



Hampshire Heathland Project

**Hazeley Heath Management
Plan: Completion of
Consultation Process**


**Outcome D: Draft Outline
Management Plan**

Hampshire County Council

April 2007

Hazeley Heath Management Plan Consultation Process

Outcome D: Draft Outline Management Plan

JOB NUMBER: 5044947			DOCUMENT REF: Draft Plan rev3.3.doc			
3.3	Amended after committee meeting	AS	AS/EN		AS	05/04/07
3.2	Amended after stakeholder reps meeting and updated baseline information	AS/JC/AG	AS/EN		AS	02/04/07
3.1		team	AS/EN		AS	09/03/07
3	Amended after committee meeting and feedback	team	AS/EN	RIC/JB	AS	02/03/07
2	Some amended items	team	AS/EN		AS	12/05/07
1	Draft for discussion	team	AS/EN	RIC/JB	AS	05/02/07
		Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
Revision	Purpose Description					

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Executive Summary

Introduction.

Hazeley Heath is one of the largest surviving remnants of lowland heathland, an internationally endangered habitat, in the Thames Basin region of north Hampshire. The extent of heathland on the site has declined in recent times due to encroachment by woodland and scrub. It is generally accepted that active management is required to ensure the continued viability and status of the site, but views have differed as to the best way to achieve this. Hence, this plan has been developed through the application of the 'Common Purpose' approach, which is intended to arrive at a consensus view as to the best way forward, as a commission to Hampshire County Council.

This Outline Management Plan Report is intended to provide a summary of the background to and context of the study, the current site conditions and the consultations undertaken so far, before proceeding to the proposed approach to the management of Hazeley Heath. The means whereby the plan may be implemented and funded are then discussed.

This report is for Outcome D, the final stage in the 'Common Purpose' process, which is the identification of the preferred Management Aims and Options from the comments received to the previous stages and the development of these Options into an Outline Management Plan.

Site Description.

The management plan covers all 176 ha of Hazeley Heath, which is registered as common land in two units: CL 49 and CL 100. Hart District Council (HDC) owns 51 ha, all in Hartley Wintney Parish. The remainder lies within Mattingley Parish and is privately owned; mostly by the Timpany Trust, with several smaller holdings around the periphery in separate ownerships. .

It is understood that the common land at Hazeley Heath has always been open for access by the commoners and, to varying degrees, the public, the legal basis notwithstanding, apart from a period during which Milburn, when the owner of CL 100 in the 1970s, attempted to prevent public access to this unit. This action has contributed significantly to the subsequent views taken by the local communities toward any suggestion of fencing on the common.

Due to the rarity and importance of its heathland plant and animal communities, the site is notified by Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Hazeley Heath is also notified as a part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) for its heathland bird interest, with three species being internationally protected by European legislation. The SSSI/SPA boundary is very similar but not identical to the common boundary.

The site straddles a long ridge, orientated northwest to southeast between the valleys of the Rivers Hart and Whitewater, with the B3011 running along its western side. Parts of the site have been cleared and/or heavily disturbed in the past, particularly by gravel and sand extraction, landfill and military training. Undisturbed areas are underlain by various sands, gravels and clays that are generally acidic in nature and are characteristic of heathland soils.

Peat soils and valuable wetland habitats have developed in many areas with impeded drainage.

The main habitats present on Hazeley Heath are lowland heathland with areas of gorse and bracken, secondary woodland and grassland. Some woodland areas near the edges are well established and there are substantial boundary trees. Although once covering much of the site, heathland now only extends over about 37 ha. This is the most important habitat present and supports a variety of rare plants and wildlife. Most of the secondary woodland has developed relatively recently on heathland and largely consists of common and widespread species. An area of former landfill close to Hartley Wintney now supports artificial soils and varied grassland and scrub. Hazeley Heath contains a diverse range of habitats and different plant communities within these habitats, reasonable structural diversity of the vegetation and a large variety of wildlife species present, including eight Red Data Book species and a further fifty-eight recognised as Nationally Notable. The nature conservation value is enhanced by the presence of other heathland and woodland in the area.

Some commoner's rights still apply to Hazeley Heath although traditional management by commoners and their livestock has long since ceased. This past land use was an important part of the local economy for centuries and was also vital in maintaining heathland habitats and wildlife. The main present-day use of Hazeley Heath is informal recreation, especially dog walking and horse riding. Hart District Council own and maintain CL 49 on the basis that it is public open space. The Timpany Trust has stated that they allow the use of their part of CL 100 for horse riding, notwithstanding the legal position regarding such access by right.

Findings from Consultation

The proposals included in this Plan were developed on the basis of consultation in two stages; Management Aims that considered issues in a general sense; and Management Options that considered different approaches that could be taken to achieve the preferred Aims.

Management Aims

Four General Management Aims that would be central to the conservation value of the site were supported by the majority:

- ◆ Maximise nature conservation value over substantial defined areas
- ◆ Maximise nature conservation value for species of special status
- ◆ Maximise diversity for nature conservation, landscape and access
- ◆ Maximise openness of the site in defined areas by woodland removal

There were also several Specific Management Aims that were generally supported:

- ◆ Prevent loss of lowland heath
- ◆ Reduce scrub
- ◆ Remove invasive alien species
- ◆ Minimise bracken
- ◆ Maintain mature woodland

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- ◆ Reduce tree cover by selective removal of species or sizes
- ◆ Improve visitor behaviour and respect for the site.

These preferred Management Aims then formed the basis for the subsequent reporting and discussions of Management Options.

At subsequent committee meetings, a general aim of the management process has been summarised as: 'Sustaining the Heath as an important amenity for the local community who use it for walking, dog walking and riding.'

Management Options

A significant element in most discussions was the opposition towards grazing as the principal means of heathland management, due to the practical difficulties for Hazeley Heath as it is now and particularly if there is any need for fencing within the registered common. The management options that were preferred in the consultations are summarised below:

- ◆ Cutting and Mowing - These will be the main means of maintaining the dwarf shrub heathland in good condition, with the required balance of different growth stages, so that the value and attractiveness of the key habitat and landscape type is maintained. The grassland areas on the former landfill will also continue to be cut.
- ◆ Stripping and Scraping - These have been found to be successful in creating relatively small areas of bare ground and wet or damp hollows, in place of areas of coarse grasses. These are to be continued to maintain diversity of the heathland and provide the desired proportions of bare ground or wet ground in the respective Zones.
- ◆ Invasive alien species such as rhododendron and Japanese knotweed would be removed by appropriate means.
- ◆ Gorse - Common gorse is valuable for wildlife and is part of a heathland community. However, parts of Hazeley Heath, particularly in Zone 9, have become overrun by this plant. There is an urgent requirement therefore to remove or regularly coppice areas of dominant and over-mature common gorse.
- ◆ Woodland and Scrub Clearance - The mature native tree species provide important habitat for a large number of species, including plants, lichens, invertebrates, birds and reptiles. They also contribute to the landscape value of Hazeley Heath where the mature boundary trees have long marked the extent of the common and where tree groups on higher ground accentuate the varied terrain. An acceptable balance of woodland and heathland needs to be created. More importantly, the removal of trees needs to be carried out in such a way so that the patches of heathland are reconnected. This is critical to ensure the long-term viability of Hazeley Heath. The Plan includes the intended removal of substantial areas of the more recent woodland and scrub where this has developed over heathland.
- ◆ Bracken – there are large dense stands of bracken that shade out the heathland species and these will be cleared in many locations, leaving some bracken as cover within woodland areas. Spraying is proposed as the most effective means for use here, although cutting may also be used.

- ◆ Burning - Given the limited size of the suitable heathland cover at Hazeley, the limitations on the benefits to the quality and diversity of the resultant sward and the array of potential legal problems that could arise, burning is not recommended as a technique for use in this management plan.
- ◆ Grazing - Trial grazing could take place at Hazeley Heath initially in order to establish whether this will be a beneficial solution in the long-term. Grazing will not completely control scrub or gorse or the encroachment of bracken so some supplementary management would still be required even if grazing is endorsed, in addition to the clearance of scrub and woodland that is required in any event.
- ◆ Interpretation and Information – some limited interpretation boards were considered worthwhile, located at the most used entry points to the site, which would be around the Hartley Wintney end. These could also be used for the display of information about what conservation works were being undertaken at the time. Information on conservation works should also be made available to the local communities generally.

Issues of site use by different interests, path condition and site access generally were all covered in discussions, with the general outcome being that the current conditions were about right and that no specific actions were needed, although existing encroachment onto and fencing of the common by landowners needs to be addressed. Nonetheless, it is recommended that consideration be given to localised treatment of wet areas on the public footpaths.

Management Proposals

The approach taken in this Management Plan is to divide Hazeley Heath into a series of Management Zones in order to summarise the character of the site and provide a basis for the explanation and control of the pattern of management. These Zones are intended to reflect the general pattern of habitat and landscape character across the site, as well as the common land boundaries and the principal land ownerships.

The condition of each Zone is described and proposals presented for each Zone and are summarised as:

- ◆ Zone 1 – Former landfill and surrounding woodlands providing the most used area for recreation. Maintain extent and diversity of open grassland and relic heath. Remove invasive weeds and litter. Mow about half of grassland each year.
- ◆ Zone 2 – Woodland by Arrow Lane. Limited clearance and thinning to create glades and improve woodland structure.
- ◆ Zone 3 – Low damp area north-east of the landfill. Most diverse range of heathland habitats on the site. Retain heathland/grassland mosaic at about 80% of Zone. Continue scrapings to create bare ground and wetland. Trial grazing area in part of Zone.
- ◆ Zone 4 – Broadly between Purdies Farm and Crabtree Lodge roads. Mixed woodland and heathland. Substantial removal of recent woodland, scrub and bracken to restore heathland and provide link between Zones 3 and 9. Aim for at least 60% heath and grassland, maintained by cutting.
- ◆ Zone 5 – Woodland and clearings west of landfill. Limited thinning and clearance to improve woodland structure. Existing recreational uses retained.

- ◆ Zone 6 – Woodland by Hazeley House. Limited clearance and thinning to create glades and improve woodland structure.
- ◆ Zone 7 – Mix of character and ownerships above Hazeley Bottom. Aim for thinning and coppicing to extend open areas and improve woodland structure.
- ◆ Zone 8 – Dry wooded slopes with heathland and scrub to south and west of B3011. Woodland and bracken clearance to restore heathland. Aim for 50% heathland and grassland, maintained by cutting.
- ◆ Zone 9 – Main area of existing open heath between the valley above Crabtree Lodge and the Police college roads. Substantial removal of recent woodland and scrub and spraying of bracken in open areas. Dense gorse to be removed or coppiced. Aim for at least 70% heathland and grassland, maintained by cutting.
- ◆ Zone 10 - Small and partly fenced area with ponds at Crabtree Lodge. Aim to reinstate open access and reduce woodland screen around ponds.
- ◆ Zone 11 – Woodland and clearings with bracken north of Police college road. Substantial removal of recent woodland and spraying of bracken in open areas. Aim for 50% heathland and grassland and to remove inappropriate uses.
- ◆ Zone 12 - Woodland and clearings with bracken in south part of Hazeley Lea. Some spraying of bracken and limited removal of recent woodland.
- ◆ Zone 13 - Woodland and scrub with clearings and paddock in north part of Hazeley Lea. Limited removal of recent woodland to extend relic damp heathland. Aim to reinstate open access.

These works have been costed at approximately £70,000 for the tree and scrub clearance and should be capable of completion within 6 to 10 years, depending upon the level of disturbance that is considered acceptable and the type of funds that are available. When combined with an average estimate of £15,000 per year for the maintenance works and other management practices such as turf scraping and woodland management, this would bring the total cost for the restoration period of £160,000 to £220,000.

The feelings of the local communities to the proposals to re-introduce grazing and its associated need for fencing have been explored and accepted. These discussions have also led to the acceptance that a limited trial of grazing for a five year period would be worthwhile to establish whether grazing would be an effective and acceptable maintenance practice for this site, on the basis that the restoration needs to be achieved and upheld in an environmentally sustainable and cost effective manner.

The management works undertaken should be systematically recorded, so that the pattern of works (and their associated expenditure) can be set against the monitoring of the site condition and of the species of conservation concern. Management plans are not static documents and the progress made on Hazeley Heath should be reviewed annually. A review should also undertaken at five-year intervals to determine the status of the habitats and species occurring on the site. This will ensure that the management objectives are still pertinent and that the work programme has been and will be effective in achieving these objectives. All information entered into the site database should be collated for this review and subsequently used to update the management plan.

It is important to regularly collect as much information as possible about the species and habitats present in order to maximise the effectiveness of the work carried out, to ensure that no damaging activities are taking place and to guide any specific management that may be

necessary for certain notable or rare species. This include surveys of lower plants (mosses, liverworts and lichens), fungi, vascular plants, selected groups of invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds, bats and small mammals.

A management body that represents the views of the landowners, commoners and local communities will need to be established to act as a focus for community involvement in the improvement and maintenance of the Heath, provide a focus for the identification and management of funds and act as the contact for the other stakeholder organisations. The use of a Scheme of Regulation under the 1899 Commons Act would appear to be a suitable and cost effective basis for establishing such a body.

Heathland management includes an element of fire prevention, since activities such as vegetation cutting and gorse coppicing dramatically reduce the build up of inflammable vegetation. Even on the best-managed sites, however, there is no way to prevent heathland fires altogether so a fire control plan for the site should be prepared in conjunction with the local Fire Brigade.

