

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Evidence

Section 1: Analysis of local ecological data

Section 2: Nature sites report

ANALYSIS OF LOCAL ECOLOGICAL DATA

Following the strong positive results from the Neighbourhood Plan survey in response to questions related to protecting and enhancing the natural environment, contact was made with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) in order to obtain information held by them related to the parish and surrounding area. SWT have already been involved in the preparation of key documents for the AONB, Cannock Chase District Council (CCDC) and Staffordshire County Council.

SWT manage a number of important wildlife sites around the parish and have carried out limited mapping and survey of the area. Fig 1 shows the location of the key wildlife sites in and around the parish. Fig 2 and Table 1 show currently identified nature conservation sites within the parish and how these relate geographically to sites just outside the parish.

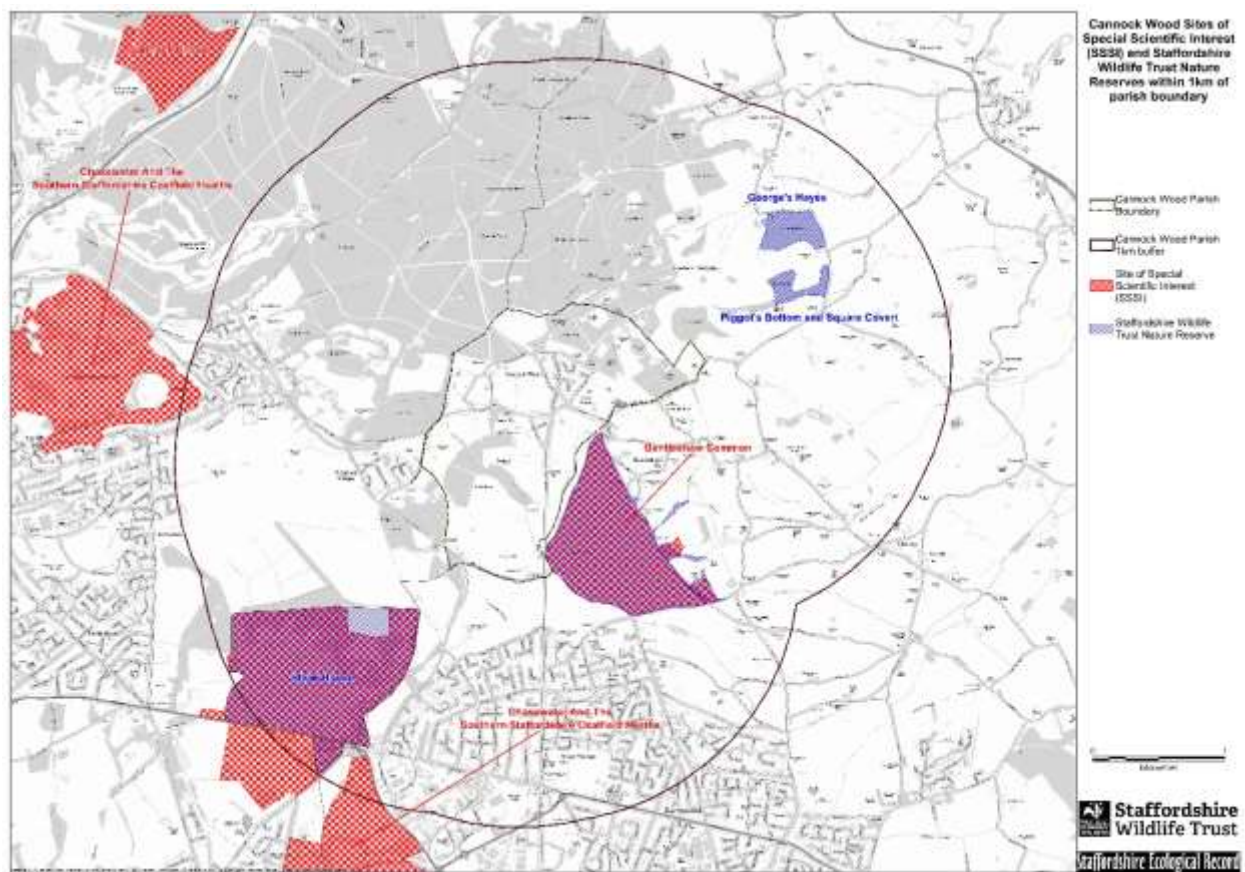


Fig 1: Nature Conservation Sites around Cannock Wood

Nature Conservation Sites within Cannock Wood Parish (SK047119)

