


1	 2000	WOODLAND SURVEY SHEET. GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION		County / Local Authority <i>West Midlands</i>
		WGS REF. No. NWP/015/209	Site Name Small Wood	District/Parish <i>Solihull</i>
Owner/tenant/agent Solihull MBC Contact David Lowe Solihull MBC, Ecologist Landscapes Section PO BOX 19, Council House, Solihull, West Midlands, B91, 3QT	Nature Conservation Status / Designation pSINC		Total area (of included woodland) <i>0.5 ha</i>	
	Other Designations / Protections <i>Midlands Plateau Natural Area (43)</i>		Grid ref (access) <i>SP 148 785</i>	
	Ancient / Recent Semi-Natural / Plantation <i>Semi-natural woodland</i>		Surveyor <i>Helen S Miller</i> <i>Middlemarch Environmental Ltd</i>	
	Biodiversity Action Plan <i>Warwickshire, Coventry & Solihull BAP</i> <i>See Appendix A</i>		Date of survey <i>30 June 2004</i>	

Woodland vegetation types (**mark on map**).
SEMI-NATURAL WOODLAND TYPE (HAPS):
Lowland mixed broadleaved (Forest Practice Guide 3)

NVC COMMUNITIES:
W8

PLANTATIONS:
No data available

Adjacent land (**mark on map**)
Urbanisation – residential housing and lowland grassland in the form of amenity grassland.

Threats
Over use from recreation.
Invasion of exotics from neighbouring gardens.
Vandalism

Aspect West	Slope <i>Slight valley. Steeper to the south-east at about 30°</i>	Altitude 130 m
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Soil– from Soilscape on www.magic.gov.uk

Ref/class	Name	Main surface texture class	Natural drainage type	Natural fertility
18	Slowly permeable seasonally wet acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils	Loamy	Impeded drainage	Moderate

Geology
No data but most likely to be Reddish till

Climatic Factors From Met Office web-site for Stratford-Upon-Avon weather station, approximately 15 miles south of the Solihull Woodlands:

- Average annual rainfall 622.3 mm with 115.7 days experiencing less than 1 mm.
- Average annual days experiencing air frost and ground frost: 62.2 and 95-110 respectively
- Minimal risk from wind exposure.

WOODLAND SURVEY SHEET.
COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

County
Unitary
West Midlands

Ref. No. NWP/015/209

	Tx	Tp	Ts	Tc	Tn	Cx	Ct	Px	Pc	Sx	Sc	St	Js	Jp	Jv
Acer cam												R		R	
Acer pse												O			
Aescu hip															
Alnus glu															
Betul pen															
Betul pub															
Carp bet															
Casta ast															
Conifer sp															
Coryl ave															
Crata mon										F				R	
Crata oxy															
Euony eur															
Fagus syl															
Frang aln															
Fraxi exc	F											O	O	IF	
Ilex aqu	R												R		
Junip com															
Larix sp															
Malus syl	R														
Picea sp															
Pinus syl															
Popul tre															
Prunu avi												R			
Prunu lau															
Prunu pad															
Prunu spi															
Querc cer															
Querc pet/hybrid															
Querc rob	D														
Rham cat															
Rhodopon															
Salix alb															
Salix aur															
Salix cap															
Salix cin												O			
Salix fra															
Salix pen															
Salix vim															
Samb nig										O					
Sorbu ari															
Sorbu auc															
Sorbu tor															
Taxus bac															
Thely san															
Tilia cor															
Tilia eur															
Tilia pla															
Ulmus car															
Ulmus gla															
Ulmus pro															
Vibur lan															

D = dominant
 A = abundant
 F = frequent
 O = occasional
 R = rare
 L = localised

Small Wood is mixed broadleaved woodland with oak dominating the canopy. Ash is frequent within the canopy. Ash is readily regenerating and is represented at least occasionally in age classes ranging from seedling to mature tree. As a result the wood appears to be progressing from oak woodland to an ash-field maple wood. There is moderate habitat, structural and age diversity throughout wood. The ground layer is dominated by bramble and nettle but has locally abundant dogs mercury.