Conclusions

The conclusions on the management of this site are:

- ◆ That considerable intervention followed by appropriate maintenance is required to restore the proportion of heathland to something commensurate with its European designation as part of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA
- ◆ That past threats to the common land status have left a legacy of distrust of any proposals that entail fencing on the common, which, along with the relative lack of open heathland, mean that the use of grazing as a management tool is not feasible at this point in time
- ◆ That a substantial package of mechanical and manual management measures is proposed to push back the encroaching woodland and scrub and reduce the extent of bracken and over mature common gorse, to enable the restoration of heathland in areas that have been identified as suitable – this will include substantial felling of recent woodland
- ◆ That the former landfill area is maintained as a non-heathland landscape of considerable habitat diversity and considerable recreational value
- ◆ That the maintenance of the existing and proposed habitats will be undertaken also by mechanical and manual methods, principally cutting, mowing, scraping and coppicing
- ◆ That a management body with community support is a necessary prerequisite of the formulation of any funding applications to support these works and a necessary expression of the desire of the interested communities to establish a consensus approach
- ◆ That a grazing trial be established to evaluate whether or not grazing would be suitable in the future as a more sustainable approach to the management of the heathland and grassland on this site.

1. Introduction and Background

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This Outline Management Plan Report is intended to provide a summary of the background to and context of the study, the current site conditions and the consultations undertaken so far, before proceeding to the proposed approach to the management of Hazeley Heath. The means whereby the plan may be implemented and funded are then discussed.
- 1.2 This structure is intended to be simple to use and allow concentration on the principal issues under discussion. There is a considerable amount of additional detail and supporting information provided in the Appendices, including the Figures for the report, which are In Appendix A.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

- 1.3 Hazeley Heath is valued as open space and for the character and condition of its heathland. A degree of management has been taking place to maintain the site in its current state and halt the gradual change from heathland to woodland. The extent of the site is shown on Figure 1.
- 1.4 English nature (EN - now Natural England NE) has in the past entered into grant-aided Wildlife Enhancement Scheme (WES) agreements with the principal landowners in order to achieve betterment for the wildlife on the site. About 95% of the SSSI is currently classed by NE as having areas of heathland in 'unfavourable recovering' condition, although this includes unspecified areas in 'favourable' condition. Some small and largely wooded areas near Hazeley Bottom are classed as being in 'favourable' condition.
- 1.5 The SPA designation has increased the onus on those responsible for the management of the SSSI to protect and enhance the habitat for the three significant bird species, leading to the production of a draft management plan by HDC and EN in 2004 and an associated grazing feasibility study. However, the approach taken in the draft management plan and the implications of its recommended management strategy were not accepted by all of the stakeholders. These included local individuals, local interest groups and non-local organisations. Their concerns were that the strategy was being almost entirely driven by habitat issues without considering the wider management issues, such as recreation and amenity, also that assumptions had been made about the acceptability of extensive grazing and fencing without appropriate consultation. In view of these concerns, the 2004 draft management plan and the grazing feasibility study were withdrawn.
- 1.6 Atkins have therefore been commissioned by Hampshire County Council (HCC) to address the current management issues for the registered common land at Hazeley Heath and the concerns of the many and varied stakeholders, by use of the process outlined in 'A Common Purpose'. This recent publication was prepared for English Nature, the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Rural Development Service, the Open Spaces Society (OSS), the Countryside Agency

(CA) and the National Trust (NT). It encompasses the views of the main organisations responsible for conservation, recreation and stewardship in the countryside. It sets out a step-by-step process for the involvement of the stakeholders in the identification of management aims for the site and the development of associated management options, leading to a recommended strategy for the achievement of those aims.

- 1.7 This commission is intended as a 'clean-slate' project to address the issues underlying the management of the site, using the findings of consultation exercises undertaken by HCC in 2005 and subsequent findings from Atkins/HCC consultation exercises.

APPROACH TO THE STUDY

- 1.8 The HCC brief for the Atkins commission has been based on the approach outlined in 'A Common Purpose'. This approach is based on the principle of working with stakeholders to create increased levels of awareness of the issues and values related to their common and the range of possible solutions that would tackle the one while respecting the other. By developing an increased understanding of all stakeholders' views, and agreeing the problems before proposing solutions this approach seeks to promote the development of sound, effective management proposals based on co-operation. The approach has been developed to help address the problems that develop on commons where groups or individuals become concerned that their interests have not been properly considered when changes in management practice are being proposed. The precise details of the process will vary from one location to another but the underpinning principles should largely remain constant.

- 1.9 The underpinning principles to the Common Purpose approach are expressed as a set of 'golden rules', which are repeated below:

1. Common land is valued by many people for different reasons. What people value may differ but they are united by the strength of their concern.
2. Progress is least likely when one interest in a common attempts to sideline the others, or forces change upon them.
3. Regular communication amongst stakeholders is critical in building and maintaining trust and confidence between parties, and should start from a very early stage in the process.
4. Lasting progress is most likely when:
 - People respect and try to understand each others' values and aims;
 - people recognise that all perspectives are valid and that everyone will have things in common;
 - They keep an open mind about what form any change should take, until they have properly explored the various options and the impacts on others;
 - Any change brings benefit to the neighbourhood and wider interests.
5. Complete unanimity may not be possible but a broad consensus should be the aim.

- 1.10 The HCC brief requires four outcomes from the study:
- ◆ Outcome A an understanding of the site and the issues entailed in planning for its future management and of the responses from the consultation already undertaken
 - ◆ Outcome B the identification and ranking of Management Aims for the site and the distribution of these to the stakeholders for comment – this establishes ‘where we wish to get to’;
 - ◆ Outcome C the development of Management Options for the delivery of the Management Aims, with emphasis on those Aims that are favoured from the previous consultation, with further comment obtained through a meeting with stakeholders – this establishes ‘how we wish to get there’
 - ◆ Outcome D the identification of the preferred Management Aims and Options from the comments received and the production of an outline Management Plan.
- 1.11 This report is for Outcome D, the final stage in the ‘Common Purpose’ process, which is the identification of the preferred Management Aims and Options from the comments received to the previous stages and the development of these Options into an Outline Management Plan.

HEATHLAND CONTEXT

- 1.12 Heathland is a form of vegetation that is maintained by external influence to retain its open character but; left to its own devices, it will gradually revert to woodland. An essential irony is that heathland has developed largely due to its economic importance for communities for which it provided a source of grazing, fuel and other materials, whereas it is now valued for its apparent wildness and lack of human activity. However, the human influence is still required to maintain its distinct and attractive character and its rich and often uncommon wildlife.

General History of Heathland

- 1.13 It is thought that heathland originated in the Stone Age between 6,000 and 10,000 years ago, from clearance of forested areas for farming that gave rise to the spread of a heathland landscape on a large scale.
- 1.14 Following from the removal of vegetation, the planting of growing crops and the associated leaching of nutrients from the soil by rain led to the development of what are known as ‘podzols’. These soils have very infertile acid upper layers above a relatively impermeable ‘iron pan’. Eventually these soils became too infertile for farming, so heathland species began to take over.
- 1.15 This heathland habitat was maintained over the centuries through the grazing of domestic livestock and the cutting of wood and collection of turves for fuel. Heaths were central elements in the economy of manorial village life, as well as providing links between the various adjacent properties, of which many became roads over time. With changes of human population and cultural shifts, the areas of heathland increased and decreased in size over the years where areas of woodland began to start to colonise.

- 1.16 However, the decline of traditional practices, including grazing, began to happen in the 19th century, accelerating after the first World War and declining to practically zero after the last war. Large areas were lost to development in the late 19th and the 20th centuries. Much of the loss since the registration of the remaining commons has been due to natural succession to woodland.

Diversity of Heathland

- 1.17 Lowland heath supports a diverse assemblage of rare or restricted in range plants, invertebrates, reptiles and birds and is hence very important in terms of biodiversity conservation.
- 1.18 Heathland passes through various successional stages, from pioneer through to old heathland. This is due to structural changes in the vegetation as it ages. This leads to variations in the composition of the heathland flora. Heathland may therefore often look very different at different stages in its succession.
- 1.19 The more different age types of heath are represented on an area of heathland, the more diverse the fauna becomes. This is due to the increase in the number of different available microhabitats. One of the most important considerations in managing a heathland habitat is therefore to ensure age diversity in the vegetation, in order to increase the insect and animal diversity.

Dynamics of Heathland

- 1.20 If heathland is left unmanaged, trees and tall shrubs such as gorse will soon begin to colonise. If left unchecked, these trees and tall shrubs will become mature and new tree seedlings will arise. Over the years there will be a gradual change from heathland to woodland habitat as the trees encroach ever further into the heath, shading out the shorter plants. In order to prevent this, it is vital to carry out a suitable management programme which controls the spread of trees into heathland areas.
- 1.21 Heathland plants are highly adapted to fire and have various techniques in order to be able to recover. Adult plants may be killed by fire, but many species can regenerate through seedlings. Some plants hold their seeds in protective casings, dropping them onto the charred earth after the fire. Others rely on seed banks in the soil, which germinate in response to the heat or smoke of the fire.
- 1.22 Most seedlings will appear in the first year after a heathland fire because there is plenty of phosphorus in the soil which enables them to grow. Other heathland species will reproduce by sprouting from rhizomes, some distance from the parent plant. While this can happen at any time, the rate is much higher immediately after a fire. Other heathland species are stimulated to flower by fire, which is known as pyrogenic flowering.

LEGAL CONTEXT

- 1.23 Appendix B provides a summary of the legal context relevant to registered common land and to SSSIs and SPAs.

2. Site Description

SITE CONTEXT

Location and Extent

- 2.1 Hazeley Heath is a substantial area of registered common land in Hampshire, extending along a low ridge of sands, clays and gravel immediately to the north-west of Hartley Wintney as far as Hazeley Lea. The ridge rises gently from about 80m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the north end of the common to about 89m AOD near the south end. The valleys of the River Hart and River Whitewater are to the north-east and south-west respectively, at about 50 to 60m AOD. The Heath extends along the top and upper slopes of the ridge, extending down to the Hart valley floor at Hazeley Lea and also in the south-eastern corner, where an area of wetter ground is overlooked by a distinctive line of small wooded ridges.

Site History

- 2.2 Hazeley Heath has had a long and varied history of intervention and management, with the most relevant influences being those of the late 19th and 20th century, when substantial areas of the gravel cap were extracted and the larger of the resultant voids used for landfill, after which much of the Heath was also used for military training or vehicle testing. There has also been some extraction of sand in places. These activities removed all vegetation over large areas and the heathland soil over some areas and ensured that many areas of the Heath were largely devoid of woodland until at least the later part of the 20th century. This partially mirrored the role of grazing and other common practices that are assumed to have been undertaken before, so maintaining continuity of the complex heathland habitats that have developed over many centuries of management. These large scale activities have also left some areas with remnants of buildings or tank training structures, created or enlarged many of the tracks that exist today and changed the landform in several areas.
- 2.3 Since that clearance, Hazeley Heath has been largely allowed to revert to woodland, with birch and pine woodland extending over large parts of the site, until the more enlightened approach of recent years has brought about some control of encroaching bracken, scrub and trees. The present appearance is principally one of woodland with three substantial areas of more open ground in which much of the heathland is found: along the northern end of the ridge; in the centre to the east of the road; and on the low ground in the south-east corner. There is a fourth open area on the central plateau at the south end resulting from the former landfill site, which was capped with imported soil with a varied and often chalky content and hence has not reverted to heathland. Now, only approximately 37 ha or 21% of Hazeley Heath is open heathland or heathland with scattered scrub, as shown on Figure 4. In 1990, EN records show that about 55 ha of the site was heathland.
- 2.4 From aerial photographs provided by HDC and Hampshire County Council of the Heath between 1946 and 2000 and included in the Outcome B report several trends can be discerned through this period:

- ◆ A great proportion of vegetation lost during the mid 20th century in the central northern and southern areas;
- ◆ Relatively little activity in the smaller areas west of the B3011 and at Hazeley Lea;
- ◆ Little change to the low-lying wet land in the south-east corner;
- ◆ Continuity of areas of woodland around the margins near to adjacent properties and in places just to the east of the B3011
- ◆ Prominence of the straight central track through the southern area
- ◆ Expansion of Hartley Wintney up the edge of the Heath through the 1960s, 70s and 80s.

2.5 The extent of woodland encroachment since 1946 is summarised in Figure 3.

2.6 The existing condition of Hazeley Heath includes several potential hazards to those using and working on the site. These principally relate to the effects of past uses of the site, such as military training and landfill, the current levels of road traffic and the underground services that have been provided across the heath to adjacent properties. An example hazard assessment prepared by the Hampshire Heathland Project for contractors working on the site is included in Appendix J. Note that this data is not complete for the entire site.

Designations

2.7 There are two registered common land units, namely CL 49 covering about 52 ha at the south-eastern end next to Hartley Wintney and wholly owned by Hart District Council (HDC), and CL 100 covering about 137 ha and extending into a smaller area of common to the north at Hazeley Lea. 120 ha of the latter are owned by the Timpany Trust with the rest in smaller private ownerships. CL 49 was registered as common on 1st October 1970, following an application by Hartley Wintney Rural District Council on 11th September 1967. CL 100 was registered as common on 2nd February 1976 following an application by Mattingley Parish Council on 13th February 1968.

2.8 175.5 ha of Hazeley Heath were designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1979, due to the extent of heathland and the variety of different heathland plant communities. The boundary of the SSSI encompasses almost all of the registered common land and one area of gardens outside the common (at Hazeley Bottom). A map of the Heath showing the boundaries of the registered common land and of the SSSI is included as Figure 1. This Figure also shows the public rights of way that cross the common.

2.9 The SSSI was one of the many heathland sites in the region incorporated in the designation of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) in March 2005, reflecting the presence of three bird species of conservation concern at European level, listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive. These are the Dartford warbler, woodlark and nightjar, all of which, to varying degrees, depend on the heathland habitat. These three species all nest at or near ground level and are therefore particularly susceptible to disturbance by human activity and by domestic dogs and cats.

- 2.10 Hazeley Heath is part of the Forest of Eversley Countryside Heritage Area, designated by Hampshire County Council for its significant landscape and conservation value.