Note: Badger records are excluded, and only 100m precision sightings are plotted

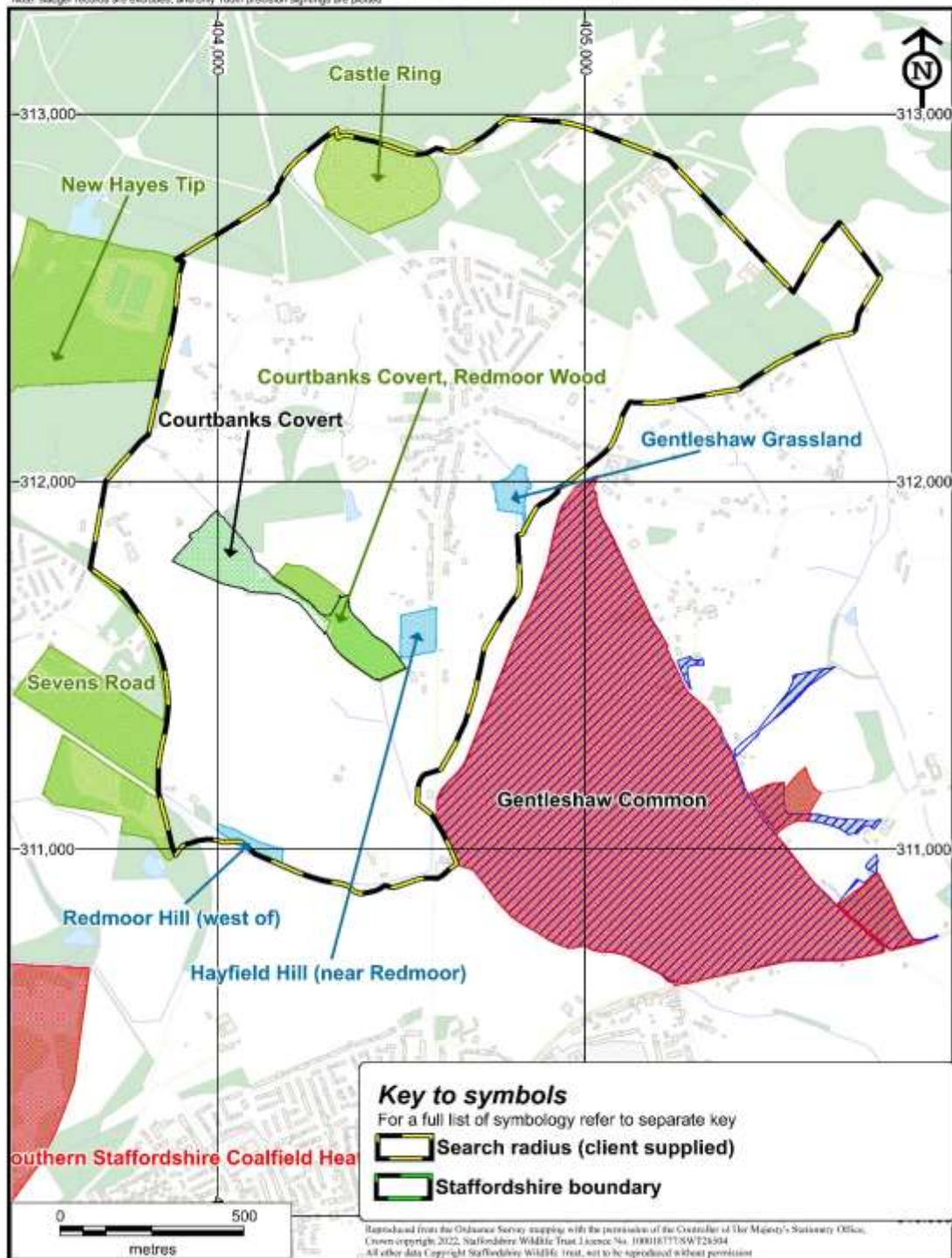


Fig 2: Identified Nature Conservation Sites in the immediate parish area.

Table 1: List of non-statutory biological/ecological sites: N/A of Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan (SK047119) produced 3/2/2022

SiteID	Grid Ref.	Site Name	Status	Year	Abstract
01-31-72	SK037112	Sevens Road	Local Wildlife Site	2019	Species-rich semi-improved neutral grassland with areas of bare ground, marshy grassland and associated habitats; tall ruderal, semi-natural broad-leaved woodland and ponds.
01-32-64	SK036124	New Hayes Tip	Local Wildlife Site	2009	An area of colliery spoil with typical ruderal vegetation which also includes common spotted orchids, and has been known to support breeding lapwings.
01-41-00	SK040110	Redmoor Hill (west of)	Biodiversity Alert Site	2019	Dry heath/acid grassland mosaic, with areas of continuous Bracken.
01-41-36	SK043116	Courtbanks Covert, Redmoor Wood	Local Wildlife Site	1990	Ancient semi-natural woodland remnant containing a site of archaeological interest.
01-41-56	SK045116	Hayfield Hill (near Redmoor)	Retained BAS	2005	Two small fields with still species rich semi-improved neutral grassland.
01-41-89	SK048119	Gentleshaw Grassland	Biodiversity Alert Site	2019	Semi-improved neutral grassland with flushes and areas of marshy grassland, surrounded by scattered trees.
01-42-49	SK044129	Castle Ring	Local Wildlife Site	2019	A dry heath/acid grassland mosaic, with marshy grassland and flush. The site includes an Iron Age hill fort. Included in the Heathland Inventory for Staffordshire.

In addition to this list, Nunswell Park was historically listed as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) but has not been recently surveyed to current criteria. The Parish Council has written to CCDC

asking for the park to be re-surveyed. Other potential Local Wildlife Sites may exist in the parish but these need to be identified and surveyed. In many counties, the percentage of land covered by Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is less than 10% of that covered by LWS which illustrates the importance of the latter as wildlife havens, stepping-stones and highways between wildlife-rich sites.

The parish contains a variety of habitats. SWT have identified these (largely from desk studies and aerial maps plus some 'on the ground data' as:

- Grassland
- Wetland
- Woodland
- Heathland

The areas in which each habitat predominates is shown on the Cannock Wood Habitat Map (Fig 3).

The legends of the symbols and coloration used throughout this summary are presented in Annex A.

