

## The case for the consideration of SSSI notification at Fineshade Wood

This document lays out the reasons why we believe Fineshade Wood in Northamptonshire (SP99) is worthy of SSSI status. We refer to relevant current guidelines for the selection of biological SSSIs, relating them to existing verifiable records from Fineshade, including those recorded by surveyors working for Forest Holidays (FH) prior to an unsuccessful application to construct a holiday camp in the wood in 2014-15. The document draws largely on the arguments laid out here: [www.fineshade.org.uk/#!/sssi/cjj8](http://www.fineshade.org.uk/#!/sssi/cjj8)

### 1) The Critical Standard Principle

[Ref: Guidelines for the selection of biological SSSIs, Part 1: Rationale, Operational Approach and Criteria for Site Selection (2013)]

In section 4.6 of these guidelines two guiding principles are laid out for site selection – the **exemplary site principle** and the **critical standard principle**.

Section 4.8 explains that both principles have been applied but the emphasis on one or the other varies according to circumstances. Two examples are given:

“In the lowlands of Cambridgeshire, for example, only a small proportion of the land is now semi-natural, and much of this is in SSSIs. In the extensive near- and semi-natural habitats of intertidal areas, or the uplands of Sutherland, a much larger proportion of land qualifies for selection. The SSSI series therefore shows a gradient: in the lowlands, there is generally a larger number of small sites, perhaps **comprising all the remaining good-quality examples of a particular habitat**, compared with fewer but larger sites within the more continuous expanses of semi-natural habitats in the uplands and coastlands.”

We would point out that, in Northamptonshire, a similarly very small proportion of the land is now semi-natural but, unlike the lowlands of Cambridgeshire, very little of this is in SSSIs.

Crucially for Fineshade Wood in particular, and for Rockingham Forest in general, section 4.8 goes on to state:

“It is important to apply minimum standards of quality to the selection of all SSSIs, but the principle of choosing only the best examples is appropriate only to the extensive and continuous types of habitat, notably rivers, northern lakes, cliff coasts and a number of upland habitats. **For many habitats, it is appropriate to select several of the best remaining examples in each area.**

Fineshade Wood is certainly one of the best and largest remaining examples of woodland habitat, (including much Ancient Woodland) in Rockingham Forest and so the Critical Standard principle should be applied.

This means of course that, applying the Critical Standard principle, **Fineshade Wood needs to reach the qualifying standard for only one habitat or species** to be eligible for selection as SSSI (Section 7.1 of the revised guidelines).

Section 4.17 of the revised guidelines concludes that:

“Selection of SSSIs is therefore based on **expert judgement**, underpinned by a **firm evidence** base (helped by our growing ecological knowledge and understanding), combined with a realistic perception of **the values society places** on these biodiversity features.”

The firm evidence base already exists, thanks largely to Forest Holidays' surveyors, and the value society places on the biodiversity features of Fineshade Wood became very clear in 2014 when there was a national outcry against development, backed by the unanimous support of the elected committee members of the local planning authority.

## 2) Assemblage of Reptiles and Amphibians

[Ref: Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs. Part 2: Detailed Guidelines for Habitats and Species Groups, Chapter 17 Reptiles and Amphibians (1989)]

### Reptiles

Section 2.1 of the guidelines explains that there are six native species of terrestrial reptiles in Britain, two of which are regarded as endangered species. Neither of these, the smooth snake and sand lizard, occur in Fineshade, but all four of the other reptiles do. For these four species the guidelines say that the "representation of outstanding assemblages should be the guiding principle".

Section 2.2.2 states that:

"the best locality containing at least three of the other species, adder *Vipera berus*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, common lizard *Lacerta vivipara* and slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, should be selected."

The fact that all four of these species occur here makes Fineshade Wood of particular importance – as the Forest Holidays' ecological consultants pointed out.

"Four species of reptile (all UK BAP species) have been recorded across the woodland area where the proposed development is located, making it a site of at least county importance". Ecological Report 5.6

Also:

"The adder population within the woodland and adjacent habitat is the largest in Northamptonshire". Desktop Survey, page 7.

It is worth stressing that the consultants were referring to the woodland as a whole, not only their proposed development area. This was reinforced by independent ecologist, Tom Langton, who specializes in herpetofauna. In his letter of objection to the planning proposal at Fineshade he referred to "this SSSI-value reptile site" and stated:

"This is one of Eastern England's most important reptile communities with a large number of snakes including adders".

