

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

<b>Subject:</b>	Designation of Ham Woods and Radford Woods as Local Nature Reserves and extension of Efford Marsh Local Nature Reserve
<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	25 March 2014
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Brian Vincent
<b>CMT Member:</b>	Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)
<b>Author:</b>	Jeremy Sabel, Green Infrastructure Officer
<b>Contact details:</b>	Tel: 01752 304229 email: <a href="mailto:Jeremy.sabel@plymouth.gov.uk">Jeremy.sabel@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
<b>Ref:</b>	JS
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Part:</b>	I

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### **Purpose of the report:**

This report proposes the designation of Ham Woods and Radford Woods as Local Nature Reserves and an extension to Efford Marsh Local Nature Reserve. The total hectares of new designations will be 75.0.

Ham Woods is a 35.2 hectare green space separating the communities of Ham, Weston Mill, King's Tamerton and Honicknowle. Radford Woods is a 38.9 hectare green space separating the communities of Hooe, Plymstock and Goosewell. Efford Marsh is an existing Local Nature Reserve and a proposed 0.9hectare extension is proposed. All areas under consideration in this report are currently owned and managed by PCC.

The Council has the power to designate sites as Local Nature Reserves (LNR) under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. To declare or extend a site as a LNR the land should have good natural interest and provide an area for the informal enjoyment of nature by the public. The proposed designations and extension meet both these criteria. PCC Street Scene Services and Natural England fully endorse the designations/extension.

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## **The Brilliant Co-operative Council Corporate Plan 2013/14 -2016/17:**

The proposed designations/extension is significant in relationship to all of the Corporate Plan Objectives. Most particularly it delivers the Growing Plymouth objective, due to its focus on the City's sustainable growth and the Vision to transform the City, but the proposals relate well to all of the Corporate Plan Objectives:

<b>Corporate Plan Objective</b>	<b>LNR designations/extension</b>
Pioneering Plymouth	We are a lead authority nationally in terms of green infrastructure planning and delivery.
Growing Plymouth	We are supporting the sustainable growth of the city by safeguarding our green assets.
Caring Plymouth	We are setting aside large areas of green space for people and wildlife to improve health and wellbeing.
Confident Plymouth	High quality green spaces increase confidence and pride of place.

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### **Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land:**

The designation of Ham Woods and Radford Woods as Local Nature Reserves will have additional revenue cost implications, estimated at £3,837 and £5,903 per annum respectively. These will be funded by secured S106 contributions for a 25 year period (in the case of Ham Woods) and 7 years (in the case of Radford Woods).

The extension of Efford Marsh Local Nature Reserve will not have additional revenue cost implications as work will be performed at current levels and contained within the existing local nature reserve maintenance budget. Plymouth City Council as owner of Efford Marsh has an existing commitment to manage this area's nature conservation interest and public access.

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### **Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:**

The formal designation of the land in itself has no implications in terms of child poverty, community safety or Health & Safety.

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### **Equality and Diversity:**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

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### **Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:**

It is recommended that the Cabinet approves the designation of both Ham Woods and Radford Woods as Local Nature Reserves and extends Efford Marsh Local Nature Reserve, and that the Head

of Legal Services is instructed to prepare and complete the legal documentation for the formal designation.

*Reason:* To extend statutory protection for key areas of green space, and to raise the profile of the Council's work to provide spaces for people and wildlife. It will ensure that Plymouth's growth continues to be sustainable and that valuable green lungs are maintained for the community's enjoyment and for the benefit the City's wildlife.

**Alternative options considered and rejected:**

The alternative option of not designating/extending the Local Nature Reserves has a number of implications:

- It would result in a lower level of legal protection for the green spaces.
- The opportunity to secure external funding to promote healthy lifestyles and community engagement may be diminished.
- Not designating these sites will mean the Council may not achieve Plymouth's Local Development Framework Core Strategy target for designating 100ha of new Local Nature Reserve by 2016.