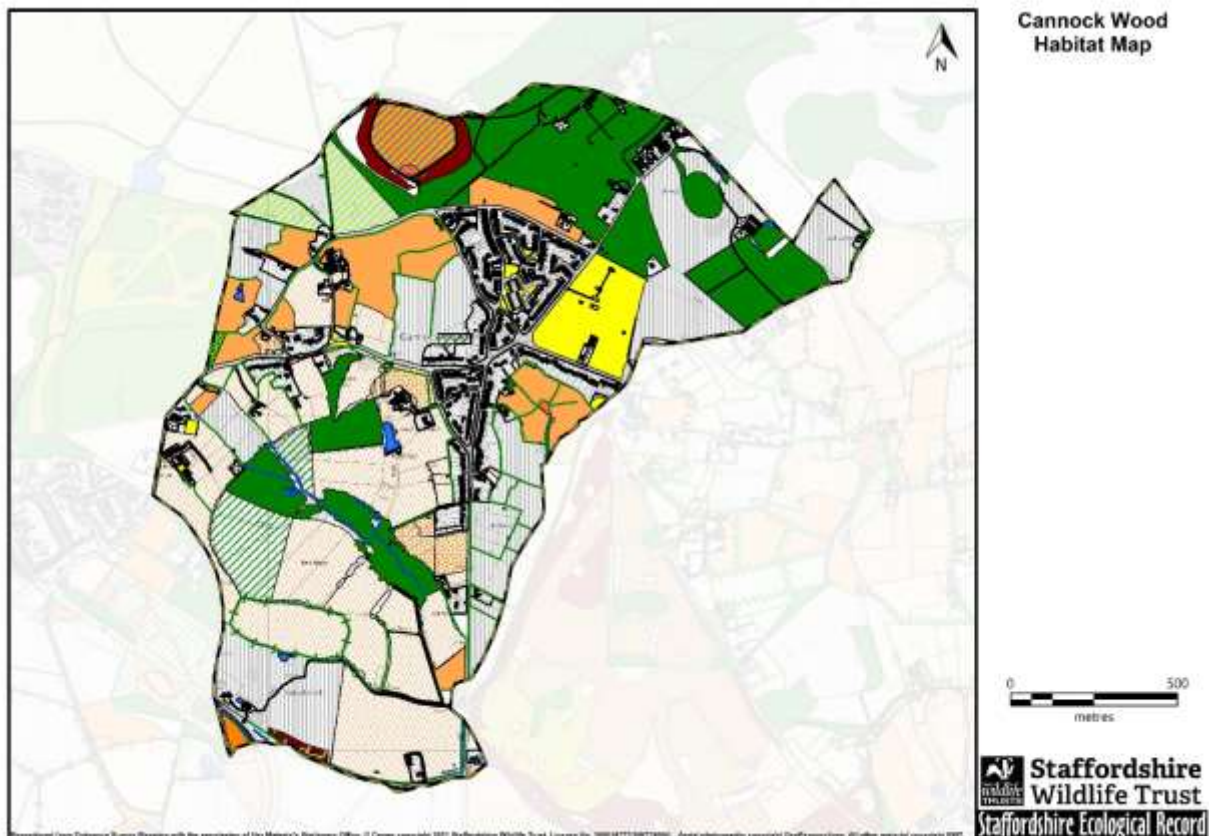


Fig 3: Cannock Wood Habitat Map

The map does not include detailed data on species present but uses the habitat classifications as an indicator of the biodiversity expected to be present. The map can be used to identify areas of high biodiversity which should be given the highest levels of protection from development and which are prime candidates for improvement as well as semi-natural areas of medium value which could be improved and where development should be avoided if at all possible. Both these area types could potentially be put forward by landowners as potential Biodiversity Net Gain sites. The map also helps to identify possible wildlife corridors.

Building on the Habitat Mapping, a Strategic Habitat Area Map can be developed (Fig 4). This consists of a grid of squares on 100mx100m resolution. The map ranks in a simple manner the importance of smaller areas of land than the Habitat map based on the % of natural various or semi-natural habitat:

Strategic	>20%
Semi-strategic	5-20%
Non-strategic	<5%

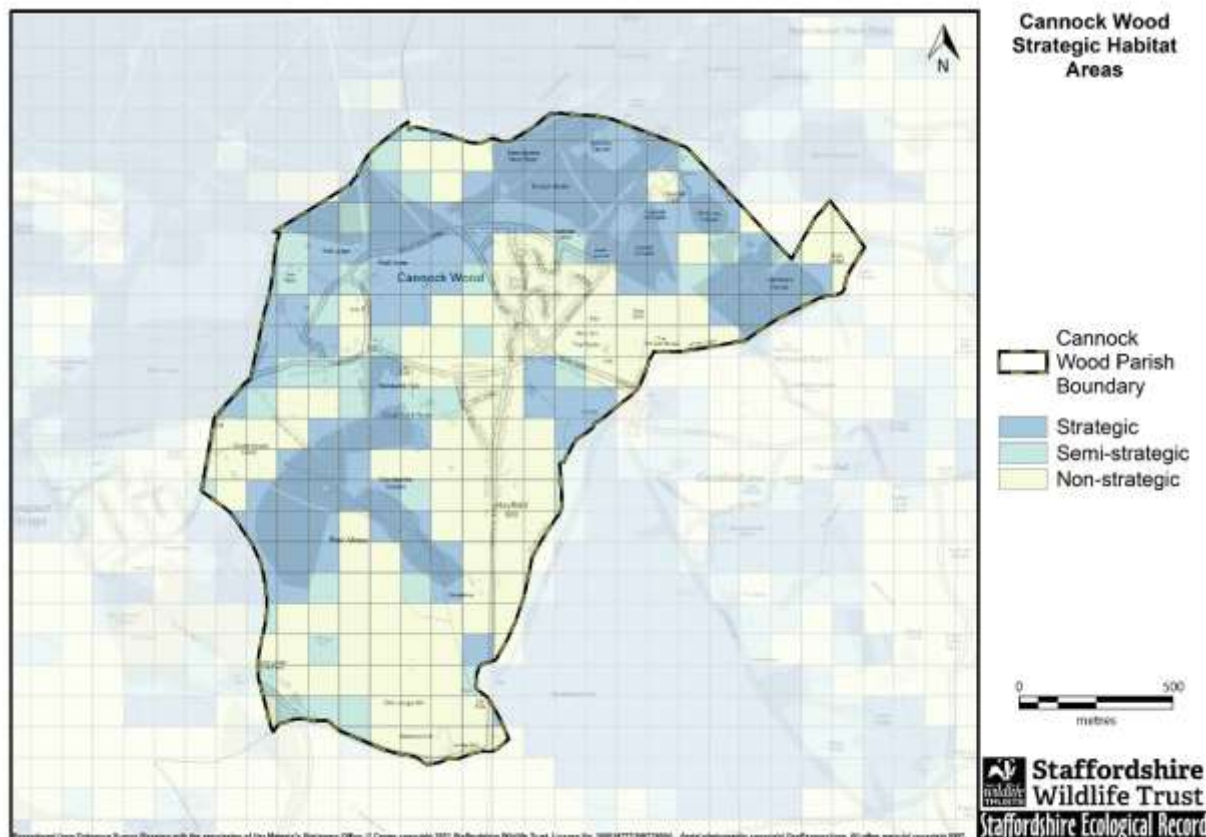


Fig 4: Strategic Habitat Map

As can be seen from Fig 4, the Strategic areas are often linked through semi-strategic areas which should be considered as areas for habitat improvement. Linkage of areas of high biodiversity through corridors or 'stepping stones' is considered vitally important both to allow species to move should a disaster hit one particular area and also to reduce in-breeding which

can occur within an isolated community. These aspirations are reflected in Government documents including the Lawson Report, Environment Bill and NPPF.

By assessing the location and estimating the quality of the different habitat types and including data from other sources in an Ecological Modelling software programme (Condatis), High Connectivity Opportunity Maps can be developed (Figs 5-9). These show on a broad scale where various type of habitat exist, if they are already connected and where to direct efforts which could be used to improve connectivity.

