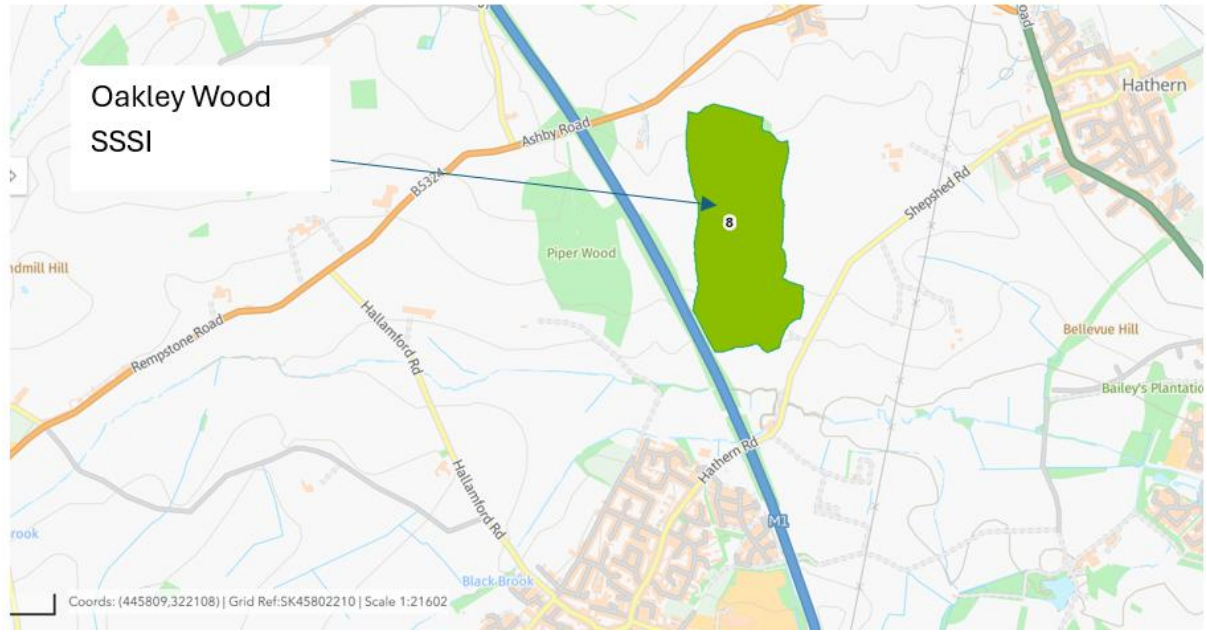
Appendix 11.6: Oakley Wood SSSI Data

Location of Oakley Wood SSSI



Source: www.magic.gov.uk. NTS.

Annex 1. Example of a Conservation Objectives Table - Sheephouse Wood

Objective: to maintain the oak-hazel (NVC W10) stands in the wood in favourable condition where this is expressed in terms of the following attributes and targets.

Attribute	Targets
Extent	• No loss of ancient woodland area • No decline in the area that is considered semi-natural.
Natural processes and structural development	• At least 25% of woodland left as mature to over-mature growth (south-west corner); elsewhere no more than 25% of woodland as stands of under 20 years at any one time. • well-developed ride structure: wide rides with scrubby edges, plus some left narrow and overgrown. • some dead wood (3-5 trees/ha equivalent) left lying in any clear-fell; dead trees left standing where practical; 2-3 living trees per ha left to grow on to over-maturity in managed areas. • mature stands to have understorey of at least 20% and canopy cover of at least 50%
Regeneration potential	• No more than 20% of regeneration areas restocked by planting. • any planting material to be of local oak stock. • restocked area with closed canopy within 15 years.
Composition (trees and shrubs)	• >95% native species in all layers • no significant change (>10% of area) to woodland composition/structure attributable to unnatural external factors (e.g. pollution) or introduced fauna (deer) over a five year period • oak present in canopy over at least 50% of the wood
Indicators of local distinctiveness	• at least 80% of the woodland areas referable to relevant NVC communities (with transitions to ash-maple woodland in the north (W8) but the majority W10 oak hazel woodland in the south); • good population of wild service tree *Sorbus torminalis* maintained; • scrubby 'green lane' along the edge (past populations of hairstreak butterflies)

