APPENDIX A

New Forest PA2 Study – SSSI Condition Assessment Screening

Site	Reason for Notification	Area (Ha)	No Units	Unit Assessment Dates	Condition					
					Favourable	Unfavourable Recovering	Unfavourable No Change	Unfavourable Declining	Destroyed	Reasons for unfavourable status
Located Wholly or Partly within the New Forest Perambulation										
The New Forest	The New Forest embraces the largest area of "unsown" vegetation in lowland England and includes the representation on a large scale of habitat formations formerly common but now fragmented and rare in lowland western Europe. They include lowland heath, valley and seepage step mire, or fen, and ancient pasture woodland, including riparian and bog woodland. Nowhere else do these habitats occur in combination and on so large a scale. There are about 4,600 hectares of pasture woodland and scrub dominated by oak, beech and holly; 11,800 hectares of heathland and associated grassland; 3,300 hectares of wet heath and valley mire-fen and also 8,400 hectares of plantations dating from various periods since the early 18th century. Within this matrix of habitats are a range of acid to neutral grasslands where the vegetation owes much to the local geology and continuous grazing, a situation which is uncommon in lowland England. Scattered around the New Forest and throughout the small pockets of enclosed farmland are a series of unimproved meadows which have similarities with these Open Forest grasslands. A network of small streams draining the system form an unusual community which results from the combination of nutrient-poor, acid waters and outcrops of neutral enriched soils. There are many ponds of varying sizes and water chemistry including several ephemeral ponds. This wide range of habitats support an assemblage of nationally rare and scarce plants and a nationally important assemblage of rare and scarce invertebrates. The area supports internationally important breeding populations of certain bird species and the wintering population of another as well as an assemblage of birds associated with specific habitats such as old woodland or wetlands. Within the New Forest there are seven sites which are of special geological or physiographic interest including valley mires, the headwaters of the Highland Water, stream sections with exposures of fossil-bearing strata and a gravel pit rich in palaeolithic artefacts.	28,924.51 (542 ha lies outside)	582 (123 units lie outside)	2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024	16,351.18 ha (56.53%)	11,444.72ha (39.57%)	674.83 ha (2.33%)	451.31 (1.56%	2.46 (0.01%)	Public Access/Disturbance Bare ground, Lack of deadwood, Lack of tree regeneration, Non-natives, Artificial drainage, Forestry & woodland Management, Vehicle disturbance
Hurst Castle & Lymington River Estuary	This site extends along nine kilometres of the north-west Solent shore and embraces a wide range of coastal habitats of limited distribution on the south coast which are of biological and geomorphological importance. The SSSI below the seawall comprises the estuaries of three substantial streams, intertidal muds, cord-grass Spartina anglica marshes and high level mixed saltmarsh whilst behind the sea wall is a belt of fresh and brackish marsh including a series of fresh to saline lagoons. These lagoons support an assemblage of rare invertebrates and plants of international importance. The south-west boundary of the site is formed by a well-developed shingle spit known Hurst Spit which has terminal recurved shingle ridges. The outer margins of the Spartina marshes, which occupy much of the intertidal area, are marked by numerous further ridges of shells and small pebbles. These together with the saltmarsh provide nesting sites for nationally important breeding populations of terns and black-headed gulls Larus ridibundus. The site is a very important component of The Solent estuarine system which supports internationally important over-wintering populations of wildfowl and waders.	1077	34	2008 2009 2010 2011 2018 2019 2022	231.12 ha (21.46%)	815.06 ha 75.67%	-	31 ha (2.88%)	-	Coastal erosion & management Scrub control Vehicles
Lymington River	The New Forest streams are a geographically isolated type with no equivalent in lowland England. The Lymington River system is the largest in the New Forest, and the SSSI includes two contrasting tributaries: the Ober Water and Highland Water. Chemically the headwater tributaries are base and nutrient-poor (oligotrophic) and have slightly acidic peat-stained waters. The Lymington system becomes more nutrient-rich further downstream, and the river communities reflect these changes. The plant communities of the Lymington system are unique in England; there is no	34.84	7	2022 2024	Units 5,6,7,8	-	Units 2,3,4	-	-	Water Quality - Low flows, Excess nutrients

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	other system currently known which shows such a rapid downstream succession in such a short stretch of river.									
North Solent	The North Solent Site of Special Scientific Interest extends along approximately 13km of the north shoreline of the West Solent and includes the parallel valleys of the Beaulieu River, Dark Water and the Stanswood Valley. It possesses a remarkable diversity of habitat ranging from coastal mudflats and saltmarshes, shingle beaches and spits, fresh and brackish marshland and pools, maritime grassland, species rich neutral and acidic grassland, valley mire, heathland and a range of ancient semi-natural woodlands. This wide range of habitats is centred on the estuary of the Beaulieu River. Collectively they support a rich flora including many locally distributed rare or diminishing species. The botanical richness of these habitats is reflected in an equally rich and diverse insect fauna including many rare and otherwise notable species. In addition, the site is of international importance for its populations of over-wintering and migratory wildfowl and wading birds and is of national importance for its populations of breeding gulls, terns and waders.	1,186.65	98	2008 2010 2018 2020 2023	760.51 ha 64.09%	217.44 ha 18.32%	76.46 ha 6.44%	132.24 ha 11.14%	-	Unmanaged grasslands with scrub management & encroachment, Rhododendron, estuarine river quality, coastal erosion
River Avon System	The Avon is richer and more varied than in most chalk streams with over 180 species of aquatic plant having been recorded, one of the most diverse fish faunas in Britain and a wide range of aquatic invertebrates. It rises in the Pewsey Vale as a network of clay streams fed by chalk springs. These converge to a chalk river running through Salisbury Plain. At Salisbury this is joined by the main Wiltshire tributaries and develops into a large calcareous river flowing over more acid sands and clay as it passes the New Forest and the Dorset Heaths. The site includes the Dockens Water, a largely unmodified acid stream draining New Forest heathlands.	475.94 ha	49	2006 2008 2009 2010 2012 2014 2018 2019 2021	13.42 ha 2.82%	35.52 ha 7.46%	407.47 ha 85.61%	19.54% 4.10%		Freshwater – drainage, inappropriate water levels, lack of corrective works - inappropriate scrub control Agriculture - inappropriate cutting/mowing, freshwater - inappropriate water levels, lack of corrective works - inappropriate scrub control Water quality & non-natives
Sowley Pond	Sowley Pond is an important refuge for both surface feeding and diving ducks and in this respect functions as an integral part of the marshland system of the west Solent, which includes Hurst Castle to Lymington River Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest and the North Solent Site of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserve. The pond is surrounded by mature oak *Quercus* and Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris* woodland which supports the largest Hampshire heronry. Sowley Pond was formed in the fourteenth century by damming a small stream, and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries became a hammer pond for an ironworks situated close to the present dam.	49.27 ha	2	2009 2019	32.83 ha 66.62%		16.45 ha 33.38%			Freshwater pollution - water pollution - agriculture/run off, freshwater pollution - water pollution - discharge,
SSSI sites Located within 2km of the New Forest Perambulation Boundary										
Avon Valley (Bicton to Christchurch)	The Avon Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest encompasses the lower River Avon valley between Bickton in the north and the estuary of Christchurch Harbour in the south. In this, its lowest reach, the River meanders across a broad flood plain dissected by numerous dykes and rivulets. To either side of the flood plain the land rises in a series of river terraces to the extensive heathlands of south- east Dorset and the New Forest. To the north of the town of Ringwood a series of lakes, known collectively as the Blashford Lakes, have been created by the excavation of aggregate from the river terraces.	1,403.77	181	2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2019 2020 2021	833.02 ha 59.34%	376.42 ha 26.81%	85.02 6.06%	109.31 7.79%	-	Agriculture - undergrazing, lack of corrective works with inappropriate weed control, ditch management, scrub control, water levels Freshwater - invasive freshwater species Forestry - forestry and woodland management,
Breamore Marsh	An important surviving manorial green on which goose and cattle grazing persists. The grassland flora, whilst limited, is of interest in the extent to which its species composition has been derived from its grazing history. The marsh includes a series of shallow pools and connecting waterways which support an exceptionally rich aquatic flora. The ponds have margins of base-enriched bare mud in summers that are not excessively wet, with a near-unique assemblage of aquatic and semi- aquatic plants,	14.77	2		-	-	14.77 ha 100%	-	-	Assessed: 2021 Not wet enough. Under-grazed

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	including the national rarity brown cyperus *Cyperus fuscus*, common mudwort *Limosella aquatica* (which has only two or three other sites in Hampshire), and pennyroyal *Mentha pulegium*.									
Dibden Bay	The site is notified for its nationally important assemblage of invertebrates (including beetles, bees, wasps and flies) and is one of the richest sites around the Solent for nationally rare and nationally scarce species. It is also notified for breeding lapwing Vanellus vanellus, only two sites having more nesting pairs in south Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Poole Bay.	229.41	2	2021 2022	4.58 2%	-	224.83 ha 98%	-	-	Over grazing by cattle leading to reduction in lapwing population
Fletchwood Meadows	Fletchwood Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest comprises a series of unimproved, predominantly dry, loamy-sandy meadows on the Bartley Water at the eastern edge of the New Forest. Collectively they represent one of the richest meadow sites in Hampshire, with over 200 species of flowering plants recorded, including several that are now scarce or local through habitat loss, for example, green-winged orchid *Orchis morio* and heath spotted orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*, lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica*, bitter vetch *Lathyrus montanus*, meadow thistle *Cirsium dissectum*, pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, betony *Stachys officinalis* and corky-fruited water-dropwort *Oenanthe pimpinelloides*. Meadows supporting the last species are a feature of coastal south-central England. The site is the best example known of a herb-rich meadow on acid soils in the New Forest area and contrasts sharply with the potentially similar but heavily grazed acid grasslands of the nearby unenclosed New Forest.	7.63	2	2013 2021	7.63 ha 100%	-	-	-	-	No significant management issues – need to monitor stocking levels
Hythe to Calshot Marshes	The Hythe to Calshot Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest embraces the most extensive remaining areas of saltmarsh and mudflats in Southampton Water. Southampton Water supports nationally important numbers of migratory and over-wintering waders and wildfowl.	591.8	6	2018	-	528.76 89.35%	64.04 ha 10.65%	-	-	Sea level rise & coastal squeeze and declining water quality.
Landford Bog	This site is one of the few Wiltshire remnants of the internationally rare habitats, lowland bog and heath. These have suffered large scale destruction through drainage, agricultural improvement, afforestation, and urban development. Landford Bog supports many plant species which are decreasing in lowland Britain and are already scarce in Wiltshire. The vegetation, a mosaic of bog and heath grading through scrub into birch woodland, resembles the fragile acid mire systems of the New Forest.	9.12	2	2012 2019	6.66 ha 73.07%	2.46 ha 26.93%	-	-	-	Unfavourable recovering unit is a buffering grassland strip with no reportable features.
Landford Heath	Landford Heath is an area of botanically diverse wet heath, mire and acid grassland in the south-eastern corner of Wiltshire. The area represents a fragment of the extensive heathland which formerly linked Hamptworth and Plaitford Commons. Whilst much of this area has now been enclosed and improved Landford Heath retains examples of habitats which have always been rare in Wiltshire and are now virtually eliminated.	11.69	3	2009	-	6.08 ha 51.97%	-	5.62 ha 48.03	-	Forestry - forestry and woodland management, lack of corrective works - inappropriate scrub control. Grazing important to maintain recovering units.
Langley Wood and Homans Copse	This extensive tract of ancient forest on acid clays, locally overlain by sands and gravels, provides a valuable area for comparison with the nearby New Forest. It appears to have had no continuous history of grazing or coppicing, and to have been modified by man to a lesser degree than most woodland in lowland England. Most of the area is unbroken oak high forest *Quercus petraea* and *Q. robur* but there is a very large range of woodland stand-types which reflect variation in soils and drainage. This has produced an exceptionally rich and varied woodland, both structurally and botanically.	220.32	3	2012 2023	-	-	217.84 98.88%	2.48 ha 1.12%	-	Agriculture - undergrazing, Forestry - deer grazing/browsing,
Loosehanger Copse & Meadows	This site consists of a mosaic of 56 ha of ancient woodland, a small area of secondary woodland, willow carr and fen meadows which together represent a well-preserved example of a medieval wooded deer park in the south of Wiltshire. The whole complex is surrounded for much of its length by a medieval boundary bank and ditch. The ancient woodland of Loosehanger Copse supports a variety of ancient semi-natural botanical communities, including nationally rare stand types and a rich flora of over 100 woodland species including over 32 species which are only likely to be found in ancient woodland. The fen meadows support a range of wetland herbs, sedges, and rushes. Such meadows are features of the lowland agricultural landscape and have	56.54	5	2019	-	6.26 ha 11.07%	-	50.29 ha 88.93%	-	Forestry - deer grazing/browsing limiting regeneration. Agriculture - grazing management required on meadow but presence of hemock-water dropwort.

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	arisen through centuries of grazing of lowland fen without the use of fertilisers. As a result of widespread drainage and fertilisation they are now very scarce, and in Wiltshire only two other possible examples are known, both occurring in close association with ancient woodland.									
Lymington River Reedbeds	The Lymington River reedbeds occupy the former upper section of the Lymington River estuary, from which salt water was excluded by a one-way tide flap in the nineteenth century. There are c. 30ha of reed *Phragmites australis*, grading upstream into wet, unimproved meadowland with a moderately rich neutral grassland flora. Reedbeds of this size are local in distribution and are particularly important; (a) as breeding sites for passerine birds specialised to this habitat; (b) as autumn roosts for migrant birds, notably yellow wagtails *Motacilla flava*, swallows *Hirundo rustica*, house martins *Delichon urbica* and sand martins *Riparia riparia*; and (c) as sites where migrant passerine birds assemble the at reserves necessary for successful southward autumnal migration by exploiting the large aphid populations characteristic of wet reedbeds. In the latter context reed beds on the south coast are of special importance. The present site is one of about 12 coastal reedbeds of more than 20ha on the central south coast.	41.75	4	2009 2010	14.82 ha 35.50%	29.93 ha 65.50%	-	-	-	Measures in place to improve wetland management and water level management.
Norley Copse and Meadows	The site comprises a small unimproved highly species-rich grazing meadow and the adjacent woodland known as Norley Copse. The SSSI also includes the Crockford stream, a clear unpolluted water course which links the two major habitat features.	7.47	2	2008 2021	3.09 41.33%	4.38 ha 58.67%	-	-	-	Forestry - deer grazing/browsing
North Solent	The North Solent Site of Special Scientific Interest extends along approximately 13km of the north shoreline of the West Solent and includes the parallel valleys of the Beaulieu River, Dark Water and the Stanswood Valley. It possesses a remarkable diversity of habitat ranging from coastal mudflats and saltmarshes, shingle beaches and spits, fresh and brackish marshland and pools, maritime grassland, species rich neutral and acidic grassland, valley mire, heathland, and a range of ancient semi-natural woodlands. This wide range of habitats is centred on the estuary of the Beaulieu River. Collectively they support a rich flora including many locally distributed rare or diminishing species. The botanical richness of these habitats is reflected in an equally rich and diverse insect fauna including many rare and otherwise notable species. In addition, the site is of international importance for its populations of over-wintering and migratory wildfowl and wading birds and is of national importance for its populations of breeding gulls, terns and waders.	1,186.65	98	2008 2010 2018 2020 2023	760.51 ha 64.09%	217.44 ha 18.32%	76.46 ha 6.44%	132.24 ha 11.14%	-	Unmanaged grasslands with scrub management & encroachment, Rhododendron, estuarine river quality, coastal erosion
Poors Common	Poors Common is near the southwest edge of The New Forest and comprises a valley bog in the head of a southward trending valley deeply incised into a terrace of sedimentary rocks (Headon Beds, Barton Sands) capped with superficial Pleistocene gravels. The gravels have largely been removed by mineral extraction. The bog occupies the valley bottom and lower valley slope up to a seepage line just below the junction of permeable and impermeable material. Below the seepage the bog surface in profile tends to assume a characteristic bulge resulting from the downslope movement of material lubricated by the seepage. Above the seepage the vegetation changes to heathland. The change is often gradual, and the seepage is not consistently well defined.	47.6 ha	2	2019	-	-	-	47.39 ha 100%	-	Levels of gorse, birch & pine
Roydon Woods	Roydon Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest comprises extensive deciduous woodland on plateau gravel, Barton Clays and Headon Beds in the valley of the Lymington River, adjoining the New Forest. Much of the woodland is ancient in origin or is derived from infilled or inter- planted open wood pasture, the numerous relicts of which survive as groups or scatters of old, large-crowned trees. Parts of the present woodland are derived from oak/hazel coppice planted on former fields in the 19th century. The combination of a wide range of woodland and associated plant communities rich in plants and animals, together with the contrasts afforded by close proximity to the New Forest, which has had a very different land use history, afford special research opportunities.	294.94 ha	8	2021	188.56	106.38 ha				Conifer cover