Land Ownership

- 2.11 The pattern of ownership is summarised in Figure 2.
- 2.12 There are two main landowners: Hart District Council owns CL 49 and the Timpany Trust owns most of CL 100.
- 2.13 Several other landowners own small areas around the perimeter of CL 100: the Kears in the centre of Hazeley Lea, the Burtons at the north end of Hazeley Lea, the Lyons at Crabtree Lodge; and the Davies, Pollocks, Allens, Cooks, Mackays and Sextons at Hazeley Bottom.

Commoner's Rights

- 2.14 The Commoner's Rights are recorded on the Commons Register and they relate to particular local properties. Rights exist over both common land units and they are summarised in Appendix D.
- 2.15 For CL 49 two properties have rights to collect Estovers and one has rights to graze three horses or three donkeys.
- 2.16 For CL 100 two properties have rights to collect Estovers and two have rights to graze cattle; 35 in total. These rights are understood to have been withdrawn from the major part of the unit, such that they now apply only to the relatively small area north of the Police College access road, which includes Hazeley Lea. Should the commoners choose to exercise these grazing rights, then this will need to be taken into account in any decisions regarding management of the common.

Public Access

- 2.17 It is understood that the common land at Hazeley Heath has always been open for access by the commoners and, to varying degrees, the public, the legal basis notwithstanding, apart from a period during which Milburn, when the owner of CL 100 in the 1970s, attempted to prevent public access to this unit. This action has contributed significantly to the subsequent views taken by the local communities toward any suggestion of fencing on the common.
- 2.18 Hazeley Heath has become increasingly popular as a destination for informal recreation, particularly with the rising population in and around Hartley Wintney. The 1925 Law of Property Act (LPA) section 193(1) provides a right of access for the public for 'air and exercise' onto commons having commoner's rights and commons that were at that time within urban district councils; this has subsequently been clarified in case law as including the right of access on horseback for the same purposes. This right applies to CL 49, as this had commoner's rights at the time of the Act (i.e. at January 1st 1926); this right of access is acknowledged in the commons register, where it is stated as being subject to an Order of Limitations made under s193(1)(b) of the LPA. A Deed of Declaration under s193 of the LPA provided the equivalent level of access by right for CL 100 in 1966, but this was

revoked by Milburn as the owner in 1971. Whether commoner's rights existed over the whole of this unit at the time of the Act is not clear from the documentation; the current rights apply only to the land north of the Police College access road.

- 2.19 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) provides a right of pedestrian access over various types of land including registered commons, but this does not apply to land that already has rights of access under s193 of the 1925 Act. Nevertheless, all registered commons are shown as CRoW 'access land' on OS maps.
- 2.20 Hart District Council own and maintain CL 49 on the basis that it is public open space. The Timpany Trust has stated that they allow the use of their part of CL 100 for horse riding, notwithstanding the legal position regarding such access by right.
- 2.21 There appears to be therefore a pattern of degree of public access over Hazeley Heath:
- ◆ Access on foot and horseback over all of CL 49, but subject to whatever constraints are included within the Order of Limitations;
 - ◆ Access on foot and horseback over the part of CL 100 that is north of the Police College access road – this includes Hazeley Lea;
 - ◆ Access on foot over the rest of CL 100 under the CRoW Act, which does not include areas within 20m of the gardens of residential properties;
 - ◆ Access on horseback over the rest of the Timpany Trust part of CL 100 by permission of the Trust.
- 2.22 However, as CL 100 and CL 49 are contiguous commons, the current interpretation by Natural England is that the higher access rights apply across both common land units. This would therefore include access on foot and horseback over all the different ownerships of CL 100, again subject to whatever constraints are included within the Order of Limitations.
- 2.23 There is no general right of access for cyclists onto common land, unless using the property accesses that cross the common.
- 2.24 The B3011 runs along the ridge, dividing Hazeley Heath along its length, with the larger area being to the north-east of the road. Three local lanes run across the Heath to the south-west towards West Green, Hazeley Bottom and Mattingley; one local lane runs northwards across the Heath at Hazeley Lea. The public roads are excluded from the registered extent of the common land at Hazeley Heath.
- 2.25 The Heath is crossed by several public footpaths, including one along most of the northern boundary, and there are numerous other paths. Some of the paths also act as access to adjacent properties, including the police college at Bramshill Park. The public footpaths at the south-eastern end of the Heath are included in the Three Castles Path that runs broadly north-south through this area. There are no public bridleways or byways across or connecting to the Heath.
- 2.26 The pattern of public footpaths and roads provides good access to Hazeley Heath from most directions, apart from the long north-eastern boundary, where there is no public access between Plough Lane near the north-eastern corner at Hazeley Lea

and the footbridge on the Three Castles route near the wastewater treatment works at the eastern end.

- 2.27 There are two parts of the common where open public access is prevented at present: the Lyon's land beside Crabtree Lodge is fenced around; and the Burton's land at Hazeley Lea is also fenced. A property adjacent to the northern boundary of the main heath has encroached on the common for garden and storage uses and has placed notices stating 'no access for horses', but has not fenced the area. None of these actions has any consent.
- 2.28 Some measures have been taken to prevent unauthorised vehicular access onto the common, including ditch and mound earthworks alongside parts of the B3011, particularly where there were former accesses, along with rough timber bollards set across access points from other tracks. These appear to have proved largely effective since being installed, although some of the timber bollards are now in need of replacement, which may have facilitated the recent instances of fly-tipping close to the Police college access road.

Public Usage

- 2.29 Hazeley Heath is considered to be a local amenity, mainly used by the residents of Hartley Wintney and Mattingley and associated hamlets for walking, horse riding and the enjoyment of nature and openness. This has been borne out by user surveys conducted in recent years in connection with the pattern of use of the Thames Basin Heaths and how this may be affected by additional development in the area.
- 2.30 The visitor surveys have shown that almost all users originate from the local communities, particularly from Hartley Wintney as this has by far the largest local population. Most users are dog walkers, arriving on foot from Hartley Wintney, who largely remain in the southern part of Hazeley Heath. Horse riding is also popular notwithstanding the lack of bridleways in the surroundings, including use by some of the owners. This extends over most of the site to the east of the B3011, with more use observed in the southern areas. Hazeley Heath is well known and used by local naturalists, including birdwatchers. There are infrequent guided walks and visits by school groups. A small lay-by on the B3011 opposite Arrow Lane and small areas beside some of the access tracks are used for parking by a limited number of visitors arriving by car.
- 2.31 The consultation process so far has shown that there is little current conflict between the various users of Hazeley Heath, who agree that the needs of all users should be met in addition to nature conservation requirements. The site has been subject to illegal occupation by travellers in the past, which has led to the provision of some use of earthworks and timber posts to prevent vehicle access from the B3011 and some of the side roads and tracks. The view is that no further major changes are necessary and that any action taken should, therefore, be sympathetic and subtle.
- 2.32 Visitors, on the whole, treat Hazeley Heath as an asset to be enjoyed and respected and many of the access problems encountered on other sites are absent, however there are occasional problems with motorbike scrambling and other unauthorised vehicles, fire-starting and fly tipping, which need to be tackled. There is currently no comprehensive formal approach to dealing with these issues and managing access to Hazeley Heath for the benefit of both its users and nature conservation.

HABITAT TYPES

- 2.33 The following habitat types are present on Hazeley Heath:
- ◆ Lowland heathland, including wet heath, mires, humid heath and dry heath;
 - ◆ Areas of bracken-dominated vegetation;
 - ◆ Disturbed grassland;
 - ◆ Dry acid grassland;
 - ◆ Bare ground;
 - ◆ Woodland and secondary woodland;
 - ◆ Dense scrub and scattered scrub;
 - ◆ Boundary trees.
- 2.34 The general disposition of these habitats is shown in Figure 4. This summarises a survey undertaken in 2002 on the basis of the National Vegetation Classification (NVC), considerably updated with local knowledge to reflect additional understanding and the principal changes since 2002.

Lowland Heathland

- 2.35 Lowland heathland presently covers approximately 21% of Hazeley Heath. There are three types of heath, namely dry, humid and wet. Dry heath occurs where the soils are free-draining and where the water table remains well below the soil surface at all times. Dry heath areas are dominated by varying proportions of heather *Calluna vulgaris*, bell heather *Erica cinerea* and dwarf gorse *Ulex minor*. Grass species include wavy hair grass *Deschampsia flexuosa* and brown bent *Agrostis vinealis*.
- 2.36 Humid heath is where soils are seasonally waterlogged. This type of heath contains heather, bell heather and dwarf gorse, but also cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix* and purple moor grass *Molinia caerulea*.
- 2.37 Wet heaths occur where the water table is naturally high, or where there is impeded drainage, due to underlying impervious rocks or clay, such that the water table is consistently near soil surface level. The habitat is dominated by purple moor grass and cross-leaved heath, whilst associated species may include heather, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, bog asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, rushes *Juncus spp* and sedges *Carex spp*.

Bracken-dominated Vegetation

- 2.38 In several patches throughout Hazeley Heath, bracken is the dominant species with very little else being able to grow. In areas where the bracken is relatively young, other dwarf scrub vegetation is present. In other areas, the bracken is paired with varying quantities of bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, which does not allow for the growth of much other ground flora and is less diverse in species composition. Other species that may occur in this habitat type include Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* and cleavers *Galium aparine*. Some small trees or saplings and shrubs may also be present.

- 2.39 Bracken is also a constituent of some of the woodland areas, where it is considerably less dominant and provides beneficial shelter near ground level.

Disturbed Grassland

- 2.40 Disturbed grassland is mainly found on the large area of former landfill in CL 49. This comprises coarse grassland and tall ruderal species. False oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, Yorkshire fog and cock's foot *Dactylis glomerata* are the main grasses and other species include common nettle, bramble, cleavers and thistle *Cirsium arvense*.

Dry Acid Grassland

- 2.41 Areas of dry acid grassland occur mainly within wooded clearings within the more disturbed parts of the site. The vegetation is generally short and closely grazed by rabbits. The dominant grass species is common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and occasional red fescue *Festuca rubra*. Other species may include scarlet pimpernel *Anagallis arvensis*, sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea* and heath speedwell, *Veronica officinalis*. Other patches of dry acid grassland occur towards the north of Hazeley Heath and are dominated by wavy hair grass.

Bare Ground

- 2.42 Until the management works of recent years, which have added some scraped areas to provide bare ground and some woodland clearance, Hazeley Heath has contained relatively little of this important component of the heathland habitat mosaic. Previously, there would have been large areas of bare ground as a result of the wartime clearance of much of the site and subsequent access by vehicles. The principal bare areas are now otherwise found alongside the main tracks through the landfill area, which are not directly connected to the open heathland.

Woodland

- 2.43 Much of the woodland in Hazeley Heath can be classified as secondary woodland, which is the term given to woodlands that have re-grown on land with alternative previous utilisation. In this instance, the woodland has encroached after the Second World War over much of the Heath and has come about through the natural processes of colonisation and succession. There are stands of more established woodland in areas of the site that were not cleared.
- 2.44 Most of the woodland is a mixture of sessile oak *Quercus robur*, downy birch *Betula pubescens* and silver birch *Betula pendula*. Many of the trees are relatively young, with the exception of a few mature specimens. The woodland shrub layer comprises holly *Ilex aquifolium* and hazel *Corylus avellana*, whilst the field layer is relatively species poor and consists primarily of honeysuckle, bramble and bracken. There are some dominant patches of Scot's pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and other areas of wet woodland where grey willow (*Salix cinerea*) is dominant. Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) is dominant in localised areas, especially along the northern edges close to the river.

Scrub

- 2.45 Dense stands of common gorse *Ulex europaeus* form a distinct habitat and visual feature throughout Hazeley Heath, particularly across the centre of the main heathland area in Zone 10. There are some pockets of blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and bramble. Other distinctive types of scrub include patches of grey willow and young silver birch.

Boundary Trees

- 2.46 Most of the outer boundaries of the common are marked by mature trees planted in the hedge line, often adjacent to the remains of a boundary bank and ditch. These boundary trees include many excellent specimens. Combined with the woodland that has developed around the edges of the common, these provide a wooded aspect to the common in views from outside.

HABITAT CONDITION

- 2.47 Natural England classifies the condition of habitats within SSSIs to provide a basis for the conservation management. The categories are described as:

- ◆ **Favourable** – the land is adequately conserved and is meeting its ‘conservation objectives’. There is scope for enhancement of these areas.
- ◆ **Unfavourable recovering** – This infers that management measures are in place, but further work needs to be done in order to ensure the land is adequately conserved.
- ◆ **Unfavourable no change** – This means the unit is not adequately managed and will not reach favourable condition unless there are changes to the site management.
- ◆ **Unfavourable declining** – The special interest of the site is not being conserved with the site condition becoming progressively worse.
- ◆ **Part destroyed** – Lasting damage has occurred to the SSSI so that it will never recover but management work may still be able to improve the remainder of the unit.
- ◆ **Destroyed** – Lasting damage has left the site unable to recover.

- 2.48 In order to achieve ‘favourable’ status for lowland heathland habitats under the NE system, the following must be achieved:

- ◆ At least 1%, but no more than 10% bare ground cover;
- ◆ Dwarf shrub cover of between 25 – 90%;
- ◆ Total gorse cover less than 50% with European gorse less than 25%
- ◆ Heather cover to be made up of pioneer (10-40%); building/mature (20-80%); degenerate (less than 30%); or dead (less than 10%);
- ◆ Less than 1% exotic species - ragwort, nettle, thistle and other herbaceous species;
- ◆ Less than 15% trees and scrub;
- ◆ Less than 10% bracken.

