Blackburn with Darwen

District Wildlife Sites (DWS) Surveys 2022

Summary Report

Head Office: Unit 8, Second Floor, Holmes Mill, Clitheroe, BB7 1EB;
Scottish Office: 218 Wallace Street, Glasgow, G5 8AE 01200 446777
www.bowlandecology.co.uk

1.0 Introduction

1.1 District Wildlife Sites (DWS) are areas of land which have been identified as being of local importance in providing habitat for wildlife. The original designations of DWSs were made in 2011, based on surveys undertaken in 1991 and partially updated in 2005. In June 2022, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (BwD) commissioned Bowland Ecology to undertake updated surveys of each of the borough's District Wildlife Sites (DWSs).

1.2 The purpose of the 2022 study is to provide a robust evidence base for the emerging Local Plan (2021-2037), help inform the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and support opportunities to deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG).

Emerging Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan 2021-2037

1.3 The Local Plan sets out the policies that will guide future development in the area, and includes policies relating to the natural environment, biodiversity net gain and local nature recovery (Policy CP6) and the protection and enhancement of designated wildlife sites, including DWSs (Policy DM15).

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)

1.4 Introduced by the Environment Act 2021, Local Nature Recovery Strategies will see 'responsible authorities' develop strategies for local nature recovery, including identifying opportunities and priorities for enhancing habitats and supporting wildlife. It is expected that DWSs, as locally important habitats, will form part of the local recovery strategy.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

1.5 The Government's Environment Act 2021 introduces a requirement, from November 2023, for most new development to deliver improvements to the quality or quantity of habitat as a mandatory part of a development proposal. It aims to ensure that new development leaves the natural environment in a better state than before. Whilst development should look to deliver these enhancements on-site, in some cases, where on-site delivery is not possible, biodiversity net gain may be delivered off-site, informed by local designations and strategies. This may include interventions to improve habitats on DWSs.

1.6 A standard biodiversity metric must be used[1] to calculate an areas' value to wildlife as 'biodiversity units'. This calculation assesses the location, quality and quantity of habit features to calculate a biodiversity value. The metric can be used to calculate how a development, or a change in land management, will change the biodiversity value of the site. It can then help design, plan and make land management decisions that take better account of biodiversity.

1.7 It is therefore important that information on the Borough's DWSs is up to date.

Study objectives

1.8 The objectives of the study are to:

- Establish which habitats / species apply to each site;
- Establish whether each site is still justified of its designation and protection as a DWS;
- Establish whether any revisions to the boundaries of the DWS are required and, if so, what those changes should be; and
- Identify opportunities for each DWS to support and deliver biodiversity net gain.

[1] Published by Natural England as the latest biodiversity metric and small sites metric

1.9 There are currently 37 DWSs identified on the Local Plan policies map, the majority of which lie on the town fringes of Blackburn and Darwen. These DWSs range in size and type, and include golf courses, reservoirs, parks, public open spaces, canals, wooded watercourses and gorges, railway lines and road verges.

2.0 Methodology

UK Habitat Classification Survey

2.1 Each DWS was subject to a UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Survey between July and September 2022. This involved a walkover survey to identify broad vegetation types, which were then classified against UKHab habitat types based on the standardised UKHab survey methodology (Butcher et al., 2020; CIEEM 2017b). A map of broad habitat types was created based on UKHab symbology.

2.2 The UKHab Classification is a unified and comprehensive coding system for all terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats in the UK, which is compatible with the BNG Calculation Metric Tool. The UKHab adopts a pyramid-like structure, with five levels in the primary hierarchy. The first level is major ecosystems – either terrestrial, freshwater or marine. Below this is the second level, ecosystem, while the third level is broad habitats. The fourth level includes Habitats of Principle Importance for Nature Conservation in the UK (NERC Act, 2006), while the fifth level includes Habitat Directive Annex 1 habitats. Levels two to five in the primary hierarchy are coded with alternate letters and numbers, for example, g3b5. The complete UKHab code can also include secondary codes which can be linked to the primary habitat, for example, 10 (Scattered scrub) could be linked with g (Grassland) or h (Heathland). This gives surveyors the option of recording habitat management, origins and other environmental and species features.

2.3 Along with a UKHab plan for each site, an overall description was provided which included habitat descriptions and lists of characteristic / notable plant species.

Biodiversity Metric Baseline Calculations

2.4 The Natural England Biodiversity Metric 3.1 is a biodiversity accounting tool that can be used for the purposes of calculating Biodiversity Net Gain. The metric uses habitats and 'biodiversity units' as a proxy to describe biodiversity. These biodiversity units are the 'currency' of the metric. There are three types of biodiversity units: area units, hedgerow units and watercourse units.

2.5 To calculate a biodiversity baseline, this study used the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (Natural England, July 2021). Areas are measured in hectares and linear features in kilometres. The biodiversity unit value for each habitat is calculated by entering the habitat area (or length), as well as multipliers for 'habitat distinctiveness', 'habitat condition' and 'strategic significance' into the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Calculation Tool. The unit values for each habitat are then totalled to produce the biodiversity baseline.

2.6 *Habitat distinctiveness* is automatically calculated by the Metric Calculation Tool based on UKHab type. This is generally based on whether the habitat type is nationally rare (very high), a priority habitat (high), semi-natural habitat (medium) or highly modified habitats (low/very low).

2.7 *Habitat condition* is assessed using the condition tables in the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Technical Guidance. The condition tables involve checking features against a list of criteria for habitat in 'good' condition. Condition status categories comprise good, fairly good, moderate, fairly poor and poor.

2.8 *Strategic significance* is based on whether the habitat area is formally recognised in a local plan for wildlife, and/or if the habitat is important in terms of landscape-scale habitat connectivity. Owing to the designation of all sites as District Wildlife Sites, all habitats were classed as being of high strategic significance: 'within area formally identified in local strategy'.