**Published work / information:**

Core Strategy 2006-2021 [www.plymouth.gov.uk/csadoption](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/csadoption)  
 Green Space Strategy 2008-2023 [www.plymouth.gov.uk/green\\_space\\_strategy\\_2008\\_2023.pdf](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/green_space_strategy_2008_2023.pdf)  
 Ham Woods Management Plan 2014 [www.plymouth.gov.uk/hamwoodsmanagement](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/hamwoodsmanagement)  
 Radford Woods Management Plan 2014 [www.plymouth.gov.uk/radfordwoodsmanagement](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/radfordwoodsmanagement)  
 Efford Marsh Management Plan 2014 [www.plymouth.gov.uk/effordmarshmanagement](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/effordmarshmanagement)

**Background papers:**

Title	Part I	Part II	Exemption Paragraph Number							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
None										

**Sign off:**

Fin	CF/Plac eFPC1 314005 .25.02. 14	Leg	JAR/19 672/Fe b14	Mon Off	TH015 3	HR	N/A	Assets	N/ A	IT	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating SMT Member: Paul Barnard, Assistant Director for Strategic Planning & Infrastructure													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the content of the report? Yes													

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Ham Woods is a 35.2 hectare green space separating the communities of Ham, Weston Mill, King's Tamerton and Honicknowle. Radford Woods is a 38.9 hectare green space separating the communities of Hooe, Plymstock and Goosewell.

Efford Marsh is an existing Local Nature Reserve and a 0.9hectare extension is proposed. All areas under consideration in this report are currently owned and managed by PCC. Maps of all three sites are shown in Section 6 of this report.

## **2.0 Local Nature Reserve Designation**

- 2.1 The Council has the power to designate sites as Local Nature Reserves (LNR) under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. To declare a site as a LNR the land should have good natural interest and provide an area for the informal enjoyment of nature by the public. The proposed designations/extension meets both of these criteria.
- 2.2 Both PCC Street Scene Services and Natural England fully endorse the proposed designations/extension as they acknowledge that this proposal reflects the management status quo on the ground. The proposed designations/extension are all covered by the management plans for the entire site.
- 2.3 To complete the process Cabinet must approve the designation of Ham Woods and Radford Woods as Local Nature Reserves and an extension of Efford Marsh Local Nature Reserve. The Head of Legal Services would then be instructed to draw up and sign the legal documents that complete the formal designation. The designation will then be advertised to inform the public.

## **3.0 Implications of the designations/extension**

- 3.1 Designating or extending the sites as Local Nature Reserves places a statutory duty on the Land Owner (PCC) to maintain the natural interests, and access provision, in the same condition as when the site was designated. It also results in a restriction on the future use of the land as it can only be used as a nature reserve, unless the site is de-designated.
- 3.2 The designation of two new Local Nature Reserves and extension of another will ensure that a valuable resource is maintained for the community's enjoyment and for the benefit of the City's wildlife. It will also enable us to achieve the LDF Core Strategy target and Plymouth Green Space Strategy target of designating 100ha of LNR by 2016 (we have designated 48.4 ha to date and these designations/extension would take us up to 123.4ha).

## **4.0 Financial implications**

- 4.1 The designation of Ham Woods and Radford Woods as Local Nature Reserves will have additional revenue cost implications. These will be funded by secured S106 contributions for a 25 year period (in the case of Ham Woods) and 7 years (in the case of Radford Woods). Copies of S106 certificates attached.
- 4.2 The extension of Efford Marsh Local Nature Reserve will not have additional revenue implications as work will be performed at current levels and contained within the existing local nature reserve maintenance budget. Plymouth City Council as owner of Efford Marsh has an existing commitment to manage this area's nature conservation interest and public access.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

The designation of two new Local Nature Reserves and extension of a third Local Nature Reserve is an opportunity to raise the profile of Plymouth's future sustainable growth and commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of the population. It will broadcast the message that the Council is serious about protecting valuable green spaces and that they will be maintained for the community's enjoyment and to benefit the City's wildlife.

It will also enable the Council to achieve the LDF Core Strategy target and Plymouth Green Space Strategy target of designating 100ha of LNR by 2016.

## **6.0 Site maps**

6.1 Ham Woods

6.2 Radford Woods

6.3 Efford Marsh

## **7.0 S106 Spend Certificates**

7.1 Ham Woods

7.2 Radford Woods