- 2.49 The characteristic dwarf evergreen shrubs of heathland need not therefore be a substantial part of the site to achieve favourable status, as long as these are combined with enough grassland to ensure that the other habitats do not exceed their parameters. The most significant factor in achieving favourable status for Hazeley Heath – all or in part - will be the extent of woodland and scrub cover.
- 2.50 NE divides Hazeley Heath into management units on the basis of land ownership. As a consequence, the size and content of the units varies greatly. The condition provided on the NE website has not been updated since 2002 and does not reflect the current condition of all the units and so the detail is not included here; the HDC and Timpany holdings are described as ‘unfavourable recovering’.

MANAGEMENT ZONES

- 2.51 The approach taken in this Management Plan is to divide Hazeley Heath into a series of Management Zones in order to summarise the character of the site and provide a basis for the explanation and control of the pattern of management. These Zones are intended to reflect the general pattern of habitat and landscape character across the site, as well as the common land boundaries and the principal land ownerships. The extent of the Zones is shown in Figure 5 and the general content and character of each Zone is summarised in Table 2.1.
- 2.52 The following describes the current character and status of the 13 management zones, and should be read against the habitat shown in Figures 4 and 5. The vegetation shown in these maps is an indicative summary of the gradations of habitat found on the site:
- (i) The difference between ‘woodland’ and ‘secondary woodland’ is not absolute, although it has originated from the 2002 survey data. By and large the ‘woodland’ is about 50 or more years old.
 - (ii) The difference between ‘dense scrub’ and ‘scattered scrub’ is not scientific. If you can’t get through it, it’s dense, as with the extensive patches of common gorse.
 - (iii) Areas of dense bracken are shown, but no indication is given of other vegetation present; it can vary from open woodland to scattered scrub.
- 2.53 Just because an area is labelled as scrub or woodland does not imply that it needs to be removed, or removed in its entirety.

Table 2.1 – Management Zones on Hazeley Heath

Zone	Description
1	<p>Majority of the zone is on a capped landfill site. Some vegetation is more characteristic of calcareous rather than acid grassland and the open part of the zone is of clearly different character to the rest of the heath. Extensive areas of nettles and disturbed grassland species, with small areas of a broad range of other species, some resulting from imported material such as canal dredgings. There are also areas of short turf and acid grassland, a small patch of Japanese knotweed and some scattered scrub. The habitat diversity attracts a wide range of insect and bird species; in July butterflies are particularly numerous..</p> <p>South, west and east of this is mostly woodland, reasonably well established, dominated by oak and birch with occasional beech and rowan, including a good carpet of primroses in some areas and two mossy 'lawns' on areas of hardcore. There are also areas of dense and scattered scrub with some heathland species and a small patch of relict heath near the south-east corner that has a colony of SS Blue butterflies.</p> <p>Many well-used paths cross the open grassland part of the zone, including four public footpaths, one of which follows the broad straight track across the centre. The area is much used by dog-walkers. The content of the landfill can be perceived where the capping thins out along parts of the north-eastern edge and where rabbits have excavated.</p>
2	<p>Area of old gravel workings covered in secondary woodland; some local spoil tipping; parts flood in winter; mostly consists of oak, holly and birch but includes aspen, hornbeam and sycamore. The woodland is better developed to the west of the zone on either side of Arrow Lane, where there are some good trees. The woodland to the east is denser and younger. An overhead power line crosses the zone and land underneath has to be kept cleared.</p>
3	<p>The zone includes the lowest part of the common where it runs down into the river valley, as well as the dry ridges extending out from the higher ground of Zone 1. The low ground is a mosaic of wet and humid heathland and mire species with rank grassland species and an area of dry acid grassland. Woodland and scrub have colonised the dry slopes and ridges and Molinia has colonised much of the wet and humid heath. The eastern boundary is wooded adjacent to the River Hart with a small alder wood.</p> <p>This zone is botanically the richest part of Hazeley Heath, with a wide variety of sedges and many specialist wet heathland plants. The dry heath supports a significant population of SS Blue butterflies; nightjars regularly breed; Dartford warbler and woodlark (Annex I species) breed if the conditions are right. This zone has been the subject of significant management attention over last 20 years, including removal of trees and scrub to link to heathland in zone 4.</p> <p>Public footpaths run close to the common boundary and provide access across the river. There are several other tracks and paths, including a length of boardwalk through part of wet heath. Traces of the past military uses provide some historic interest, principally the 'tank ramp' in the southernmost part of the Zone.</p>
4	<p>A zone of mixed and changing character, which has patches of heathland and is the connecting zone between the richer heathland of Zones 3 and 9. Approximately one half is wooded, mostly young birch with occasional pine and oak; one half is heath that generally has low species diversity. The woodland along the north-eastern edge includes possibly the oldest trees on the Heath.</p> <p>The areas of heath include (i) a small Molinia-dominated patch in the south (now connected to zone 3, (ii) a damp triangle totally dominated with Molinia, which is now connected thanks to recent tree-felling to (iii) a large are of mainly damp heath</p>

	<p>which bears round the slopes of the ground to zone 9. This last area has greatly declined botanically in the past 20 years, mainly thanks to the trees on the ridge above which have caused a drying-out of the ground.</p> <p>The upper 'plateau' area of this zone has benefited from some recent tree felling which has reduced the central area of woodland and connected through to a fourth dry heath area. This is linked to a dry clay-based area of grass/moss/lichen that has developed on a former gravel pit. This has an interesting flora and is the only part of the Heath where silver-washed fritillaries can be found. There are seasonal pools here.</p> <p>Surrounding and amongst the areas of heath are patches of dense and scattered scrub and bracken. Nightjar, an Annex 1 species, regularly breeds in this zone.</p>
5	A zone of relatively recent dense woodland, often of indifferent character, including some remains of former military buildings. Some small clearings vary the character and include areas used by recreational cyclists. There is little indication that heathland could ever be restored.
6	Largely wooded zone, with more established trees around the edges and dense young woodland in the western part where there are ephemeral pools in old gravel workings. An overhead power line runs through the zone and land underneath has to be kept cleared. The boundary of the common/SSSI is unclear to the west of this zone. There is little chance of heathland restoration.
7	A zone of mixed character made up of several small ownerships. Some owners are clearing scrub. The overall area is largely wooded, with small clearings in the western part. The SSSI includes an area of gardens that is outside the common boundary and not included in this management plan.
8	<p>A long zone set on the south-facing slopes below the B3011, with varying degrees of colonisation by woodland and scrub, crossed by an overhead power line and a local lane near the northern end. Young birch/oak woodland with some larger trees near the southern boundary. Bracken has created a deep litter layer in parts of the woodland and silver birch is extremely dominant in the south-east of the zone.</p> <p>Manual clearance of trees and removal of bracken is allowing heathland species to return to glades in the centre of the zone. Most potential heathland is 'dry', but there is a wet flush currently hidden in birches in the hollow by the B3011 formed by past sand extraction.</p> <p>Zone is crossed by several tracks and two public footpaths and there are excellent views westwards.</p>
9	<p>This zone contains the largest part of the existing open heathland, extending along the north-facing slopes away from the road. There is some reasonably well-established woodland along the north-east boundary, along with extensive areas of more recent woodland and scrub around the northern, eastern southern and western sides of the heath. There are substantial areas of mature gorse within the heath. Most of this part of the Heath is dry, but the middle part of this zone supports humid heath, seen where the common gorse gives way to dwarf gorse.</p> <p>Recent clearance of mature gorse has led to good regeneration of heathland species. All three Annex 1 species of heathland bird - Dartford warbler, nightjar and woodlark - breed here and there are widespread but small colonies of SS blue butterfly.</p> <p>There are few tracks or paths and little evidence human activity apart from the road traffic.</p>
10	Small area partially fenced off from the rest of the common. Contains two large ponds and areas of grazed grassland, maintained by the owners largely for the benefit of wildfowl. Largely enclosed by reasonably mature trees.

11	Extensive areas of young woodland and scrub including blackthorn in the south-western part of the zone, with more established woodland in the northern part. Considerable bracken in the centre of the zone. A network of glades opens out into suburban grassland close to the properties beside the western edge, where there are some garden-related activities. Various tracks and paths lead towards the properties and Hazeley Lea. There is heathland potential, but much restoration effort would be needed.
12	The southern part of Hazeley Lea, crossed by Plough Lane and various tracks and fronted by houses on two sides. Mown grassland vegetation adjacent to adjoining properties in the south west corner contains Chamomile. Mostly woodland on the north-eastern side of the zone, with dense areas of bracken to either side of Plough Lane. Some remnant heath species in the clearing under the overhead power line.
13	A zone surrounded by maturing woodland where recent management work by the owners has indicated the possibilities of restoration. A corridor for the overhead power line has been extended to show remnant damp heath dominated by <i>Molinia</i> and bramble. A second and contiguous cleared area is partially fenced off and shows potential as woodland pasture. A small ditch or stream has in the past had plants unrecorded elsewhere on H Heath

MANAGEMENT HISTORY

- 2.54 Recent years have seen a range of works undertaken on Hazeley Heath with the aim of maintaining or improving the heathland habitat quality, lessening the influence of the encroaching scrub and maintaining access. There have also been several substantial fires. These events are summarised in Table I.4 in Appendix I. Note that bracken spraying is not included in this table.
- 2.55 These works began around 1990, as the last area of landfill was capped using canal dredgings and the boardwalk was first constructed to allow access across the wet part of Zone 3. Clearance of scrub from several locations in Zones 3, 4 and 9 began in earnest in the mid 90s, with regular mowing of the grassland on the landfill in Zone 1 beginning in 2000. More frequent scrub clearance continued after 2000, along with localised tree felling, resulting in the connection of the heathland areas of Zones 3 and 4 and a more open character to most of Zone 3.
- 2.56 Recent works have included the replacement of the boardwalk, creation of areas of dry bare ground on the slopes above Zone 3 and creation of wet scrapes within Zone that have been monitored and found to provide a significant increase in species recorded. Further clearance and tree felling have joined areas of heathland in Zone 4 and gorse clearance has led to successful restoration of the heather sward in Zone 9.
- 2.57 The recent works have been largely funded by English Nature Wildlife Enhancement Scheme (WES) agreements with the landowners – HDC, Timpany Trust and the Kears. An agreement between HDC and the Timpany Trust has devolved responsibility for delivering WES funded management to HDC.
- 2.58 This summary and the table reflect the works undertaken to the two main ownerships – HDC and Timpany Trust. Many of the works have been undertaken by HDC staff

of contractors. It is therefore unsurprising that many of the activities have been within the HDC area. However, in addition to the works noted above, HDC and volunteer groups have undertaken tree and bracken clearance in Zone 8, such that areas of heath are now successfully re-establishing. Also owners of some of the smaller parcels have undertaken clearance and management works. (Details required please for these.)

- 2.59 Table I.4 shows some of the known fire incidents on Hazeley Heath over the past 20 years; the list is not comprehensive. It is noticeable that incidents are now occurring with greater frequency, which may be an indication of the increasing presence of inflammable scrub. Two of the incidents were known to be caused mischievously, one was accidentally caused by contractors, and the remaining 'just happened'.
- 2.60 No lasting damage was done to vegetation by the fires that occurred in March and April and in fact there might have been a small benefit in Zone 3. However, wildlife was adversely affected by the fires that occurred later in the year. In particular, the fires in Zone 9 have probably been a major cause of the excessively large areas of dense gorse now on that part of the Heath.

3. Summary of Consultation

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 3.1 The 2004 draft Management Plan for Hazeley Heath had been developed by HDC from the preceding WES agreements, but was put aside amid concerns that it was focused almost entirely on nature conservation and took little account of the views and needs of other stakeholders groups. It was then agreed that a clean slate approach should be taken to developing an alternative plan.
- 3.2 Consultation at that point had already included visits to Parish Councils and key local residents, heathland talks and walks, exhibitions and eight issues of a newsletter over two years. Responses were also received to the publication of the 2004 draft Management Plan and its accompanying Grazing Feasibility Study.
- 3.3 The Hazeley Heath management committee, however, felt that more consultation was needed and decided to follow the procedure outlined in 'A Common Purpose: a guide to agreeing management on common land' produced for English Nature, The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Open Spaces Society, the Countryside Agency and the National Trust. In 2005, through a questionnaire and meetings, stakeholders were asked what they thought were the features of the Heath that they valued most and the issues of most concern.
- 3.4 Full details of the consultation process and responses can be found in Appendix B. As with any consultation process, the views that get recorded reflect the interests of those willing to make themselves heard and hence the more entrenched positions may become over-represented.

Outcome B

- 3.5 All these preceding consultations and responses were used to develop a Management Aims Discussion Paper (Outcome B) circulated in July 2006, together with a further questionnaire, asking stakeholders to identify the aims they felt were most important to tackle in the Management Plan.
- 3.6 The responses confirmed the key issues and concerns that had emerged in earlier stages in the consultation process and the need to find management solutions for Hazeley Heath that will accommodate a range of uses and respond to a number of very different priorities. Full details of the questionnaire responses can be found in the Addendum to the Outcome B report, but are summarised below.
- 3.7 There are several local issues that the majority of those returning the questionnaire identified as key:
- ◆ Minimise adverse effects of rubbish from landfill and other former uses on appearance and safety.
 - ◆ Minimise litter, dog mess, old cars etc
 - ◆ Minimise access for unauthorised vehicles
 - ◆ Minimise conflict between vehicles and other users especially along the B3011

Outcome D: Draft Outline Management Plan

- ◆ Minimise susceptibility to reduction in status and protection of the site
 - ◆ Minimise encroachment on the common by neighbours
- 3.8 Despite the differing views of the wide range of groups who value and enjoy the heath, including those with a particular interest in flora and fauna, dog walkers and horse riders, four General Management Aims that would be central to the conservation value of the site were supported by the majority:
- ◆ Maximise nature conservation value over substantial defined areas
 - ◆ Maximise nature conservation value for species of special status
 - ◆ Maximise diversity for nature conservation, landscape and access
 - ◆ Maximise openness of the site in defined areas by woodland removal
- 3.9 There were also several Specific Management Aims that were generally supported:
- ◆ Prevent loss of lowland heath
 - ◆ Reduce scrub
 - ◆ Remove invasive alien species
 - ◆ Minimise bracken
 - ◆ Maintain mature woodland
 - ◆ Reduce tree cover by selective removal of species or sizes
 - ◆ Improve visitor behaviour and respect for the site
- 3.10 Establishing a community steering group to lead in the implementation of the Management Plan did not at this stage emerge as a priority – although very few respondents were actually opposed to the suggestion, a significant minority felt impartial. However around half expressed positive support for the idea.