Source: CSM-WoodlandHabitats-2004.pdf

Citation and management details for Oakley Wood

File ref:

County: **Leicestershire** **Site name: Oakley Wood**

District: **North-West Leicestershire**

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Local Planning Authority: North-West Leicestershire District Council

National Grid Reference: SK 485217 **Area:** 48.99 (ha) 121.05 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 129 **1: 25 000:** SK 42 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1956 **Date of Last Revision:** 1981

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985 **Date of Last Revision:** -

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

The site represents a unique example in Leicestershire of the transition from mixed oakwood, developed on free-draining acid soil, to ash-hazel woodland characteristic of the heavy clays of Eastern Central England.

Biology:

Developed primarily from boulder clays of glacial origin, the soils of the site are more water retentive than those derived from the Keuper Marl which underlies much of Charnwood and gives rise to acidic free-draining soils characteristic of the area.

Oakley Wood is most probably of ancient origin although its former composition may have been different to that which exists today. At the northern and southern extremities, the site supports excellent examples of lowland mixed oakwood. In these areas pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* dominates a canopy which also includes sessile oak *Q. petraea*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and silver birch *Betula pendula*. The shrub layer is characterised by an abundance of hazel *Corylus avellana*, whilst bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* dominates the ground flora.

Ash-hazel woodland occurs in the wetter central areas of the site, the less shaded conditions giving rise to more diverse ground flora which includes wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, wood sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*, lords and ladies *Arum maculatum* and yellow archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon*.

Rides provide additional floristic diversity within the wood, supporting characteristic woodland species such as lily-of-the-valley *Convallaria majalis* and bugle *Ajuga reptans*.

ENGLISH NATURE

Views About Management

A statement of English Nature's views about the management of Oakley Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

This statement represents English Nature's views about the management of the SSSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the site's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. English Nature has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of SSSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the SSSI. Also, there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation. English Nature's written consent is still required before carrying out any operation likely to damage the features of special interest (see your SSSI notification papers for a list of these operations). English Nature welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the SSSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

Management Principles

There may be several different ways in which the wood can be managed to best conserve its value for wildlife - by promoting an appropriate woodland structure, by ensuring regeneration and by looking after the things that make this wood special. The attached notes give broad views on a range of regimes that may be appropriate on your site.

A diverse woodland structure with some open space, some areas of dense understorey, and an overstorey of more mature trees (which may be the standard trees under a coppice-with-standards regime) is important. A range of ages and species within and between stands is desirable.

Some dead and decaying wood such as fallen logs, old hollow trees or old coppice stools is essential for providing habitats for fungi and dead wood invertebrates. Work may, however, be needed to make safe dangerous trees where they occur in areas of high public access.

Open spaces, either temporary gaps created by felling or coppicing or more permanent areas such as rides and glades, benefit other groups of invertebrates such as butterflies. They should be of sufficient size to ensure that sunny conditions prevail for most of the day. Rides and glades may require cutting to keep them open.

Felling, thinning or coppicing may be used to create or maintain variations in the structure of the wood, and non-native trees and shrubs can be removed at this time. To avoid disturbance to breeding birds the work is normally best done between the beginning of August and the end of February. Work should be avoided when the ground is soft, to prevent disturbing the soil and ground flora. Wet woodland by streams and other waterbodies is often best left undisturbed. Normally, successive felling, thinning or coppicing operations should be spread through the wood to avoid too much disturbance in one area. However, where there is open space interest (e.g. rich butterfly populations) adjacent plots may be worked to encourage the spread of species that are only weakly mobile.

Natural regeneration from seed or stump regrowth (as in coppice) is preferred to planting because it helps maintain the local patterns of species and the inherent genetic character of the site.

Deer management and protection from rabbits or livestock are often necessary. Whilst light or intermittent grazing may increase woodland diversity, heavy browsing can damage the ground flora and prevent successful regeneration.

Parts of the wood should be left unmanaged to benefit species that do best under low disturbance. In addition, lack of management allows for the operation of natural processes such as windblow. Within these areas some trees will eventually die naturally and dead wood accumulate.

Where they are a threat to the interest of the wood, invasive introductions such as *Rhododendron ponticum* or Himalayan balsam should, where practical, be controlled.