2.9 Potential 'available units' with habitat enhancement were then calculated. In agreement with BwD, these available credits are based on the assumption that the condition status of all habitats assessed to be in 'poor' to 'fairly good' condition are enhanced to 'good'. An overall post-enhancement figure is produced by the calculator, from which the baseline is subtracted to reveal the number of potential available units at the site. These figures therefore represent crude estimations, and assume that no habitats will expand, contract, be enhanced into other habitat types, and that enhancement to 'good' is always practical and feasible. Realistic estimations of potentially available BNG units would require a more detailed study, which could also break the figures down into units per broad habitat type, and actual value in the context of providing off-site compensation for a development site. This additional, more detailed level of assessment may be undertaken by BwD in the future.

DWS Assessment

2.10 In addition to the UKHab maps and BNG baseline data, specific data was collected in relation to relevant DWS qualifying criteria (see Appendix 3). Overall conclusions were made in relation to whether sites still appear to qualify as DWSs, along with any recommended alterations to DWS site boundaries.

2.11 This study focussed on DWS qualifying criteria relating to habitats and botany only. Other criteria were not assessed (i.e. birds, herptiles, fish, invertebrates and mammals). The botanical surveys did not include dedicated bryological or fungi data collection.

2.12 Key pressures/threats to site habitats were also recorded, such as invasive species and recreational disturbance. Potential habitat management opportunities were noted, and presented as a short list of high-level suggestions. Separate detailed management plans would be required to practically implement any habitat enhancement.

3.0 Results

3.1 Detailed results have been provided in individual site reports, which are held by BwD. A summary table of overall results is provided as Appendix 1 to the current document, and a summary plan of results is provided as Appendix 2. The text below outlines the key findings of the survey work.

Sites no longer meeting the DWS criteria

3.2 Of the 37 DWSs assessed, five appeared to no longer meet the criteria for DWS:

- Knuzden Brook (Abbot Clough) DWS;
- Meadowhead Pastures DWS;
- Blacksnape / Taylors Green DWS;
- Robin Bank DWS; and
- Bog Height Tip and Pastures (South) DWS

3.3 The study identified that habitat management opportunities exist that have the potential to restore the site habitats to DWS status in the short-medium term.

Sites recommended to be reduced in size

3.4 Two DWSs have been recommended to be significantly reduced in size owing to large areas of the sites no longer appearing to qualify as DWS:

- Darwen Golf Course DWS; and
- Knuzden Brook (Haslingden Road) DWS.

3.5 Again, the study identified that habitat management opportunities exist that have the potential to restore the site habitats to DWS status in the short-medium term.

Sites with recommended changes to boundaries

3.6 Boundary alterations are recommended for three DWSs:

- The boundary between Eccleshill Quarry DWS and Eccleshill Pastures & Disused Railway Line DWS is recommended to be altered to reflect the logical fenced boundary between land ownerships.
- The boundary of Davyfield Brook DWS is also recommended to be altered, to exclude the M65 carriageway.
- Stones Bank Brook DWS has been reduced in size owing to it being partly located within the West Pennine Moors Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Sites with DWS designations removed owing to altered allocations:

3.7 Two sites are no longer designated as DWSs owing to their incorporation into the West Pennine Moors SSSI:

- Old Mans Verge and Cutting DWS; and
- Black Height Mire DWS.

3.8 SSSIs are sites designated as being of special interest under Section 28 (1)(b) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and may be designated due to the rare flora, fauna or geology present in the area. SSSIs are of higher conservation value than DWSs, and so sites under an SSSI designation are afforded a greater level of protection.

3.9 Two sites are no longer designated as DWSs owing to their allocation for development within the current, adopted Local Plan (2015), and with the allocation carried forward in the emerging Local Plan (2021-2037):

- Bog Height Tip & Pastures DWS; and
- Craven's Farm Ponds DWS.

3.10 1.9ha of Bog Height Tip & Pastures DWS is situated outside of the development allocation. This was assessed by the 2022 survey work and does not appear to meet the qualifying criteria for a DWS in isolation. However, with appropriate management it has the potential to be restored to a DWS status in the medium term.

DWS Qualifying Criteria

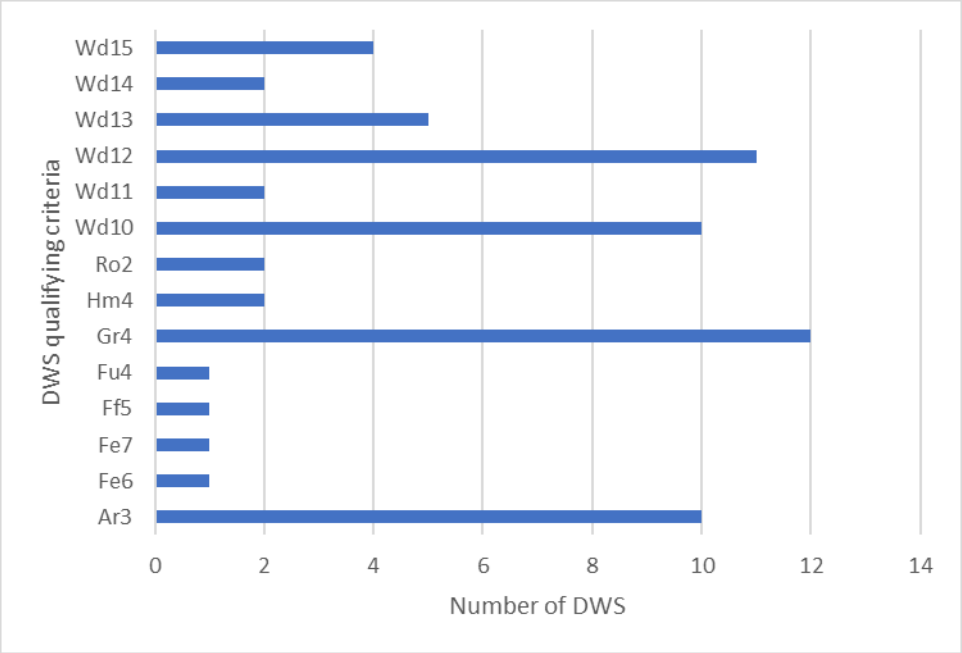
3.11 Almost all sites have altered since the 2011 assessment in relation to which DWS criteria they qualify under. This is likely owing to a combination of significant DWS boundary alterations since 2011 which exclude certain habitats and include others (e.g. North Dingle DWS, Sough Tunnel & Railway Embankment DWS and Whitehall Park DWS), habitat succession/degradation (e.g. Blackburn Golf Course DWS, Knuzden Brook DWS and Former Chorley Railway Line Embankment – Cherry Tree DWS) and potentially more detailed assessments, as for example the 2011 assessment did not consider DWS criteria Wd10, Wd11, Wd13, Wd14 and Wd15 (Appendix 3), whilst other sites were not covered at all by surveys (e.g. Davyfield Brook DWS and Turton Entwistle Reservoir DWS).