Outcome C

- 3.11 Four potential management strategies that would support these aims were set out in the management options working paper (Outcome C) report. Three of the strategies involved grazing, with different options for containing the animals ranging from perimeter fencing to tethering. The fourth option relied wholly on mechanical options to maintain the heath. The need for a formal organisation to oversee implementation of the Management Plan and take responsibility for ensuring that Hazeley Heath continues to meet the needs of its various users was also explored.
- 3.12 The Outcome C report was circulated to stakeholders for comment in November 2006, with the aim of agreeing the best options to take forward to the final management plan and of reaching consensus on some more divisive issues.
- 3.13 A stakeholder consultation meeting was held at Hart District Council offices in Fleet to provide those with an interest in Hazeley Heath with an opportunity to discuss the options in detail and to develop greater understanding of each others views. Those attending included a mix of landowners, representatives of Mattingley Parish Council, user groups, commoners, neighbours, walkers, horse riders and dog walkers.

3.14 The meeting agreed on the need for a management plan for Hazeley Heath, but there was no consensus on the best approach. Many of the opinions expressed at the meeting were opposed to grazing, but others supported or had no objection to the idea. The factors that came up in discussions as being the main reasons for objection were:

- ◆ Change to the character of the common;
- ◆ Impediment to open access across the common;
- ◆ Potential exclusion of access;
- ◆ Sensitivity to fencing based on previous attempts to exclude public access;
- ◆ Fear of grazing animals for some users;
- ◆ Potential conflicts with other users, particularly horse riders;
- ◆ Road safety, as traffic on the B3011 is fast and sightlines are poor – accidents caused by deer were reported to be a problem that could be exacerbated by roaming grazing stock;
- ◆ The practicalities of who would look after the animals and be responsible for their safety;
- ◆ Lack of apparent attractiveness to graziers;
- ◆ Up-front costs of fencing and cattle grids;
- ◆ Maintenance problems and costs of fencing.

3.15 Some of these issues have arisen from past events or from a presumption that the apparent problems are too great to make grazing practicable on this site. Such issues are capable of resolution through further discussion and provision of further information, but some may not be – for instance the highway authority would not at present support a request to apply a lower speed limit and some opposition would remain to any fencing within the common.

3.16 However, all agreed that whatever approach was chosen should be cost-effective, that the needs of all users should be met, in addition to nature conservation requirements and that any action taken should be sympathetic and subtle, with no major changes. Most felt that issues raised earlier of conflict between the different groups using Hazeley Heath had been over-emphasised and are not, in fact, a problem.

3.17 It was agreed that a formally organised body was needed to oversee the implementation of the management plan for the benefit of all Hazeley Heath's users and its environmental protection and also to gain better access to funding. Although there was interest in the idea of a statutory commons council it was felt that further information was needed before deciding whether it would be the best approach. Issues that would need to be agreed would include:

- ◆ How is the body convened?
- ◆ What powers and responsibilities individuals would have?
- ◆ Whether the landowners would hold the power?
- ◆ How the body would be funded?

Outcome D: Draft Outline Management Plan

- 3.18 There was concern to ensure that funding would be more than short-term, leaving the heath to revert to woodland once the funding stopped. A number of stakeholders expressed the view that the inclusion of grazing has appeared in the past to be a prerequisite for access to funding through EN.
- 3.19 Frustration was expressed that the new consultation process had meant that old ground was being revisited.
- 3.20 After the stakeholder meeting, written responses to the management options paper were received from Mattingley and Hartley Wintney Parish Councils, Hampshire County Council's Countryside Access Development Officer and Area Highways and Transport Manager; the British Horse Society (BHS) and three individuals from Hartley Wintney. These responses echoed much of what was said at the stakeholder meeting.
- 3.21 Albeit for a variety of different reasons, all those who responded in writing were opposed to or expressed strong reservations about the safety or practicality of grazing on Hazeley Heath. Concerns about available funding for any of the options, frustration that the new consultation process is revisiting old ground and the need for the management plan to meet the needs of all users, were also recurring themes.
- 3.22 Both Mattingley and Hartley Wintney Parish Councils suggested that there should perhaps be two commons councils with separate management plans for the two Parishes. The Hartley Wintney PC plan would relate only to CL 49 and the Mattingley PC plan would relate only to CL 100. These would reflect the differences not only in ownership, but the character of the different parts of Hazeley Heath and its neighbouring communities.
- 3.23 At subsequent committee meetings, a general aim of the management process has been summarised as: 'Sustaining the Heath as an important amenity for the local community who use it for walking, dog walking and riding.'

Outcome D

- 3.24 An evening meeting of the management committee and stakeholder representatives was held in March 2007, the notes from which are included in Appendix C. Following an initial discussion, the meeting concentrated on several issues which were agreed as being of general concern to those present:
- ◆ Grazing;
 - ◆ Fencing;
 - ◆ Restoration;
 - ◆ Mechanical Alternatives to Grazing;
 - ◆ Taking Things Forward / Establishing Trust.
- 3.25 The issues of and arising from fencing and grazing occupied much of the discussions and provided a useful insight into the perceptions that underlay the response to the 2004 plan and its associated grazing proposals. Areas of particular concern were that:

- ◆ the inclusion of a grazing trial in the draft management plan did not imply that a decision had already been taken by the committee on the application of grazing to the rest of the site ;
 - ◆ fencing is only an issue for debate if and only if grazing is found to be an acceptable and suitable solution for this site.
- 3.26 During the course of the discussions, several show-of-hands votes were taken to gauge the balance of feeling amongst those at the meeting on particular parts of the management proposals. The votes taken were:
- ◆ in favour of a trial grazing area to be included in the plan, monitored over 5 years;
 - ◆ in favour of the use of perimeter fencing if grazing is then found to be appropriate;
 - ◆ against the use of fencing alongside the roads;
 - ◆ in favour of clearance being needed to restore heathland;
 - ◆ in favour of the use of mechanical and manual methods for management.

CONSULTANT'S OVERVIEW

- 3.27 It has become increasingly evident through the commission that the opinions and expectations of the various stakeholders differ greatly, in terms of what they expect to see done, in how they expect to see it done and in who they expect to do it.
- 3.28 It has also become evident that the comprehensive approach to trying to identify a consensus view enshrined in the 'Common Purpose' document that has formed the basis for this commission may not have been the best approach to adopt in this instance. Public consultation has been undertaken in previous years and a draft management plan produced, supported by a grazing feasibility study. The local community has therefore been provided with considerable detail on some issues and with a detailed proposal. This common has some history of conflict between the local community and the landowners, resulting in the influential findings of the case of HCC v Milburn. There are many individuals in the area with a long and often detailed knowledge of parts or all of the Heath. Consequently, there is a considerable degree of local awareness and understanding of issues related to the heath and the common.
- 3.29 Re-starting the process under the Common Purpose approach has therefore generated an understandable level of impatience amongst many of the stakeholders, as their comments indicate that they would have expected to proceed directly to a revised management plan that reflected to response to the first plan. With the benefit of hindsight, it may have been more efficient to proceed on a basis of detailed consultation with representatives of the interested bodies, the landowners and commoners and the key figures from the local community – perhaps through the list of stakeholder representatives. However, the identification of a management plan that satisfies the golden rules of the Common Purpose approach will be a valuable and necessary element in gaining the necessary funds and consents for undertaking the management works.

- 3.30 A key issue will be to resolve how the process will be managed and by whom as the future implementation of the management plan will reflect the structure of the management body or bodies created by the local communities to guide the process.
- 3.31 It has been suggested in the written responses from both Parish Councils that another strategy *could* be followed, with separate Management Plans being produced for the two Parishes. In effect, this approach could be applied to any of the management strategies previously described, although it would be most difficult to apply to a strategy based around uniform grazing across the whole site.
- 3.32 There are several drawbacks to the approach of having two management plans:
- (i) Management bodies representing smaller sites and smaller communities are likely to be less successful in securing funds;
 - (ii) As the conservation status of the site and the presence of lowland heath are the principal issues underlying the availability of funds, such money may not be available at all if the site is not managed as one unit;
 - (iii) That contracts let to implement works will be smaller and hence less cost effective;
 - (iv) Existing differences of opinion between the two parishes will become hardened and potentially more divergent, rather than being resolved;
 - (v) These differences of opinion will lead to different management strategies and different rates of implementation;
 - (vi) Linkage between the two main areas of open heathland may be more difficult to achieve;
 - (vii) There is the prospect that, at some point in the future, a fence would be proposed along the boundary between the two commons;
 - (viii) That the management of Hazeley Heath will become an issue that polarises opinion between the two communities, rather than being a shared responsibility and a shared asset.
- 3.33 For the Parish Councils, the appeal appears to lie in the potential advantages of the approach:
- (i) That agreement on the most suitable management strategy can be reached more easily;
 - (ii) That a management body with support from the local community can be identified more easily;
 - (iii) That each community can proceed with the work at its own speed and, where appropriate, using its own volunteers.

This is an issue that is concerned mostly with the future implementation of the management plan, as this will reflect the structure of the management body or bodies generated by the local communities to guide the process. The disadvantages of having two management plans appear to substantially outweigh the advantages, even though initial agreements on two plans may be quicker. This division of plans would also go against the grain of the Common Purpose approach, which is based around the achievement of consensus, and would require greater commitment of resources by Natural England, Hampshire County Council and other bodies.

4. Management Options

INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 There are two aspects to the management works required at Hazeley Heath, whether considering habitats, access or landscape character:
- ◆ **Restoration** of the character of parts of the site to a more favourable status than it is currently;
 - ◆ **Maintenance** of the character and status of the site.
- 4.2 Appendix E contains details on the range of management options, which could be used at Hazeley Heath. The pros and cons of the various options are summarised in Table 4.1.
- 4.3 All management of lowland heathland is a form of intervention to overcome the natural process of reversion to woodland. It is therefore unsurprising that the cons generally appear to outweigh the pros, as in all cases a degree of expenditure, energy use, inconvenience and effort is involved.
- 4.4 The discussion of options is arranged in terms of habitats. This is not intended to indicate that other attributes of Hazeley Heath are less important, but is merely the means by which the management methods for this landscape are defined.
- 4.5 There are timing restrictions on most of these activities, due to either the growth pattern of the species involved or the legal restrictions on clearance that affects potential breeding habitats under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. Grazing could take place all year round, but if used on this site would probably be restricted to May to September.

Table 4.1 – Pros and Cons of Potential Management Options

Option	Pros	Cons
Cutting of vegetation	Maintains age range in heath shrub species; Prevents common gorse becoming dominant; Limits fire risk; Creates some incidental bare ground.	Noise and disturbance of machine operation; Use of fossil fuels; Continued cost, increasing as area of heathland is increased; Potential for artificial appearance; Need to find suitable locations for arisings.
Controlled burning	Removes litter and old woody vegetation Encourages regeneration of dwarf shrubs and common gorse; Instant effect; Cheap, if using volunteers.	Creates good grazing sward; Can reduce biodiversity; Difficult to arrange; Not suited for small sites; Many substantial legal implications; Potential issues with neighbours; May encourage arson.
Scrub	Maintains age range in heath	Some noise and disturbance of

management	scrub species; Prevents common gorse becoming dominant; Scope for volunteer involvement;	machine operation; Use of fossil fuels; Need to find suitable locations for arisings.
Grazing	Minimal use of resources to effect control of grass and shrub growth; Minimal disturbance to wildlife and site users by machinery; Known to enhance growth of dwarf shrubs over rank grasses: Can remove young scrub regrowth Creates suitable conditions for seed germination and small bare ground niches; Creates detailed mosaic of micro-habitats;~ Maintains age range in heath shrub species; Natural appearance to managed areas; Grazing animals usually come to be seen as an item of interest; Potential for limited income from the grazing, although may also need to compensate commoners with unused grazing rights; Costs reduce over time after initial set-up costs.	Initial costs, especially if cattle grids required; Perception that fencing impedes access or openness, especially if internal divisions required; Need to reach agreements with many landowners if new boundary fencing is required; Cost of fence maintenance; Difficulties of maintaining temporary fences, if used; Potential of collision between stock and traffic on the B3011; Need to identify grazier; Need to ensure continuity year to year; Need not to exceed the level of stocking that is appropriate for habitat management in each part of the common; Need to relocate stock at night; S of S consent needed for any fencing within common; Need to deal with existing commoner's grazing rights; Requires monitoring of the stock whilst on the common; Need to restrict stock to suitable breeds; Would expect dogs to be kept on leads within grazed areas – but this is also expected for the whole site anyway from March to August.
Woodland and Scrub Removal	Allows re-establishment of heathland species; Restores open character of heathland landscape; Provides views across site and out over wider landscape; Improves potential accessibility, especially on horseback; Reduces cover available for deer; Can use some of hardwood timber for creation of dead wood habitats; Some of timber may have market value. Cleared woodland habitat is favoured by woodlark.	Need to ensure that trees and tree groups with landscape and/or habitat value are identified, protected and retained; May be regarded by some as an adverse effect on the character; Noise and disturbance of machine operation; Use of fossil fuels; Need to find uses for or means of removal of felled timber and brash; Need to follow up with removal of tree seedling re-growth. Clearance may expose views of traffic on B3011; Has little measurable effect on traffic noise levels.

