



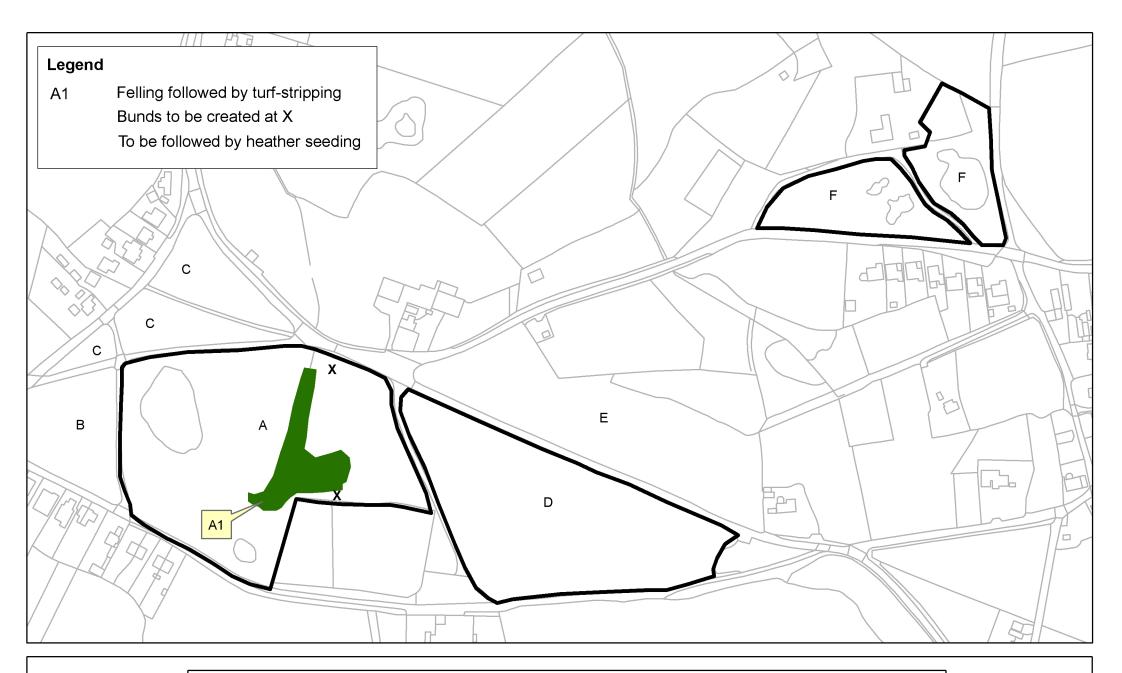
Sound Heath SSSI Woodland Cover 2011



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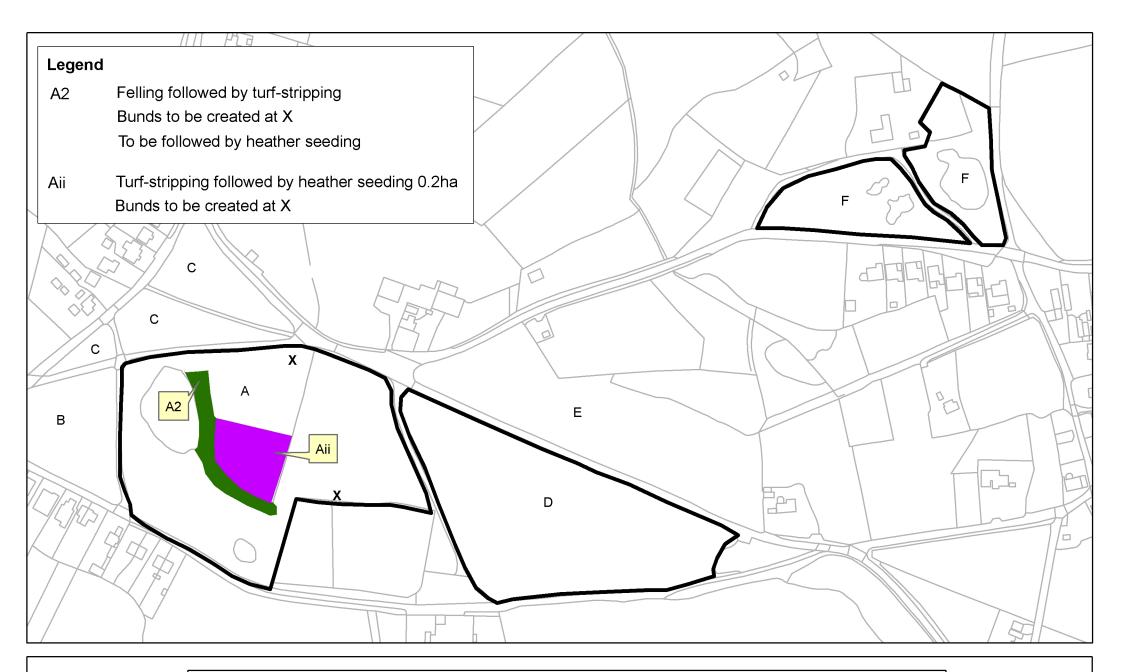




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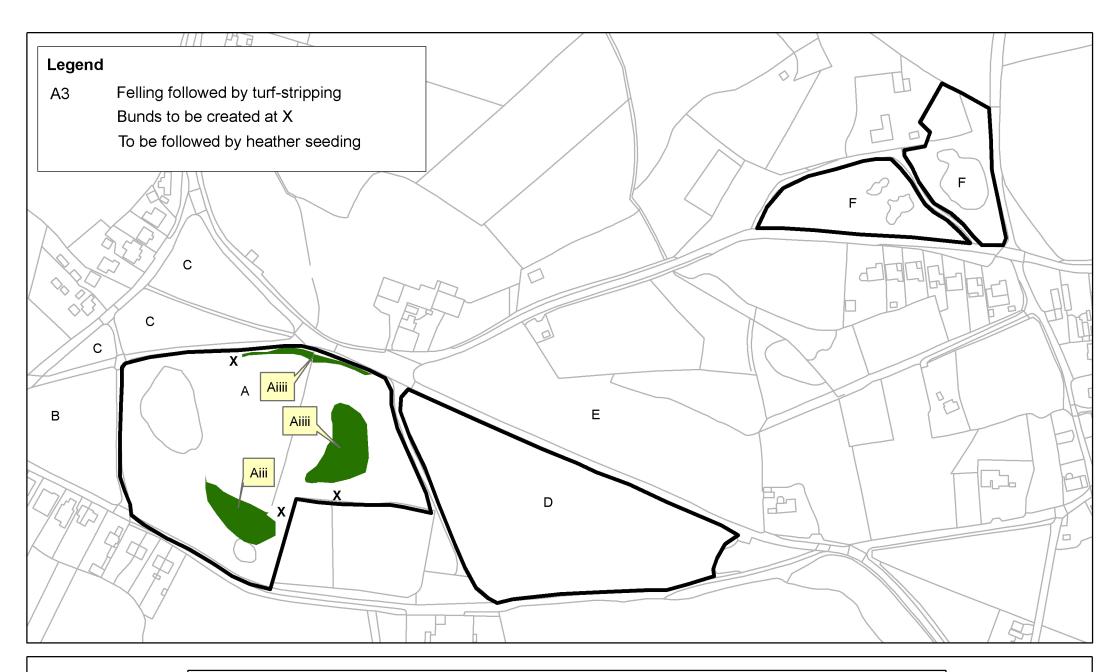
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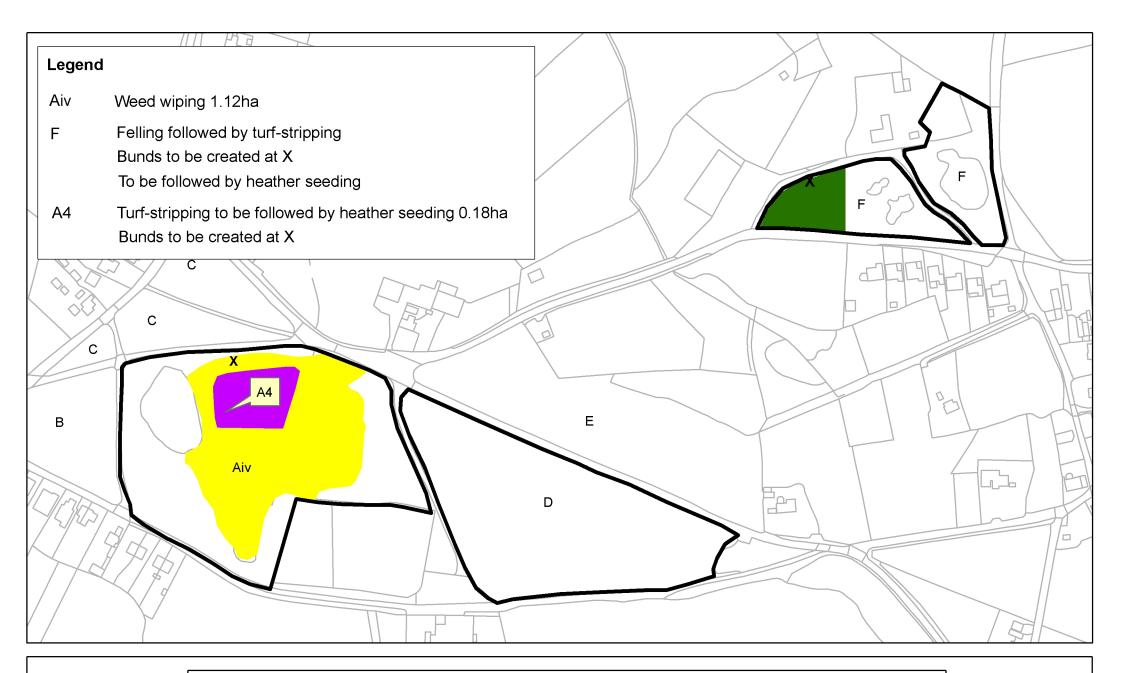






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Sound Heath SSSI Woodland Cover 2016



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Cheshire East Council. 100049045 2010.