3.12 The definitions of each criteria/guideline are summarised in Appendix 3. Sites can qualify under several different criteria. Belmont Gorge DWS and Buryfold Brook & Old Briggs Cloughs DWS qualify under the highest number of criteria (as shown in Table 1 of this report).

3.13 The most common DWS criterion that sites qualify under is Gr4 (see **Figure 1**), which relates to numbers of favourable grassland species present within a site. 12 sites were concluded to qualify under this criterion in 2022, which is a reduction of eight sites since the 2011 assessment. This implies an overall reduction in good quality grassland since the 2005/1991 survey work, although some changes in DWS boundaries since the 2011 assessment have resulted in the exclusion of good quality grassland areas from the DWS boundaries (e.g. Stones Bank Brook DWS, Whitehall Park DWS, Sough Tunnel & Railway Embankment DWS, Bog Height Tip & Pastures and Meadowhead

pastures DWS). Grassland degradation was noted as a key issue across several DWSs, largely owing to human disturbance and/or a lack of habitat management, resulting in an encroachment of invasive species and prominence of rank grasses. Overgrazing and intensive mowing regimes were also noted as pressures to grassland habitats.

Figure 1: Number of sites qualifying as DWS under different criteria. *Graph excludes criteria which no DWS qualify under.*



3.14 Eleven sites qualify under Wd12, which relates to numbers of specified, favourable woodland species present. This is an increase from nine sites which previously qualified under this criterion in 2011.

3.15 Ten sites qualify under Ar3, which relates to artificial landscape features of significant biodiversity value to the borough. Six sites previously qualified under this criterion.

3.16 Ten sites qualify under Wd10, which relates to the presence of ancient woodland indicator species. Five sites qualify under Wd13, which relates to the presence of 'old' trees. Four sites qualify under Wd15, which relates to the presence of upland oak woodland. These criteria were not fully assessed as part of the 2011 assessment.

3.17 Other criteria that low numbers of DWS (one or two) qualify under include: Wd14 (wet woodland), Hm4 (Habitat mosaics), Wd11 (priority woodland habitat types), Ro2 (natural cliffs), Fe7 and Fe6 (wetlands).

3.18 Fungi surveys were not undertaken; however heath waxcap *Gliophorus laetus* was noted as an incidental observation at Turn Lane Fields DWS, which is known at three other locations only within the borough[4].

3.19 The DWS criteria Ff5 relates to sites that support native plants recorded from three or fewer localities in the borough. A native black poplar *Populus nigra ssp. betulifolia* is present within Ewood Aqueduct & Canal Embankment DWS. BSBI data[5] identifies six records of this species within the borough (to a 10km grid square accuracy); however five of these records date back to between 1987-1999, and one is from 2000-2009. The current

status of these trees is unknown. As such, as a precaution, Ewood Aqueduct & Canal Embankment DWS is recommended to retain its conservation status under criteria Ff5.

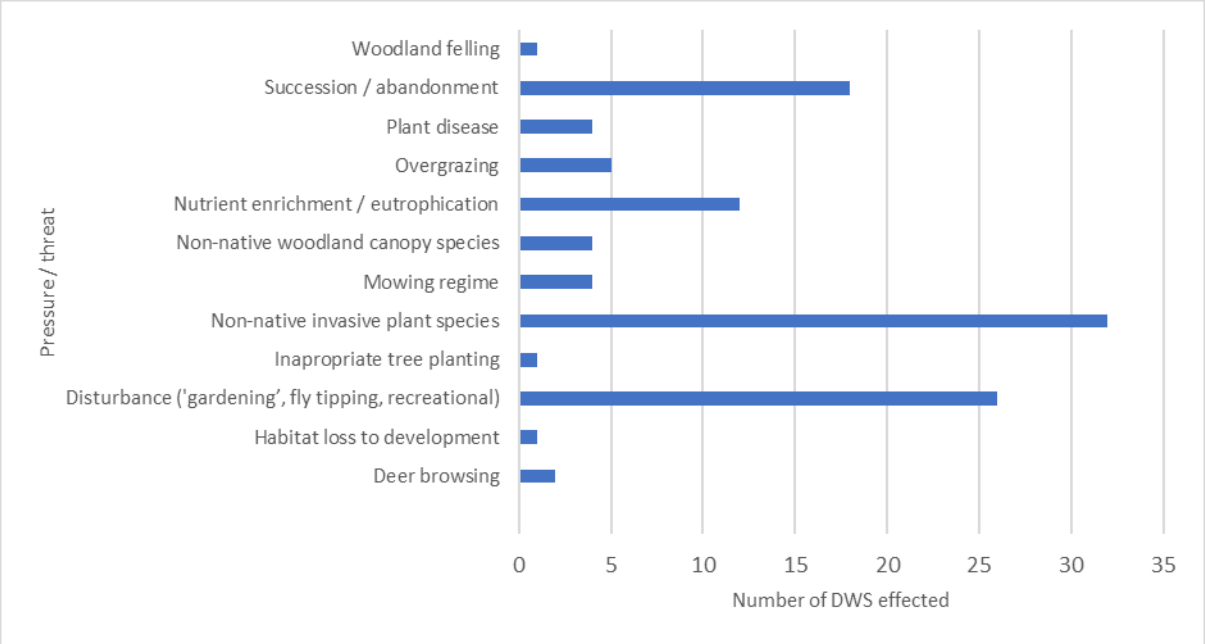
3.20 Similarly, corn mint *Mentha arvensis* is present within Eccleshill Quarry DWS, which has six records within the borough[5]. Only three of these records are from the last 20 years. The remaining three date back between 1999 and 1950. As such, this site was also concluded to qualify under Ff5.