The NVC community is W8.

There are no clear management compartments or clear indication of current management. The woodland is primarily used as a 'cut-through' between the residential areas. There are some paths through wood and a multi-access, lit urban pathway runs, north-south, through the wood.

The wood is bounded by fences to the north, east and west. There is no boundary along the south edge.

There does not appear to be any grazing, squirrel or deer problems.

stand description
 management & use
 history
 nature of boundaries
 grazing

Area of (ha)

Ancient Semi-nat ASNW	Recent Semi-nat OSNW	0.5	Ancient Replanted AWS	Recent Plantn.
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Area occupied by each NVC type

0-0.5 ha	0.5-2 ha	2-10 ha	10-20ha	20+ha
W8				

Tree layer	Height 10 m	Cover (%) 80	Shrub layer	Height 3 m	Cover (%) 30
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Age class abundance (all species, using DAFOR system)

D/mature	Mature	Young trees	Saplings	Seedlings	Coppice
	D	O	O	R	

	Sx	Sc	Js	Jp	Jv	Sx	Sc	Js	Jp	Jv
Clem vit						Ribes syl				
Daph lau						Ribes uva				
Heder hel		A				Rosa arv				
Ligus vul						Rosa can	F			
Lonic per						Sarot sco				
Maho aqu						Ulex eur				
Myrica ga						Ulex gal				
Ribes nig						Vibur opu				

- Tp* Planted tree
- Tn* Self-sown tree
- Ts* Standard in c-w-s
- Tc* Grown from coppice
- Tx* Any other tree
- Cx* Coppice
- Ct* Regrowth from stump
- Px* Pollard (2.5m+)
- Pc* Pollard (1-2.5m)
- Sx* Shrub
- Sc* Climber
- St* Young tree
- Js* Seedling
- Jp* Sapling
- Jv* Sucker

Site name Small Wood

 Surveyor
 Helen S Miller
 Middlemarch Environmental Ltd

 Date of survey
 30 June 2004

HABITATS, FEATURES & COMMUNITIES (MARK ON MAP)

Habitats

The NVC community is W8 with a varied structure and moderate habitat and species diversity. These are detailed below (Target notes) and marked on the map.

Oak dominates the canopy with ash occurring frequently. Ash is readily regenerating and is represented at least occasionally in age classes ranging from seedling to mature tree. As a result the wood appears to be progressing from oak woodland to an ash-field maple wood. Holly and field maple are also regenerating.

The ground layer is dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus* and nettle *Urtica dioica* but has locally abundant dogs mercury *Mercurialis perennis* and ivy *Hedera helix*. A range of common woodland vascular species occur at least rarely throughout. The most frequent included Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, cleavers *Galium aparine*, various grasses, dock *Rumex* spp., enchanters nightshade *Circaea luteiana*, herb-robert *Geranium robertianum*, buttercups *Ranunculus* spp., red campion *Silene dioica* and wood avens *Geum urbanum*.

Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata* and water forget-me-not *Myosotis scorpioides* are locally abundant in and around the pond. Species occurring rarely include pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, lesser sedge *Carex acutiformis*, ferns *Dryopteris felix-mas* and *D. dilatata* and garlic mustard *Allaria petiolata*.

There are small clearings within the wood where grass and nettle *Urtica dioica* tends to dominate the ground flora.

Several of the trees were clad with ivy *Hedera helix*.

Wetland features

There is a vegetated pond (Target note 1) in the north of the wood, fed by a stream/drain from the south. At the time of survey, the water level was relatively low. Water plants included bog bean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, water forget-me-not *Myosotis scorpioides*, lesser sedge *Carex acutiformis* and pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*.

Veteran trees and deadwood

Deadwood habitats are minimal throughout the wood. There are no veteran trees.