Sound Heath HLS application notes

- I've completed the FEP map and forms so you don't need to worry about them see copies of the datasheet and map enclosed.
- The application is HLS only so the ELS questions do not apply.
- (10) common land question there's another form to fill in as it is common land I've included a copy of that. Not sure the value of it as there are no registered commoners but best fill it in I guess.
- The heathland restoration areas should go into option H02 (Restoration of lowland heathland). I've estimated the areas to be:
 - o SJ6247 0499 0.96ha
 - o SJ6248 4016 0.15ha
- Capital works this is the tricky bit to work out how to fund I think our best bet is through a combination of items:
 - LHX Major preparatory work for heathland recreation this can fund at 100% (based on 3 quotes being received) but not for tree /scrub removal – it can fund the scraping though.
 - There are two items which can be used to fund the tree / scrub removal. TRE tree removal pays at £25m³. This would seem the most suitable option for the areas which are woodland at the moment. Within and on the margins of the heathland the scrub options are probably most suitable there are a few which can be used:
 - SS scrub management base payment this can be claimed every year there is some scrub removed.
 - SA/SB/SC scrub management payments on a hectarage basis depending on % cover of scrub.
 - BDS difficult site supplement it's only an extra £7/ha but you are welcome to it if you want it!
 - Fencing if you feel areas need to be fenced we can fund this post and wire is now £2.50/m. Wooden gates are fine as well.
 - Hydrological survey can be funded at 100% based on 3 quotes through the WPS
 water penning structures item. At this stage you could just put in an estimated cost.
 Alternatively there is the PAH professional help item which is a flat rate of £400 but
 doesn't require quotes. Depends on how much it is likely to cost....
 - Obviously we have a 5 year plan but the way the agreement works as regards capital works is I can set up plans for 1, 2 or 3 years so would need to subdivide the capital items to take account of this. Hopefully this isn't too complicated to do.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship Agreement

Agreement number AG00426104

This Agreement is between Cheshire East Council - Sound Heath of Old Municipal Buildings Earle Street

Crewe Cheshire

CW1 2BJ

and Natural England of

Natural England Customer Services PO Box 380 Crewe Cheshire CW1 6YH

This Agreement covers all of the land parcels listed on the table entitled 'Parcel based options summary' at Part 2A.

This Agreement will run from 01/10/2012 to 30/09/2022.

Natural England agrees to pay you according to the schedules in Part 1 and 4.

This Agreement is made up of the following parts:

Part 1A	ELS annual payments
Part 1B	Annual payment schedule for HLS options (excluding capital works)
Part 1C	Annual payment schedule for all options (excluding capital items)
Part 2A	Parcel based options summary
Part 2B	Whole farm, rotational, farm buildings and access base payment
	options
Part 3	HLS Management of Environmental Features - Specific options,
	prescriptions and Indicators of Success
Part 4	HLS Capital Works Plan and payments (if applicable)
Part 5	Capital works specifications (if applicable)
Part 6	Grassland Management
Part 7	Maps, including Historic Environment Features map

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship Agreement

PART 1A Annual payments for ELS

Your annual payment for ELS is as follows:

Land Description	Payment per Ha	Area (Ha)	Target Points	Payment
Area of land in agreement, excluding parcels of 15 ha or more above the Moorland Line		0	0	0
Area of parcels of 15 ha or more above the Moorland Line		0	0	0

Annual Payment		£0.00
Total Target Points	0	
Actual Points	0	

PART 1B
Annual payment schedule for HLS options (excluding capital items) Years 1-10

Options	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
HO2 Restoration of lowland heath	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00
Total HLS payment years 1-10	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00

PART 1C
Annual payment schedule for all options (excluding capital items)

	ELS payment	HLS payment	Total payment	
Year 1	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 2	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 3	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 4	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 5	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 6	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 7	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 8	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 9	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Year 10	£0.00	£300.00	£300.00	

PART 2A Parcel based options summary

		RLR	OPTIONS							
RLR field number	Field name		Code	Description	Quantity (ha/100m/no.)	Start date	End date	Duration (years/ months)		
SJ61489610		0.66								
SJ62470499		4.67	HO2	Restoration of lowland heath	1.30	01/10/12	30/09/22	10 Years		
SJ62470694		0.55								
SJ62482302		1.46								
SJ62483606		0.36								
SJ62484016		1.13	HO2	Restoration of lowland heath	0.20	01/10/12	30/09/22	10 Years		

PART 2B

Whole farm, rotational, farm buildings and access base payment options summary

Code	Description	Quantity (ha/100m/no.)	Start date	End date	Duration (years/ months)
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PART 3

HLS - Management of environmental features

General conditions on all HLS agreement land

On your HLS agreement land you must follow the general management conditions set out below, unless specifically stated otherwise in a subsequent section of this agreement. HLS agreement land is all land on which Higher Level Stewardship management prescriptions apply, including items within a Capital Works Plan

- Do not apply lime.
- On the conventional land that you manage: do not apply pesticides, except for the
 control of spear thistle, creeping thistle, curled dock, broad-leaved dock, common
 ragwort, nettles or other undesirable species named in your agreement.
 Herbicides may only be applied to these species by weedwiper or by spot
 treatment.
- Do not allow your agreement land to be levelled, infilled, used for the storage or dumping of materials or used by motor vehicles or machinery (except where necessary for the management of the land), if this is likely to cause long-term damage from rutting or compaction of the soil, or otherwise damage areas being managed under the scheme.
- Do not light fires (including burning brash or cuttings) where they could cause damage to features of archaeological or historic interest, or within ten metres of tree canopies or on any areas managed for their wildlife habitat interest. (This does not restrict your ability to manage heathland vegetation by controlled burning in compliance with the Heather and Grass Burning Regulations 1986 and accompanying Code.)
- Do not allow your agreement land to be used for organised games or sports, rallies, camping or caravanning, shows or sales where this is likely to damage areas being managed for their wildlife habitat interest or features of archaeological or historic interest; where this is likely to cause excessive or unreasonable disturbance to wildlife being encouraged under your agreement; or where this would cause unreasonable restriction to Public Rights of Way or "access land" as designated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Do not carry out or permit metal detecting or archaeological fieldwork on any of the archaeological sites on your holding identified in your Farm Environment Plan, unless agreed with your Natural England adviser in writing. In some cases a derogation will also be required.

HO2 - Restoration of lowland heath

Land parcels and associated features managed under this option:

RLR Field Number: SJ62470499

Features: M03 Lowland heath - BAP habitat

RLR Field Number: SJ62484016

Features: M03 Lowland heath - BAP habitat

General description of the management required:

This option is aimed at restoration of lowland heathland that is not currently in good/favourable condition, including on sites whose management has been neglected. Such sites are likely to have become degraded by scrub, bracken, gorse, invasive grasses or secondary woodland encroachment, and in some cases overgrazing and too frequent burning, and may or may not currently be under active management. Soil type, management history and location in relation to existing heathland sites will be significant factors in determining suitability. Significant site clearance and weed control may be needed, but it is expected that, following suitable treatment, heathland vegetation will re-establish without the need for seeding from external sources. This option will help to restore and strengthen the vegetation mosaics characteristic of lowland heathland, and thus enhance the integrity of the historic landscape character of the area, retain and manage historic environment features and benefit heathland wildlife.

Indicators of Success

- By year 5 cover of dwarf shrubs heather and cross-leaved heath should be between 20% and 70%.
- By year 10 cover of dwarf shrubs heather and cross-leaved heath should be between 50% and 70%.
- By year 10, there should be a wide range of age classes of dwarf shrubs present.
 This should include between 10% and 40% cover of pioneer stage, between 10%
 and 30% cover of degenerate stage and no more than 10% cover of dead dwarf
 shrubs.
- By year 5, at least 2 desirable wildflower species, such as heath bedstraw, tormentil, sundew, lousewort and bog asphodel should be occasional.
- By year 10, cover of bryophytes and lichens should be at least 5%.
- By year 10, cover of bare ground should be between 5 and 10%
- All SSSI land should be in favourable or recovering condition.

Management Prescriptions; the dos and don'ts of management

The following rules apply across the whole area being managed under this option.

- Remove areas of scrub and invasive trees agreed with your Natural England contact, together with arisings. Control unbrowsed regrowth with approved herbicide or by stump winching.
- On areas where heathland vegetation has established, restore a balanced range of dwarf shrub age classes by cutting and removing a number of patches each year
- Agree a plan with your Natural England adviser to reverse any drainage of wet heath or mire to restore original hydrology.

- After successful establishment, operations involving ploughing, sub-surface cultivation, reseeding, installation of new drainage or modification of existing drainage systems are not permitted unless agreed with your Natural England adviser.
- Do not apply fertilisers, organic manures, lime or waste materials (including sewage sludge).
- Control undesirable plant species such as Creeping Thistle /Spear Thistle /Curled Dock /Broad-leaved Dock / Common Ragwort, so that by year 5 their cover is less than 15% and by year 10 their cover is less than 10%. Agree control methods with your Natural England adviser.
- Control trees / scrub so that by year 5 their cover is less than 25% and by year 10 their cover is less than 15%.
- Follow the agreed capital works programme produced by Paul Hughes and Mark Arnold.

PART 4

Capital works plan and payments

Schedule of works:

Works for each plan must be completed by the end date of the plan.

Plan no.	Code	Description	Location/ boundary reference	Grant rate (£)	Quantity to complete	Eligible grant (£)	Must be completed by:
1	BDS	Difficult site supplement for bracken & scrub control	CP1 7.00/ha		1.30 ha	9.10	Sep 2015
1	LHX	Major preparatory work for heathland re-creation or restoration	CP1	3600.00/item	1	3,600.00	Sep 2015
1	SB	Scrub management 25% - 75% cover	CP1	376.00/ha	1.30 ha	488.80	Sep 2015
1	SS	Scrub Control - Base Payment	CP1	76.00/item	3	228.00	Sep 2015
1	TRE	Tree removal	CP1	25.00/m3	60.00 m3	1,500.00	Sep 2015
1	WPS	Construction of water penning structures		2500.00/item	1	2,500.00	Sep 2015
2	FW2010	Post and wire fencing	CL1	2.50/m	159.00 m	397.50	Sep 2016
2	BDS	Difficult site supplement for bracken & scrub control	CP2	7.00/ha	0.20 ha	1.40	Sep 2016
2	LHX	Major preparatory work for heathland re-creation or restoration	CP2	900.00/item	1	900.00	Sep 2016
2	SB	Scrub management 25% - 75% cover	CP2	376.00/ha	0.20 ha	75.20	Sep 2016
2	SS	Scrub Control - Base Payment	CP2	76.00/item	1	76.00	Sep 2016
2	TRE	Tree removal	CP2	25.00/m3	24.00 m3	600.00	Sep 2016
2	GF	Wooden field/river gate	CP3	149.00/item	1	149.00	Sep 2016
					Total payment:	10,525.00	

Failure to complete and submit a claim for items by the date shown may be considered by Natural England as a breach of your agreement and you may have to repay any grant received, including payments for annual options.

Claim profile:

The following is the value of the work expected to be completed in each year of your agreement. You will be expected to complete works at least equal to this amount.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
2,775.30	2,775.30	2,775.30	2,199.10	0.00
Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10

Total payment:	10,525.00
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PART 5

Capital works specifications

Introduction

The specifications set out below describe the minimum standard of work for the capital items set out in Part 4 of your Environmental Stewardship Agreement. If you do not follow these specifications we cannot pay you for the work.

All capital works must be completed and maintained to the standard required to perform their intended function for the duration of the agreement.

If this agreement replaces an existing or expired CSS, ESA or ES agreement, you must take all reasonable care to protect, for the duration of this new agreement, any capital works which you have completed and for which you have been paid under that agreement.