3.21 Marsh cinquefoil *Comarum palustre* was identified at two DWS sites by the 2022 surveys (Belmont Gorge DWS and Yellow Hill Pond DWS). Marsh cinquefoil was classed as an Ff5 species by the 2011 assessment; however BSBI data[5] identified nine records of this species from the last 20 years, including five since 2010, along with other historic records. The plant is treated as a notable consideration in the context of habitat condition and distinctiveness however is no longer considered a qualifying feature in isolation.

Pressures and Threats

3.22 The presence of invasive non-native species was the most commonly identified pressure/threat, identified as a threat at 32 out of the 37 DWSs (see **Figure 2**). The second most commonly identified pressure was disturbance (26 sites) in the form of recreational use, fly tipping and 'gardening' projects. Succession and abandonment of habitats is the third most prominent pressure (18 sites), followed by nutrient enrichment and eutrophication (12 sites) and overgrazing (5 sites). Other pressures/threats include deer browsing, intensive mowing regimes, habitat loss to development, planting of non-native trees, drainage, plant disease and woodland felling.

Figure 2: Pressures and threats effecting BwD DWS



Restoration opportunities

3.23 All DWSs have the potential to be enhanced. Frequently recommended high-level management strategies include:

- Invasive species removal/management

- Grassland enhancement via conservation grazing, annual hay cuts and/or management of scrub/tree/bracken encroachment.
- Woodland management including woodland thinning, targeted haloing of suitable trees, veteranisation of suitable trees, woodland expansion, sensitive removal of non-native canopy species and planting in native tree/understory species.
- Restriction of public access, and discouragement of fly tipping and gardening projects within DWSs. Removal of fly tipped waste.
- Management of pond vegetation (removal of reedmace and/or introduction of other native emergent/aquatic species) and desilting.
- Habitat creation, including woodland, hedgerow, ponds and heath.

3.24 The sites that have been recommended for declassification have potential to be restored to DWS status with appropriate management. This also applies to excluded areas of Darwen Golf Course DWS and Knuzden Brook (Haslingden Road) DWS. In addition, two sites that have been recommended as declassified are located immediately adjacent to Biological Heritage Sites (BHSs) and thus are potentially important in relation to habitat resilience and connectivity of the BHSs: Meadowhead Pastures DWS and Robin Bank DWS. These sites also possess an increased chance of natural recolonisation of target species and habitats with appropriate management, owing to the proximity of BHS quality habitats. This also applies to excluded areas of Darwen Golf Course DWS, which lies adjacent to Sunnyhurst Woods BHS.

Biodiversity Metric Calculations

3.25 Baseline biodiversity units for each site are shown on *Figure 3,* overleaf**.** Turton and Entwistle Reservoir DWS possesses the most baseline biodiversity units (321.08 units), whilst Yellow Hill Pond possesses the lowest (1.89 units). The number of baseline units generally positively correlates with the size of sites *(Figure 4). Figure 5* shows the number of units per hectare, Stones Bank Brook DWS possesses the most (6.21 units across 0.3ha, equating to 20.7 units/ha), whilst Bog Height Tip and Pastures (South) possesses the least (5.04 units across 1.95ha, equating to 2.58 units/ha).

3.26 Ample opportunities exist for biodiversity net gain, through widely recognised and potentially easily implemented management strategies as outlined in 'Restoration Opportunities'. In agreement with BwD, the calculated available units (post enhancement) are not published here as they are crude estimates and subject to the significant caveats outlined in the Methodology section of this report.

Figure 3: Baseline Biodiversity Units. *See Appendix 1 for Site reference codes next to DWS names.*