It is clear that expert opinion believes Fineshade to be one of the best regional localities for reptiles, so under section 2.2.2 of the current guidelines it should certainly be notified as SSSI.

### Amphibians

The case for Fineshade to be notified for SSSI selection for amphibians alone may be less watertight - partly because of incomplete surveys carried out in 2014. Section 3.1 of the current guidelines explains that six native species of amphibians occur.

Of these the Great Crested Newt (a European Protected Species and UK BAP species) occurs regularly in Fineshade. The guidelines say that site selection should take particular account of this species and that outstanding assemblages of this and other widespread species should be selected.

There are at least 12 ponds in the woodland complex that regularly hold water throughout the year. Most have not been surveyed for many years but in 2014 Forest Holidays surveyed three of them. As stated elsewhere, additional surveys for the company were carried out in 2015 by the ecological consultants, AECOM. The extent of the 2015 survey and the results have not been made public, though are presumably known to FH and the Forestry Commission.

Despite this incomplete survey information, the surveys in 2014 still show the presence of Great Crested Newt and also the local BAP species Palmate Newt (64 recorded by torching in one pond) and a single individual toad (rare in the area).

*Natural England's latest review document*

In December 2015, a new document was published: *SSSI Notification Review for Amphibians and Reptiles* by Paul Edgar, Senior Environmental Specialist. The document represents NE's evaluation of the adequacy of the current SSSI site series, dividing amphibian and reptile species into two categories - "range restricted" and "widespread". All of Fineshade's known species fall into the second category. In the summary on page 4 of the document, we read:

The second review, which covers the widespread great crested newt plus the amphibian and reptile assemblage features, highlights **the complete inadequacy of the existing site series** for these features as well as a serious lack of the type of information that would be required for designing one. There is significant potential for adding these features to existing SSSIs, and also **notifying new sites** for them, although the resources and time required for this exercise would be significant.

In addition the review points out that the Adder, one of Fineshade's key species, is a notified feature on only one SSSI in England. To remedy this, the creation of new species features is proposed along with "changes to the selection and boundary setting criteria". Once again the need for a huge data gathering exercise is seen as a major problem.

We claim that there is already, thanks to FH's own surveys, suitable evidence from Fineshade that would allow a brand new SSSI to be created because of its assemblage of reptiles and amphibians, and particularly on account of its adder population

But the need for this notification is now urgent. In February 2015 Fineshade Wood was saved from the certain destruction of much of its reptile habitat by the sound decision of the local planning authority. However, a new similar application is under consideration. The LPA's decision now needs to be supported by Natural England's notification of the woods as SSSI - a notification that would deter further predatory applications for development.

### 3) Assemblages of Birds

[Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs. Part 2: Detailed Guidelines for Habitats and Species Groups. Chapter 17 Birds. 2015]

In relating this document to Fineshade, it is important to read it as whole including important statements in the introduction such as these:

There is also a need to maintain the level of protection in response to changes in bird distribution, for example as a result of future predicted changes in climate, by **reviewing the adequacy of the network of sites and taking action to protect new locations of importance.** (Introduction page 2)

**Relatively dispersed but rapidly declining species and those restricted to particularly threatened and fragmented habitats require special attention.** It is likely that habitat protection and management conferred by SSSI notification will make an increasingly significant contribution to the conservation of these species (Introduction page 3)

Of particular importance may be those of Fineshade's bird species which are now clearly at the edge of their range such as Nightingale and Willow Tit and the very rapidly declining Turtle Dove. We see Fineshade as one of the new locations of importance that need action taken to protect them.

However, we believe that the most compelling reasons for Fineshade's notification as a SSSI concern the significant assemblages of breeding bird species that occur in the two main habitat types within Fineshade.

#### *Assemblages of breeding bird species*

It is section 3.8 of the guidelines that appears to be of particular relevance to Fineshade Wood. Here is the wording in full.

Localities which support an especially good range of bird species characteristic of a particular habitat, as **defined by an index value, will qualify for SSSI selection.** Different habitats support different numbers of bird species, and there are geographical differences within the same habitat type. Therefore, the index value denoting a breeding assemblage of special quality differs between habitats and may differ geographically in order to maintain the range of the birds concerned. Refer to Annex 1 for use of species lists and index values, and for the approach to sites consisting of mixed habitats.