Notable species

Bluebell occurs within the wood – a UK BAP species.

There appeared to be a poor-moderate woodland bird population.

Other features

There are no other notable features.

Adjacent landuse

The adjacent land is urbanisation dominated by residential housing with the occasional area of lowland grassland in the form of amenity grassland.

Target notes for map

1. Vegetated pond fed by stream/ditch form the south.
2. Open canopy.
3. Area of bramble and dogs mercury.
4. High frequency of ash saplings.
5. Area dominated by nettle and ivy.
6. Embankment.

4	FC 2000	WOODLAND SURVEY SHEET OTHER VALUES OF THE WOOD	REF No. NWP/015/209
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SITE NAME: SMALL WOOD	COMPILED BY: HELEN S MILLER MIDDLEMARCH ENVIRONMENTAL LTD DATE: AUGUST 2004
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ARCHAEOLOGY & CULTURAL HERITAGE

As a result of its small size, Small Wood would not have been identified by English Nature's Ancient Woodland Inventory. The current survey did not find any clear indications of the woodland being ancient woodland.

There are no scheduled or nationally designated historic features within the woodland.

LANDSCAPE

Small Wood lies in the Countryside Commission/English Nature's Character Area "Arden (97)". This Character Area has a "wide variation of landscape character" and includes the "undulating wooded landscape and small hedges of the main plateau". This Character Area has a long history of wood-pasture with "deer parks and estate woodlands once widespread". Some remnant features, such as veteran trees, provide reminders of the past. "Broad-leaved woodland and hedgerow trees lend a well wooded character to the area". The "woodlands themselves vary in type from twentieth century plantations to species rich ancient woodland (with) oak and ash woods with bracken, bramble or dog's mercury are particularly distinctive". The mosaic of urban areas and woodland are characteristics of the Character Area.

Although the Character Area suggests the landscape has reasonable woodland, the Natural Area (Midlands Plateau, 43) is characterised by lowland heathland with woodland, grassland, freshwater and farmland with woodlands being under represented at just 4%. 40% of the land area of Natural Area 43 is urban. Woodlands are therefore an important feature of the landscape. Many of the woodlands within the Natural Area are less than 5 ha and are typically uncoppiced, even-aged stands regenerated from clear fells. However, about half are semi-natural in character. The woods cover a range of NVC communities, although they tend to be more acidic.

The land surrounding Small Wood is relatively flat and dominated by urbanisation. The wood is not particularly prominent in the landscape as the buildings around are more intrusive. However, the woodland forms a unique area of semi-natural habitat within the residential dominated local area. At just 0.2 ha, it's locality and situation of Small Wood is fairly typical of the Character Area and Natural Area in which it occurs.

RECREATION / PUBLIC ACCESS

As a result of its small size there appears to be limited use of Small Wood, other than as a 'cut-through' between residential housing. There are no footpaths in the immediate surrounds of the wood. Access to the site is at the north and south end off Huntley Drive and Monkspath Hall Road respectively. A multi-use lit path connects these two access points.

WOOD PRODUCTION, GAME / LIVESTOCK & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There does not appear to be any formal wood production taking place within the wood at present. As a result of being entirely surrounded by urbanisation and three sides (north, west and east) backing onto housing there is an issue of garden and household waste dumping.

PHOTO No. 1 (mark location and direction on map)
Typical of site with a clearing to the right of the
photograph. 99°