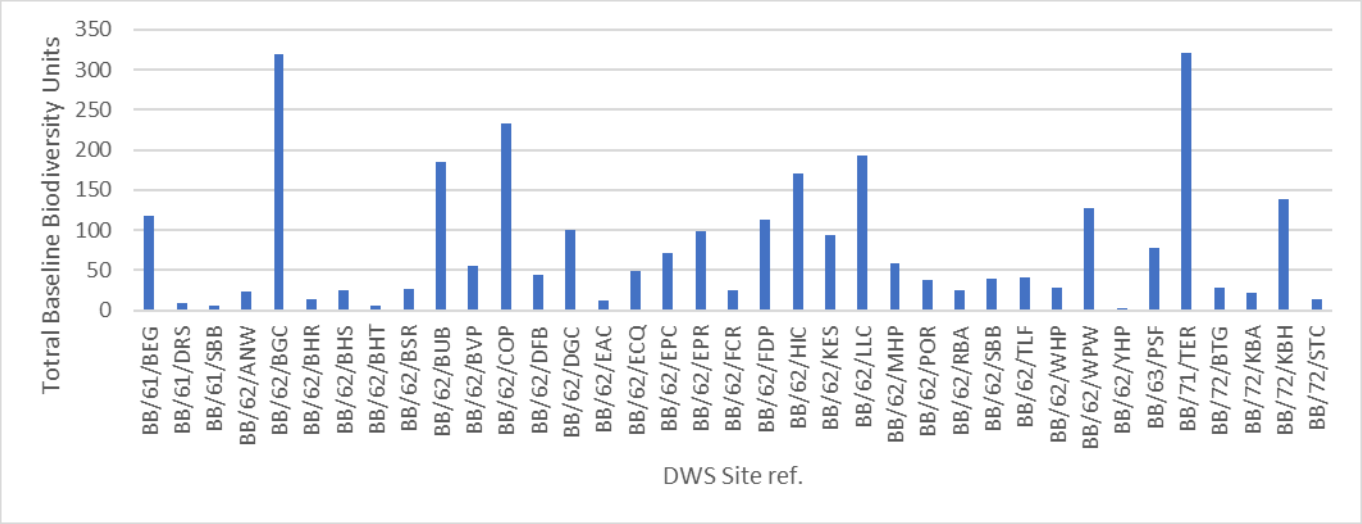


Figure 4: Corelation between baseline biodiversity units and size of DWS

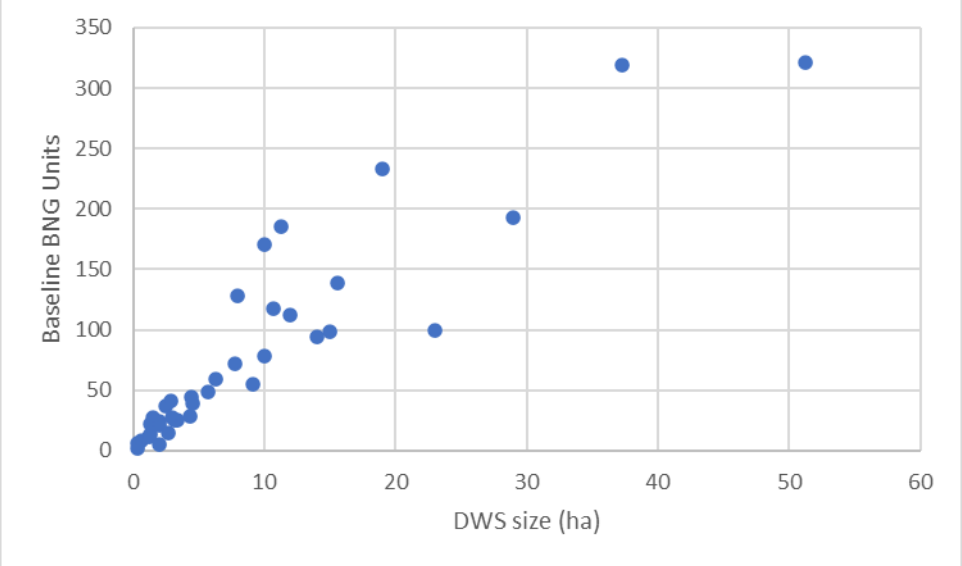
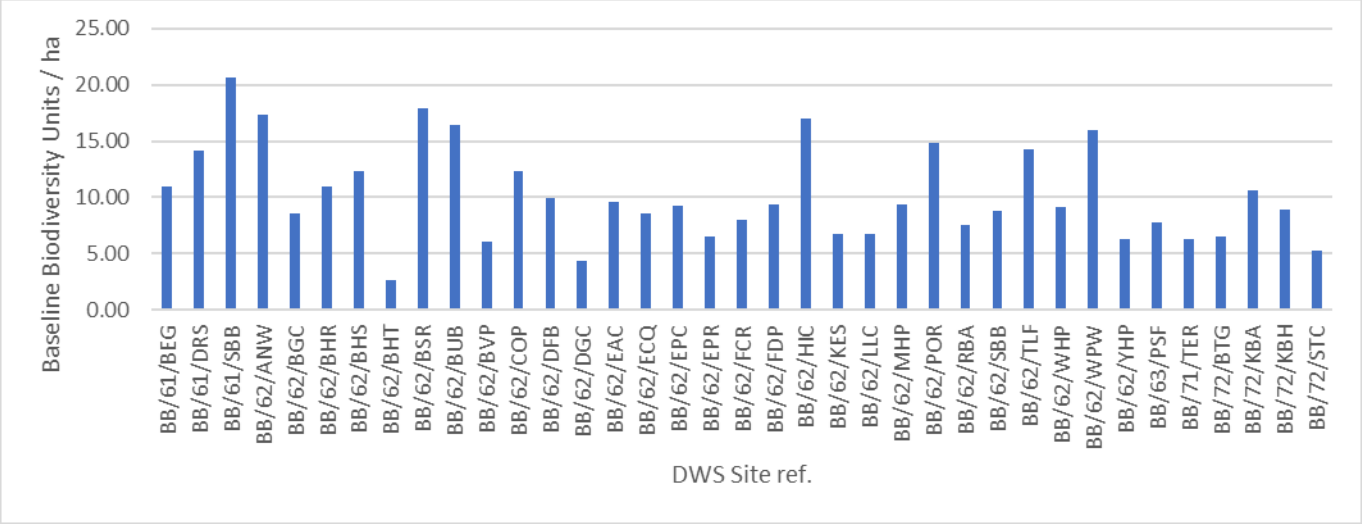


Figure 5: Baseline Biodiversity Units / ha. *See Appendix 1 for Site reference codes next to DWS names.*



Author Paula Hollings BSc(Hons) MSc ACIEEM

Title Senior Ecologist

Date 19/01/23

References:

1: Natural England (2021) *The Biodiversity Metric.* Available at: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720

2: Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. (2020). *UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions V1.1*. Available at: http://ukhab.org

3: Lancashire Wildlife Trust (2011) *District Wildlife Site Biodiversity Guidelines: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.*