Annex 1 explains that the index value for a site is calculated by summing "indices of abundance" (IoA) for the species breeding in it. Species may be included that have been recorded as **probably breeding in the majority of recent years for which information is available.**

For example, in lowland woodland a bird such as the Willow Warbler has an index of abundance of 1, whereas the Hobby has index of abundance of 3. Fineshade has reliable evidence of breeding by both species, so it scores  $1+3 = 4$  points, just for these two species. Add together the points for all the breeding species in each of the habitat types of a potential SSSI and if any total exceeds a certain threshold value the site is SSSI-worthy for its assemblage of birds.

Notice that although the adding up of points gives the method an apparent exactness, there is a need for expert judgement and interpretation in deciding exactly which species qualify both as "probably breeding" and whether there are reliable records for "the majority of recent years for which information is available".

In relation to the first point, the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) separates breeding evidence into three classes indicating possible, probable and confirmed breeding. For example, a single sighting of a bird in suitable habitat may indicate only *possible* breeding, whereas if the bird is recorded repeatedly or if a pair is seen in suitable habitat this indicates *probable* breeding. A nest with eggs or recently fledged birds indicates *confirmed* breeding. For the rest of this analysis we refer to Fineshade records where there is strong evidence of probable or confirmed breeding using BTO definitions of the terms.

It is harder to interpret what is meant by “recent years” and also “for which information is available”. For example, as Forest Holidays’ ecological consultant pointed out :

“Crossbills (a Schedule 1 bird) have been recorded within Fineshade and adjacent woodland in autumn and winter 2002, and have been recorded breeding in the past.”  
*[Quoted from Section 4.10 of Forest Holidays' Ecological Desktop Survey & Ecological Appraisal, Fineshade Wood, Northamptonshire. December 2013, revised June 2014 Version 3. This document may be downloaded from here on the East Northants Council Planning website <http://otportalsrv.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/pap/index.asp?caseref=14/01704/FUL> ]*

Whether or not these records would allow the index of abundance for the Crossbill to be added to Fineshade’s woodland index value would, no doubt, be part of the expert judgement that Natural England would provide when assessing for SSSI worthiness.

#### *Fineshade’s main habitat types*

There are two clear habitat types (as defined in the guidelines) in Fineshade Wood. These are Lowland Scrub and Woodland.

##### a) Lowland Scrub

The guidelines' threshold value for notification of SSSI is 14. The species contributing to the index value are listed below along with their indices of abundance. We believe there is robust evidence that the birds indicated should be included. This evidence comes partly from Forest Holidays Final Ecological Report, Appendix II, reporting on their surveys of just part of the wood in 2014, but also from ongoing monitoring and records from other parts of the entire Fineshade Wood site including BTO BBS records for SP9897, 2006-16, BTO Woodcock and Nightingale surveys etc.

(Note: Forest Holidays commissioned a further bird survey for part of the woodland in 2015 with a different consultant, AECOM, carrying out the work for them. The results of that survey have not been made public, but once published it can only increase the indices of abundance in these lists.)

Turtle Dove may not be included since, although it was common here as little as 10 years ago, its numbers have collapsed both locally and nationally. The only recent known record was quoted by Forest Holidays: "a record of a single bird in 2013".

	IoA	Presence
Turtle Dove	2	?
Cuckoo	2.5	yes
Long-eared Owl	3	yes
Willow Tit	3	yes
Long-tailed Tit	1	yes
Garden Warbler	1	yes
Lesser Whitethroat	2	yes
Grasshopper Warbler	2	yes
Nightingale	3	yes
Linnet	1	
Lesser Redpoll	1	
Bullfinch	1	yes
Yellowhammer	1	yes

Even omitting Turtle Dove the Fineshade index value would be 19.5 – well above the threshold value of 14.

b) Woodland in lowland England

The threshold value is 39 for this habitat. Again the species contributing to the index value are listed below, along with their indices of abundance. We believe there is robust evidence that the birds indicated should be included.