DATE:
30 June 2004

NVC TYPE:
W8



PHOTO No. 2 (mark location and direction on map)
Pond/stream habitats. 249°

DATE:
30 JUNE 2004

NVC TYPE:
N/A



6	FC 2000	WOODLAND SURVEY SHEET ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION & MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		REF No. NWP/015/209
SITE NAME: SMALL WOOD		SURVEYOR: HELEN S MILLER MIDDLEMARCH ENVIRONMENTAL LTD		DATE OF SURVEY: 30 JUNE 2004
<p>ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION of the main features of interest (include an assessment of naturalness, representativeness, size, rarity, fragility, position in an ecological unit, diversity, recorded history, potential value, intrinsic appeal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conservation significance of Small Wood lies in its position within a densely urbanised area. Although fairly isolated from other semi-natural habitats it is likely to provide a refuge for wildlife, notable feeding, roosting and breeding birds with appropriate management. There is the potential to improve the condition through future management. The wood has a moderate degree of native species and naturalising character, although sycamore has the potential to become dominant. Sycamore currently only occurs as occasional saplings. • Small Wood is a pSINC. • The woodland forms a valuable woodland island within an area dominated by residential housing; providing aesthetic as well as ecological value through breaking up a potentially monotonous, low diversity landscape. However, it has poor connectivity to other habitats, other than gardens. • The floral diversity is moderate with only one NVC community being represented (W8) and therefore one HAP type; the greatest species richness occurring along the stream/ditch through the wood. Considering the small size of the wood, there some diversity in habitat. Other habitats include, stream/ditch, pond and clearings. At the time of survey the wood did not indicate a good woodland bird population. Badgers have been recorded within 1 km of the site, although the records are confirmed. Great crested newts have been recorded within 1 km SE of the wood. There is potential to increase the quality and quantity of the deadwood habitats within the wood. Some of the older oaks, have the potential for future veteran trees. • Deer, rabbits and squirrels do not appear to be a major problem at the present. • Bluebells occurred occasionally and are likely to be a major aesthetic asset to many of the woodlands in the spring. 				
<p style="text-align: center;">ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS (based on conservation objectives and above evaluation)</p> <p>The management of this wood should be viewed in conjunction with the other woodlands managed by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC). For example some woodlands may lend themselves better to coppice; while in others may be more suited to minimal intervention. A range of habitats should be created across the district. Wildlife and public access are the key focus points for the management of woodlands within the SMBC District.</p> <p>The following management considerations should be considered to improve the future nature conservation values of the woodland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any current and future native shrubs, including hazel, holly, elder and hawthorn, should be protected and/or encouraged and avoided during any forestry operations. • Control/remove the sycamore while it is still young and before it reaches maturity and dominates the wood and canopy. • Encourage the regenerating ash and field maple for future canopy trees. • Opening up and allowing the oaks to mature with some being retained as future veteran trees. • Improving the age structure, particularly through encouraging natural regeneration. Bramble control may be necessary to aid age restructuring. • Discourage garden and house hold waste dumping. • Create new standing/fallen deadwood where safe to do so. • Enhance and maintain the pond and stream/ditch habitats. <p>The following guidelines should be followed to ensure continued/improved conservation and aesthetic appeal of the woodlands and landscape and that impacts are minimised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect any native shrubs during forestry operations. • Forestry operations, particularly felling, should not be carried out during the bird breeding season (1 March until 31 August). • Prior to major forestry operations, the site should be checked for badger activity and the presence of setts. A licence from English Nature would be required for any works being undertaken within 30 m of a badger sett. • It is recommend that the pond is assessed for suitability and presence of great crested newts prior to any major works within the wood. • Bramble may become overwhelmingly dominant where significant light is allowed to reach the woodland floor, therefore it may be appropriate to develop an understorey prior to any opening up the canopy. • Management should favour native species in the canopy and understorey. With the high occurrence of ash and to a lesser extent field maple, the wood may be progressing away form an oak dominated canopy, as such these species could be favoured since they appear to grow well in the wood. • Existing deadwood, both fallen and standing should be retained and protected. Some native trees should be retained to provide for future veteran trees and deadwood habitats. Some felled material should be left on site to create deadwood piles of value to invertebrates. • Natural regeneration is the preferred option if restocking is required although planting may be necessary. If the latter is the case it should be after attempts to encourage natural regeneration and local provenance is preferred. • Appropriate guidelines should be followed for operations being undertaken along the stream/ditch and around the pond. • Standard forestry practices for nature conservation/enhancement should be followed. 				