Health and Safety

The requirements of health and safety and other current legislation and codes of practice must be observed in all work undertaken, in particular in all cases where pesticides are used.

Permissions

The offer of a Stewardship agreement is a permission from Natural England to undertake the work on SSSI land under Section 28E of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). However, additional permissions from other organisations may be required. The following are examples of permissions that may be necessary:

- On a Scheduled Ancient Monument Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent, from English Heritage.
- Pond creation, restoration, scrape creation, restoration, and ditch work may require an Impoundment Licence or Abstraction Licence from the Environment Agency, Planning Permission from the planning authority, and permission from the Internal Drainage Board where these are present.
- Obstructions to water courses or in the floodplain. This includes disposal of spoil from ditches, scrapes and ponds, tree planting, otter holts, car parking, erecting sluices and river gates and fencing - permission from the Environment Agency.
- Works in a Conservation Area consent from the Planning Authority
- Tree Preservation Order consent from the local authority
- Tree felling, pollarding, hedgerow works, coppicing bankside trees may require a felling licence from the Forestry Commission.
- Chemical bracken control near water course will require permission from the Environment Agency
- Areas for parking cars, hard standing, earthworks may require planning permission from the Planning Authority

Proposition from	osed c the Hi	hanges ighway	to the ex Authority	xisting ty	ype of st	ile or gat	e on a rio	ght of way	/ - conse	nt
	Proping	Proposed of from the Hi	Proposed changes from the Highway	Proposed changes to the extrom the Highway Authority	Proposed changes to the existing ty from the Highway Authority	Proposed changes to the existing type of sti from the Highway Authority	Proposed changes to the existing type of stile or gat from the Highway Authority	Proposed changes to the existing type of stile or gate on a rig from the Highway Authority	Proposed changes to the existing type of stile or gate on a right of way from the Highway Authority	Proposed changes to the existing type of stile or gate on a right of way - conse from the Highway Authority

DIFFICULT SITE SUPPLEMENT FOR SCRUB & BRACKEN CONTROL

The scrub or bracken control associated with this supplement must be carried out to the relevant specification.

Location

CP1 – SJ6247 0499 – 1.30ha (years 1-3)

CP2 – SJ6248 4016 – 0.20ha (year 4)

POST AND WIRE FENCING

General

All types of fencing should be erected in accordance with British Standard 1722. Before erecting new fencing, all old fencing material must be removed. New fencing should be put up in straight lines, between strainer posts. Strainer posts should be used at each end of the fence and at each corner and turning point. They may also be necessary where there is a significant difference in gradient. All softwood timber must be fully peeled and tanalised or treated with an approved preservative. Durable hardwood, such as oak or sweet chestnut, may be used and does not require treatment with preservatives. Square or half round section timber can be used as an alternative to the round sections given below. Timber sizes quoted are minimum requirements.

Barbed wire should not be used where fencing runs alongside access routes, unless this is unavoidable.

New fencing should avoid sites of archaeological or historic importance. You should ensure any relevant consents are gained before carrying out the work e.g. Scheduled Monument consent from English Heritage.

Fences must be maintained to this specification for the life of the agreement.

Post and Wire Fencing

Wire fencing should be at least 1.05 metres high. Use galvanised 4mm mild steel plain or 2.5mm barbed wire, or equivalent as stated in BS 4102.

Straining posts should be at least 125mm top diameter, 2.1 metres long and at a spacing not exceeding 150 metres.

Struts should be 65mm top diameter, 2.1 metres long and notched into the straining post.

Intermediate posts should be 65mm top diameter, 1.7 metres long and at a spacing not exceeding 3.5 metres.

Post and rail fencing can be erected if preferred for security reasons.

Location

CL1 – SJ6248 4016 – 159m (year 4)

WOODEN FIELD GATE

The field gate must be erected in accordance with British Standard 3470 and should be made of timber, unless agreed otherwise with your Natural England contact. All timber must be fully peeled and tanalised or treated with an approved preservative.

The gate must be soundly framed and constructed in a traditional and appropriate local style. The height must correspond to the adjoining fence and the gate must be fitted with the appropriate fittings required for its operation.

Where there is no local style a standard style can be used as follows:

Width of gate - up to 3 metres/over 3 metres

Top rail - 100mm x 75mm/125mm x 75mm

tapered to - 75mm x 75mm/75mm x 75mm

Under rails - 75mm x 25mm/75mm x 25mm

Braces - 75mm x 25mm/75mm x 25mm

Hanging stile - 100mm x 75mm/125mm x 75mm

Shutting stile - 75mm x 75mm/75mm x 75mm

The gate must be hung and clapped independently of the adjoining fence line i.e. the hanging post must not be used as an end strainer.

Gate posts should either be set at least 900mm into the ground and surrounded with concrete at least 450x450x600mm deep; or, where ground conditions are suitable, may be erected without concrete surrounds and should be set at least 1.1 metre below the ground surface with the soil well compacted around the posts in 150mm layers. The top of the posts should be weather capped.

New gateposts should avoid sites of archaeological interest. You should ensure any relevant consents are gained before carrying out the work e.g. Schedule Monument consent from English Heritage.

The gate should be maintained in good condition for the life of the agreement.

Location

CP3 – SJ6248 4016 (year 4)

MAJOR PREPARATORY WORK FOR HEATHLAND RECREATION

The significant preparatory work must be a pre-requisite for heathland re-creation to take place (e.g. on forestry land).

The work required is site-specific and a management plan should usually be prepared in advance. This should detail the nature and timing of the additional work and any potential impacts on sites of archaeological interest. On completion of the management plan, the work to be undertaken must be agreed with your Natural England contact and carried out accordingly.

You should ensure any relevant consents are gained before carrying out the work e.g. Scheduled Monument consent from English Heritage.

This capital item is to fund the turf stripping required as part of the heathland restoration programme. Three quotes have been received and the selected contractor is ATS, based on their quote of £4500.

Work to be carried out in line with the works programme produced by Paul Hughes and Mark Arnold, and under their supervision.

Location

CP1 – SJ6247 0499 - £3600 (years 1-3)

CP2 – SJ6248 4016 - £900 (year 4)

SCRUB MANAGEMENT

General

For the purposes of this grant, scrub means any woody shrubs including European gorse, bramble and young trees. Dwarf and Western gorse are integral components of heathland and should not be included in this item.

A management plan is usually required before carrying out work on significant areas of scrub. The plan must be agreed in advance with your Natural England contact and the work carried out accordingly.

You must ensure any relevant consents are obtained before carrying out the work e.g. consent from English Heritage for work on a Scheduled Monument and the Natural England SSSI specialist for work in a SSSI.

Timing

Work must be done between 1 October and 28 February, outside the bird-nesting season

Scrub control

Techniques for removing scrub include flailing, using a chain saw and clearing some species (e.g. birch or pine) by hand. Controlling scrub by burning is not acceptable unless it is specifically agreed with your Natural England contact.

Cut scrub down to ground level without disturbing the roots and leaving no protruding stems. Care must be taken to avoid uprooting adjacent grassland or heathland plants. Stumps must not be removed unless specifically agreed with your Natural England contact. In exceptional circumstances and where agreed with your Natural England contact, it may be necessary to remove large stumps using mechanical equipment. Under no circumstances is scrub burning or stump removal to be undertaken on sites of archaeological interest.

Controlling scrub regrowth

Where regrowth is to be controlled it may be achieved by mechanical methods such as flailing or livestock grazing, or by chemical treatment. In cases where herbicides are applied to control regrowth you must observe the requirements of current legislation. You must also refer to the manufacturer's guidance on application rates and safety requirements. Herbicides must be applied with extreme care to ensure the grassland or heath vegetation is not affected.

Disposal of cut material

Dispose of cut material by removing it from the site, tidying it into piles or burning. Bonfire sites must be far enough away from trees to avoid causing damage and at least 10m from the crown of any tree. Burning sites and piles of wood must not be on patches of ground where they could damage species rich grassland, anthills or other ecological or archaeological features. The area used for burning must be agreed in advance with your Natural England contact and cleaned up as soon as possible after burning. Burning on a metal sheet reduces damage to the soil and makes it easier to remove ash from the site. As the site regenerates the growth of nettle, thistle, dock, ragwort and other weed species must be controlled.

Location

CP1 – SJ6247 0499 – 1.30ha (years 1-3)

CP2 – SJ6248 4016 – 0.20ha (year 4)

One base payment of £76 can be claimed per year that scrub control takes place.

Work to be carried out in line with the works programme produced by Paul Hughes and Mark Arnold. Removal of stumps and roots is permitted.

TREE REMOVAL

Trees should be felled and cleared as agreed with your Natural England contact.

You should ensure any relevant consents are gained before carrying out the work e.g. Felling licences from the Forestry Commission or consent relating to Tree Preservation Orders from the Local Authority.

Disposal of Felled Material

Felled trees are to be removed from site. In certain circumstances and where agreed with your Natural England contact, some wood may be left stacked on site for wildlife habitat.

Thin branches and twigs may be burnt or scattered on site. Bonfire sites must be far enough away from any remaining trees to avoid causing damage and at least 10m from the crown of any tree. Burning must not take place on areas of species rich grassland, anthills or other ecological or archaeological features. Burning on a metal sheet reduces damage to the soil and makes it easier to remove ash from the site. The area must be cleaned up as soon as possible after burning. As the site regenerates the growth of nettle, thistle, dock, ragwort and other weed species must be controlled.

Location

CP1 – SJ6247 0499 – 60m3 (years 1-3)

CP2 – SJ6248 4016 – 24m3 (year 4)

Work to be carried out in line with the works programme produced by Paul Hughes and Mark Arnold.

CONSTRUCTION OF WATER PENNING STRUCTURES

The design of these structures is constrained by and dependent on site-specific conditions and variables. The water penning structure should be located, designed and constructed as agreed with your Natural England contact and where appropriate, other relevant bodies. It should reflect similar features typical of the local landscape.

You should ensure any relevant consents are gained before carrying out the work e.g. consent from the Environment Agency and the Internal Drainage Board. They will wish to see fully dimensioned drawings and a specification in support of an application for consent. For this reason, survey and design should be entrusted to a qualified and competent person.

The work must not be carried out to the detriment of other owners/occupiers in the area.

The structure must be maintained in good condition during the life of the agreement. Repair or replacement of damaged structures should be carried out in consultation with Natural England and any other relevant bodies.

This capital item is to fund a hydrological survey of the heathland area, with a view of restoring the wet heath present at time of SSSI designation.

A detailed specification is to be written and agreed with Natural England before seeking quotes for production of the plan.

PART 6

Grassland management

Where this Agreement includes grassland management, you must maintain the areas of permanent grassland, and at least 80% of the area of temporary grassland, on your farm* as set out below for the duration of your agreement.