	IoA	Present		IoA	Present
Grey Heron	2		Firecrest	4	
Little Egret	4		Crested Tit	3	
Honey-buzzard	5		Coal Tit	1	yes
Red Kite	3	yes	Willow Tit	3	yes
Goshawk	4		Marsh Tit	2	yes
Sparrowhawk	2	yes	Long-tailed Tit	1	yes
Buzzard	2	yes	Wood Warbler	3	
Osprey	4		Garden Warbler	1	yes
Hobby	3	yes	Nuthatch	1	yes
Black Grouse	3		Treecreeper	1	yes
Capercaillie	4		Fieldfare	6	
Woodcock	2	yes	Redwing	5.5	
Stock Dove	1		Spotted Flycatcher	2	yes
Cuckoo	2.5	yes	Nightingale	3	yes
Tawny Owl	2	yes	Pied Flycatcher	2	
Long-eared Owl	3	yes	Redstart	1.5	
Wryneck	6		Tree Pipit	1.5	yes
Green Woodpecker	2	yes	Siskin	1	
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1	yes	Lesser Redpoll	1	
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	3		Common Crossbill	2	?
Jay	1	yes	Scottish Crossbill	2.5	
Raven	3	yes	Bullfinch	1	yes
			Hawfinch	4	?

Even omitting Common Crossbill (and also Hawfinch) for which there are no recent records but which have bred within the last 20 years, the Fineshade index value would be 44 and above the threshold value of 39.

*Nightjars - a heathland species*

In the above analysis no account is taken of Fineshade's Nightjars because they occur neither on the Lowland Scrub nor Woodland lists, but rather on the list for Lowland Heathland. No-one would claim that any part of Fineshade Wood resembles heathland, but the fact that they are recorded here in such unusual habitat (certainly they occur no-where else in Northamptonshire) should be something that Natural England's specialists should bear in mind as they move towards making a decision about Fineshade's worthiness for SSSI status.

## 4) Woodlands

[Ref: Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs  
Part 2: Detailed Guidelines for Habitats and Species Groups (1989)]

### *Ancient semi-natural woodland*

The phrase used by the Forestry Commission (FC) to describe Fineshade on its website and elsewhere is “ancient semi-natural woodland”. The introduction to Part 2 of the guidelines emphasises the value of the small remaining amounts of this type of woodland especially in areas such as Northamptonshire. Here are two quotes.

1.3. There is great regional variation in the size and extent of the surviving ancient semi-natural woodland. In parts of south-east England it is the main woodland type and still covers much of the landscape. Elsewhere in the lowlands, ancient woods tend to be small, isolated and surrounded by agricultural land.

1.5 Ancient semi-natural woodland occupies less than 2% of Britain's land surface. While some plantations on ancient woodland sites and other long- established woods may retain or have developed some semi-natural characteristics, all these three kinds of woodland together can hold but a fraction of the variety of woodland types and wildlife contained in the original forest. **It is, therefore, strongly argued that all such woods should be conserved** (Game & Peterken 1984). The total area of ancient semi-natural and other woodland selected as SSSIs in each AOS should be sufficient to protect an adequate extent of, as well as the full range of variation in, native woodland communities and features against future threats, independently of other land-use policies.

We understand that the AOS (or Area of Search) in Fineshade's case, is Rockingham Forest. With an area of 497 ha, the Fineshade Wood complex is one of the largest sections of the remaining Rockingham Forest without statutory protection. Large parts of the wood complex are Ancient Woodland including some recently designated areas that have been added to the AW Inventory. Many of the post-war conifer plantations on Ancient Woodland sites have been cleared and are regenerating well under the Forestry Commission's Ancient Woodland Project. Within Fineshade there is a variety of woodland and plantation types including some that are very unusual in Northants, for example a beech plantation on an AW site in Buxton Wood and a stand of fine alder coppice alongside the stream on the NW boundary of the site.

Also note that the final sentence of section 1.5 quoted above from the 1989 guidelines exhibits an adherence to the exemplary site principle rather than the critical standard principle as recommended in the 2013 revision of Part 1 of the guidelines.

### *Habitat selection*

Section 3 of the guidelines deals with habitat selection requirements and section 3.3.1 points out that county ancient woodland inventories provide a useful starting point for judging present and future SSSI selection. As stated, much of Fineshade has long been recognized as either “Ancient or semi-natural woodland” or “Ancient replanted woodland”. In addition, the recent report by Neil Sanderson, *Notes on the Status of Woodland at Fineshade*, Northamptonshire, which studied a section of the northern part of the wood, found that it was a mosaic of areas of Ancient Woodland (now added to the AWI) and other 17th century (and therefore “recent”) plantations. (More details are available here: [www.fineshade.org.uk/#!ancient-woodland/cxjb](http://www.fineshade.org.uk/#!ancient-woodland/cxjb).)