SITE NAME: SMALL WOOD	COMPILED BY: HELEN MILLER
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OWNERS OBJECTIVES

For full details of the owners objectives please refer to ‘Woodland Strategy for Solihull’. The key objectives are summarised below.

1. ‘Protect, manage and enhance Solihull MBC woodlands with, and for the benefit of Solihull residents, recreation, nature conservation and visual amenity.’
 - a) Public safety – ensure it is not neglected
 - b) Recreation and public access – maintain or improve where appropriate
 - c) Wildlife conservation – maintain and wherever suitable restore natural ecological diversity
 - d) Landscape enhancement – maintain and where appropriate improve aesthetic value
 - e) Sustainable management of woodlands – taking opportunities to produce utilisable products such as woodchips for fuel, charcoal, fence materials and interpretation signs.

MISSION STATEMENT / LONG TERM VISION

The aim is to develop woodlands, which balances visual amenity, recreation and nature conservation while maintaining the landscape character of the Borough.

The ecological assessment clearly identified that the Solihull woodlands have high current and future ecological value. Several of the woodlands also have archaeological features. The assessments and desk study also indicated the value that these woodlands have for the local residents of Solihull.

LONG TERM MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS / OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Further details and generic long term management proposals and operational objectives can be found in the ‘Woodland Strategy for Solihull’. A summary of the key points is provided below.

Aim

Long term objective

Operation objective

Public safety

Maintain public safety at all times in relation to trees
Monitor tree health. Undertake tree surgery only where necessary.

Maintain access for a range of users
Monitor access for all uses. Maintain multi-access paths in good conditions. Create new multi-access paths where appropriate.

Maintain safety on high use, multi-access paths through the woodlands i.e. those with hard standing, lit pathways
Monitor lights on a regular basis and replace any broken ones as soon as possible.

Maintain safety in relation to dangerous plants
Control/remove plants known to be dangerous i.e. giant hogweed.

Maintain safety in relation to non-woodland product e.g. fly tipping
Monitor the woodlands for fly-tipping incidences. Clear up reported fly-tipping as soon as possible.

Recreation

Provide access
Create new multi access paths where appropriate. Create and maintain path networks through the wood.

Wildlife

Maintain a structurally diverse woodland.
Implement appropriate management e.g. selective felling, coppicing, group felling etc

Enhance structural diversity within the woodland
Selectively thinning areas of dense growth or introduce coppice management

Protect trees and woodlands from development
Use additional statutory protection where appropriate e.g. TPOs, SINCS, LNRs, SSSIs etc

Protect from vandalism by fire, litter, garden and house hold waste dumping etc
Education to local residents e.g. leaflet dropping, interpretation boards, school visits. Open up areas where these problems are particular high e.g. create open vista habitats within the wood or at woodland entrances (i.e. at fly-tipping hot spots)

Enhance wetland features
Clear out rubbish/pollution. Introduce some native marginal plants

Enhance habitat for roosting bats
Erect a variety of bat boxes. Retain standing deadwood. Identify future veteran trees

Increase habitat diversity - veteran trees
Identify future veteran trees

Increase habitat diversity - deadwood
Create deadwood habitat through ring barking selected trees and leaving some cut trees on site.

Protect the woodlands and wildlife from unnecessary disturbance
Educate the public through interpretation boards etc. Create and maintain footpath networks within the wood and encourage people to stay on them.

Enhance for bird life
Erect bird boxes

Landscape

Protect trees and woodlands from development
Use additional statutory protection where appropriate e.g. TPOs, Conservations Areas

Maintain current landscape value
Avoid large areas of clearfell.