Tree and woodland management	Improves woodland structure, diversity, viability and attractiveness; Can improve accessibility and so provide more options in parts of the site where reaction is considered to be the prime function; Scope for volunteer involvement;	Some noise and disturbance of machine operation; Use of fossil fuels; Benefits and effects of such work are not widely noticed.
Management of grasslands	Controls dominance of the more invasive species; Maintains species diversity and hence attractive appearance; Improves accessibility	Noise and disturbance of machine operation; Use of fossil fuels; Continued cost; Potential for artificial appearance;
Bracken Clearance	Allows re-growth of heathland shrubs and grasses; Facilitates public access; reduces fire hazard; Improves appearance of heath; Reduces accumulation of litter layer	Reliance on herbicides may not be accepted by all Treatment needs repeating for complete effect: Needs to be accompanied by removal of existing litter layer and exposure of heathland seed source
Turf Stripping	Reduces dominance of Molinia; Exposes heathland seed source	Noise and disturbance of machine operation; Use of fossil fuels; Continued cost; Potential for artificial appearance; Need to find location to place or tip arisings.
Scraping	Provides bare ground niches for distinctive heathland species; Creates open water areas within wet heath;	Noise and disturbance of machine operation; Use of fossil fuels; Continued cost; Potential for artificial appearance; Needs to be repeated at intervals as scrapes grow over

CHOICE OF OPTIONS

- 4.6 The choice of techniques to be utilised has been based on the findings of the preceding consultation processes and on the arrangement and condition of the site.

Cutting

- 4.7 This will be the main means of maintaining the dwarf shrub heathland in good condition, with the required balance of different growth stages, so that the value and attractiveness of the key habitat and landscape type is maintained. The grassland areas on the former landfill will also continue to be cut.

Stripping and Scraping

- 4.8 These have been found to be successful in creating relatively small areas of bare ground and wet or damp hollows, in place of areas of coarse grasses. These are to be continued to maintain the desired proportions of bare ground or wet ground in the respective Zones.

Rhododendron

- 4.9 This is not abundant on Hazeley Heath, but should be removed where it occurs. Scattered bushes or young stands must be cut down and the arisings removed off site or taken to a place where they can be burnt without causing nuisance or damage.

Gorse

- 4.10 Common gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) is valuable for wildlife and is part of a heathland community. However, parts of Hazeley Heath, particularly in Zone 9, have become overrun by this plant. There is an urgent requirement therefore to remove or coppice areas of common gorse that dominate areas of dwarf shrubs.

Japanese Knotweed

- 4.11 This invasive alien species, which is found in small areas on the landfill area in Zone 1, needs to be treated as a high priority in order to avoid its spread.

Woodland and Scrub Clearance

- 4.12 The mature native tree species provide important habitat for a large number of species, including plants, lichens, invertebrates, birds and reptiles. They also contribute to the landscape value of Hazeley Heath where the mature boundary trees have long marked the extent of the common and where tree groups on higher ground accentuate the varied terrain. An acceptable balance of woodland and heathland needs to be created. More importantly, the removal of trees needs to be carried out in such a way so that the patches of heathland are reconnected. This is critical to ensure the long-term viability of Hazeley Heath. The Plan includes the intended removal of substantial areas of the more recent woodland where this has developed over heathland.

Burning

- 4.13 Given the limited size of the suitable heathland cover at Hazeley, the limitations on the benefits to the quality and diversity of the resultant sward and the array of potential legal problems that could arise, burning is not recommended as a technique for use in this management plan.

Grazing

- 4.14 Trial grazing could take place initially at Hazeley Heath in order to establish whether this will be a beneficial solution in the long-term. Grazing will not completely control scrub or gorse or the encroachment of bracken so some supplementary

management would still be required if grazing is endorsed, in addition to the clearance of scrub and woodland that is required in any event.

Overall Approach

- 4.15 We consider that the following techniques would help the initial **restoration** of degraded areas of the heathland habitats:
- ◆ Cutting of vegetation;
 - ◆ Scrub management;
 - ◆ Scrub removal;
 - ◆ Woodland removal;
 - ◆ Bracken control.
- 4.16 We consider that the following techniques would be suitable for the **maintenance** of the habitats created or retained:
- ◆ Grazing – if considered as acceptable and beneficial after a trial on site;
 - ◆ Cutting of vegetation;
 - ◆ Scrub management;
 - ◆ Tree management;
 - ◆ Management of mature woodland;
 - ◆ Turf stripping;
 - ◆ Scraping;
 - ◆ Management of grasslands.
- 4.17 Given the obvious level of community interest in the management of Hazeley Heath, it is both imperative and practicable to ensure that at least some of the management work is undertaken by volunteer groups drawn from the locality. This will continue initiatives that have been undertaken in the past, will build links between the local communities and the chosen management organisation and will help ensure the necessary public ‘ownership’ of the management process. Consideration should therefore be given to the organisation of volunteer groups that elect to work on any part of the Heath with the aim of raising interest in the Hartley Wintney area in particular.
- 4.18 These habitat-based works need to be combined with the removal of the loose litter on the landfill area and the systematic use of arisings from the other works to cover areas of emerging rubbish or fill in areas of settlement.
- 4.19 Discussions should be started with the landowners that have fenced parts of the common or are using it for inappropriate purposes, such that the public rights of access are upheld and that the intended pattern of habitat management can become applicable to all areas. Confirmation of the status of public access by right to CL 100 would assist in this process, which may require information on the Order of Limitations that applies to the contiguous common of CL 49.

- 4.20 The opportunity exists for the Timpany Trust and the other owners of CL 100 to enter into a Deed of Declaration under s193 of the 1925 LPA to provide a right of public access equivalent to that provided by s193. This would then formalise and clarify the position.
- 4.21 Some limited interpretation boards were considered worthwhile, located at the most used entry points to the site, which would be around the Hartley Wintney end. These could also be used for the display of information about what conservation works were being undertaken at the time. Information on conservation works should also be made available to the local communities generally.

5. Outline Plan

PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 5.1 The content of the proposed Outline Management Plan has been arrived at through the various consultation processes and from consideration of the progress that has been made on comparable sites elsewhere. The principal factors underlying the choice have been:
- (i) That the heathland habitats and the degree of public access conferred by the common land and the landowners are acknowledged and agreed to be the principal assets of Hazeley Heath and that these should be protected and enhanced and hence should dictate the approach to be taken in the management plan;
 - (ii) That heathland has developed on suitable soils from long-standing grazing and other common land practices over many centuries and hence requires continued management in some form to prevent reversion to woodland;
 - (iii) That many of the local stakeholders do not at present wish to see fencing of or on the commons, with some also not wishing to see grazing animals on the commons;
 - (iv) That the works required to establish a single grazing regime across the common would entail considerable time and financial support and could be delayed by the need to resolve issues with the landowners that have encroached into the common with fences and or land uses;
 - (v) That, given the quantity and range of adjacent landowners, it would be likely that pragmatic proposals for boundary fencing to contain grazing stock would entail the exclusion of some common land and hence would require an application to the Secretary of State for consent to works on the common;
 - (vi) That being able to provide for continuity of grazing will depend on the establishment of agreements with a nearby farm or a commoner with grazing rights, or becoming part of a wider arrangement that may be established for the grazing of other MoD heaths in the area or for providing grazing on other parts of the Thames Basin Heaths that are outside MoD ownership – such arrangements could take several years ;
 - (vii) That the use of grazing as a management option for the common is therefore not considered to be appropriate in the short term;
 - (viii) That a range of mechanical and manual means are therefore required to substitute for the potential effects of grazing in restoring and maintaining the heathland;
 - (ix) That significant other mechanical and manual works will anyway be required to push back the considerable encroachment of secondary woodland and scrub that has occurred in recent decades, which grazing would not in itself achieve.

The principal elements of the works included in the Plan are as follows:

- (i) The completion of the recent tree and scrub clearance in Zones 3 and 4 to complete the rejoining of the two main areas of existing heathland, so that there is continuity in the key habitat and open landscape between the two commons;
- (ii) The clearance of the secondary woodland and scrub along the north-eastern and south-western sides of Zones 4 and 9 so that these areas can be returned to open heathland;
- (iii) The management of the existing woodland around the former landfill and military areas in Zones 1 and 5, so that the quality and accessibility of the woodland is improved;
- (iv) Cutting some areas of over-mature gorse to provide a range of ages and reduce fire risk;
- (v) The commencement and/or continuation of a cycle of heathland cutting, such that all areas that can and need to be are cut at least every 20-25 years, with some areas cut every 10-15 years – this is interpreting broadly as aiming to cut 10% of the applicable area for the first 10 years and 5% each year thereafter (before any allowance is made for the effects of incidental fires), with some additional cutting at the outset to manage large areas of over-mature heath;
- (vi) The establishment of a fire break or breaks in accordance with a scheme agreed with or between the Fire Brigade and HDC, which may also provide some bare ground habitat – the committee will work with Hampshire Fire and rescue to develop a Fire Plan for the site;
- (vii) Continuation of the grassland cutting on the former landfill area in Zone 1 with approximately 50% cut per year, the partial cutting of scrub areas and the treatment of Japanese knotweed and ragwort;
- (viii) The continuation of clearance of secondary woodland and scrub into Zones 9 and 11 to return more areas to open heathland;
- (ix) The extension of the woodland clearance to the south of the B3011 in Zone 8, including some clearance alongside the road.

5.2 An additional intention within this management plan is that permission is sought for the provision of temporary fencing for the use of grazing in one or possibly two areas for a trial period of five years. The first area would be on the lower part of the heath in Zone 3, as this contains areas of wet heath and mire that are not easily maintained by mechanical means. This is intended to evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of grazing on *Hazeley Heath*, following initial surveys to establish the necessary baseline data.

5.3 The effects of the grazing would be evaluated over the five years, looking at the performance of the heathland habitat in extent and quality when compared to adjacent un-grazed areas, the other works required, the costs incurred, the funding attracted, the benefits to or problems for the grazier(s), the effects on access and the responses from stakeholders and the community generally.

5.4 Should the grazing be found to not provide an overall advantage over mechanical and manual methods, then it would be discontinued. Should it be considered to be a suitable, effective and acceptable method of management for this site, then a proposal could be formulated by the management organisation of the Heath for the

expansion of the grazing to manage almost all of Hazeley Heath. This proposal would be subject to its own management plan and consultation at that time.

MANAGEMENT TARGETS BY ZONE

5.5 The following sequence of tables shows how these elements can be translated into 'Management Targets' for each of the Management Zones. This approach acknowledges the existing content of the Management Zones and the range of Management Aims that the consultations have identified. The targets therefore encompass factors in addition to habitat quality and so reflect different percentages of vegetation types than those in the 'favourable status' for heathland used by Natural England. The targets follow the approach used to define favourable conservation status at Elvetham Heath to some extent, but with the attributes modified into:

- ◆ **Area:** What the zone should look like overall – the balance between vegetation types and land uses.
- ◆ **Vegetation Structure:** What the different vegetation types should be like and the principal intentions to change this, if needed.
- ◆ **Vegetation Composition:** Detailed aims for the habitats required, which can be developed to include percentage composition, when more detailed baseline data becomes available.
- ◆ **Other Features;** Other distinctive features, such as bare ground, peaty ground , ponds and scrapes.
- ◆ **Access:** public footpaths. other paths, general accessibility and authorised and unauthorised vehicle access onto and across the common.
- ◆ **Main Restoration Activities:** What interventions are proposed for the zone to be ultimately evaluated as 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' by Natural England.
- ◆ **Preferred Maintenance Regime:** What has to be done subsequently to retain this status.
- ◆ **Monitoring:** What has to be measured or recorded to confirm the status - regular monitoring of change can be done only after there has been an initial baseline survey covering plants, animals and invertebrates.

5.6 In due course, the vegetation structure and composition entries can be more detailed in its expectations, particularly regarding the % balance of different vegetation types within the mix. However, an up to date, detailed and formal habitat survey will be required of the relevant areas before this can be included as part of the detailed Implementation Plan.

5.7 These targets are considered to be achievable and practicable but are nonetheless aspirational. How successful the management works are in achieving success will depend upon the rate of funding available and how the site conditions react to the works being undertaken. Hence the approach and the expectations of the works will both need to be managed as the process continues. Two particular factors are: that the slower the rate of clearance, the more mature and expensive the remaining areas become to clear; and conversely that the more rapidly the extent of heathland is

restored, the more funds will need to be found to maintain the heath and prevent re-colonisation by woodland.

- 5.8 The following tables contain considerable detail on the issues and intentions for each Zone. The restoration proposals included in the tables have been summarised on Figures 6 to 9 in terms of clearance of some areas of woodland, scrub and bracken, based on the summary of habitat types depicted on Figures 4 and 5. Once completed, this clearance would provide a continuous area of heathland from Zone 3 to Zone 11 and extending across into Zone 8.
- 5.9 The possible phasing of the works included in these tables is discussed in general terms later in the chapter.