4: NBN Atlas (2022) *Species search*. https://nbnatlas.org/

5: BSBI (2022) *Distribution maps*. Available at: https://bsbi.org/maps

Document Title: BOW174 – BwD DWS: Summary report	Author: P. Hollings, Senior Ecologist	Checked by: J. Jones, Director & Principal Ecologist	Version: Draft A	Date: 29.03.23

Appendix 1: Summary of overall results

DWS ref	DWS qualifying criteria																				
	Wd 10	**Wd 11**	**Wd 12**	**Wd 13**	**Wd 14**	**Wd 15**	**Pk2**	**Gr4**	**Fe6**	**Fe7**	**Bo8**	**Bo9**	**Bo10**	**He4**	**Ri1**	**Ro2**	**Ar3**	**Hm4**	**Ff5**	**Fu4**	**Recommendation**
13: Belmont 'Gorge' - BB/61/BEG	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	n/a	Y	N1	Y	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	N	Y	Y	N1	N	NS	Retain as DWS
27: Stones Bank Brook - BB/61/SBB	N1	N1	N1	N	N	Y	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
35: Leeds-Liverpool Canal - BB/62/LLC	N2	N2	N2	N	NS	NS	n/a	N2	N1	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	n/a	Y	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
56: Broken Stone Road - BB/62/BSR	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Y	n/a	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
57: Sheep Bridge Brook - BB/62/SBB	N2	N2	N2	N2	N2	N2	n/a	Y	N2	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	n/a	n/a	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
63: Meadowhead Pastures - BB/62/MHP	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	N2	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	n/a	n/a	N	N2	NS	De-designate / prioritise habitat restoration
64: Darwen Golf Course - BB/62/DGC	N2	N2	N2	N	N	N	n/a	Y	N1	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	N	n/a	N	Y*	N2	NS	Retain as DWS with boundary changes
67: Bog Height Tip & Pastures - BB/62/BHT	Majority of site allocated for housing within local plan (southern parcel remains a DWS)																				
67: Bog Height Tip & Pastures (South) - BB/62/BHT(S)	N2	N2	N2	N	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N1	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N	N	NS	De-designate / prioritise habitat restoration
68: Bog Height Road - BB/62/BHR	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Y	N	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
71: Bold Venture Park - BB/62/BVP	Y	N2	Y	N	N	N	n/a	N2	N1, N2	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
73: Kelvin Street - BB/62/KES	N2	N2	Y	N	n/a	Y	n/a	Y	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	n/a	n/a	N	N	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
82: Buryfold Brook & Old Briggs Cloughs - BB/62/BUB	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	n/a	N2	N1	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NS	Y	n/a	n/a	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
85: Whitehall Park - BB/62/WHP	N2	N2	Y	N	N	N	N	N	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N	N	N	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
100: Eccleshill Quarry - BB/62/ECQ	N2	N	N2	N	N1	N	N	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	n/a	n/a	Y	Y*	Y	NS	Retain as DWS with boundary changes
101: Eccleshill Pastures & Disused Railway Line - BB/62/EPR	N	N	N2.	N	N	N	N	Y	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	n/a	N	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS with boundary changes
111: Yellow Hill Pond - BB/62/YHP	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Y	n/a	N	NS	Retain as DWS
117: Witton Park Wood - BB/62/WPW	Y	N2	Y	Y	N	N	N	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	NS	Retain as DWS
129: Preston Old Road - BB/62/POR	Y	N2	N2	Y	N	N	N	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	n/a	n/a	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
135: Tauheedul Islam Girls' (formerly Beardwood / Billinge) High School - BB/62/BHS	Y	N2	Y	Y	N	N	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
141: Craven's Farm Ponds – BB/62/CFP	Now allocated for housing within local plan																				
145: Ewood Aqueduct & Canal Embankment – BB/62/EAC	N1, N2	N1, N2	N1, N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N1	Y	NS	Retain as DWS
151: Corporation Park – BB/62/COP	Y	N2	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	NS	n/a	Y	N1	N	NS	Retain as DWS
152: Blackburn Golf Course – BB/62/BGC	N2	N2	N2	N	N	N	N	N2	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N2	n/a	Y	N1	N	NS	Retain as DWS

Appendix 1: Results summary (continues)

DWS ref	DWS qualifying criteria																			
	Wd 10	**Wd 11**	**Wd 12**	**Wd 13**	**Wd 14**	**Wd 15**	**Pk2**	**Gr4**	**Fe6**	**Fe7**	**Bo8**	**Bo9**	**Bo10**	**He4**	**Ri1**	**Ro2**	**Ar3**	**Hm4**	**Ff5**	**Fu4**	**Recommendation**
156: Fishmoor Drive & Pilmuir Road – BB/62/FDP	N2	N2	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	Y	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N1	N	NS	Retain as DWS
174: Higher Croft - BB/62/HIC	Y	N2	Y	N1	N	N	N	Y	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N	n/a	n/a	N	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
189: Pleckgate Streams & Fields – BB/63/PSF	N2	N2	Y	N	N	N	N	N1, N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	n/a	Y	Y	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
213: Sough Tunnel & Railway Embankment - BB/72/STC	N1,N 2	N2	N2	N2	N2	N2	n/a	N2	n/a	N	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	n/a	N2	Y	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
215: Blacksnape / Taylor's Green - BB/72/BTG	N2	N2	N2	N	N	N	N	N1	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	N	n/a	n/a	N1	N2	NS	De-designate / prioritise habitat restoration
229: Knuzden Brook (Haslingden Rooad) – BB/72/KBH	Y*	N2	N2	N	N	N	N	N2	N1	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	NS	n/a	n/a	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS with boundary changes
237: Knuzden Brook (Abbot Clough) – BB/72/KBA	N2	N2	N2	N	N	N	N	N2	N1	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	NS	n/a	N/A	N1	N2	NS	De-designate / prioritise habitat restoration
238: Anchor Wood - BB/62/ANW	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	NS	Retain as DWS
239: EL Railway – Pleasington-Cherry Tree – BB/62/EPC	Y	N2	N2	N	N	N	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Y	Y	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
240: Former Chorley Railway Line Embankment - Cherry Tree – BB/62/FCR	Y	N2	N2	Y	N	N	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Y	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
245: Old Man's Hill Verge and cutting – BB/61/OMH	Now situated within West Pennine Moors SSSI																				
247: Turton & Entwistle Reservoir - BB/71/TER	Y	N2	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y		N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	N2	n/a	Y	N1	N2	NS	Retain as DWS
248: Black Height Mire – BB/72/BHM	Now situated within West Pennine Moors SSSI																				
250: Turn Lane Fields, Sunnyhurst (adjacent to BHS) - BB/62/TLF	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Y	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	n/a	n/a	n/a	N1	n/a	Y	Retain as DWS
251: Dingle Reservoir - BB/61/DRS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Y	N1	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	NS	Retain as DWS
252: Robin Bank - BB/62/RBA	N2	N2	N2	N	N	N	N	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	n/a	n/a	N1	N	NS	De-designate / prioritise habitat restoration
253: Davyfield Brook - BB/62/DFB	N2	N2	N2	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	N2	n/a	n/a	N1	N	NS	Retain as DWS with boundary changes