Section 3.3.2 of the 1989 guidelines points out that plantations on AW sites can be most important, particularly where those plantations have themselves been there for hundreds of years.

3.3.2 Plantations on ancient woodland sites are important where they have allowed survival of significant elements of the original woodland ecosystem which are now less well represented in semi-natural woods. For example, the rides in some recent plantations on ancient woodland sites have retained a rich flora and fauna, as in Bernwood Forest.

We believe that many of the recent records of flora and fauna that have been coming to light show that Fineshade Wood has also retained a species richness similar to Bernwood's.

For Fineshade much of section 3.4 of the guidelines, *Judging the quality of stands and sites*, is of the utmost importance. We draw attention particularly to the following statement.

3.4.1 A basic presumption is that the NCC **should seek to protect the largest areas available of all the major types in an AOS** so that the largest possible populations of the species associated with each type can be protected.

We repeat, Fineshade is one of the largest remaining areas in the Rockingham Forest AOS. Therefore, even using the "exemplary site principle", Fineshade is SSSI-worthy.

#### *Implications of incomplete knowledge*

Fineshade Wood has been the subject of immense change in the last 20-30 years. The very positive effects of the FC's Ancient Woodland Project are now beginning to come to light, not least because of the efforts of Forest Holidays' ecological surveyors.

The guidelines point out that

3.6.1 It is expected that the number and extent of woodland SSSIs will increase in future as more woods are found which are of a quality similar to or higher than existing SSSIs.

Fineshade is a prime example of exactly this – if it was overlooked for SSSI status before, it should certainly be notified now.

#### *The importance of size*

Probably the guideline which provides the strongest level of support for designating the Fineshade Wood complex, even if using the "exemplary site principle", is here:

4.6. The excessive fragmentation of most ancient semi-natural woodland in Britain means that there should be a strong presumption towards selecting any very large areas that remain, regardless of their type, because it is only in such areas that the full range of woodland processes may be observed. In the relatively well-wooded areas of southern England this applies to reasonably compact blocks of more than 200 ha, but elsewhere to semi-natural blocks of 100 ha or more.

The area of the Fineshade Wood complex is 497 ha, well above the suggested guide areas.

Finally, since Northamptonshire is acknowledged to be a county with little woodland (less than 5%) the following section is important.



4.8 Following the above prescriptions will lead, in most AOSs, to about 20% (range 10-40%) of the area of ancient semi-natural woodland being selected. There may, however, be a need also for 'species' sites containing woodland or for areas of recent semi-natural woodland. These are neither target percentages nor limits, but an indication of the level of representation that current experience within the NCC suggests is necessary. **In very poorly wooded areas the figure may rise to 100% of the semi-natural woodland (both ancient and recent).**

Here, in the 1989 guidelines, we get a foretaste of the “critical standard principle” laid out more fully in Part 1 of the newly revised guidelines (2013). But we believe that, even using the guidelines that are now 27 years old, there is a strong case for notifying Fineshade Wood as a SSSI.

## 5) Other supporting taxonomic criteria and evidence

In addition to the clear reasons for notification listed so far we wish to draw your attention to solid existing data for other taxonomic groups. In some cases survey work has been rather limited and may need further research, but in other cases recent survey work has been carried out, but the results do not yet appear to be in the public domain; no doubt it could be acquired by Natural England.

### *Mammals*

[Ref: Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs. Part 2: Detailed Guidelines for Habitats and Species Groups. Chapter 13 Mammals (1989)]

The guidelines make clear that the presence of certain mammals (many of which have high levels of protection in their own right) provides “enhanced value” when sites are being assessed against habitat or species criteria.

In particular:

- section 1.5 deals with **Otters** (some Fineshade records),
- section 1.7 deals with **Badgers** (widespread through the wood),
- section 1.8 deals with **Common Dormice** (historical and recent records) and
- section 1.9 deals with **Bats** (at least 6 species present).

All of these species are described in section 1.10 as especially in need of conservation measures and hence the ones to be considered especially in relation to SSSI selection.