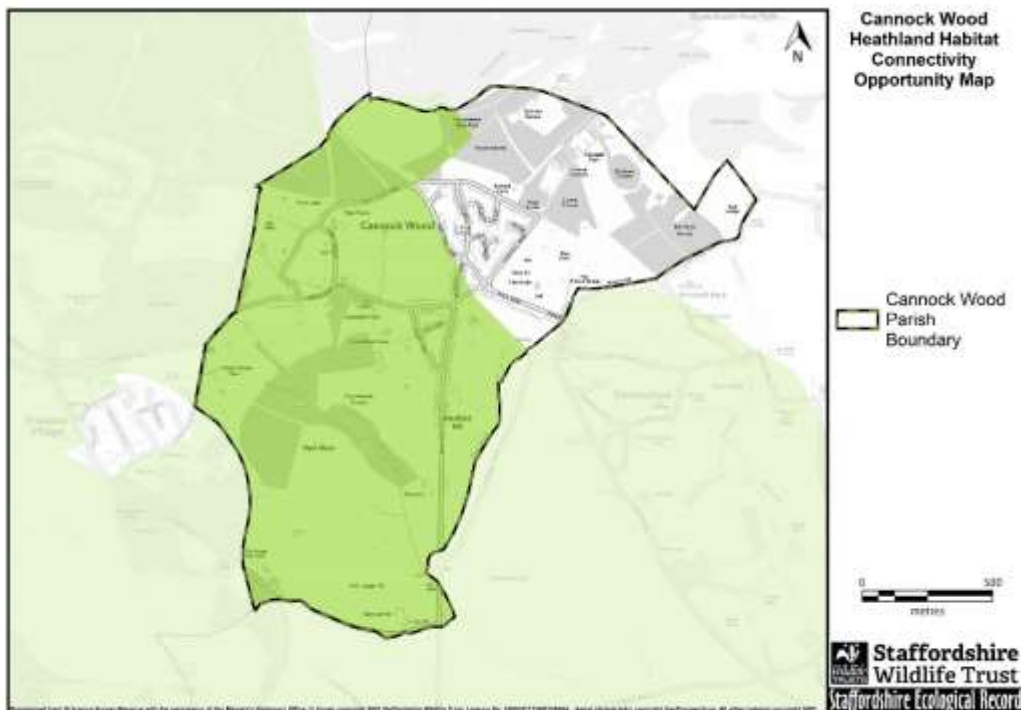


Fig 5: Heathland Habitat Connectivity Opportunity Map

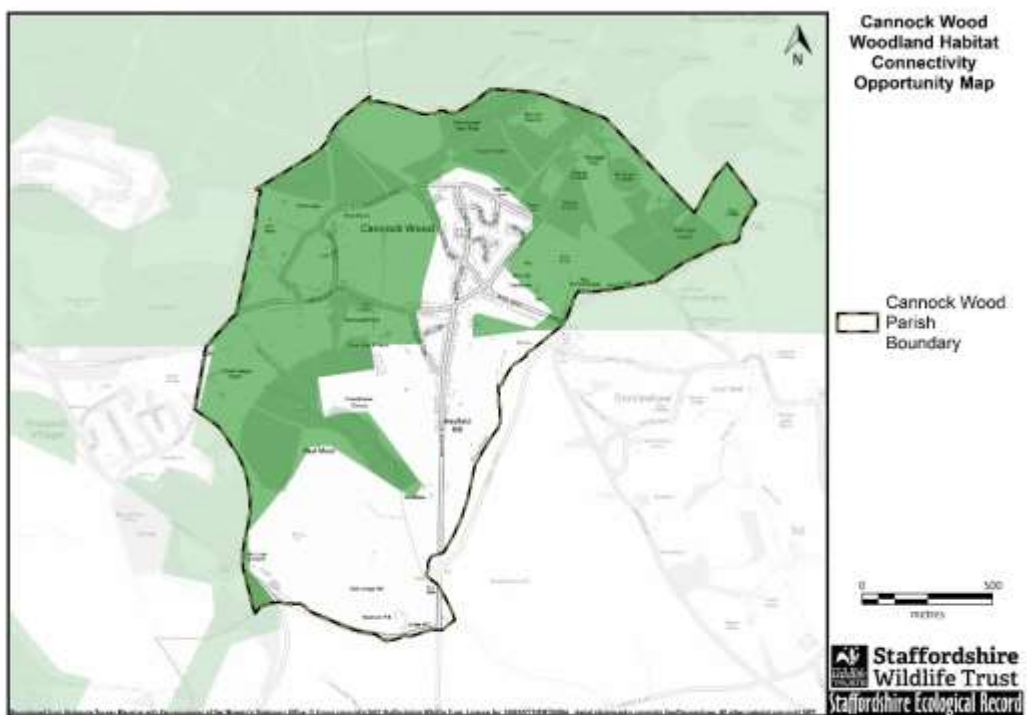


Fig 6: Woodland Connectivity Opportunity Map

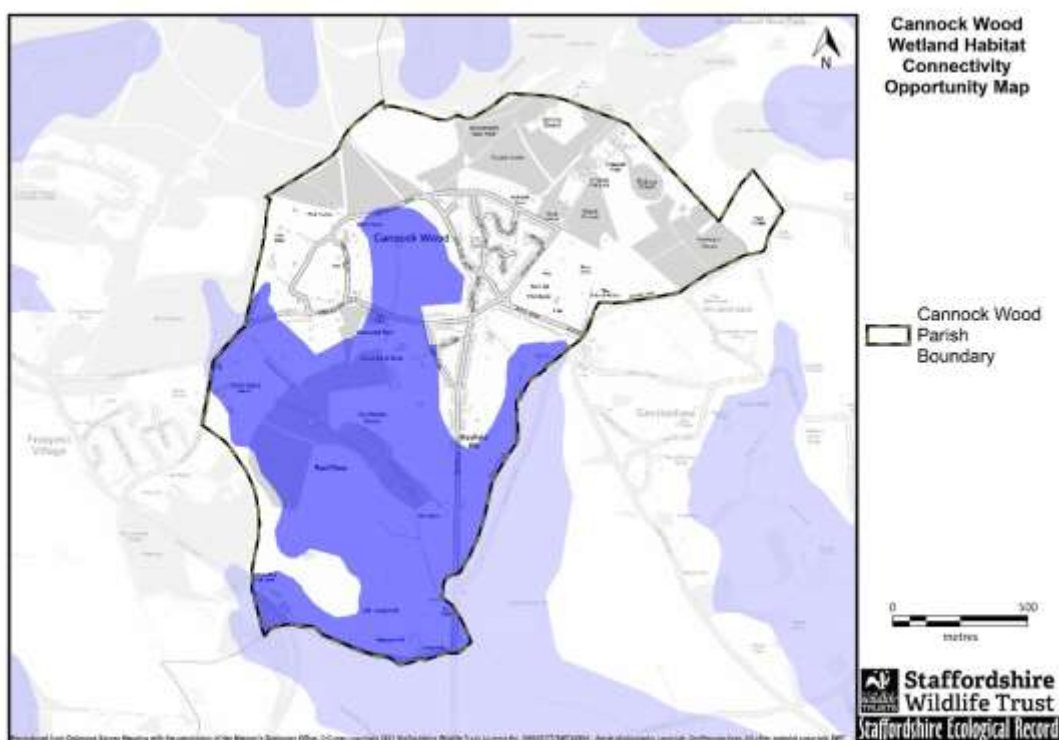


Fig 7: Wetland Habitat Connectivity Map

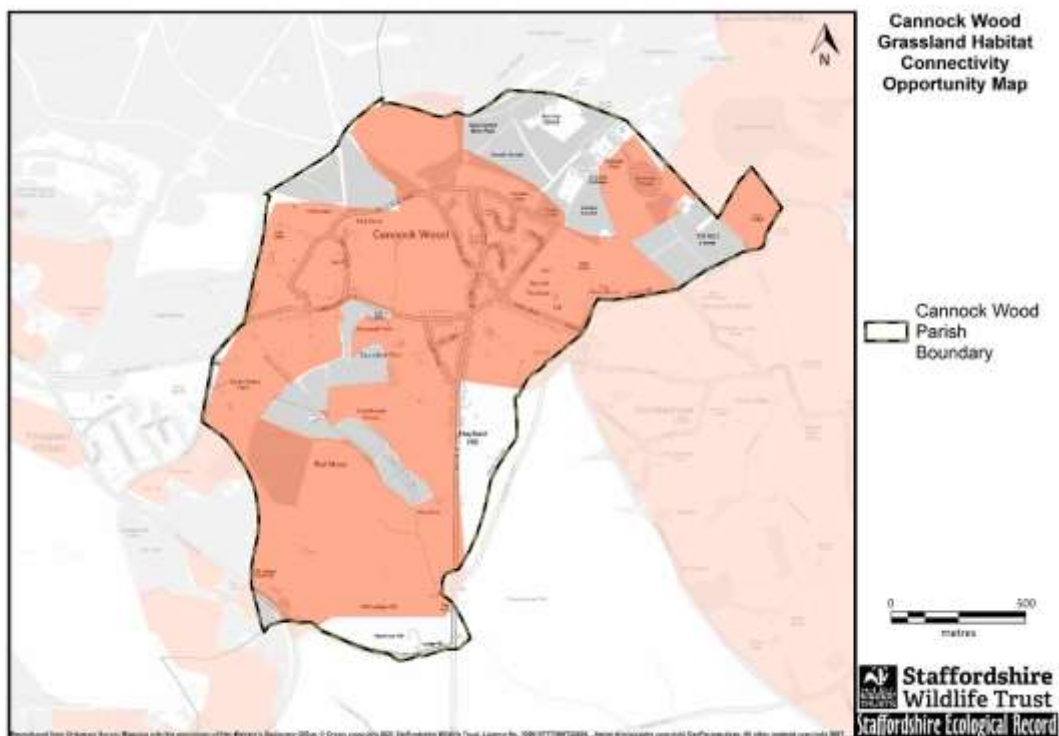


Fig 8: Grassland Connectivity Opportunity Map

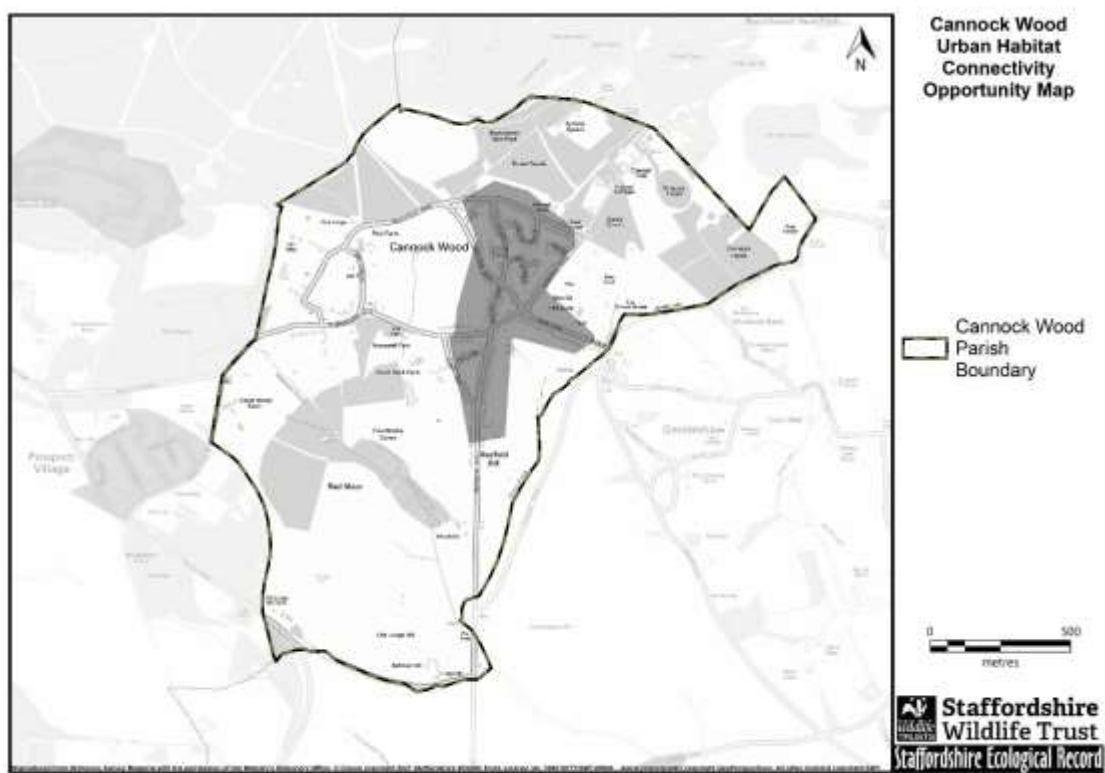


Fig 9: Urban Habitat Connectivity Opportunity Map

These HCO maps are fairly coarse as they were designed to work at a large scale and incorporate only one habitat type. Clearly it is impractical in most circumstances to use these maps to identify priorities for development of corridors and developing a Nature Recovery Network.

In order to refine the Connectivity Opportunity maps, the data is reviewed against local expert knowledge including the location of potential connectivity barriers, known local habitat connection priorities and plans. In this way, Condatis can model habitat gaps and the resistance to 'flow' through the landscape and suggest priority green (land) and blue (wetland/water) corridors (fig 10). These green and blue corridors provide a more local context of connectivity, either existing or potential i.e. they represent the areas which already provide habitat connectivity and areas where we may wish to look at improving connectivity in line with the broader HCO areas.