In addition, you must not over-graze or under-utilise any of these areas and you must not exceed the maximum stocking density as also set out below.

Permanent grassland (RLR field number)	Total area of field (ha)
Total permanent grassland	0.00
Total temporary grassland	0.00
Total area of grassland (permanent + temporary)	0.00

Maximum stocking density for your farm permitted under this Agreement Lu/Ha	0
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^{* &}quot;Farm" means the coherent area of land which is managed under the charge of the Agreement Holder for the period of this Agreement. Land occupied under short term tenancies and temporary grass keeps should not be included.

Entry Level Stewardship/ Higher Level Stewardship

Application Form (Fast-track tier)







This form should be used if you wish to apply for Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) and Entry Level Stewardship (ELS). If you wish to apply for any other combination of ELS, OELS or HLS options please contact your Natural England office for the relevant form

Important: before you start to complete this form, please read the accompanying ELS and HLS handbooks and supplements (if any) carefully.

Before making your application you must ensure that the land parcels recorded on the field data sheet at Annexes 2 and 3 of this application form are eligible for the scheme, by studying the eligibility criteria in the ELS and HLS Handbooks.

If you find that some of your eligible land parcels have not been included in Annex 2 and 3 you must contact your Natural England office for a new application form and maps. You must not add any field parcels to your prefilled details at Annex 2 and 3 yourself.

For Fast-track applications Natural England will have prepared a FEP for you to accompany this application. For Standard and Complex applications you must have prepared a Farm Environment Plan. If you have not submitted a FEP, we cannot process your application.

If there is insufficient space to answer any questions or to complete the tables, photocopy the blank tables and attach them securely to the form. Where you have used a continuation sheet, please indicate this on the relevant table/question and cross-reference them clearly.

Please use BLOCK LETTERS and **black ink** throughout and ensure that any alterations are initialled by you - do not use correcting fluid.

Please send your completed form together with maps and other supporting documentation to your Natural England office.

Data Protection Act 1998/Environmental Information Regulations 2004

Natural England may make the information we receive as part of your application generally available (see the ELS Handbook for further information).

■ Section 1. Applicant details

1.	(a)	Application reference	AG00413908	
	(b)	Title (e.g. Mr/Mrs/Miss/N	s) Initials	
		ĦŖ.	P.	
		Forename	Surname	
		PAUL	Hughes	_
	(c)	Business name		
		Cheshire County Coun	H-Sound Heath CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL	
	(d)	Main correspondence a	dress	
		GOUNTY OFFICES	2ND FLOOR OLD MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS	_
		CHAPEL LANE	EARLE STEEF	_
		Town	WILMSLOW- CREWE	
		County	Cheshire	
		Restrode SK9 1PU		
		Postcode	CW 1 28 J	
	(e)	Telephone number (incl. r	ational dialling code) Fax number	
		01270 6860	01270 686186	
		Mobile telephone	07745 69774	
		į	V 113 V 1774	_
		E-mail address	paul. hughesd cheshireeast. gov.uk	
	(f)	Please indicate your pref method of contact:	• telephone 🗸 • fax 📗 • mobile 📗 • e-mail 🗸 • letter	٦
2.	Othe	er agreement contact deta		
	Mair	contact details if differen	from 1 above	
	(a)	Title (e.g. Mr/Mrs/Miss/M) Initials	
		Forename	Surname	
	(b)	Business name		
				٦
	(c)	Main correspondence ad	ress	
	, ,			٦
		Town		
		County		
		Postcode		

3.	Vendor number This information is necessary for Natural England to make payments. If you do not already have a vendor			
	number you must obtain one from the RPA and enter it into the box below (see the ELS Handbook).			
	Vendor number			
4.	Legal trading status of applicant (tick one box)			
	Sole trader Public Limited Company			
	Cooperative Public sector organisation			
	Partnership			
	Private Limited Company			
5.	VAT registration, are you VAT registered?			
6.	Authorisation for an agent to make an ELS/HLS application (please see the ELS Handbook)			
	I am an agent and I am submitting this application on behalf of others			
	Please tick to confirm that the agent authorisation form is attached			
=	Section 2. Application/agreement details			
7.	Agreement title (e.g. name of farm)			
8.	Preferred agreement start date			
	Please confirm your preferred agreement start date (see the HLS Handbook).			
	Your application must reach us before the deadline for your chosen agreement start date.			
	Next available start date			
	1 January			
	1 May 1 June 1 July			
	1 September			
9.	Land ownership and control			
	Please note that inter-tidal habitat creation options HP7, HP8, HP9 and the inundation grassland supplement			
	HQ13 are for 20 years. If you are applying for a 20 year agreement a 20 year term applies to the following questions, declarations and undertakings.			
Will you have management control over the land for the entire length of the agreement (10 years) so that you can meet the Declaration and Undertakings in Section 5 of this form? Yes No III				
	For further information on land ownership and control, please see the HLS Handbook.			
	(a) Title (e.g. Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) Initials			
	Forename Surname			

9. Land	d ownership and control (cont	inued)		
(b)	Business name			
	CHECHIRE SA	ART COUNCIL		
(c)	Main correspondence address	ss		
	2nd FLOOR	OND MUNICIPAL B	uildings,	
	BARLE STREET			
	Town	CRANE		
	County	CHESHIRE		
	Postcode cwi 28	3		
(d)	Telephone number (incl. natio	onal dialling code)	Fax number (if applicable)	
	01270 696061		01270 686186	
'	E mail address (if anniverble)			
	E-mail address (if applicable) Dwnership and Control	paul hughes dete	shireeast. gov. uk	
Declar • In tha		ge.	agreement by me/us, I/we are subject to any additional penalties set forth in the Entry Level Stewardship Handbook and supplements (if any). In the event that I/we are required to fulfil the obligations	
Hi an at	gher Level Stewardship Hand y) and the information provide Section 1 on this form and the am/We are the freehold owner	ibooks and supplements (ed by the applicant named e attached maps. Tick one box only r of part/all of the	under the agreement by reason of the preceding Undertakings, I/we also agree, in that event, to make and abide by the undertakings in relation to "Permission to carry out operations on a SSSI" and "Options and capital items for access and maintenance and/or	
• la	nd in this application am/We are the tenant of part/s	all of the land in this	restoration of buildings", as set out in Section 5 of this application, which I/we have read and understand.	
 application and my/our tenancy is for a minimum period of 10 years from the start date of any agreement that may result from this application In the event that the applicant named in Section 1 ceases to have control over the relevant land (the land over which l/we can undertake management control), l/we will have control over the relevant land for the remainder of the 10 year agreement. In addition, l/we undertake to allow access to any land and any relevant records to which the application relates, to any authorised person for the carrying out of an inspection in order verify the accuracy of any information provided to Natural England and to ensure compliance with the undertakings; provide any additional information as may be required. 				
Underta I/We und ceases t which I/V applicati year terr	_	ant land (the land over nt control) in this apletion of the full 10 from this application,	 provide any additional information as may be required by Natural England and co-operate with or take part in any economic, environmental or other monitoring and evaluation of the scheme (including any research and development studies) conducted by Natural England or by anyone appointed by it for that purpose; 	
land, I/w of the ob	t's possessory interest in or co e will from the date of such co oligations under the agreemen until the expiry date of that ago	essation ensure that all at will be properly	Warning: if you knowingly or recklessly make a false statement to obtain payment of aid to yourself or anyone else, you also risk prosecution, termination of the agreement, the loss of all aid paid to you	
have fail paragrap	latural England has good read ed to fulfil the obligations ider oh (e.g. by not complying with	ntified in the previous relevant option	under this scheme and exclusion from certain Rural Development schemes for up to two years.	
Complia misleadi	tions or by breaching the stan nce) or where it is reasonably ng information has been giver	believed that false or how he had be believed that false or he had been been believed to be believed that false or he believed the believed that false or he believed that false or he believed that false or he believed the believed that false or he bel	Signature Date 20/8/12	
this sche	on form or in subsequent corr eme, the agreement may be to , and I/we agree to repay on o	erminated by Natural	Name (BLOCK LETTERS) PAUL HUGHES	
any aid p	paid to me/us or the applicant	under the agreement.	Capacity of signatory (e.g. tenant, landlord)	

serious breach of any obligation contained within the

1,		Please tick if this application includes common and/or shared grazing land and the appattached	*********					
	Far	m Environment Record (FER) and Farm Environment Plan (FEP)		ت.				
		As part of the application process for ELS and HLS you must complete a FER and FEP. FER For details of how to complete your FER please see the ELS Handbook. You will be awarded 3 points per hectare for completing a FER. You should record your total points for completing your FER in Annex 1 of this application form.						
		FEP Fast track applications: The FEP and FER/FEP map will be completed by your Natural feligible for a FEP payment. Please note for all Fast track applications the applicant is in Authority for their historic environment consultation.						
		Standard and Complex applications: For details of how to complete your FEP please se claim payment for your FEP please complete part (b) below.	FEP please see the FEP manual. To					
	(b)	Farm Environment Plan (FEP) claim and payment for Standard and Complex applicatio	ns onlya					
		I have submitted an e-FEP/attached a completed FEP	Yes [***	No				
		Total area of my holding eligible for FEP						
		I wish to claim the appropriate FEP payment	Yes 🚾	No 🗌				
		ase make sure that you keep a copy of your combined Farm Environment Record and Food as this will form part of your agreement.	arm Environi	nent Plan				
2.	lder	tifying fields that may be at risk from soil erosion or run-off						
	The	ELS Handbook provides guidance on how to identify fields which may be at risk.						
	•	Is any of your land at risk from soil erosion or run-off?	Yes 🗌	No 🗸				
		If 'YES' have you marked these fields on your Farm Environment Record map?	Yes	No				
	•	Have you also completed the column headed 'Soil Erosion/run-off risk' on the Field Data Sheet at Annex 2 to show which fields are at risk?	Yes [No 🗸				
3.	Fun	ding from other sources						
	(a)	Have you applied, or do you intend to apply, for funding from any other source in respect of any land to which this application relates?	Yes	No 🗸				
		If 'YES', please give details. Please include details of the source of the funding, the amo obligations receipt of this funding confers upon you.	ount and any	•				
(b)	Land conditionally exempt from Inheritance or Capital Gains Tax Is any land subject to this application conditionally exempt from inheritance or other capital tax and subject to management conditions as part of either an undertaking to the Inland Revenue or a Heritage Landscapes Management Plan (HLMP)? (see the HLS Handbook)	Yes	No ✓				
		If 'YES', please give details and attach a copy of your HLMP.		لصبط				

10. Common and shared grazing land

14.	Links with other Environmental Stewardship applications or agreements	
	Is this application linked to any other Environmental Stewardship applications or agreements e.g. raised water levels/adjoining project?	
	If 'YES', please provide the reason for the link and the other application/agreement reference numbers.	
15.	Feasibility studies/ Detailed management plans	
	A feasibility study/detailed management plan is required for historic park restoration and inter-tidal habitat creation, and in some other situations as outlined in the HLS Handbook.	
	Please tick ONE box only	
	I am applying for a stand alone HLS agreement to complete the feasibility study/detailed management plan	
	I am applying for a feasibility study/detailed management plan on part of my land as part of an HLS agreement	
	I attach/have already submitted a completed feasibility study/detailed management plan as required for the HLS options that I am applying for	
16.	Special projects	
	If you are applying for a special project you should prepare a management plan listing and costing all the necessary work as described in the HLS Handbook.	1
	Special project management plan enclosed	
	Restoration of traditional farm buildings	
17.	7.001012000	
17.	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are applying only for the maintenance of traditional farm buildings option.	
17.	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are	
17.	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are applying only for the maintenance of traditional farm buildings option. If you are applying for restoration work on a traditional farm building you should prepare a management plan	
	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are applying only for the maintenance of traditional farm buildings option. If you are applying for restoration work on a traditional farm building you should prepare a management plan listing and costing all the necessary work as described in the HLS Handbook. • Traditional Farm Building management plan enclosed	
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	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are applying only for the maintenance of traditional farm buildings option. If you are applying for restoration work on a traditional farm building you should prepare a management plan listing and costing all the necessary work as described in the HLS Handbook. • Traditional Farm Building management plan enclosed	
	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are applying only for the maintenance of traditional farm buildings option. If you are applying for restoration work on a traditional farm building you should prepare a management plan listing and costing all the necessary work as described in the HLS Handbook. • Traditional Farm Building management plan enclosed	
	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are applying only for the maintenance of traditional farm buildings option. If you are applying for restoration work on a traditional farm building you should prepare a management plan listing and costing all the necessary work as described in the HLS Handbook. • Traditional Farm Building management plan enclosed	
	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are applying only for the maintenance of traditional farm buildings option. If you are applying for restoration work on a traditional farm building you should prepare a management plan listing and costing all the necessary work as described in the HLS Handbook. • Traditional Farm Building management plan enclosed	
18.	Before completing this section see the HLS Handbook. You do not need to complete this section if you are applying only for the maintenance of traditional farm buildings option. If you are applying for restoration work on a traditional farm building you should prepare a management plan listing and costing all the necessary work as described in the HLS Handbook. Traditional Farm Building management plan enclosed	

■ Section 3. Your ELS points target and choice of scheme options

Guidance on completing this section can be found in the ELS Handbook.

Please check that all of your RLR field parcels that are eligible for ELS are listed on the Field Data Sheet at Annex 2. Please also check that the area figures in table A below are the same as the total area figures in the boxes at the bottom of the column headed 'RLR field size' on the Field Data Sheet(s) at Annex 2.

Table A

Your target	Points per unit	Area (ha)	POINTS TARGET
Total area and points target of land, excluding parcels of 15 ha or more above the Moorland Line and ineligible land	30 per hectare (ha)	8.83	264.9
Total area and points target of parcels of 15 ha or more above the Moorland Line, excluding ineligible land	8 per hectare (ha)	0	0
Total points target on your land			265

You must record the individual options you have chosen by completing Annex 1 and Annex 2 and record your total points in Table B below:

Table B

ELS Options Summary	Points
Total points for Annex 1	
Total points for Annex 2	
Total points (Your total points must be equal to or more than your points target above)	

If you want to make sure that there is some margin for error, you may wish to consider delivering options slightly in excess of your target





You must record the HLS options you have chosen by completing Annex 3 (HLS non-rotational options within fields), Annex 4 (rotational, maintenance of traditional farm buildings and access base payment options) and Annex 5 (HLS capital works).

If you are applying for any options involving grassland management, please complete Annex 6.

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■ Checklist

Before returning your completed application form and supporting documentation, please make sure that you have:

1.	for	· ELS,	
	•	completed your ELS options map	L
	•	completed your record of ELS boundary, rotational and traditional farm buildings options (Annex 1)	
	•	completed your record of ELS non-rotational options within fields (Annex 2 Field Data Sheet)	[
	•	completed your ELS points target and option summary tables (Section 3 tables A and B)	L_
2.	for I	HLS;	
	•	completed your record of HLS non-rotational options within fields (Annex 3 Field Data sheet)	~
	•	completed your record of HLS rotational, maintenance of traditional farm buildings and access base payment options (Annex 4)	
	•	completed your record of HLS capital works (Annex 5)	~
	•	submitted your e-FEP/enclosed your Farm Environment Plan and your combined FER and FEP map	
	•	completed your HLS options map	
	•	enclosed a copy of your Heritage Landscapes Management Plan (if applicable)	
	•	enclosed necessary consents. • English Heritage	
		Environment Agency	
		Other	
	•	enclosed management plans (if applicable)	
	•	attached a HLS common land and shared grazing supplementary form for all applications for common land	<u></u>
	•	attached an agent authorisation form if you are an agent	
	•	attached any continuation sheets that you have used to complete your application	
		ease write your application reference number on each sheet and ter in the box opposite the number of sheets you have attached	

Section 5. Declaration and undertakings

Before applying to enter this ELS/HLS commitment you must ensure that you have read and understood the ELS and HLS Handbooks and supplements (if any) and in particular the section called 'What additional requirements will apply to my agreement?'. There are many important terms and conditions contained in those handbooks and supplements (if any) that are incorporated into the ELS/HLS agreement by reference - in other words binding on you but not repeated in the body of the agreement that Natural England will eventually send to you should your application be successful. If there is anything which you do not understand, contact Natural England before signing these declarations and undertakings.

Declarations

I/We declare that I/we have read, understood and agree to abide by the requirements contained in the ELS and HLS Handbooks and supplements (if any) for the duration of any ELS/HLS agreement.

Undertakings

In signing this form I/we undertake that, if admitted to Environmental Stewardship, I/we will.

- fulfil the obligations required of me/us as a result of my/our participation in ELS and HLS, as specified in this application and the attached maps and as set out in the ELS and HLS Handbooks and supplements (if any), for the duration of the agreement,
- allow access to any land and any relevant records to which the application relates, to any authorised person for the carrying out of an inspection in order to verify the accuracy of any information provided to Natural England and to ensure compliance with this undertaking;
- agree to disclose all information relevant to this application, provide any additional information as may be required by Natural England and co-operate with or take part in any economic, environmental or other monitoring and evaluation of the scheme (including any research and development studies) conducted by Natural England or by anyone appointed by it for that purpose;
- repay on demand, with interest, any aid paid where Natural England has good reason to believe there has been a breach of agreement (e.g. by not complying

with relevant option prescriptions or by breaching the standards of Cross Compliance) or where it is reasonably believed that false or misleading information has been given in this application form or in subsequent correspondence relating to this scheme.

Permission to carry out operations on a SSSI In signing this form, I/we also seek permission under Section 28E Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) ("the Act") to carry out the operations detailed in Annexes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of this application as part of an agreement with Natural England under the terms of Environmental Stewardship. I/We understand that, should my/our application be successful and an agreement is offered, any existing consents that I/we may already have under Section 28E of the Act relating to the operations in the agreement will be suspended for the duration of the agreement.

Options and capital items for access and maintenance and/or restoration of buildings

I/We declare that I/we will not receive more than €200,000 (approximately £140,000) in aid subject to 'de minimis state aid' rules over any 3-year rolling period for the duration of the agreement (the "de minimis threshold"). This includes payments for options and capital items for access and maintenance or restoration of buildings in Environmental Stewardship, access payments in Countryside Stewardship (CSS) and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) agreements, payments for Conservation Enhancement Scheme agreements and payments from other government departments or agencies. I/We will keep a record of all such payments that my/our business has received for the duration of my/our agreement. Natural England may recover payments made under the agreement with interest in the event it discovers that I/we have exceeded the de minimis threshold at any point during the course of the agreement.

Warning: if you knowingly or recklessly make a false statement to obtain payment of aid to yourself or anyone else, you also risk prosecution, termination of the agreement, the loss of all aid paid to you under this scheme and exclusion from certain Rural Development schemes for up to two years.

reby apply for (please tick):		
an ELS and HLS agreement		
an HLS agreement only		1
Applicant's signature	Date	
	20/8/12	
Name (BLOCK LETTERS)	Capacity of person signing	
PAUL Hughes	COUNTRYSIDE RANGER	
	(e.g. sole trader, partner, director, agent)	

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■ Annex 1. Please record your choice of ELS boundary, rotational and traditional farm buildings options on the table below. Completion of the Farm Environment Record and map and selection of option EA1 is compulsory.

Code	Description	Points available	Measurement	Your points
EA1	Farm Environment Record (FER)	3 per ha	ha	
EB1	Hedgerow management (on both sides of hedge)	22 per 100m	m	
EB2	Hedgerow management (on one side of hedge)	11 per 100m	m	
EB3	Enhanced hedgerow management	42 per 100m	m	
EB4	Stone faced hedge bank management on both sides	16 per 100m	m	
EB5	Stone faced hedge bank management on one side	8 per 100m	m	
EB6	Ditch management	24 per 100m	m	
EB7	Half ditch management	8 per 100m	m	
EB8	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating EB1)	38 per 100m	m	
EB9	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating EB2)	26 per 100m	m	
EB10	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating EB3)	56 per 100m	m	
EB11	Stone wall protection and maintenance	15 per 100m	m	
EB12	Earth bank management (on both sides)	14 per 100m	m	
EB13	Earth bank management (on one side)	7 per 100m	m	
EC3	Maintenance of woodland fences	4 per 100m	m	
EC23	Establishment of hedgerow trees by tagging	1 per tree(s)	tree(s)	
ED1	Maintenance of traditional farm buildings	2 per m2	m2	
EF2	Wild bird seed mixture	450 per ha	ha	
EF6	Over-wintered stubbles	120 per ha	ha	
EF8	Skylark plots	5 per plot(s)	plot(s)	
EF9	Unfertilised cereal headland within arable fields	100 per ha	ha	
EF10	Unharvested cereal headland within arable fields	330 per ha	ha	
EF13	Uncropped cultivated areas for ground-nesting birds - arable	360 per ha	ha	

Annex 1 continued.

Code	Description	Points available	Measurement	Your points
EF15	Reduced herbicide cereal crop preceding over- wintered stubble	195 per ha	ha	
EF22	Extended overwintered stubbles	410 per ha	ha	
EG1	Under sown spring cereals	200 per ha	ha	
EG4	Cereals for whole crop silage followed by over- wintered stubbles	230 per ha	ha	
EJ2	Management of maize crops to reduce soil erosion	18 per ha	ha	
EJ10	Enhanced management of maize crops to reduce erosion and run-off	94 per ha	ha	
EJ11	Maintenance of watercourse fencing	4 per 100m	m	
EJ13	Winter cover crops	65 per ha	ha	

Application reference	Application	reference
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AG00413908

Annex 3: Field Data Sheet for HLS non-rotational options within fields

Please enter all the non-rotational options within fields that you have chosen into this data sheet. Details of the options available are provided in the HLS Handbook and supplements (if any).