In 2015 Forest Holidays' consultants, AECOM, were said to be carrying out bat surveys in order to meet these criticisms. One night of heavy rain, they were seen attempting to carry out the survey. (Details here: [www.fineshade.org.uk/#!/archived-news--7-9-2015-/l9re](http://www.fineshade.org.uk/#!/archived-news--7-9-2015-/l9re)). No report of the outcome of that monitoring has been made available by AECOM, Forest Holidays or the Forestry Commission.

It is understood that similar information may have been collected by AECOM in relation to Badgers and Dormice but again that information is not available to us. However, in 2015 dormouse monitoring was also carried out by the Wildlife Trust BCN in two locations in the wood and this has confirmed the continued presence of dormice.

### *Vascular plants*

[Ref: Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs. Part 2: Detailed Guidelines for Habitats and Species Groups. Chapter 11 Vascular Plants (1989)]

The guidelines make the point that site selection for vascular plants has to give particular attention to the rarer and more threatened species. The county recorder, Rob Wilson, draws our attention to records of Fineshade's Yellow Star of Bethlehem (*Gagea lutea*) (located in both 2015 and 2016) and Wood Barley (*Hordelymus europaeus*). In addition there are other species recorded in Fineshade that are now considered to be nationally rare including Dyer's Greenweed (*Genista tinctoria ssp. tinctoria*) and wild Columbine (*Aquilegia vulgaris*).

In 2014 John Handley, working for Forest Holidays, carried out very detailed site surveys for parts of the three monads, SP9898, SP9899 and SP9999. In his report Handley drew attention to 49 axiophytes or ‘worthy plants’ - the 40% or so of species that arouse interest and praise from botanists when they are seen. They are indicators of habitat that is considered important for conservation, such as ancient woodlands, clear water and species-rich meadows. He concluded that:

"this would indicate that the site is almost certainly worthy of being awarded the status of County Wildlife site".

We also draw attention to section 3.6 of the 1989 Guidelines relating to declining species and species at the edge of their range.

If an AOS contains species which are known to have declined markedly within Britain but are not yet in the nationally rare or nationally scarce category, particularly large populations may be selected, in consultation with the CSD rare plants specialist. Examples are *Eriophorum latifolium*, *Orchis morio*, *Platanthera bifolia*, *P. chlorantha* and *Pyrola minor*.

*Platanthera chlorantha*, or Greater Butterfly Orchid, seems to bloom irregularly in the Fineshade Ancient Woodland areas and a total of 52 flower spikes were recorded in 2015, all within SP9898. Perhaps these specimens comprise a "particularly large population" in this declining species.

#### *Invertebrates*

[Ref. Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs. Part 2: Detailed Guidelines for Habitats and Species Groups. Chapter 17 Invertebrates (1989)]

Of all the invertebrate groups, the best recorded in Fineshade are probably the moths and butterflies, the former because of the nightly use of a Rothampstead trap, run by FC staff at Top Lodge for many years. From 1993 to 1998 nearly 300 species of moths were recorded. Of these 78 were described as notable or protected (Northants Biodiversity Records Centre report ref 14-013 16 January 2014).

Section 1.3 of the 1989 guidelines points out the difficulty of applying a scoring technique for potential sites for butterflies. In particular it is said that "it is seldom that any one site will contain many rare and/or scarce species". Fineshade Wood appears to be one of these seldomly found sites.

Of the 14 species which were nationally scarce in 1989 (occurring in 16-100 10 km squares) two were recorded in Fineshade in 2015. These were

Purple Emperor (2015 for first time)

White-letter Hairstreak (Recorded annually in several parts of Fineshade)

Furthermore, of the 15 Butterflies which in 1989 had experienced substantial local declines, seven have been recorded in Fineshade recently. These are:

White Admiral (2015 and most years in small numbers)

Silver-washed Fritillary (2015 in good numbers)

Brown Argus (2015 Now widespread in Northants)

Chalkhill Blue (One vagrant specimen in 2015)

Small Heath (2015 in good numbers)

Dingy Skipper (Recorded most years in small numbers)

Grizzled Skipper (Recorded most years in small numbers)

In addition to those recently recorded species, there are also historical records of:

Pearl-bordered Fritillary

Chequered Skipper

Duke of Burgundy

Wall

Further taxonomic surveys are recommended, to clarify whether Fineshade Wood also qualifies for SSSI notification under other classes of invertebrates.