Products

Identify products and local outlets
Introduce a range of management systems to provide a range of woodland products suitable for local use. E.g. a range of coppice rotation lengths across the Borough

SITE NAME: SMALL WOOD

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LONG TERM PROPOSALS (Silvicultural systems, broad management strategies)

1. Maintain a dead-wood resource

- a. Check availability of dead wood in woodland, both standing and lying
- b. If shortage of dead wood:
 - i. Select suitable areas away from main paths
 - ii. Use trees felled for thinning or group fellings for lying dead-wood.
 - iii. If no standing dead wood, select diseased or poorly formed trees for ring-barking. Treat birch in preference to oak or ash. Min. dia. 20cm.
 - iv. Do not ring-bark well-formed or healthy mature trees.
 - v. Ring-bark approx. 3-5 trees per hectare

2. Weed Control**a. General Rules re Weeding**

- i. Application by knapsack sprayer or weed wiper in compliance with all legislation for chemicals management, health and safety and code of practice – obtain detailed guidance on this matter.

b. Control sycamore: Survey extent and age of sycamore presence. Consider ecological status of wood and owner's policy towards sycamore.

- i. If level of regeneration is limited and there are no mature sycamore of good form and size: sycamore can be eliminated by felling parent tree(s) and treating sycamore saplings and seedlings as for Rhododendron above.
- ii. If regeneration is well-established and/or there are mature, well-formed parent trees, consider a strategy of controlling regeneration within a defined area. The best formed saplings within the area will be selected at 3-4 years and protected (in shelters), and others will be manually cut back or sprayed.
- iii. Before taking any action, consult owner's senior ecological officer.

3. Protect and select existing regeneration

- a. Protect area from public by fencing or signage (in busy areas only).
- b. Select best saplings at 3-4 years old, apply shelters and cut back or spray/weed-wipe competitors.
- c. If weed or grass competition is a problem, spray each year for 3 years in spring and, if required, late summer.
- d. If regenerated trees are going to suffer from shading, gradually open the canopy by felling some of the immediately surrounding parent trees as the young trees develop. This needs careful monitoring each year and a measured approach.

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FIVE YEAR PLAN OF OPERATIONS (S.M.A.R.T.)

Insert: Thinning.

Years 1-5

- A. Thinning**
 - i. Thin around regenerating ash, as its requirement for light increases. Retain oak wherever possible.
- F. Selection and protection of natural regeneration**
 - i. Carry out in all test areas and other areas where regeneration of desired species has occurred; in accordance with protocol above.
- I. Control invasive species**
 - i. Control invasive species i.a.w. 'Weed Control' protocol above.
- K. Dead wood resource**
 - i. Retain all felled trees arising from thinning (around regeneration) as a dead wood resource. Standing dead trees to be left. Site not large enough to merit ring-barking.
- M. Ecological/archaeological procedures**
 - i. All operations to be carried out i.a.w. protocols concerning Protected Species (if any), Nesting birds, Water habitats, Archaeological features.

Years 6-10

- S. Natural regeneration – protection and selection**
 - i. Carry out i.a.w. protocol above. This includes natural regeneration which is not in the areas of group fellings.
- U. Control invasive species**
 - i. Control invasive species i.a.w. 'Weed Control' protocol above.

9**FC
2000**

WOODLAND LONG TERM MANAGEMENT PLAN

REF No. NWP015/209

MONITORING & REFERENCES

SITE NAME: SMALL WOOD

COMPILED BY: ALAN GUY. MIDDLEMARCH
ENVIRONMENTAL LTD**MONITORING**

Survey Wood once per year for the following:

- successful regeneration anywhere on site, particularly in trial areas.
- general health of canopy and understorey
- dangerous trees near well-used paths
- damage to trees or ground layer: deliberate or accidental
- damage to paths or forest floor from pedestrians, cyclists etc
- disease
- squirrel or deer damage in trees
- rabbit or deer damage to regeneration areas, coppice areas or newly planted trees/shrubs
- invasive species
- dumping of inert matter or other waste NB do not try to inspect suspicious substances, bags or containers: contact Environmental Health

REFERENCES

Woodland Strategy for Solihull. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Environment Services July 2000