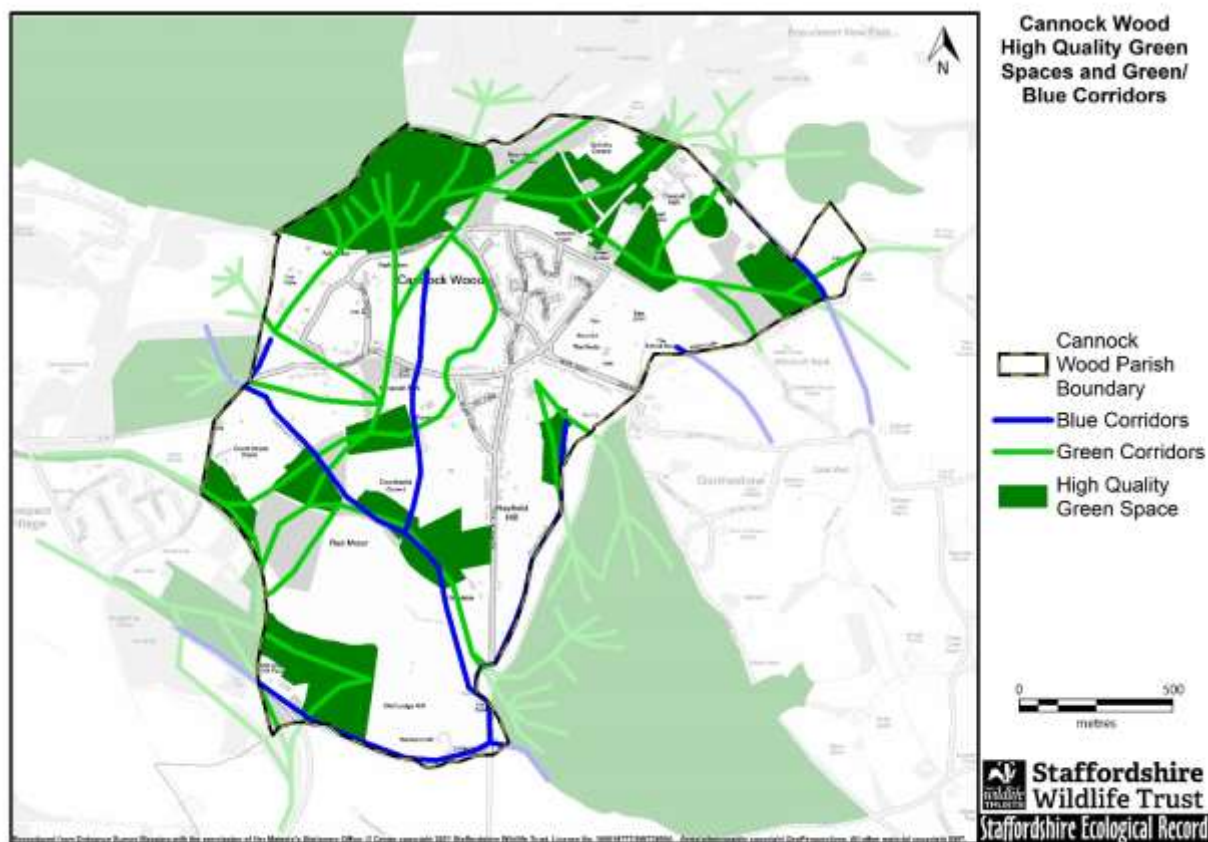


Fig 10 – Priority Connectivity Routes

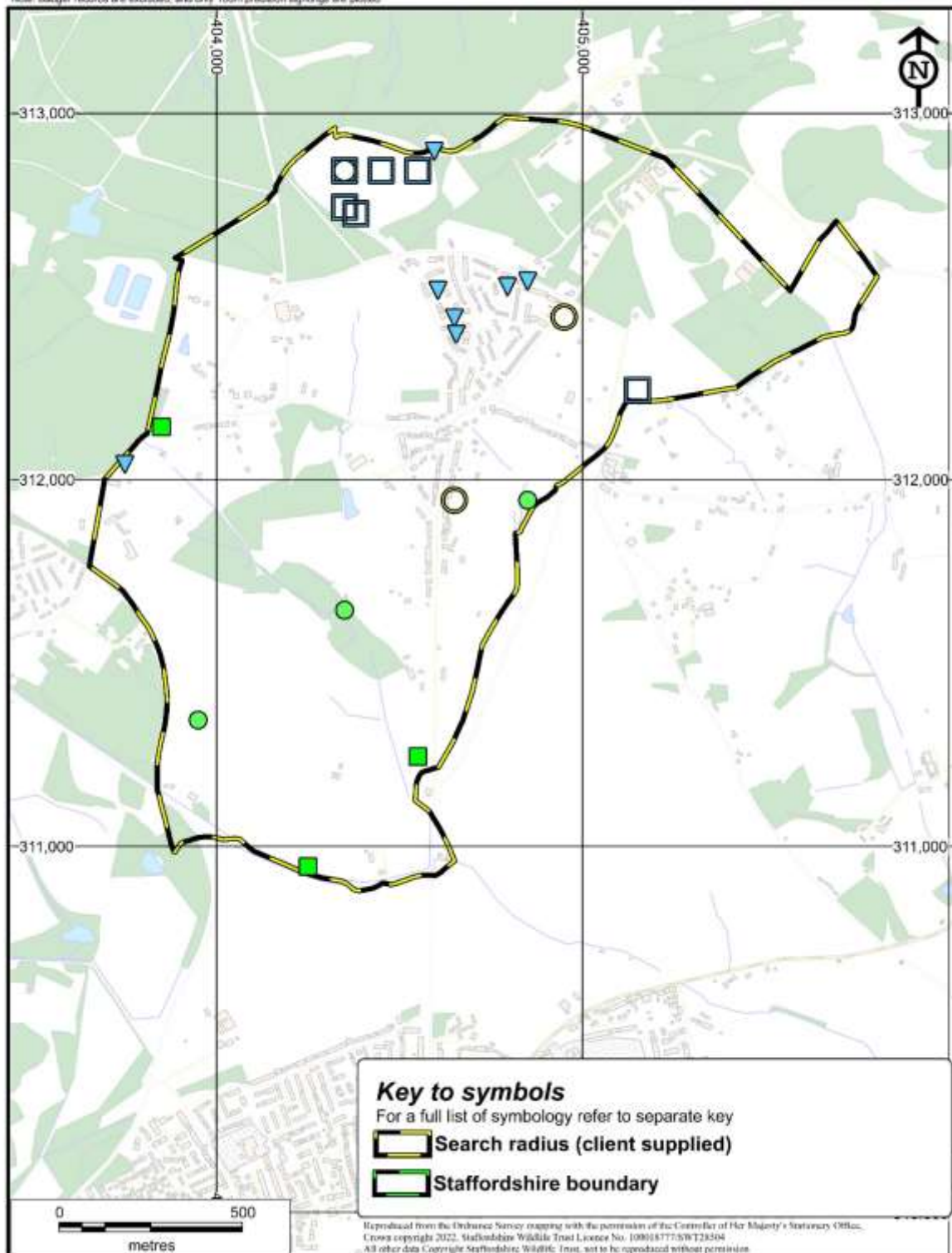
None of the analysis presented above depends on detailed analyses of species present. To do this requires that Ecological Surveys are carried out and data from known species reports

considered. Fig 11 shows the data currently available. Information on species sightings can be reported online to the Staffordshire Ecological Record www.staffs-ecology.org.uk . Data on ancient trees can be reported to the Woodland Trust www.ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk who maintain an inventory. Requests to protect a tree with a tree preservation order (TPO) or queries on damage to suspected trees covered by a TPO can be reported to CCDC – www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk tree management.

