

Warwickshire Sites Of Importance for Nature Conservation: Wildlife Site Evaluation Form

(Refer to guidelines for completion)

Site Name: Berkswell Moss	Site Ref: SP27 P2	Grid Ref: SP 253794
Local Authority Area: Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council		Date Selected:
<p>Summary:</p> <p>Berkswell Moss is a small example of a basin mire, ie a fen on deep peat with a limited through flow of water. The site contains a large population of the locally rare plant Marsh Cinquefoil as well as a locally rare Bulrush Swamp vegetation type.</p>		
Site description:		Area: 0.09ha
<p>Berkswell Moss is a small 0.09ha area of basin mire situated on Home Farm, Berkswell Estate in Solihull. This mire has developed in a pond and contains a continuous cover of Schwingmoor (floating fen peat) substrate. There are no similar features in the area although the Berkswell Marsh SSSI (a valley mire) occurs approximately 2km to the west. Marshland vegetation is otherwise absent in this area of Solihull which is predominantly arable with some improved grassland. A small area of broad-leaved semi-natural woodland is immediately adjacent to the east of the moss.</p> <p>The vegetation is best classified as S12d <i>Typha latifolia</i> swamp <i>Carex rostrata</i> sub community. Bulrush (<i>Typha latifolia</i>) and Marsh Cinquefoil (<i>Potentilla palustris</i>) are abundant with frequent Common Marsh-bedstraw (<i>Galium palustre</i>). Occasional frequency species include Soft-rush (<i>Juncus effusus</i>), Marsh Thistle (<i>Cirsium palustre</i>), Water-plantain (<i>Alisma plantago-aquatica</i>), Duckweed (<i>Lemna</i>), Gipsywort (<i>Lycopus europaeus</i>), Bittersweet (<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>) and Marsh Willowherb (<i>Epilobium palustre</i>). Rare frequency species include Bottle Sedge (<i>Carex rostrata</i>), Hairy Sedge (<i>Carex hirta</i>), Tussock Grass (<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>), Field Horsetail (<i>Equisetum arvense</i>), Brambles (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>), Broad-leaved dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>), Tufted Forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis laxa</i>) and Lesser Spearwort (<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>). The field layer is also well developed and includes Bog Moss (<i>Sphagnum squarrosum</i>) at a rare frequency. Marginal Grey Willow (<i>Salix cinerea</i>) scrub is present around most of the moss.</p> <p>The first edition Ordnance Survey Map shows the area, with its current boundaries as a pond.</p>		
Phase 1 Habitats present:		
Basin Mire		

Evaluation against the criteria												
Habitat criteria applied: Mires and Wetlands												
SCIENTIFIC CRITERIA	Elements of the criteria applying to the site						COMMUNITY CRITERIA	Elements of the criteria applying to the site				
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5
Diversity	3			SR			Physical & Visual Access					
Rarity	3						Educational Value					
Size							Community & Amenity Value					
Naturalness	3						Aesthetic Appeal & Landscape			3	3	
Fragility		3					Geographical Position	3	3			
Typicalness	3	3					Recorded History					
Ecological Position		3					Continuity of Landuse	3				
Significant Populations	3											
Potential Value												

Why this site qualifies as a Wildlife Site: Summary of assessment

Berkswell Moss qualifies for eight scientific criteria and five community criteria from the mires and wetlands criteria set. The most important aspects of the SINC are its rarity, naturalness and typicalness.

In terms of rarity basin mires are very rare in Warwickshire, only a few examples exist. Schwingmoor is extremely rare in the county and of national importance. S12d vegetation is also very rare in the county, this being the only occurrence identified so far. Marsh Cinquifol is a rare plant in the county. The population here is large and therefore is likely to represent a high proportion of the Warwickshire population.

The vegetation and mire structure are good, natural examples and, given the successional Sere, must be long established.

The site makes a valuable, and perhaps unique, contribution to the limited range of mire types in Warwickshire.

Sources of Information : WSP & HBA		Recorder Site No: NA	Ecosite No: NA
Survey Details:			
Date:	Survey Type:	Surveyors:	Location of records
29/08/2001	Phase II	Jeff Waddell	Wildlife Sites Project
03/06/1997	Phase I	Reg Elliot et all	Habitat Biodiversity Audit
<p>Any Other Information:</p> <p>Not previously designated as a SINC.</p>			
Completed By: Jeff Waddell Date: 07/09/2001		Map attached: Yes Species list attached: Plant	
Passed by Sites Selection Panel:		Yes / No / Further survey required:	(circle as appropriate)
Signed:		candidate Wildlife Site	Date:

