

Pitt Down West
SU41102930
42-0031
Winchester

Habitat Survey



Pitt Down West, community (2).

Date of Survey:	27 th July 2022
Written by:	Ian Ralphs
Validated by:	Evie Templeman
Date of validation:	2 nd February 2023
Last reviewed by:	
Date of review:	



Survey Summary

Pitt Down (West) 27/07/2022

Site Details

Grid Reference :	SU41102930	File Reference :	42-0031
Total Area :	4.6 ha		
Civil Parish :	Hursley		
District :	Winchester		
Vice-County :	11, South Hampshire		

Survey Details

Survey Type :	Phase II
Survey Date :	27/07/2022
Survey Time on Site :	3.7 (hrs)
Data Owned By :	Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre Partnership
Data Recorded By :	Ian Ralphs, HBIC

Site Summary

Pitt Down West is a scrub invaded chalk grassland, situated on relatively level site just west of Winchester, and is the western section of the impressive Pitt Down chalk grassland complex, managed by the Hampshire County Council.

Site Designations

Designation

Hampshire County Council Countyside Site
Public Access
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Features

<u>Type</u>	<u>Description</u>
Features	Boundary Banks
Features	Scrub Invasion
Geology	Upper Chalk
Invasive Species	Other (Tor-grass)
Management	Grazing - Horses (Pony grazed at moderate density)
Management	Scrub Clearance
Management	Tree Clearance
Usage	Dog Walking
Usage	Managed For Wildlife
Usage	Public Access

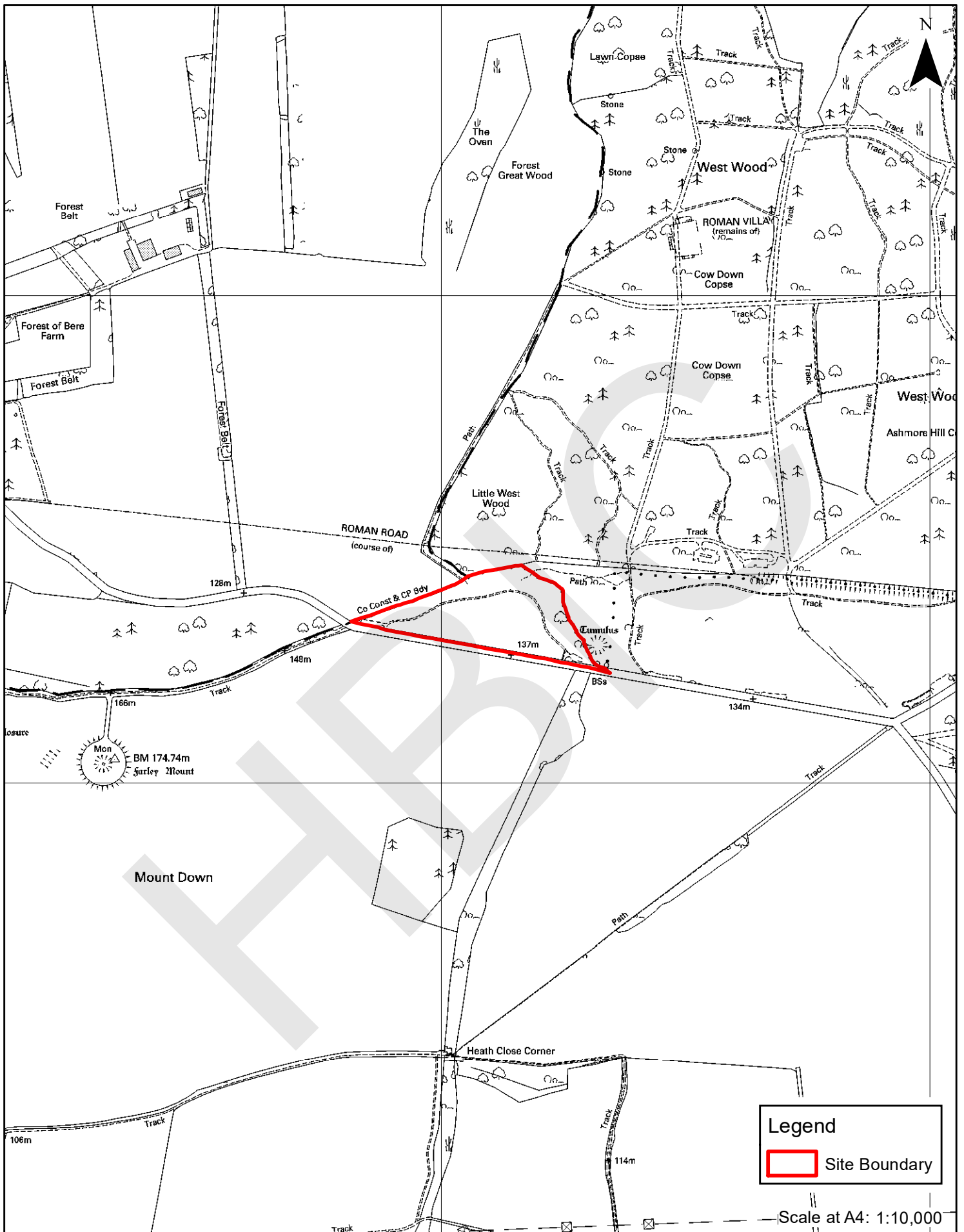
Priority Habitats

<u>Priority Habitats</u>	<u>Area</u>
Lowland calcareous grassland	40 %
Lowland beech and yew woodland	20 %

Notable Species

<u>Taxon Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Status</u>
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<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Skylark	Hampshire BAP Species NERC Act 2006, Sect 41 Birds of Conservation Concern: Red List
<i>Brachypodium rupestre</i>	Tor-grass	County Scarce South Hampshire Scarce (VC11)
<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	White Helleborine	NERC Act 2006, Sect 41 IUCN (EN2014) - Vulnerable IUCN (2001) - Vulnerable
<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	Small Heath	NERC Act 2006, Sect 41
<i>Meles meles</i>	Eurasian Badger	Protection of Badgers Act 1992
<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Red Kite	Hampshire BAP Species EU Birds Directive Annex 1 WACA Sch 1, Part 1 County Rare
<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Bullfinch	Hampshire BAP Species
<i>Speyeria aglaja</i>	Dark Green Fritillary	County Scarce
<i>Thesium humifusum</i>	Bastard-toadflax	Hampshire BAP Species Nationally Scarce County Scarce
<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Song Thrush	Hampshire BAP Species Birds of Conservation Concern: Red List



Survey Details

General description and management.

Pitt Down West is a scrub invaded chalk grassland, situated on a relatively level site just west of Winchester, and is the western section of the impressive Pitt Down chalk grassland complex, managed by the Hampshire County Council.

Pitt Down West is the smaller of the two sections of Pitt Down at only 4.6ha in size, however an exceptional 158 species were recorded on the site during the survey, this included 29 chalk grassland indicator species and 19 species that have either a “notable” or “noteworthy” status attached to them, refer to the species list for details.

Juniper (*Juniperus communis*) which is formerly recorded from the site was not re-found during the survey.

The Down is well fenced and grazed seasonally and has (clearly) been subject to significant rotational scrub clearance in the past, although there was little evidence of recent scrub clearance at the time of the survey.

Tor-grass (*Brachypodium rupestre*) is an invasive native species that has become established on the site in recent years, although it is thankfully still quite rare on the western section of Pitt Down, it is likely to spread widely across the site, as is the case on the eastern section of the down. The only reasonable method of removing **Tor-grass** from chalk grasslands, short of spot chemical treatment, is by digging it out, although apparently a quite drastic measure, this would have the benefit of providing short rotation bare ground habitats and habitat for pioneer chalk grassland species.



General view of (2) [CG3] here only with limited scrub regeneration.

Communities.

(1). [MG1d]: *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland; *Pastinaca sativa* sub-community.

False Oat-grass invaded chalk grassland, often in the margins and edges and transitional with scrub communities. Priority Habitat Lowland Calcareous Grassland. (IHS:- GC11.SC2.GM13).

Canopy :-	Scattered to moderate Dog Rose agg, Pedunculate Oak saplings, Hazel and locally abundant Dewberry.
Flora :-	Moderate to tall sward. False Oat-grass, Dewberry, Wild Parsnip, Black Knapweed, Perforate St.John's-wort, Cock's-foot, Ragwort, Wild Carrot, Yorkshire-fog, Wild Marjoram, Ribwort Plantain, Hogweed, Common Restharrow, Hoary Ragwort and Curled Dock.
*Variant 1 :-	With a high degree of variability as patches of (2) type [CG3] are present locally.



Community (1) both sides of the main access track, near the three Oaks.

(2). [CG3]: *Bromus (Bromopsis) erectus* grassland.

Herb rich moderate to tall chalk grassland sward, becoming quite scrubby locally. Priority Habitat Lowland Calcareous Grassland. (IHS:- GC11.SC2.GM13).

Canopy :-	Moderate to scattered Hazel, Hawthorn and Dogwood, with Privet, Pedunculate Oak and Beech saplings. 0%-30%, 0.5-2 meters.
Flora :-	Upright Brome, Sweet Vernal-grass, Quaking-grass, Red Fescue, Cock's-foot, Yorkshire-fog, Wood False-brome and Yellow Oat-grass, with Wild Carrot, Burnet-saxifrage, Black Knapweed, Salad Burnet, Bird's-foot Trefoil, Small Scabious, Rough Hawkbit, Red Clover, Black Medick, Ribwort Plantain, Harebell, Kidney Vetch, Agrimony, Wild Basil, Hairy Violet, Glaucous Sedge, Perforate St. John's-wort, Stemless Thistle, Ladies Bedstraw, Pyramidal Orchid, Greater Knapweed, Fragrant Orchid, Rockrose and Squinancywort.
*Variant 1 :-	There are extensive transitions between [CG3] and the adjacent [W21] calcareous

	scrub communities.
*Variant 2 :-	Paths and high traffic lawns more improved [MG6]: <i>Lolium perenne</i> - <i>Cynosurus cristatus</i> grassland, or even [MG7]: <i>Lolium perenne</i> leys and related grasslands.

Point data	
1	Greater Butterfly-orchid , 3 at SU4101729302 +/- 3 meters.
2	Tor-grass , Patch at SU4098529361 +/- 3 meters.
3	Bastard Toadflax at SU4101829338 +/- 3 meters and SU4099829344 +/- 3 meters.



Community (2) above, with a similar view across community (2) but with dense (3) Hazel scrub in the background, below.



(3). Transitional community.

Hazel scrub, probably [W21]: *Crataegus monogyna* - *Hedera helix* scrub, but tending to be Hazel dominated, sometimes overwhelmingly Hazel dominated. Appears, for the most part, to represent a fairly recent phase of scrub invasion. (IHS:-WB2.WF11.WM7).

Canopy :-	Hazel locally dominant, with Pedunculate regeneration, Bramble, Dewberry, Blackthorn, Dog Rose, Privet and Hawthorn.
Flora :-	[MG1] (1) type in the edges and interstitial light gaps.

(4). [W21]: *Crataegus monogyna* - *Hedera helix* scrub.

Patches of [W21]: *Crataegus monogyna* - *Hedera helix* type scrub cover with occasional even locally frequent taller trees. Recent rotational scrub management evident, often structurally diverse with good marginal structure. (IHS:- WB2. TS21. WF11. WM7).

Canopy :-	Pole stage and late pole stage Beech, with Pedunculate Oak and Ash, over Hazel (LF), Blackthorn, Dog Rose, Bramble, Hawthorn and Wayfaring-tree. To 20 meters, 90%.
*Variant 1 :-	[W24]: <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> - <i>Holcus lanatus</i> underscrub in the margins locally.
*Variant 2 :-	Hazel can be abundant locally.



A mix of [W21] and more transitional [W24] in the edges and gaps in the (4) scrub.

(5). [W12]: *Fagus sylvatica* - *Mercurialis perennis* woodland.

The Beech woodland in the north-western and north-eastern edges of the site. Quite possibly 2nd or even 3rd generation Beech plantations on former wood pasture, so the stands retain a high degree of naturalness and will qualify as priority habitat. Some thinning and localized felling. Priority Habitat Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland (IHS:-WB331.WF11.WMZ).

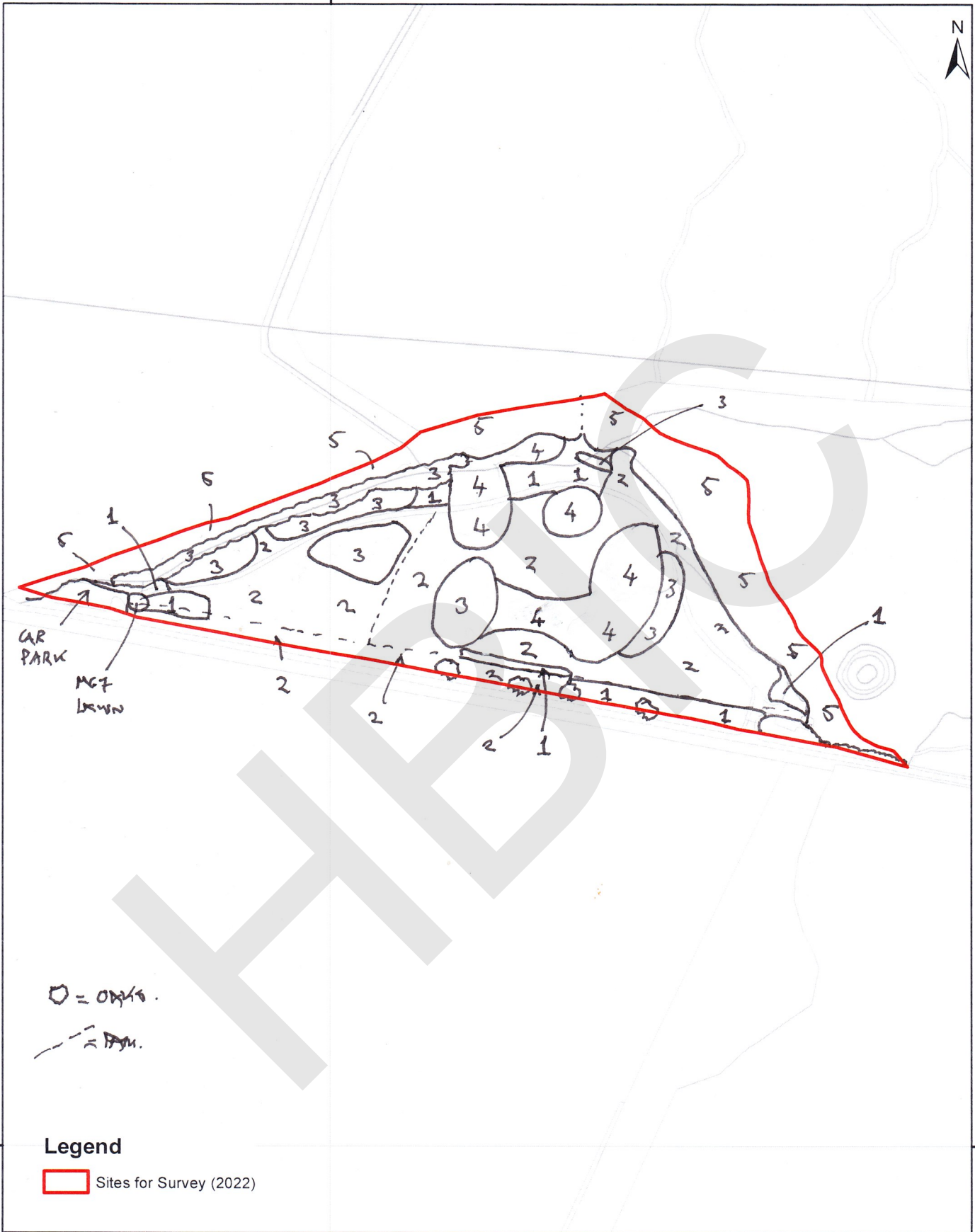
Canopy :-	Mature and fairly complete cover of old standard, late pole stage, pole stage and regrowth Beech, with Pedunculate Oak, Ash, Sycamore, Silver Birch and Yew. 10-30 meters, 60%-100%.
Shrub layer :-	Patchy, with Hazel, Hawthorn and Dogwood.
Flora :-	Dog's Mercury, Wood False-brome and Wood Avens, becoming much more complex in light gaps and track margins.
*Variant 1 :-	Light gaps with locally abundant regeneration of canopy species.
*Variant 2 :-	Margins on the south side drop often quite abruptly into (3) type Hazel dominated and [W21] scrubs etc.



Track along the wooded north-western edges of the Down, with (5) canopy.

Ian Ralphs, Field Ecologist, HBIC.

441000



○ = ORVIS.
 - - - = DYM.

Legend

Sites for Survey (2022)

129000

129000

441000



HBIC Survey Programme 2022
 Pitt Down (West)
 SU41102930

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Scale at A4: 1:3,000

Survey Details

Pitt Down (West) 27/07/2022

Habitats Recorded

Priority Habitats

	<u>Area</u>
Lowland calcareous grassland	40 %
Lowland beech and yew woodland	20 %

National Vegetation Classifications

	<u>Area</u>
CG3, Bromus erectus grassland	30 %
W12, Fagus sylvatica-Mercurialis perennis woodland	20 %
MG1d, Arrhenatherum elatius grassland: Pastinaca sativa subcommunity	10 %
W21, Crataegus monogyna-Hedera helix scrub	10 %
W24, Rubus fruticosus-Holcus lanatus underscrub	10 %

Species Recorded

<u>Taxon Name</u>	<u>Taxon Common Name</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Species Status</u>
* <i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	R/O	
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway Maple	R	
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	R	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	O	
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	Ground-elder	R	
+ <i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	Agrimony	OLF	
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent	OLF	
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping Bent	R	
~ <i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal Orchid	R/O	
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal-grass	OLF	
~ <i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	Kidney Vetch	OLF	
<i>Arctium minus</i>	Lesser Burdock	R	
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass	F/A	
<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Lords-and-Ladies	R/O	
~ <i>Asperula cynanchica</i>	Squinancywort	R	NW
<i>Betula</i>	Birch	OLF	
~ <i>Brachypodium rupestre</i>	Tor-grass	R	NB
<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>	False-brome	OLF	
~+ <i>Briza media</i>	Quaking-grass	OLF	NW
~ <i>Bromopsis erecta</i>	Upright Brome	F/A	
* <i>Bromopsis ramosa</i>	Hairy-brome	R	
<i>Bromus sterilis</i>	Barren Brome	R	
~^ <i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	Harebell	R/O	NW
~+* <i>Carex flacca</i>	Glaucous Sedge	OLF	
* <i>Carex pendula</i>	Pendulous Sedge	R	
* <i>Carex sylvatica</i>	Wood-sedge	R	
+ <i>Centaurea nigra sens. lat. (=nigra/debauxii)</i>	Common Knapweed	F/A	
~ <i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>	Greater Knapweed	OLF	

<u>Taxon Name</u>	<u>Taxon Common Name</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Species Status</u>
<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	White Helleborine	R	NB
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Common Mouse-ear	O	
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay Willowherb	R/O	
~ <i>Cirsium acaule</i>	Dwarf Thistle	OLF	
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle	R	
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	Marsh Thistle	R/O	
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	R	
<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	Traveller's-joy	R	
~ <i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>	Wild Basil	O	
<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood	F	
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	OLA	
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	F	
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawk's-beard	R	
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	Crested Dog's-tail	O	
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	F	
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild Carrot	OLF	
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Tufted Hair-grass	R	
* <i>Dioscorea communis</i>	Black Bryony	R	
* <i>Elymus caninus</i>	Bearded Couch	R	
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Spindle	R/O	
* <i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>	Hemp-agrimony	R	
* <i>Euphorbia amygdaloides</i>	Wood Spurge	R	
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech	O/F	
~^ <i>Festuca ovina</i>	Sheep's-fescue	OLF	
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue	R/O	
^ <i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Wild Strawberry	R/O	NW
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	R/O	
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	R	
~^+ <i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's Bedstraw	OLA	
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill	R	
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb-Robert	R	
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood Avens	R/O	
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground-ivy	R	
~ <i>Gymnadenia conopsea</i>	Common Fragrant-orchid	R	
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	O	
~^ <i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>	Common Rock-rose	R	NW
~ <i>Helictotrichon pratense</i>	Meadow Oat-grass	R	
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed	R	
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	F/A	
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	Perforate St John's-wort	OLF	
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Cat's-ear	R/O	
* <i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	R	
+ <i>Jacobaea erucifolia</i>	Hoary Ragwort	O	
<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	Common Ragwort	R/O	
~ <i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	Crested Hair-grass	R/O	
* <i>Lamium galeobdolon subsp. argentatum</i>	Lamium galeobdolon subsp. argentatum	R	

<u>Taxon Name</u>	<u>Taxon Common Name</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Species Status</u>
+ <i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow Vetchling	O	
~^+ <i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Rough Hawkbit	OLF	
<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Wild Privet	R/O	
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass	OLA	
~^+ <i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil	F/A	
<i>Matricaria discoidea</i>	Pineappleweed	R	
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medick	OLF	
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	Dog's Mercury	OLF	
<i>Odontites vernus</i>	Red Bartsia	R/O	
~ <i>Ononis repens</i>	Common Restharrow	OLF	
~ <i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Wild Marjoram	OLA	
<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	Wild Parsnip	OLF	
<i>Phleum bertolonii</i>	Smaller Cat's-tail	R	
<i>Phleum pratense</i>	Timothy	R/O	
+ <i>Pimpinella saxifraga</i>	Burnet-saxifrage	F	
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	F	
<i>Plantago major</i>	Greater Plantain	O	
~ <i>Plantago media</i>	Hoary Plantain	OLF	NW
~* <i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>	Greater Butterfly-orchid	R	NW
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Rough Meadow-grass	R	
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	Knotgrass	R	
<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	Silverweed	O	
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping Cinquefoil	R/O	
~+ <i>Poterium sanguisorba</i>	Salad Burnet	OLA	
* <i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Primrose	R	
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Selfheal	R	
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	OLF	
<i>Quercus robur</i>	Pedunculate Oak	OLA	
<i>Reseda lutea</i>	Wild Mignonette	R	
+ <i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	Yellow-rattle	O	
* <i>Rosa arvensis</i>	Field-rose	R/O	
<i>Rosa canina</i>	Dog-rose	R/O	
<i>Rubus caesius</i>	Dewberry	F/A	
<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	Bramble	R/O	
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curled Dock	R	
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock	R	
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat Willow	R/O	
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	Common Sallow	R	
~ <i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>	Small Scabious	F	
<i>Scorzoneroides autumnalis</i>	Autumn Hawkbit	R	
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth Sow-thistle	R/O	
<i>Sorbus aria</i>	Common Whitebeam	R/O	NW
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge Woundwort	R/O	
<i>Taraxacum</i>	Dandelion	R	
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Yew	OLF	
~ <i>Thesium humifusum</i>	Bastard-toadflax	R	NB

<u>Taxon Name</u>	<u>Taxon Common Name</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Species Status</u>
~ <i>Thymus polytrichus</i>	Wild Thyme	R	
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	OLF	
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	R	
~+ <i>Trisetum flavescens</i>	Yellow Oat-grass	R/O	
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse	R	
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common Nettle	R/O	
<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>	Common Valerian	R	NW
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Germander Speedwell	O	
<i>Viburnum lantana</i>	Wayfaring-tree	R	
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch	R	
~ <i>Viola hirta</i>	Hairy Violet	OLF	
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Common Dog-violet	R/O	

<u>Taxon Name</u>	<u>Taxon Common Name</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Species Status</u>
<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Skylark	P	NB
<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Buzzard	P	
<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Goldfinch	P	
<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	Small Heath	P	NB
<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Woodpigeon	P	
<i>Curruca communis</i>	Whitethroat	P	
<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Blue Tit	P	
<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Chaffinch	P	
<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	Meadow Brown	P	
<i>Meles meles</i>	Eurasian Badger	P	NB
<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Red Kite	P	NB
<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	European Rabbit	P	
<i>Parus major</i>	Great Tit	P	
<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Chiffchaff	P	
<i>Picus viridis</i>	Green Woodpecker	P	
<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	Common Blue	P	
<i>Pyronia tithonus</i>	Gatekeeper	P	
<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Bullfinch	P	
<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>	Eastern Grey Squirrel	P	
<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Nuthatch	P	
<i>Speyeria aglaja</i>	Dark Green Fritillary	P	NB
<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Blackcap	P	
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Wren	P	
<i>Turdus merula</i>	Blackbird	P	
<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Song Thrush	P	NB
<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	Painted Lady	P	

Species Summary

Total no. of species :	158
No. of woodland species :	69
* No. of AWVP indicators :	12
~ No. of CG indicators :	29
^ No. of LDAG indicators :	7
+ No. of LM indicators :	13
x No. of PMGRP indicators :	2

Notes

Habitat Classifications :

Priority: Habitats identified as the highest priority for conservation action in the UK

NVC: A system of classifying natural habitat communities according to species associations

Phase 1: A standardised system for surveying, classifying and mapping broad wildlife habitats including urban areas

Peterken: A stand type classification that describes woodlands by tree species

Indicators Species :

- * Ancient Woodland Vascular Plants (AWVP) - species most strongly associated with ancient woodland and are typical components of botanically rich ancient woodland communities
- ~ Chalk grassland (CG) indicators - species characteristic of unimproved chalk downland or have a strong affinity to calcareous soil
- ^ Lowland Dry Acid Grassland Indicators (LDAG) - species characteristic of lowland dry acid grassland.
- + Lowland Meadow Indicators (LM) - species characteristic of lowland meadows.
- x Purple Moor-grass and Rush Pastures Indicators (PMGRP) - species characteristic of Purple Moor-grass and Rush Pastures.

Species Abundance:

Frequency: D=dominant A=abundant F=frequent O=occasional R=rare L=locally

Frequencies within brackets () indicate non-native occurrences

Habitat and Species designations and statuses:

Habitat designations/categories and species legislation/statuses are correct at the time the report was generated and may not necessarily reflect those applicable either at the time of survey or later than the generated date.

Species statuses:

NB: Records of species that are legally protected or otherwise notable within Hampshire.

NW: Species that may or may not have another/a legal designation, but are of note/interest due to one or more of the following: Hampshire Responsible, Hampshire Declining or Near Threatened.