Table 5.1 – Management Targets Zone 1

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Existing balance of woodland and grassland retained – approximately 40:60 No reduction in area of relict heath – approximately 3%
Vegetation Structure	Woodland along southern edge and between B3011 and landfill to be left to evolve Varied character of grassland habitats to be enhanced as habitat mosaic Approximately 50% grassland mowed each year No alien species - Japanese knotweed eradicated within 2 years
Vegetation Composition	Less than 15% nettles Ragwort pulling to continue Grassland - mow selectively, depending on flowering time of forbs Scrub - brambles to be selectively cut to provide varied shrubby areas Trees and shrubs within landfill to be coppiced on a rotational basis Mixed native woodland - occasional maintenance; some thinning in the primrose area Heathland/lichen community to be maintained to maximum extent
Other Elements	3-5% bare ground – mainly along existing tracks Visible and loose litter removed or re-buried, ideally using arisings from other work Locations identified for spreading of arisings from mowing and scraping activities elsewhere on site
Access	High level of public access maintained Interpretive and information signs added at main points of entry No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	N/A
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Cut & collect mowing, ragwort and alien removal, selective coppicing, selective secondary woodland removal, scrub cutting on heath. Grazing inappropriate
Monitoring	5-yearly invertebrate surveying by expert, regular reviews of tracks for erosion and landfill litter

Table 5.2 – Management Targets Zone 2

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Existing woodland and secondary woodland Aim for 20% woodland clearings plus open ride under the power line
Vegetation Structure	Good existing trees retained Dense re-growth thinned and/or coppiced to create clearings and improve woodland structure Relic heathland to be encouraged
Vegetation Composition	Detail to be added
Other Elements	Less than 5% bare ground Enhance dormouse habitat
Access	No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	Selective secondary woodland removal, Low priority zone
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Clearance of scrub under power lines and in clearings, Selective coppicing of some trees in woodland Grazing not appropriate unless clearings and heathland established
Monitoring	Confirmation of presence/absence of dormouse needed, Regular reviews of tracks for access

Table 5.3 – Management Targets Zone 3

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	No reduction in area of existing heath or acid grassland Reduce extent of Molinia dominance Reduce extent of scrub on slopes Retain alder woodland by river 75% minimum mix of dry heath, humid heath, wet heath and mire 5% dry acid grassland No more than 20% woodland and scrub
Vegetation Structure	Mosaic of all heathland, mire, bare ground and acid grassland communities, with all growth stages represented Woodland fringe along site boundary and along ridges beside Zone 1 with varied age structure
Vegetation Composition	Less than 15% Molinia, and nowhere dominant Grassland - no loss of area; keep free of scrub and bracken Mixed native woodland – multi-aged through rotational coppicing and thinning Dry heathland - variety of ages of heather Humid heathland - minimal scrub, but not devoid of it Wet heathland and mires - open water to spongy bog
Other Elements	5-10% bare ground – along existing tracks, on dry south-facing slopes and in scrapes on damper ground

	<p>Wet areas and ponds maintained or enhanced</p> <p>Visible litter on edge of zone 1 to be covered by arisings or tree/shrub cover</p> <p>Tank ramp area cleared of vegetation</p>
Access	<p>Level of public access maintained – all paths and tracks to be kept provided with gates if stock control fencing introduced</p> <p>Interpretive and information signs added at main points of entry</p> <p>No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access</p>
Main Restoration Activities	<p>Tree removal from 'the Dell' and vistas created through trees from zone 1 above Dell.</p> <p>Further tree removal on slopes, but care needed to not dislodge landfill</p> <p>Further bare-patch creation on southerly facing sandy soil</p> <p>Further scraping in areas dominated by Molinia</p>
Preferred Maintenance Regime	<p>Regular scrub-cutting, regular selective grass/heather mowing, maintenance of fire breaks in heather, selective scraping to maintain 'ponds', bracken-spraying as necessary</p> <p>Trial area for grazing</p>
Monitoring	<p>Biannual vegetation condition monitoring, five yearly botanical survey, invertebrate survey on 5-year rotation, annual inspection of boardwalk and path conditions</p>

Table 5.4 – Management Targets Zone 4

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	<p>No reduction in area of existing heath; where possible extend and improve heathland in the zone that has seen the greatest decline in botanical interest in last 20 years</p> <p>Limit scrub and woodland to confirm heathland link between this Zone and Zone 3</p> <p>Reduce scrub and woodland to guarantee heathland link between this zone and Zone 9</p> <p>Remove sections of woodland to join-up the three areas of heathland and potential heathland within this zone</p> <p>No more than 40% woodland and scrub</p> <p>Reduce extent of Molinia dominance in damper heath</p>
Vegetation Structure	<p>Mosaic of heathland, bare ground and grassland communities, with all growth stages represented</p> <p>Woodland fringe along site boundary, with stands of pines left in centre after woodland clearance</p>
Vegetation Composition	<p>Dry heathland – variety of ages of heather</p> <p>Wet heathland and mires – no open water, but scope for good specialist plant diversity</p> <p>Humid heathland – as slopes in north of zone become damper the quality and quantity of flora should increase</p> <p>Less than 10% Molinia, and no longer dominant</p> <p>grassland - no loss of area, with scrub and bracken removed</p> <p>mixed native woodland - multi-aged through rotational cropping and thinning; heathland edges to be scalloped</p>

Other Elements	About 5% bare ground At least four pools on the central 'plateau' to be maintained Maintain line of secondary woodland along B3011 to cut down traffic noise
Access	Level of public access maintained Interpretive and information signs added at main points of entry, although little parking for this zone, so most visitors will be expected to walk in from other zones No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access Two tracks to properties across the zone
Main Restoration Activities	Tree removal on either sides of the two tracks (with residents consulted to agree final scope) Tree removal round areas of heathland Scraping in areas dominated by Molinia Bracken-spraying where it is too dominant Scrub-cutting on higher plateau to open up pools
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Regular scrub-cutting, particularly around pools; selective coppicing of trees in woodland, regular selective grass/heather mowing, maintenance of fire breaks in heather, bracken-spraying as necessary Scope for follow-up grazing in the longer term
Monitoring	Biannual vegetation condition monitoring, five yearly botanical survey, invertebrate survey with subsequent monitoring on 5-year rotation, annual inspection of path conditions

Table 5.5 – Management Targets Zone 5

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Existing woodland and secondary woodland Aim for 20% woodland clearings including the areas used by recreational cyclists
Vegetation Structure	Good existing trees retained Dense re-growth thinned and/or coppiced to create clearings and improve woodland structure
Vegetation Composition	Mixed native woodland - mainly deciduous with a few Scots pine small areas of scrub, rabbit-grazed grass (with moss)
Other Elements	5-10% bare ground Consider scope for and benefits of possible removal of building remnants
Access	High level of public access maintained Parking on access road to Purdies Farm + Hatts Cottage allowed but not encouraged No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised access Retain recreational cycle use within wooded area, along with associated jumps
Main Restoration Activities	N/A

Preferred Maintenance Regime	Selective coppicing and thinning of woodland and scrub
Monitoring	Annual checking of condition of paths and of building rubble

Table 5.6 – Management Targets Zone 6

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Existing woodland and secondary woodland , with some scrub Aim for 20% woodland clearings plus open ride under the power line
Vegetation Structure	Good existing trees retained Dense re-growth thinned and/or coppiced to create clearings and improve woodland structure
Vegetation Composition	Mixed native woodland - contrasting with exotics in grounds of Hazeley House Dense willow woodland around ephemeral ponds open areas containing remnant dry heath and lichens
Other Elements	
Access	Single footpath maintained; review possibility of new path parallel to B3011 Private car-park for Hazeley House within the zone No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	Selective scrub and secondary woodland removal in area 'opposite the bus stop' Low priority zone
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Clearance of scrub under power lines, clearance of scrub in clearings, clearance of footpath, selective coppicing of some trees in woodland Grazing not appropriate.
Monitoring	Annual monitoring of conditions of paths

Table 5.7 – Management Targets Zone 7

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Complex Zone with several different ownership parcels, one of which has multiple owners and is outside the common but inside the SSSI; two other parcels may have their inclusion in the SSSI reviewed [may need to identify a series of separate targets for each of the parcels within the common] No reduction in any areas of relict heath Aim for mosaic of woodland and open habitats
Vegetation Structure	Good existing trees retained Dense re-growth thinned and/or coppiced to create clearings and improve woodland structure
Vegetation	Grassland - encourage on west-facing slopes, particularly around

Composition	ephemeral ponds
Other Elements	Ensure owners are partners to any plans
Access	Woodland management will allow easier public access, but principal use will still be by Hazeley Bottom residents and landowners Currently no footpaths No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	N/A
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Selective coppicing of trees and clearance of scrub Could be linked into any long term grazing regime used for zone 8
Monitoring	

Table 5.8 – Management Targets Zone 8

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Continue with and extend successful cutting of woodland and bracken to increase re-colonisation by heathland species Encourage heathland in northern part of Zone based on area under power line Aim for 50% heathland
Vegetation Structure	Good existing trees retained, particularly along the north-western edge along the ridge and in the areas of lower land towards Hazeley Bottom Dense re-growth thinned and/or coppiced to create clearings and improve woodland structure Maintain line of secondary woodland along B3011 to screen traffic 'Triangle' of land by Shoulder of Mutton to have bracken treated and some trees/scrub coppiced
Vegetation Composition	Mixed native woodland - multi-aged through rotational coppicing Dry heathland - variety of ages of heather; when bracken is removed next to existing heather the heath will naturally regenerate; when bracken is removed in isolated areas some reseedling may be needed
Other Elements	Approximately 5% bare ground
Access	Maintain or enhance accessibility and openness of the various tracks that run along the ridge and down the slopes; ensure continuing viewpoints to west Several accesses to property, with some use for parking No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	Extensive tree removal of secondary woodland; spraying of bracken, and probably the scraping and removal of rhizomes + reseedling;
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Selective coppicing of trees and clearance of scrub, regular selective grass/heather mowing, maintenance of fire breaks in heather, bracken-spraying as necessary Scope for follow-up grazing in longer term

Monitoring	Botanical review after major heathland restoration exercise; annual inspection of paths
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Table 5.9 – Management Targets Zone 9

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Up to 25% woodland and scrub, but mainly heathland -it abuts open heath in Zone 4 and should have trees removed at north of zone to link with the potential heath in Zone 11. Considerably reduce extent of mature common gorse Reduce bracken coverage in open areas Considerably reduce extent of woodland and scrub along north-east side Provide scalloped edges to scrub along south-west side
Vegetation Structure	Mosaic of all heathland, mire and bare ground communities, with all growth stages represented Woodland fringe along site boundary and along B3011 roadside (to screen traffic) with varied age structure Isolated pine and oak trees adding to character
Vegetation Composition	Less than 5% Molinia Less than 5% bracken Mixed native woodland - multi-aged through rotational coppicing and thinning Dry heathland - variety of ages of heather Humid heathland - minimal scrub, but not devoid; Grassland which returns after gorse removal to be kept free of bracken
Other Elements	About 5% bare ground Dips and hollows (created by tanks in WWII and by sand extraction) to be retained
Access	Level of public access maintained – all paths and tracks to be kept provided with gates if temporary stock control fencing introduced Interpretive and information signs added at main points of entry No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	Tree removal from east and north of zone Gorse cutting and removal
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Regular scrub-cutting, selective coppicing of trees in woodland, regular selective grass/heather mowing, maintenance of fire breaks in heather, bracken-spraying as necessary Scope for follow-up grazing in longer term
Monitoring	Biannual vegetation condition monitoring, five yearly botanical survey, invertebrate survey with subsequent monitoring on 5-year rotation, annual inspection of path conditions

Table 5.10 – Management Targets Zone 10

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Ponds and grassland surrounded by woodland Aim to keep woodland cover to less than 40% and create links to adjacent heathland
Vegetation Structure	Good existing trees retained Grassland and heathland mosaic
Vegetation Composition	Grassland - around ponds more 'woodland' than 'dry heathland' Mixed native woodland - occasional maintenance to ensure no dense scrub between ponds and heath Ponds - use natural drainage from Heath to keep small flow through
Other Elements	Two substantial ponds – aim to continue access to these for amenity, habitat connectivity and potential emergency water supply for fire crews.
Access	Owners may apply for consent to retain existing fencing – aim to agree access points into common land inside the fence as a minimum, or to agree aspects of the management of the adjacent heath to enable the fencing to be removed. No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access Ensure owners are partners to any plans
Main Restoration Activities	N/A
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Selective secondary woodland removal and coppicing, and scrub cutting
Monitoring	Record wintering wildfowl. Botanical and invert. surveys to check on potential of ponds

Table 5.11 – Management Targets Zone 11

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Reduce bracken coverage in open areas Reduce extent of woodland and scrub Aim for less than 50% woodland and scrub Aim for long-term return of heathland, by ensuring connection through to Zone 9
Vegetation Structure	Mosaic of woodland, scrub and grassland communities, with varied age structure
Vegetation Composition	Grassland - no loss of area; encourage expansion Mixed native woodland - multi-aged through rotational coppicing and thinning; aim for age graduation from oldest in north and east Dry heathland - might emerge after bracken removal and scraping, otherwise could spread from remnant grassland Less than 15% bracken Scrub- some management needed, but gorse and blackthorn along B3011 to be encouraged

Other Elements	Removal of existing inappropriate uses of common for storage
Access	Remove signs discouraging access on horseback If possible identify site of former cricket pitch and sign accordingly Accesses to several properties No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	Removal of secondary woodland in centre of zone; major attack on bracken, selective removal and thinning of scrub on the western side Lower priority than zone 9
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Selective coppicing of trees and clearance of scrub, bracken-spraying as necessary Scope for follow-up grazing in longer term
Monitoring	Annual recording of breeding birds; annual inspection of paths

Table 5.12 – Management Targets Zone 12

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Reduce bracken coverage in open areas Reduce extent of woodland and scrub
Vegetation Structure	Mosaic of woodland, scrub, remnant heathland and grassland communities, with varied age structure
Vegetation Composition	Grassland - close-cropped Mixed native woodland - mature on eastern edge of zone, getting younger to the bracken-dominated centre Less than 5% bracken to be achieved through spraying Good display of escaped daffodils
Other Elements	Fine isolated small trees to be retained Ensure chamomile remains healthy by taking care that no inappropriate chemical is applied to grassland
Access	Wide unmade roads off Plough Lane provide access to various properties No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	Thinning of secondary woodland; major attack on bracken. May have to scrape bracken rhizomes before grass or heath replaces bracken
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Selective coppicing of trees and clearance of scrub, bracken-spraying as necessary
Monitoring	Annual recording of breeding birds

Table 5.13 – Management Targets Zone 13

Attribute	Target for Zone
Area	Existing balance of woodland and recently cleared areas to be retained Existing balance of woodland pasture and damp heathland to be retained Small area of scrub to be retained, and damp stream banks cleared for flora
Vegetation Structure	Mosaic of woodland, scrub and grassland communities, with varied age structure
Vegetation Composition	Grassland - no loss of area, to be kept free of scrub and bracken Mixed native woodland – multi-aged through rotational coppicing Damp heathland – tendency for bramble thickets to be restrained; excessive <i>Molinia</i> to be scraped back Dense scrub and stream to be kept healthy
Other Elements	Ensure owners are partners to any plans Existing internal fencing removed Access to and along public footpath improved
Other Activities	No tolerance of fly tipping or unauthorised vehicle access
Main Restoration Activities	Scraping in areas dominated by <i>Molinia</i>
Preferred Maintenance Regime	Regular scrub-cutting, regular selective grass mowing, selective scraping to maintain damp heath, bracken-spraying as necessary
Monitoring	Annual breeding birds recorded; botanic survey to check on flora of this unique part of Hazeley Heath

APPROXIMATE COST OF THE WORKS

- 5.10 The main elements of potential works that could be required have been listed and general cost rates applied to each element, as summarised in Table 5.14. These rates have been derived from the site management works undertaken by Hampshire County Council over the previous five years, particularly those for Hazeley Heath, Yateley Common and Tadley Common, as well as other sources. These have then been factored to provide 2007 rates. Inclusion of an item in this table does not necessarily mean that it is included in the draft Management Plan at this stage.