Key:

*: Site meets Ar3 criteria if site boundary is adjusted as recommended. Otherwise, sites are too large to qualify.

Y & Green Fill Colour = Yes (site meets the guideline)

n/a = not applicable (habitat not present on site)

NS Not Surveyed

N = No (site doesn't qualify) N1 because of size, N2 = insufficient species

Red Fill Colour = site does not appear to meet any of the current District Local Wildlife Site selection guidelines

The study identified that a number of sites no longer meet the criteria for DWS designation – although there are opportunities to restore these habitats in the short-medium term. Due to this, the Council could de-designate the sites as DWS, or seek to prioritise habitat restoration/enhancement works to return the sites to a DWS status.

Appendix 2: Plan of overall results

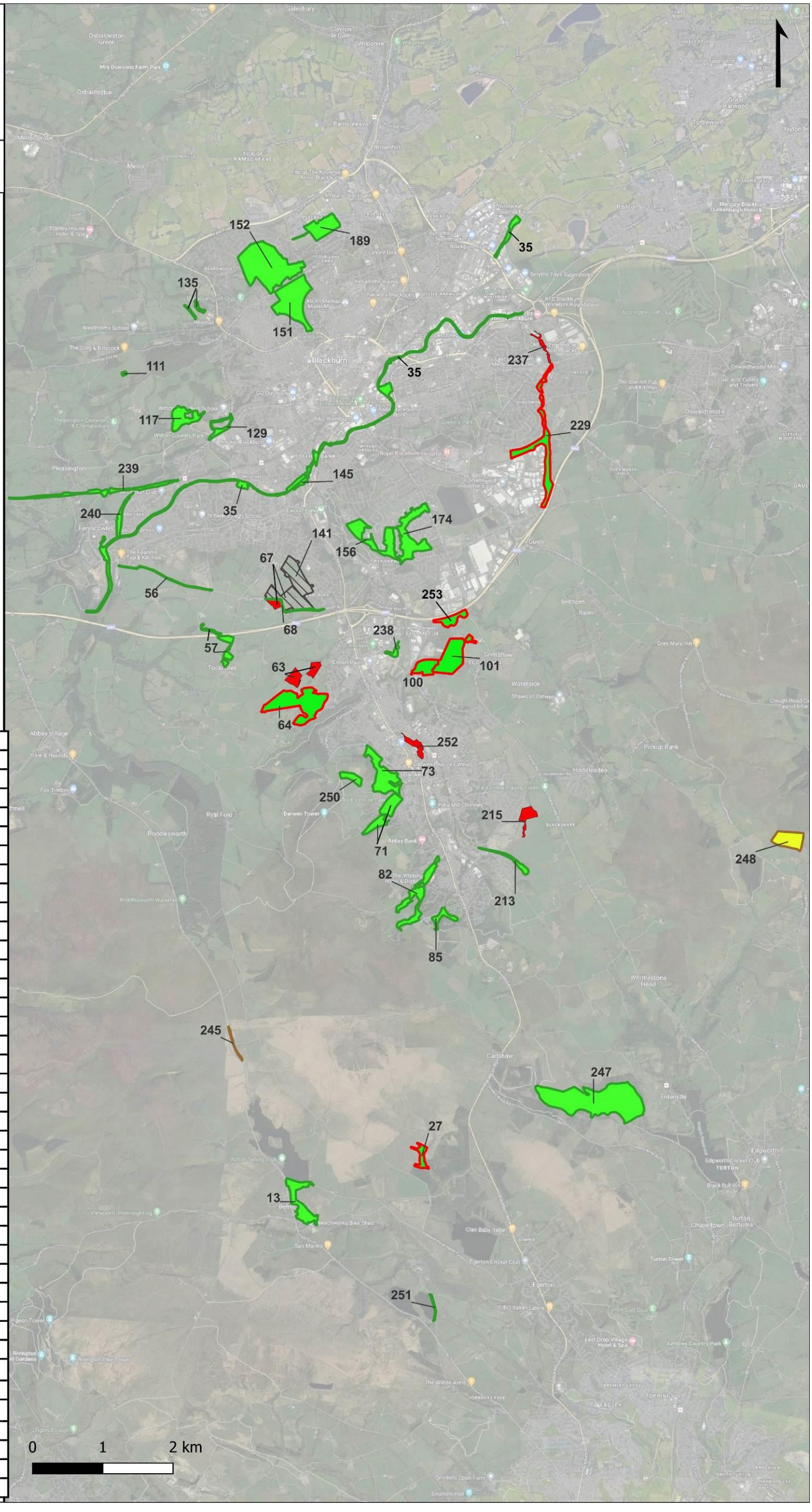
BOW174 Blackburn with Darwen District Wildlife Sites