Reporting sightings and important natural features helps to provide a better picture of our local environment and may help to protect it.

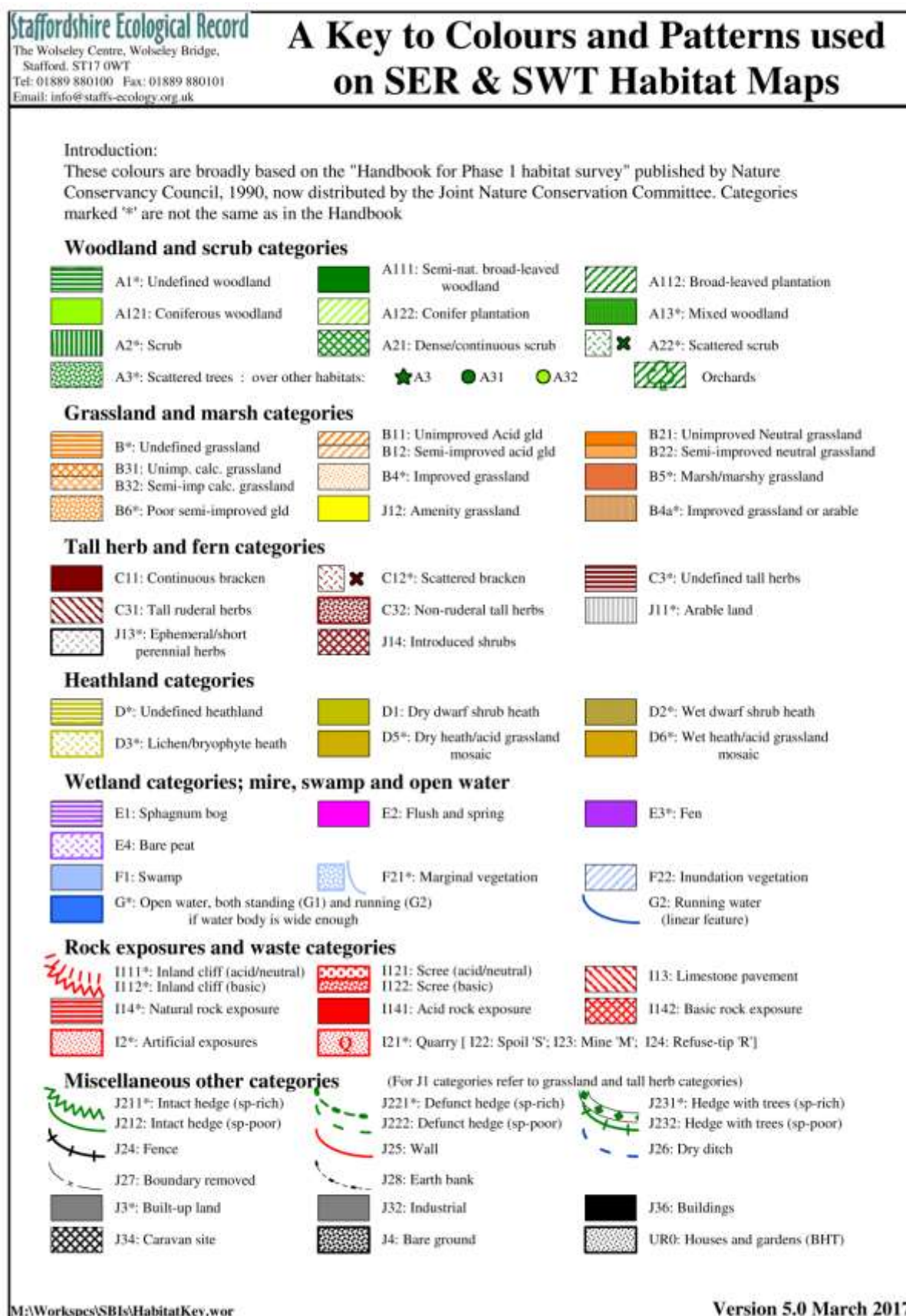
Nature Conservation Sites within Cannock Wood Parish (SK047119)

Note: Badger records are excluded, and only 100m precision sightings are plotted



APPENDIX 1 – KEY TO FIGURES

1.1 Habitat Key



1.2 Nature conservation sites and species

Staffordshire Ecological Record The Wolsley Centre, Wolsley Bridge, Stafford, ST17 0WT Tel: 01889 880100 Fax: 01889 880101 Email: info@staffs-ecology.org.uk	<h1>A legend to the map showing Nature Conservation Sites and Species</h1>																																
<p>Introduction</p> <p>These colours are used on the site alert mapping within the SWT GIS, but SER cannot guarantee the same colours are used in any other mapping system, particularly those based on ArcView.</p>																																	
<p>Statutory Designations from Natural England's web-site</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td>National Nature Reserves</td> <td>★</td> <td>NNR (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sites of Special Scientific Interest</td> <td>★</td> <td>SSSI (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Local Nature Reserves</td> <td>★</td> <td>LNR (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)</td> </tr> </table>			National Nature Reserves	★	NNR (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)		Sites of Special Scientific Interest	★	SSSI (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)		Local Nature Reserves	★	LNR (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)																				
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<p>Notes:</p> <p>The Local Nature Reserve and other nature reserve boundaries can overlay the current grading when both layers are actively visible</p> <p>Where there are multiple species records for the same grid reference the dot for one species may obscure the dots for other species - all species records will be displayed in the accompanying spreadsheet</p> <p>Not all the above categories may be present on the accompanying map</p>																																	
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