												HLS Option	ons	<u>.</u>							
RLR field no./boundary no.	RLR field size (ha)	LFA status	HO2- Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Amount (ha/100m/ no.)	Total HLS £s (this sheet
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SJ62470499	4.67	N	1.30 ha					 	 -			 	 -							<u> </u>	······································
SJ62470694	.55	N			<u> </u>			 						-							
SJ62482302	1.46	N	 	\ -																	
SJ62483606	.36	N			 						ļ										
SJ62484016	1.13	N	0.2 ha	ļ																	
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otal amount (ha/100m/no.)			1.50 ha																		ś
ILS rate per unit			200											<u> </u>							in water
ILS £s			300							<u>. </u>			<u> </u>		<u> </u>						<u> </u>

If necessary, please continue on additional sheets and indicate in the box how many have been attached.

^{*} Total value of HLS options for this sheet.

Code	Description	Payment rate	Amount(ha)/ no./length	Total Paymen £

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■ Annex 5. HLS capital works

												Work Item											
	TRE	FNB	4 F	LHX	55	SB	BDS	WPS															
Location reference	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity		Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantily	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Total HLS Payment
CPI	Ço			13600	3	1.3	1.3																
CP2	24			£ 900	1	0.2	0.2																·
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Annex 6. Grassland management

If you are applying for any options involving grassland management please complete this annex. Guidance on how to complete this annex can be found in the HLS Handbook.

Permanent grassland (RLR Field Numbers)	Area (ha)	
		Please provide the current maximum stocking density over your farm. If necessary, please discuss with your Natural England contact Livestock units per hectare
Total area of permanent grassland (ha) Total area of temporary grassland (ha) Total area of all grassland (permanent and temporary)		If necessary, please continue on additional sheets and indicate here how many you have attached

HLS App Ref		Applicant Surname				in the second	Vendor	Number		
Land Parcel Number	Feature Group	Feature List	Feature Detail	Designation	Designation Reference	Grid Rel	Feature Quantity	Feature Unit of Measure	Feature Consilion	Notes (maximum 254 characters)
J62470499	Heathland and moorland M	/03 - Lowland heath - BAP habitat		SSSI	1014792		3.84	ha		Unit 1 of Sound Heath SSSI
J62470499	Heathland and moorland N	/103 - Lowland heath - BAP habitat					0.96	ha		Falls CA 1,2,4. Degraded heathland with invasive oak and birch, and mature / degenerate heather only. Restoration required.
J62484016	Heathland and moorland N	M03 - Lowland heath - BAP habitat		SSSI	1014793		0.96	ha	Unf-No Change	Unit 2 of Sound Heath SSSI
		M03 - Lowland heath - BAP habitat					0.15	ha		Fails CA 1, 2,4. Degraded heathland which has mainly suceeded to oak and birch woodland. Small amount of pioneer heather only. Restoration required.



HER CONSULTATION RESPONSE PROFORMA: Fast Track HLS Application

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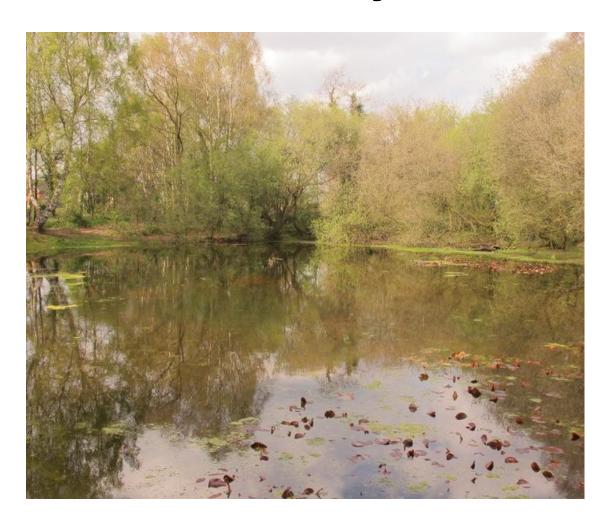


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Signed:	Name: Rob Edwards

Sound Common SSSI Great Crested Newt Survey





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Summary

A Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* survey of the two ponds on Sound Common was carried out to establish whether this species is present and if so what the population size class is. This is necessary before work can take place on the restoration of the lowland heath on the Common which is a SSSI but at risk of loss. One female Great Crested Newt was found in the large pond during torch surveys on each of two visits. This suggests a small population size class. A small population may be due to a recent colonisation of the pond by newts following the death of the introduced fish during the hard freeze of 2010.

1.0 Introduction

Sound Common is located in the village of Sound near Nantwich Cheshire and is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest due to its lowland heathland. 96% of lowland heathland has been lost in this country since the 1940's and Sound Common, which is currently in a critically degraded condition, will join this disturbing statistic without immediate action. Work planned to reinstate lost areas of the heath may cause disturbance to species such as newts if they are present on the common.

Great Crested Newts *Triturus cristatus* are listed in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and in Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations 2010 and therefore are fully protected in all life stages, eggs, larvae, juveniles and adults. Due to the presence of potential breeding pools and suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt in close proximity to the work area a survey was considered necessary to establish whether this species are present and if mitigation works are required before the heathland restoration works can commence.

2.0 The Surveyors

Carolyn Sherratt – MSc Conservation Biology. BSc (Hons) Animal and Plant Biology. Most recent GCN surveying course four day Field Studies Council Reptiles & Amphibians course in June 2011. Licenced to survey Great Crested Newts since 2004 due to the presence and monitoring of a population of GCN's on two sites which responsible for, Dane-in-Shaw Pasture SSSI and the Biddulph Valley Way.

Alistair Wright - BSc (Hons) Environmental Science (Rural Environmental Protection). National Certificate (Distinction) Countryside Management. Newt mitigation work for Cheshire Ecological Services (consultancy service affiliated to Cheshire Wildlife Trust). Involved in surveying GCN's on Danein-Shaw Pasture SSSI and Biddulph Valley Way.

3.0 Description of Ponds

Two potential breeding pools were established as present within 250 metres of the work area and therefore these were both surveyed for Great Crested Newts.

Main Pond – Pond A

A large pond of approximately 35 by 55 metres. Depth has not been established but does appear to be shallow at not much more than 1.5 to 2 metres. There are trees present around 60% of the pond edge but these are not creating any problems with shading due to the large size of the water body. Willow in the waters edge can also provide egg laying sites when the leaves hang in the water.

On the initial visit the pond was found to have a covering of blanket weed across about 85% of the water surface. This made surveying by night time torch counts difficult and therefore work was undertaken on two occasions to clear the majority of this blanket weed from the pond surface, checking it thoroughly for wildlife and piling it close to the pond above the water line. Blanket weed generally indicates high levels of nutrients in the water.



A full vegetation survey of the pond was not carried out but plants noted in and around the water were Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, Water Mint *Mentha aquatic*, Yellow Flag Iris *Iris pseudacorus*, Meadow Buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, Lesser Spearwort *Ranunculus flammula*, Bittersweet *Solanum dulcamara*, Cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis*, a Pondweed *Potamogeton sp*, a Water-crowfoot species *Ranunculus sp.*, a Duckweed *Lemna sp*, a Water-lily, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne* and the highly invasive non-native Australian Swamp Stonecrop *Crassula helmsii*. Early in the season there did not appear to be a great deal of vegetation which would be a suitable substrate for newt egg laying but this increased as the spring progressed.

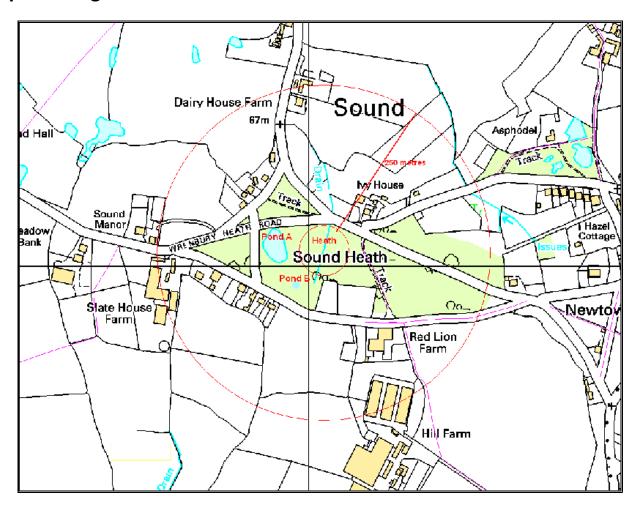
There is a history of fish such as large carp having been introduced into the pond. During one site visit a local resident informed us that the fish had all died during the heavy freeze of 2010. The presence of fish in a pond can have a big impact on the invertebrates and amphibians found within the water body.

Pond B

A smaller pond of approximately 15 metres diameter located within a more wooded area. More heavily shaded and affected by leaf litter due to the smaller nature of the water body. Again, though the depth was not established it did not appear to be much deeper than about 1 metre.

Plants noted in and around the water were Meadow Buttercup, Bittersweet, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and a Willowherb *Epilobium sp*. The main potential newt egg laying substrates appeared to be terrestrial plants such as grasses growing within the water.

Map Showing Sound Common and Ponds



4.0 Methodology

To establish the presence or absence of Great Crested Newts four survey visits each employing three types of survey methodology should be carried out on potential breeding ponds during suitable weather conditions from mid-March to mid-June, with at least two of these visits during mid-April to mid-May. The survey types chosen were night time torch light surveys, bottle trapping and egg counts.

Once the presence of Great Crested Newts had been established the survey emphasis shifted to establishing a population size class assessment. This is needed for licensing and to guide mitigation works. Establishing a population size class involves 6 survey visits in suitable weather conditions between mid-March to mid-June, with at least 3 of these visits during mi-April to mid-May. The population size class is then taken from the maximum adult count per pond per night gained through torch survey or bottle trapping (numbers can be merged for ponds within 250 metres of each other with no barriers to dispersal). Populations are classed as small for maximum counts up to 10, medium for maximum counts between 11 and 100 and large for maximum counts over 100. We chose to continue with torch surveys as these were proving more effective at detecting newts in the pools than the three nights of bottle trapping had been.

4.1 Night Time Torch Light Survey

Newts were searched for by walking slowly around the margin of the ponds in the dark searching the water with a 1,000,000 candle power torch. Surveys were carried out between dusk and midnight when the temperature was above 5° C on dry, still evenings.

4.2 Bottle Trapping

Bottle traps made from 2-litre plastic bottles secured with a garden cane were set around the pond margin during the evening and left overnight. The traps were set approximately every 2 metres around the edge of the pond facing centrally. This method was used only when night time air temperatures were above 5°C and the traps were checked and removed from the pond before 11am the following day. Care was taken to leave an air reservoir in the bottles and each trap was numbered to ensure that they were all collected in and did not remain in the pond as a threat to wildlife.



