintain, enhance and increase the area of species-rich chalk grassland.

- 2 To maintain the habitat diversity of the site, and conserve notable species.
- 3 To create and maintain glades in the wooded areas.
- 4 To monitor changes so that there is a continuous feedback and the need for management changes can be detected.
- 5 To maintain and enhance access opportunities and use of site by local people while ensuring key objective of the site.
- 6 To enhance the educational value of the site.

### **Main Management Operations**

- 1.1 To mow the areas of chalk grassland 3 times per year. If a rotary mower can be used it may not be essential to remove cuttings.
- 1.2 Remove leaf litter.
- 2.1 To cut the areas of coarse grassland 1/2 times per year removing all cuttings but noting areas of Meadow Cranesbill to ensure that these are allowed to set seed.
- 2.2 Coppice areas of scrub on an 6-9 year cycle in four compartments. Remove all arisings.
- 2.3 To keep existing example of Milk Vetch free from encroachment by Traveller's Joy and Bramble.
- 2.4 To keep areas of *Lonicera caprifolium* free from Traveller's Joy.
- 2.5 To pull up or cut down any Sycamore found on site.
- 3.1 Maintain and or enlarge glades in the Ash woodland by cutting.
- 3.2 Maintain ground flora of glades and encourage chalk grassland to develop. This may mean creating one substantial glade rather than several small ones to allow increased light levels.
- 4.1 Monitor 2m quadrats as a means of assessing the results of management.
- 4.2 Base line survey including birds, and insects
- 4.3 Monitor effects of coppicing on *Dipsacus strigosus* (Introduced Teasel type)
- 5.1 Encourage a community interest group
- 5.2 Keep paths clear
- 5.3 Maintain the perimeter fence.
- 5.4 Consider adopting Bye Laws
- 5.5 Remove dumped household rubbish
- 6.1 Provide interpretive board
- 6.2 Maintain nature trail including way markers
- 6.3 Produce leaflet

### **Site Maps**

Map 1 shows the location of the main habitats.

Map 2 shows the desired state of the site.

Map 3 shows the different management operations and the area to which they apply







5.3	Maintain fence	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going
5.4	Consider Bye Laws									
5.4	Remove household rubbish									
6.1	Provide board									
6.2	Maintain trail	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going
6.3	Produce leaflet				Update leaflet					

This table ascribes actions to various partner organisations within the Steering Group. The management of the site is a partnership. The actions will be under constant review to improve and refine management procedures. Major departures from the programme will be reported back to the Steering Group.

The partner organisations sign up to the management programme, and even where an action is ascribed to an organisation, if there is any doubt, or any possibility that the management prescriptions would be enhanced by partnership discussion and participation, it is expected that this course will be taken.

With agreement from the Wildlife Trust the City Council will undertake the routine tasks of management and maintenance of the site. The Wildlife Trust will underwrite tasks that need to be carried out in a sensitive manner or which can be carried out by voluntary/community action groups or surveys by specialists.

All funding requests and applications for grant aid are to be initiated by the Steering Group.

	Wildlife Trust
	Cambridge City Council
	Cambridge City Council in consultation with the Steering Group
	Wildlife Trust in consultation with the Steering Group

Contact: Helen Hepburn, Planning Department, Cambridge City Council, The Guildhall, Cambridge  
Wildlife Trust

## West Pit

### Site Description

West Pit is a more recent quarry than Limekiln Close and older than East Pit on the opposite side of Limekiln Road. To the north and west lies the residential area of Cherry Hinton with Netherhall School playing field to the immediate west.

The reserve lies on the Cretaceous Lower chalk.

Part of West Pit is a SSSI along with East Pit and some roadside verges. West Pit, like Limekiln Close, has experienced succession to scrub and Ash woodland, while the more recent East Pit still has habitat representative of the early stages of succession on bare chalk.

West Pit along with Limekiln Close are the only examples of Ash woodland community in the area, although unlike the woodland developing in Limekiln Close it does not contain a high proportion of Field Maple and Wild Cherry.

The woodland and scrub have developed on the quarry slopes. The bottom of the quarry leased by the Caravan Club is closely mown grass. There are continual problems with dislodged chalk falling down the slopes to the Caravan Club Site.

Notable plant species for the SSSI include Great Pignut, Moon Carrot and Grape Hyacinth. The other rare plant recorded is Perennial Flax. Many specimens of these plants grow along the road verges as well as within the quarry areas. \*\*This info is for the whole SSSI.

The area is important for birds and insects although there are no known surveys for these species.

### Objectives

The key objective of the urban Local Nature Reserves is to conserve and enhance the existing wildlife habitats and species for the continued enjoyment of the community.

### Site Objectives

- 1 To maintain, enhance and increase the area of species-rich chalk grassland.
- 2 To maintain the habitat diversity of the site, and conserve notable species.
- 3 To create and maintain glades in the wooded areas.

- 4 To monitor changes so that there is a continuous feedback and the need for management changes can be detected.
- 5 To liaise with Caravan Club regarding their operations and to ensure that management wherever possible benefits wildlife.
- 6 To maintain and enhance access opportunities and use of site by local people while ensuring key objective of the site.
- 6 To enhance the educational value of the site.

### **Main Management Operations**

- 1.1 To mow the areas of chalk grassland 3 times per year. If a rotary cutter is used it may not be necessary to remove cuttings
- 1.2 Remove leaf litter.
- 2.1 To cut the areas of coarse grassland 1/2 times per year removing all cuttings
- 2.2 Coppice areas of scrub on an 6-9 year cycle in four compartments. Remove all arisings.
- 2.3 To pull up or cut down any Sycamore found on site.
- 3.1 Maintain and or enlarge glades in the Ash woodland by cutting.
- 3.2 Maintain ground flora of glades and encourage chalk grassland to develop. This may mean creating one substantial glade rather than several small ones to allow increased light levels.
- 4.1 Base line survey including birds, and insects
- 5.1 Wildlife expert to visit Caravan Club Site at least once per year to establish open communication channel.
- 6.1 Encourage a community interest group
- 6.2 Consider adopting Bye Laws
- 6.3 Keep paths clear
- 6.4 Maintain the perimeter fence.
- 6.5 Erect and maintain fences to protect steep slopes
- 6.6 Remove dumped household rubbish
- 7.1 Provide interpretive board
- 7.2 Maintain nature trail including way markers
- 7.3 Produce leaflet

### **Site Maps**

Map 1 shows the location of the main habitats.

Map 2 shows the desired state of the site.

Map 3 shows the different management operations and the area to which they apply







6.5	Erect internal fences	Erect internal fences	Erect internal fences	Erect internal fences	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going
6.6	Remove household rubbish									
7.1	Provide board									
7.2	Maintain trail	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going
7.3	Produce leaflet				Update leaflet					

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