Table 5.14 - Generic Costs of Potential Works

Item	Unit	Rate £	Comments
Bracken cutting	Ha	150	
Bracken spraying	Ha	300	Needs litter removal
Bridle gate	Each	200	
Field gate	Each	250	
Cattle grids – main road	Each	20,000	Lower end of wide range
Cattle grids – minor road	Each	5,000	
Cattle grids – private access	Each	2,000	
Clear fenceline	Metre	3.50	
Connection to mains water	Each	2,100	
Coppice gorse	Ha	1,000	
Dense scrub clearance	Ha	1,500	Includes chipping and stump treatment
Permanent stock fence	Metre	6.30	
Gorse – clear dense stands	Ha	3,000	Includes litter removal
Gorse - coppice	Ha	1,000	
Grazing support	Ha/year		
Heather cutting	Ha	600	
Heather cuttings spreading	Ha	500	
Herbicide scrub treatment	Ha	190	
Interpretation boards	Each	110	
Kissing gate	Each	280	
Litter scraping	Ha	710	
Mow heather/grass	Ha	240	
Path surfacing	Metre	31	
Scattered (20%) scrub clearance	Ha	1,200	Includes chipping
Woodland clearance – dense	Ha	3,000	Includes chipping and stump treatment
Stile	Each	100	
Turf cutting	Ha	860	
Voluntary assistance support	Day/per	50 - 150	
Provision of information boards	each	250	

Note – all rates include transport of any machinery required
(this table to be moved into the appendices)

PHASING OF THE WORKS

- 5.11 On the assumption that the funds and resources available to undertake and manage the works would require several seasons for all of the proposals to be implemented. The general intention of the heathland restoration works would be to extend out from the existing core areas of heathland in Zones 3, 4 and 9 into other parts of the site. Hence this would lead to the funds being used in the southern and central area in advance of the northern and western areas, but this is one pragmatic way of arranging the works; detailed baseline survey data and local community interest may both lead to a different logic being applicable to the phasing of the works in the Implementation Plan. Other works to maintain and improve the quality of the existing heathland, woodland and grassland areas would continue at the same time as the restoration works, but are not shown as areas of change on the plans.
- 5.12 Two factors need to be borne in mind when moving from this outline Management Plan into a detailed programme of works for implementing changes to the site:
- (i) The longer the programme takes to implement, the more established the secondary woodland and scrub becomes and hence the more expensive it will be to remove and the more difficult it will be to reinstate suitable ground conditions for heathland and open access;
 - (ii) Effective clearance of large areas of woodland and scrub early in the programme will mean that more funds have to be allocated to the early maintenance of these areas to ensure that the initial flush of tree and shrub seedlings does not become established.
- 5.13 A timetable for the implementation of the proposed works cannot be completely ascribed to particular years, as the rate at which the intended works can be implemented will depend upon the funds available. The timetables ascribed to the phasing should therefore be taken as indicative of the relative order of works. Ideally, it would be better and more economic to complete the felling and clearance programme within a short period, as this would minimise the effects of continued growth of the woodland. However, this would entail considerable intrusion into the accessibility and tranquillity of Hazeley Heath whilst these works were being undertaken.
- 5.14 The numbering of the clearance areas in Figures 6 to 9 is based on the works being arranged in four areas – south (Zones 1-3), central (Zones 4, 5 and 10), north (Zones 9, 11-13) and west (Zones 6-8). Addressing the major clearance works in this way would mean that significant disturbance can be contained to only part of the site at any one time and that the need for vehicle movements across the site should be reduced. However, it may be considered worthwhile to undertake some tasks, such as bracken spraying, on a site-wide basis in order to gain most benefits early in the process.
- 5.15 The quantity of restoration work envisaged here should be capable of being completed within 6 to 10 years, split into two broad phases of 3 to 5 years, with the southern and central sections in the first phase and the northern and western sections in the second phase. Any planned programme would also need to accommodate change as it progresses, due to feedback from monitoring of the effects of the work as it progresses and due to other factors, such as effects of storms or fires.

Table 5.15 – Summary Phasing of the Heathland Restoration Works

Activity	Phase 1		Phase 2	
	South	Central	North	West
Woodland clearance	Areas 1-4	Areas 5-10	Areas 11-14	Area 15
Dense Scrub Clearance	Areas 1-3	Areas 4-5	Areas 6-8	-
Scattered Scrub Clearance	Areas 1-6	Areas 7-10	Areas 11-12	-
Bracken Clearance	-	Areas 1-3	Areas 4-10	to be evaluated after woodland clearance

5.16 The following tables provide outline costs for the restoration works in each phase,

Table 5.16 – Phase 1 Restoration Works

Element	Area	Rate	Cost
Woodland clearance areas 1 to 10	8.7 ha	£3,000	26,100
Dense scrub clearance areas 1 to 5	1.4 ha	£1,500	2,100
Scattered scrub clearance areas 1 to 10	3.9 ha	£1,200	4,700
Bracken clearance areas 1 to 3	0.5 ha	£500	250
TOTAL			£33,150

Table 5.17 – Phase 2 Restoration Works

Element	Area	Rate	Cost
Woodland clearance areas 11 to 15	9.9 ha	£3,000	29,700
Dense scrub clearance areas 6 to 8	2.9 ha	£1,500	4,350
Scattered scrub clearance areas 11 to 12	0.7 ha	£1,200	850
Bracken clearance areas 4 to 10	3.0 ha	£500	1,500
TOTAL			£36,400

5.17 The total for the Restoration works would therefore be approximately **£70,000**.

- 5.18 Inclusion of an average annual Maintenance cost for vegetation cutting, mowing, limited scraping and some woodland management of £15,000 per year would than lead to a total for a six-year project of £160,000 and for a ten-year project of £220,000.

POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

- 5.19 Although outside the remit of this draft management plan, it is clearly fundamental to the success of any proposals for co-ordinated management of Hazeley Heath that an effective mechanism is created for the implementation and monitoring of any scheme. This will also be a key factor in the ability to apply for funding on the basis that the management body encompasses and represents the consensus view of the local communities.
- 5.20 Management could be continued by the landowners, as has been the case up until now, along with assistance from volunteer work. However, in order to have a better chance of securing the necessary funding for the restoration and management works, a more inclusive body would be required. This would also continue the intentions of the Common Ground approach.
- 5.21 The implementation could be managed by a voluntary body and these exist under various titles for many commons. However, this provides only a limited means of applying for and managing funds for the works and does not provide a basis for creating bye-laws, should these be considered necessary.
- 5.22 A Scheme of Regulation under the Commons Act 1899 provides powers for the District council to establish byelaws to help manage the common, including a power to provide temporary car-parking spaces on common land subject to the consent of the owner of the soil and of the Secretary of State being first obtained. As the District Council is also one of the principal owners and will therefore anyway be a significant component of any management committee, this is recommended as a practicable and effective means of providing a formal basis to the setting up and running of the management process for the Heath.
- 5.23 The Commons Act 2006 provides for the establishment of statutory commons councils, with powers to manage the agricultural activities, vegetation and rights of common. However, these will not be an easy option to set up. They appear to be more suited to commons where agricultural uses are a prominent feature. Their main value is in enabling commons to be run by majority voting, where previously a minority of people vetoed agreements. This approach is not recommended as the best solution for Hazeley Heath, but further information on their potential constitution is provided in Appendix G.

6. Potential Funding Sources

NATIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

- 6.1 The success of the Hazeley Heath Management Plan will depend on funding being available to deliver the chosen approach. There are a number of potential sources of funding which will need to be pursued:
- 6.2 Funding towards the management of Hazeley Heath is already being provided by Natural England through existing Wildlife Enhancement Scheme (WES) agreements. However, these schemes will close in 2007.
- 6.3 The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has two current funding schemes of interest:
- (i) Landscape Partnerships, which provides grants of between £250,000 and £2 million for partnerships representing a range of heritage and community interests to tackle the needs of landscapes, whose various elements may be in different ownership. Landscape Partnerships funding is assessed competitively twice a year. The closing date for Stage 1 applications is 1st April and 1st October each year.
 - (ii) Heritage Grants offers grants of £50,000 or more to projects (including nature conservation) that conserve and enhance our diverse heritage, encourage more people to be involved in their heritage, or both. All projects must also make sure that everyone can learn about, have access to and enjoy their heritage.
- 6.4 EU Life+ is the follow-on programme from the EU Life Programmes that finished at the end of 2006 and included funding for conservation projects. Final details have yet to be announced and decisions yet to be made on the level at which funds will be made available; this is likely to be at level of County or Thames Basin Heaths as a whole. The development of the programme will need to be monitored for funding opportunities for Hazeley Heath.
- 6.5 Appropriate Natural England grants are currently fully committed, however the organisation should be monitored for future opportunities and the possibility of local grant funding should be explored.
- 6.6 The Single Payment Scheme (SPS) may offer a potential avenue for funding for the common, if a joint approach can be agreed between the owners of the common and commoners. This would depend upon whether the parties involved have registered their entitlement to claim SPS funds.
- 6.7 Environmental Stewardship is a new agri-environment scheme which provides funding to farmers and other land managers in England who deliver effective environmental management on their land. The scheme is intended to build on the recognised success of the Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Countryside Stewardship Schemes. Higher Level Stewardship provides more resources in exchange for more significant environmental benefits in high priority situations and areas. There is a schedule of the funding available for different types of activity, against which good scores are needed to gain any chance of success. The

Environmental Stewardship is an important potential source of funding for Hazeley Heath.

- 6.8 Payments for heathland management can only be made through the Higher Level Scheme (HLS) and Natural England, which now has responsibility for this, is known to favour only schemes that have a sustainable maintenance plan that includes grazing. HLS payments are generous at £200/ha for heathland restoration, together with annual maintenance payments of £200/ha. Payments cover capital items such as fencing, gates water troughs as well as scrub clearance, bracken control and pond restoration.
- 6.9 Most of the funding sources tend to be oriented towards capital works, with more limited funds available for maintenance works, hence the need to establish maintenance routines that do not rely on repeated substantial investment.

LOCAL FUNDING SOURCES

- 6.10 Hart District Council as the owner of the Southern section of Hazeley Heath already funds dedicated staff and ongoing management initiatives. The continuing commitment of Hart District Council is also essential to the future management of Hazeley Heath.
- 6.11 There are Section 106 funds available to HDC from the developments within the surroundings of the Thames Basin Heaths, which may provide a source of funds, although most of this money is currently committed.
- 6.12 Hampshire County Council has played a major role in the development of the Hazeley Heath Management Plan and it is hoped, will be a source of ongoing support and funding.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The principal issues and findings of this study are:

- ◆ That Hazeley Heath is a relatively small lowland heathland common, which has evolved a complex and interesting character;
- ◆ That past changes to the landscape from industrial and military usage and unauthorised access have contributed to this complexity
- ◆ That the subsequent lack of agricultural activity and limited level of management have allowed the heathland to be substantially diminished in extent and value as woodland and scrub have encroached, such that there is now only about X% of the site that is open heath or heath with scattered shrubs.
- ◆ That considerable intervention followed by appropriate maintenance is required to restore the proportion of heathland to something commensurate with its European designation as part of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA
- ◆ That past threats to the common land status have left a legacy of distrust of any proposals that entail fencing on the common, which, along with the relative lack of open heathland, mean that the use of grazing as a management tool is not feasible at this point in time
- ◆ That a substantial package of mechanical and manual management measures is proposed to push back the encroaching woodland and scrub and reduce the extent of bracken and over mature common gorse, to enable the restoration of heathland in areas that have been identified as suitable – this will include substantial felling of recent woodland
- ◆ That the former landfill area is maintained as a non-heathland landscape of considerable habitat diversity and considerable recreational value
- ◆ That the maintenance of the existing and proposed habitats will be undertaken also by mechanical and manual methods, principally cutting, mowing, scraping and coppicing
- ◆ That a management body with community support is a necessary prerequisite of the formulation of any funding applications to support these works and a necessary expression of the desire of the interested communities to establish a consensus approach
- ◆ That a grazing trial be established to evaluate whether or not grazing would be suitable in the future as a more sustainable approach to the management of the heathland and grassland on this site.