Page 5

4.3 Egg Searches

Submergent vegetation was examined for Great Crested Newt eggs on three occasions but only small newt (Smooth Newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* or Palmate Newt *Lissotriton helveticus*) eggs were found. Once the presence of Great Crested Newts was established egg searching was discontinued. Extensive surveys were not considered appropriate as due to the very small population of Great Crested Newts detected, potentially many small newt eggs would need to be unwrapped to have any chance of finding a GCN egg. This would impact on the breeding success of the small newts as unwrapped eggs are more susceptible to predation and UV radiation impacts.

5.0 Results



5.1 Visits

5th April

This visit was for an initial look at the site and planning but a torch survey was carried out whilst there. The temperature was at the bottom limit for a torch light survey (5° C) but the weather was dry with no wind.

No newts were seen during this visit though one Common Frog *Rana temporaria* and a number of tadpoles were seen in Pond A and 18 of clumps of frog spawn were seen in Pond B. Approximately 12 small fish fry were also seen in Pond A.

12th/13th April

Bottle trapping only was carried out during this visit. It was a clear night though the previous 3 days had seen a lot of showers. Temperature was 7°C.

No adult amphibians were caught though a number of frog tadpoles were caught in three of the traps on the northern edge of Pond A.

24/25th April

During the day on the 24th work was carried out to remove the blanket on the surface of Pond A. During this 1 male Smooth Newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*, 1 female Smooth Newt, I small newt larvae, 1 Common Frog and a large number of small fish fry were seen.

A torch survey and bottle trapping were carried out during this survey. The 24^{th} was a very sunny day though it clouded over in the evening, remaining dry. The temperature in the evening was 9° C. It rained on the morning of the 25^{th} when the bottle traps were collected in.

Whilst carrying out the torch survey one female Great Crested Newt was seen in the leaf litter at the bottom of Pond A on the southern edge. Nine small newts were also seen and a Common Toad *Bufo bufo*. No amphibians were seen in Pond B. Frog tadpoles and one fish fry were caught in the bottle traps in Pond A. Nothing was caught in the bottle traps in Pond B.

1st/2nd May



A torch survey and bottle trapping was carried out during this survey. The weather during the evening of the 1^{st} was overcast but dry and 10° C. The morning of the 2^{nd} was also overcast but dry. There had

been a substantial amount of rain in the previous two days to such an extent that there was a noticeable rise in the water level of both ponds.

During the torch survey on the evening of the 1st one female Great Crested Newt was found in Pond A. She was in the same area on the southern edge of the pond as the one sited on 24th April. 11 small newts, 1 Common Toad, 3 Common Frog and a lot of fish fry were also seen in Pond A. One Common Frog was seen in Pond B.

When the traps were lifted on the 2nd May 4 male Smooth Newts and 1 Common Frog were found in Pond A and 1 female Smooth Newt was found in Pond B.

16th/17th May

A sunny day and clear night on the evening of the 16th, temperature 6°c at the end of the survey.

Since the presence of Great Crested Newt had been established surveying had reverted to completing 6 night time torch surveys only to establish the population size class.

Nine small newts, 1 Common Toad, 11 tadpoles and approximately 70 small fish fry were seen in Pond A. No amphibians were seen in Pond B.

Further work to remove the blanket weed was carried out on the 17th May.

31st May

Dry and clear during the survey with a temperature of 12° c after a very sunny week though with rain that day.

Eleven small newts, 3 Common Toad, 2 Common Frog, 5 fish fry and numerous tadpoles were seen in Pond A. No amphibians were seen in Pond B

18th June

A dry day but some short showers during the survey of Pond A, 13°c.

Eleven small newts, 1 Common Frog and numerous tadpoles, froglets and small fish fry were seen during the torch survey of Pond A. A small Common Frog and a froglet were seen during the survey of Pond B.

Other catches in the traps and sightings during torch surveys included: Pond A - a substantial number of very small snails on the traps when lifted in the mornings, water spiders, water boatman, whirligig beetles, water beetles, dragonfly nymphs, great diving beetle, freshwater shrimp, water scorpion.

Pond B – water beetle, great diving beetle, water boatman, cased caddis.

Record forms from each visit are on file at the Countryside Office at Astbury Mere.

6.0 Conclusions

The Great Crested Newt population at Sound Common appears to have a population size class assessment of small. There could be a number of reasons for this result but a strong possibility is that newts have not been using the pond for breeding in recent years due to the introduction of predatory fish. Now that the fish are no longer present, newts may be starting to colonise the pond. It is known that there are Great Crested Newts present in other ponds in the area and the species have been found to move over considerable distances (up to 1.3km from breeding sites) and hence find and utilise new ponds.

6.1 Recommendations

6.1.1 Great Crested Newts

The type and extent of any mitigation works required to address any adverse impacts associated with the proposed heathland restoration will be discussed with Natural England. Great Crested Newts benefit from having a number of breeding ponds in an area which they can make use of. The species often form metapopulations, a series of sub-populations linked by dispersal of individuals between those sub-populations. Having a number of ponds with no barriers to newts between them within the area is beneficial as if a pond becomes unsuitable either during a breeding season due to for example drying out, or permanently due to for example the introduction of predatory fish, then another pond within the area can be used for breeding. Small populations of newts based on single ponds are more likely to go extinct. Therefore it would be beneficial to the Great Crested Newt population in the Sound Common areas if the surveyed ponds could be maintained as suitable newt breeding ponds.

The main barrier to this in Pond A is most likely to be the presence of predatory fish in the pond. Though the larger fish were killed during the recent heavy freeze there is risk from further introductions of fish and the small fry present developing into large fish. Consideration needs to be given to preventing the future stocking of the pond and removing the existing fry from the pond before they become a problem if it is to be maintained as newt breeding habitat.

Pond B may not be being used by newts due to a number of factors such as the heavy shading of surrounding trees which both lowers the water temperature and deposits large amounts of leaf litter into the water, a lack of suitable egg laying vegetation, a lack of prey items or regular drying out. The development of newt eggs and larvae is slower in colder waters and newts appear to favour ponds that lack shade on the southern side. Therefore the removal of trees and shrubs from this side of the pond would allow more sunlight to reach the water surface warming it. This would also reduce the leaf litter in the pond, a large amount of which will increase the rate of silting. The occasional drying out of ponds can be of benefit as it reduces the number of species which may predate on newts such as fish. If the pond regularly dries out before larvae are able to develop though (around August) then it will be unsuitable for breeding. None breeding ponds can still be of importance to newts as they may support

prey species. Care needs to be taken before carrying out work within the water body such as de-silting due to the potential presence of other important species.

Adult newts spend the majority of their lives on land. Sound Common contains suitable terrestrial habitat for the species such as heathland and woodland. There are already plans to increase the suitability of this habitat by providing more refugia and hibernacula during the heathland restoration works.

6.1.2 Fish

The presence of fish in Pond A will impact not just on Great Crested Newts but also on other amphibians and invertebrates. A pond stocked with predatory fish has low biodiversity compared to one without. Therefore any future stocking of the pond with fish should be prevented and the removal of the fry currently present should be considered before they reach a size where they will effect other wildlife in the pond. The Environment Agency should be consulted for advice on the removal of fish from the pool.

6.1.3 Australian Swamp Stonecrop Crassula helmsii

The *Crassula helmsii* has not taken hold in the ponds yet. It would be advisable to try to eradicate it now while it is at a lower density as it only takes about 5 years for this plant to completely cover a pond. A glyphosate which is suitable for use near waterbodies, such as Roundup Bioactive, can be used on any emergent and dry *C. helmsii*, though this must be carried out by a person qualified to use pesticides. Other control methods involve shading the plant with a cover or dye in the water. As *C. helmsii* has no dormant period this can be done in the winter when other plants will not be affected. Shading must be carried out for at least 8 weeks and preferably six months. Mechanical methods of removal are not recommended for this species as only a tiny piece of the plant (5mm) can regenerate and breaking it up risks spread. Smaller specimens can be carefully removed but they must be disposed of carefully preferably by bagging and then burning once dry. If shading or herbicides are used the plant material should be removed from the pond once dead to prevent nutrient enrichment.

Where this species has been introduced from also needs to be considered. It may have been from the fishing equipment which had fragments from another waterbody on it or through the tipping of vegetation and frog spawn from garden ponds into the water. Local people should be made aware of the risks of dumping garden waste into ponds.

6.1.4 Filamentous algae

Filamentous algae, or blanket weed, is a problem on the larger pool (Pond A) particularly when the survey began before work was carried out to remove it. This is most likely present because of eutrophication (introduction of nutrients) of the water. There does not appear to be any run off into the pool from surrounding land or any reason why the immediate area should have been treated with

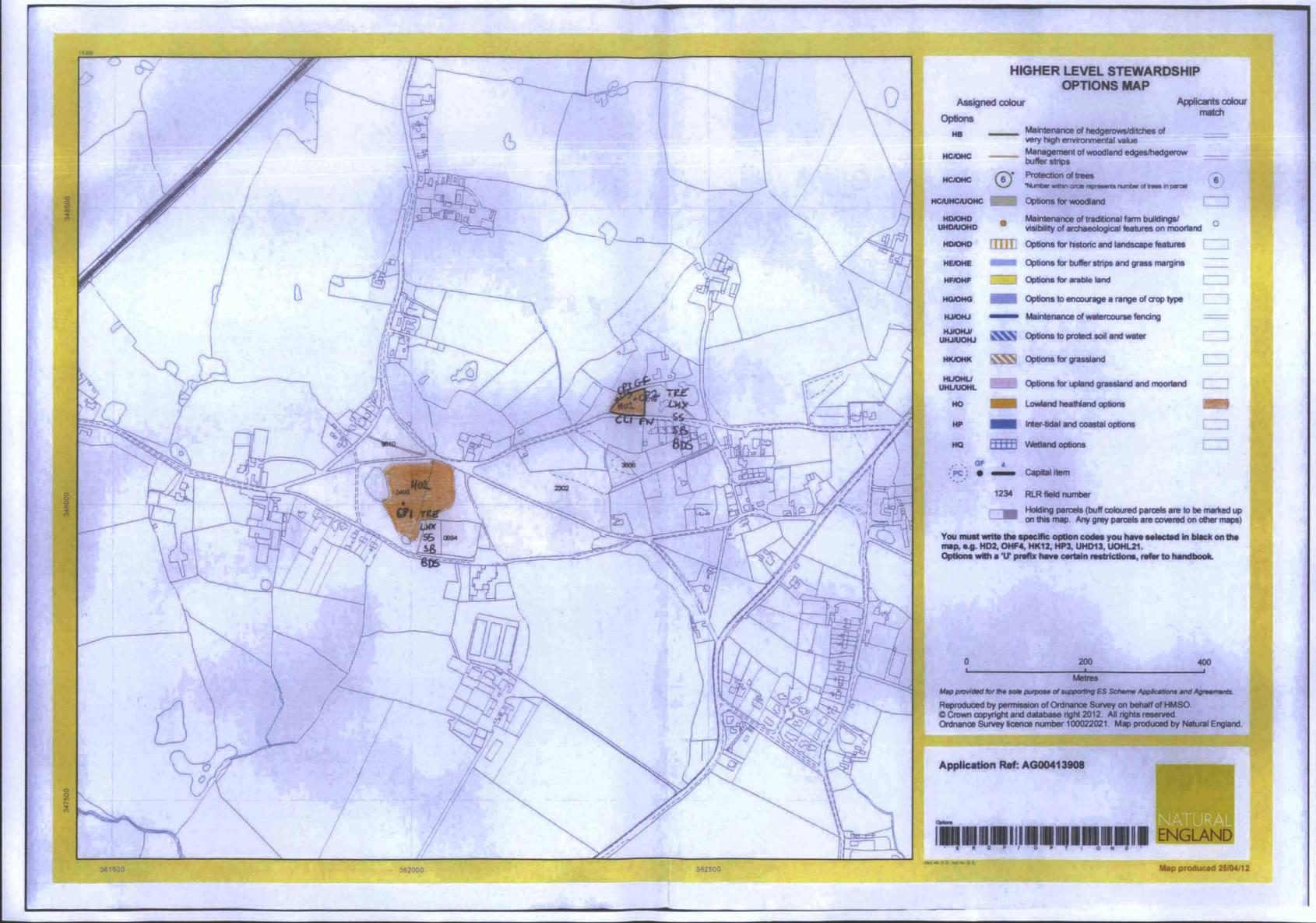
fertilisers. One possible cause may be the dumping of garden waste into the pond as on the visit of the 5th April a number of Leylandii type branches where seen in the water.