Drawing title: Summary plan - 2022 results

Drawn by: LB
Checked by: PH

Date: 30.09.2022

- DWS recommended for retention
- DWS recommended for retention, with adjusted site boundary
- DWS status no longer applicable owing to location within SSSI
- DWS recommended for declassification
- DWS status no longer applicable owing to allocation for housing within Local Plan



13	Belmont Gorge
27	Stones Bank Brook
35	Leeds Liverpool Canal
56	Broken Stone Road
57	Sheep Bridge Brook
63	Meadowhead Pastures
64	Darwen Golf Course
67	Bog Height Tip & Pastures
68	Bog Height Road
71	Bold Venture Park
73	Kelvin Street
82	Buryfold Brook & Old Briggs Cloughs
85	Whitehall Park
100	Eccleshill Quarry
101	Eccleshill Pastures & Disused Railway Line
111	Yellow Hill Pond
117	Witton Park Wood
129	Preston Old Road
135	Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School
141	Craven's Farm Ponds
145	Ewood Aqueduct & Canal Embankment
151	Corporation Park
152	Blackburn Golf Course
156	Fishmoor Drive & Pilmuir Road
174	Higher Croft
189	Pleckgate Streams & Fields
213	Sough Tunnel & Railway Embankment
215	Blacksnape / Taylor's Green
229	Knuzden Brook (Haslingden Road)
237	Knuzden Brook (Abbot Clough)
238	Anchor Wood
239	East Lancashire Railway Pleasington/Cherry Tree
240	Former Chorley Railway Line, Cherry Tree
245	Black Height Mire
247	Turton & Entwistle Reservoir
248	Old Man's Hill Verge and Cutting
250	Turn Lane Fields, Sunnyhurst (adj BHS)
251	Dingle Reservoir
252	Robin Bank
253	Davyfield Brook

Appendix 3: District Wildlife Sites Qualifying Criteria

Broad habitat type	DWS guideline reference	DWS Qualifying Criteria
Woodland	Wd10	Semi-natural woodlands (or re-planted with native broad-leaved species) >0.5ha in all Boroughs, except Lancaster and Ribble Valley, where field evidence indicates they are ancient in origin
	Wd11	Other upland mixed ashwoods, wet woodland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, upland birchwoods greater than 0.5ha where the species list conforms to the relevant National Vegetation Classification (NVC) or UK Priority woodland type(s).
	Wd12	Other woodlands greater than 0.5ha with at least seven indicator species of semi-natural woodlands, as listed by DWS guidance (The Wildlife Trust, 2011)
	Wd13	Broad-leaved woodlands over 1ha which have at least three 'old' trees, which possess at least four features of 'old' trees, as listed by DWS guidance (The Wildlife Trust, 2011).
	Wd14	Wet willow, birch or Alder dominated woodlands over 0.25ha with the water table seasonally near or above the surface
	Wd15	Other upland oak woodland greater than 0.25ha of stand types W11, W16 and/or W17 either as single stands or in combination.
Parkland and scattered trees	Pk2	Scattered native or non-native trees that include some 'old' trees in parkland or similar (includes churchyards). Trees must have at least features of 'old' trees, as listed by DWS guidance (The Wildlife Trust, 2011).
Grassland	Gr4	Areas of grassland over 0.25 hectare with ten indicator species of semi-natural grasslands occurring at least occasionally within the sward, as listed by DWS guidance (The Wildlife Trust, 2011)
Swamp, fen and reedbed	Fe6	Stands of fen, swamp and reedbed >0.3ha. This can include species poor stands.
	Fe7	Stands of fen, swamp and mire that support three or more species indicative of acidic (base-poor) fen or at least six species indicative of neutral and alkaline (moderate to base-rich) fen.
Bog	Bo8	n/a in BwD locality
	Bo9	Areas of blanket bog or blanket mire supporting moorland vegetation over peat.
	Bo10	Areas of bog/mire supporting seven or more species of Bog-moss (Sphagnum species).
Heathland	He4	Areas of heathland on mineral or thin organic soils greater than five hectares in which dwarf shrubs occur frequently either individually or combined.
Freshwater habitats	Ri1	Rivers and streams with at least seven features indicative of natural river systems for small rivers and streams, or five features indicative of natural river systems for large rivers, and ten plant species indicative of clean water (features and species listed by the Wildlife Trust, 2011)
Rock habitats	Ro2	Natural cliffs more than three metres high and/or screes that support species indicative of a UK BAP habitat type(s) or one or more UK BAP priority species

Artificial habitats	Ar3	Any of the following habitats, which are considered to contribute significantly to the biodiversity of the Borough: • Hedgerows • Walls • Churchyards • Parks and golf courses • Reservoirs, mill lodges and ponds • Gravel pits • Quarries and mines • Spoil heaps and landfill • Derelict and unmanaged land • Sewage works • Roadside verges • Railway land including cuttings, sidings and embankments, whether active or disused
Other areas of semi-natural habitat and habitat mosaics	Hm4	Habitat mosaics between 5-10 hectares, which contribute significantly to the biodiversity of the Borough.
Flowering plants and ferns	Ff5	A site that supports a population of a native notable species where it can be demonstrated that the site makes a significant contribution to the distribution pattern, or the total population size, of that species in the Borough. Sites that support a native species recorded from three or fewer localities in the Borough may be considered where this can be demonstrated.
Fungi	Fu4	A site which supports a population of a native notable species where it can be demonstrated that the site makes a significant contribution to the distribution pattern, or the total population size, of that species in the Borough. Sites that support a native species recorded from three or fewer localities in the Borough may be considered where this can be justified.