Though the algae was quite affectively removed it would be preferable to prevent its return rather than rely on physically removing it whenever it becomes a problem. Again local people should be made aware that it is unacceptable to dump waste into the pond. Barley straw sacks in the water can assist in the prevention of filamentous algae.

Consulted Literature

Gent, T. & Gibson, S. (editors), 2003 (revised). Herpetofauna Workers' Manual. Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Hayes, C & Whitehurst J., 2001. Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature



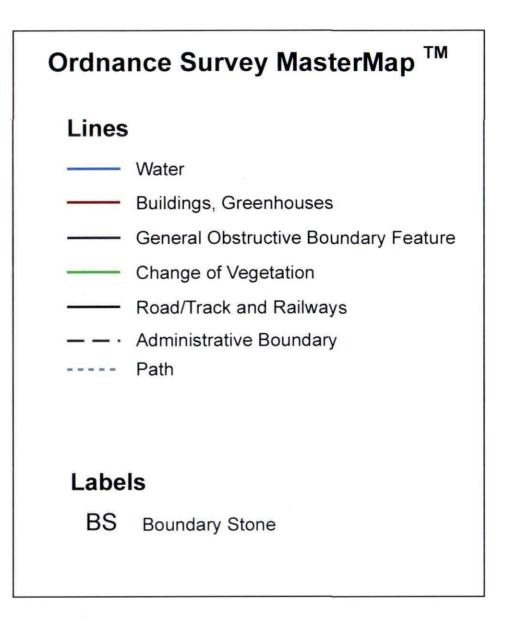
Rural Land Register (RLR) Map

Map Legend



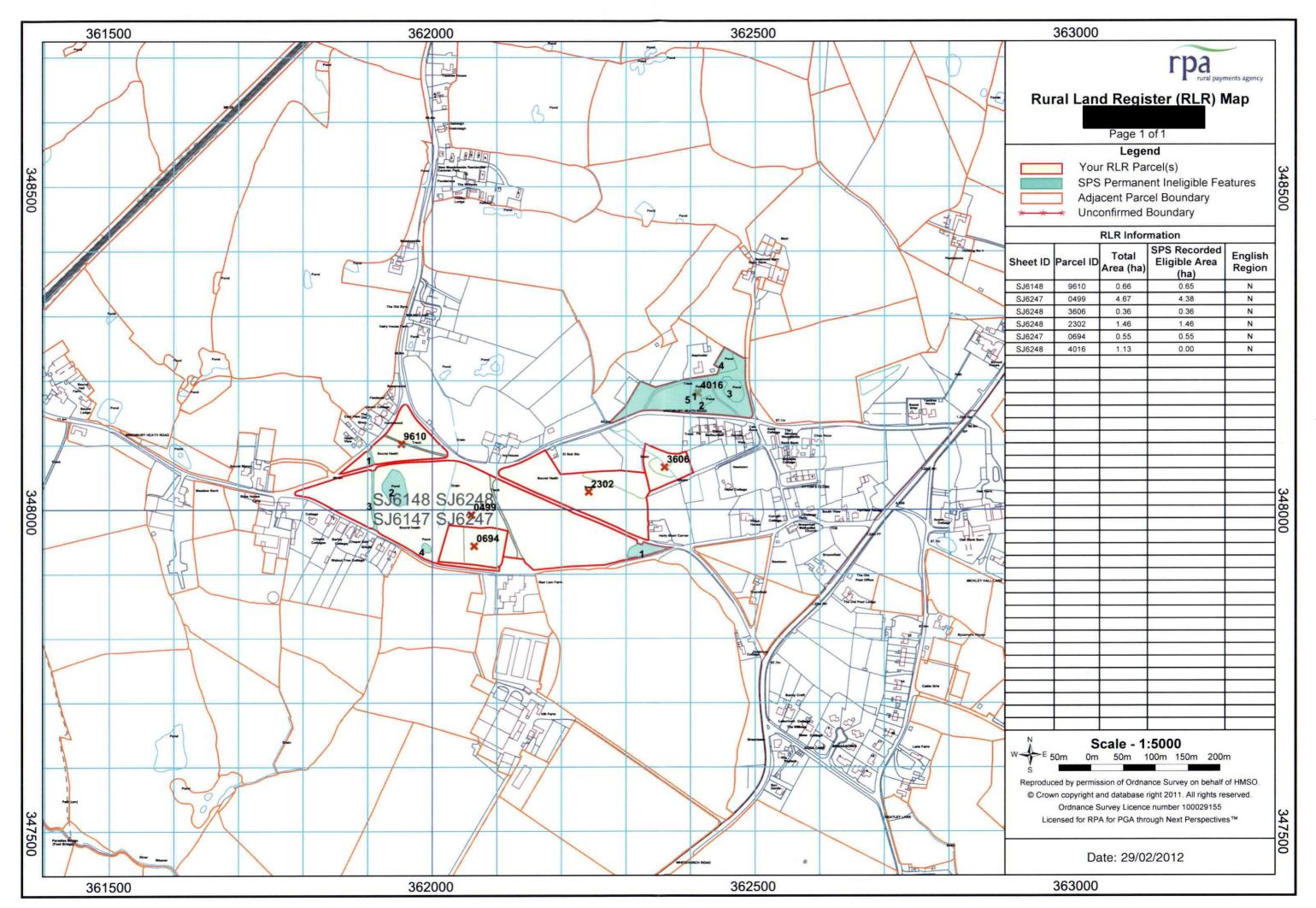
Rural Land Register				
Your RLR Parcel(s)				
Adjacent RLR Parcels				
SPS Permanent Ineligible Features				
★ ★ ★ Unconfirmed Boundaries				

English Region Boundaries				
Non-LFA (N)				
— Disadvantaged (D)	Other land outside SDA (EOUT)			
Moorland Disadvantaged (MD)				
——— Severely Disadvantaged (S)	Other land within SDA (ESDA)			
Moorland Severely Disadvantaged (MS)	Moorland within SDA (EMOR)			
——— National Boundary				



For further information about what these features mean, please see our guidance booklet.

For further information about any OS features or labels, please see the OS website or OS maps.



Rural Land Register (RLR) Information





Cheshire East Council - Field Information Data Sheet

					Land Parcel Da	ata				
Map Sheet No.	Sheet ID	Parcel ID	CPH Number for the Land Parcel	English Region	Total Area (ha)	SPS Recorded Eligible Area (ha)	Permanent Ineligible Features (ha)	Permanent Ineligible Features ID	Description	Area (ha)
	SJ6148	9610	06/180/0043	N	0.66	0.65	0.01	1	Road Or Track	0.008
		0499 06/180/0043			4.67	4.38	0.29	1	Hard Standing	0.084
	0.100.47		00/400/0040					2	Inland Water	0.160
	SJ6247		06/180/0043	N				3	Road Or Track	0.034
								4	Inland Water	0.017
	SJ6248	3606	06/180/0043	N	0.36	0.36	0.00			
Map 1 of 1	SJ6248	2302	06/180/0043	N	1.46	1.46	0.00			
	SJ6247	0694	06/180/0043	N	0.55	0.55	0.00			
	SJ6248	4016 06/180/0043						1	Pond	0.008
								2	Pond	0.020
			N	1.13	0.00	1.13	3	Pond	0.090	
							4	Pond	0.084	
								5	Non-Coppiced	0.928

Totals

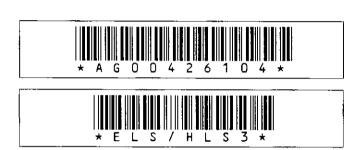
	No. Of Parcels	Total Area (ha)	SPS Eligible Area (ha)	
Totals:	6	8.83	7.40	

29/02/2012 Page A (1 of 1)

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP ENTRY LEVEL / HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT DECLARATIONS

Natural England Customer Services PO Box 380 Crewe Cheshire CW1 6YH







DECLARATION 1 - Agreement Acceptance

- (a) Name:
- (b) Business name (name to which payment will be made): Cheshire East Council
- (c) Main correspondence address:
 Old Municipal Buildings
 Earle Street
 Crewe
 Cheshire
 CW1 2BJ

Agreement number AG00426104

Vendor number:

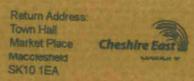
Declaration:

- I have read, understood and agree to undertake the 'ELS/HLS Options' in accordance with Parts 2, 3, 4 and 5 of my Agreement.
- I agree to manage all the land on my holding in accordance with the requirements set out in the section called 'What additional requirements will apply to my agreement?' in the ELS and HLS Scheme Handbooks.
- I have read, understood and agree to be bound by all other requirements contained in the ELS and HLS Scheme Handbooks and supplements (if any).
- I undertake to manage the HLS environmental features in accordance with the appropriate specific prescriptions to achieve the 'indicators of success' as set out in Part 3 of this Agreement.
- I understand that if I do not comply with my requirements I may be considered in breach of my agreement and any payments received may be recovered and any future payments due may be withheld.

Name:				
Signature:	 	Date:?+./	19/12	

18F. class,

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NATURAL ENGLAND

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Po Box 380

CREWE

CHESHIRE

CWI 6YH