



# Ministry of Defence

Secretariat  
Defence Infrastructure Organisation  
Kingston Road  
Sutton Coldfield  
B75 7RL

E-mail: [diosec-parli@mod.gov.uk](mailto:diosec-parli@mod.gov.uk)  
[www.gov.uk/DIO](http://www.gov.uk/DIO)

Ref. FOI 2019/03827

21 May 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 21 March 2019 requesting the following information:

*"Thanks you for your response to my Freedom of information request, FOI2019/02371.*

*The document you link to is for Army Training Estate - Home Counties. I was in fact already aware of this document; I'm trying to find the equivalent document (if it exists) for Army Training Estate - East.*

*Can you advise if such a document is available?"*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and I can confirm that all the information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested can be found enclosed, at annex 1-27.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may wish to note that this document was initially produced in 2003 and is still in draft form. Since 2003, six of the training facilities referred to in this draft have subsequently been sold and other information within this draft is out of date.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made in writing within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the

MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

DIO Secretariat

**PUBLIC ACCESS CONSULTANCY  
FOR THE ARMY TRAINING ESTATE**

**Regional Report – ATE East**

***Confidential Draft***

---

Prepared by:  
RPS, Oxford

July 2003

**RPS**  
Mallams Court  
18 Milton Park  
Abingdon  
Oxfordshire OX14 4RP

**Tel**        01235 821888  
**Fax**        01235 820351  
**Email**      [rpsox@rpsplc.co.uk](mailto:rpsox@rpsplc.co.uk)

---

# Contents

---

	Page No
<b>1</b>	
Introduction	1
<b>2</b>	
Army Training Estate East	4
<b>3</b>	
Public Access to the East of England	7
<b>4</b>	
Access to the Army Training Estate East	17



# Figures & Appendices

---

## Figures

- 1 Map of Army Training Estate, highlighting ATE East
- 2 Map of ATE East
- 3 ATE East in relation to the regional study area

## Tables

- 1 Details of Training Areas and Ranges
- 2 Average Population densities for the East Region
- 3 Length of Public Rights of Way (PROW) by type for each county
- 4 A comparison of Public Rights of Way by type in East Region and England as a whole
- 5 Indicator of Supply and Demand for PROW
- 6 National, Regional and County Walking, Riding and Cycling Trails
- 7 Indicative List of Licensed Activities
- 8 Timetable for CROW Act Mapping
- 9 Summary of Proposals and Recommendations

## Appendices

**Appendix A** Proforma for Site Visits

**Appendix B** Site Reports

- East Midlands Training Area
  - Beckingham & Fulbeck Training Areas
  - Dukeries Training Area & Proteus Camp
  - Yardley Chase Training Area
- East Anglia Training Area
  - Barton Road Rifle Range
  - Colchester Training Area
    - Middlewick Ranges
    - Friday Woods Training Area
    - Fingringhoe Ranges
  - Kelling & Salthouse Heaths Training Area
  - Stradishall Training Area
- Stanford Training Area (STANTA)
  - Main Training Area
  - Sculthorpe Airfield
  - Watton Airfield

**Appendix C** Sources of Information

**Appendix D** Glossary of Terms/Abbreviation

# 1 Introduction

---

## Overall Aims of the Study

- 1.1 RPS has been commissioned by Headquarters Land Command (HQ Land) and Defence Estates (DE), to undertake a study of Public Access across the Army Training Estate (ATE).
- 1.2 The Study will be taken forward within the context of the Strategy for the Defence Estate, *"In Trust and On Trust"* (referred to as the Estate Strategy) and the emerging Countryside and Rights of Way legislation.
- 1.3 Within the Estate Strategy, the Charter for the Defence Estate states the following:-  
*"There is a presumption in favour of public access to the rural estate although operational, safety and conservation interests necessarily restrict unlimited access"*.
- 1.4 With this in mind, the Strategy explains that *"Although subject to intensive military use, there will continue to be a presumption of public access wherever this is compatible with its primary military purpose. Where our duty of care to the general public, safety and security considerations permit, we will seek to increase the overall amount, quality and certainty of access to the estate. Against this, we will have to balance the interests of our tenants and protect fragile aspects of the environment"*.
- 1.5 Taking these commitments into account, the Public Access Study has been carried out with the following aim:  
*"To review the existing opportunities available for public access across the Training Estate and to make recommendations that could be implemented to enhance public access opportunities commensurate with military training requirements, in line with Government policy. Any recommendations must therefore take into account nature conservation, cultural heritage and other issues/constraints."*

## Approach and Methodology

- 1.6 It has been agreed to focus the study on each of the 12 ATEs that make up the Army Training Estate separately. This allows consideration of the regional context of each ATE and the unique nature of public access resources and demand in different regions throughout the UK. Figure 1 illustrates the location of ATE East (ATE E), the focus of this report, in relation to the other 11 ATEs.

Figure 1 Army Training Estate, highlighting ATE East



1.7 The method employed for the study involved visits to selected sites within ATE E and interviews with selected staff. A proforma was devised to ensure all relevant information was collected for each site, included in Appendix A of this report. The findings of these visits and interviews are provided in the form of Site Reports, included in Appendix B of this report.

- 1.8 Information was also collected from various sources on each region in general, including the demographics and current access resources, to give a regional context to each of the 12 reports.

### **Report Structure**

- 1.9 Each regional report will follow a similar structure, with a review of the existing public access and recommendations about how those opportunities could potentially be improved and enhanced.
- 1.10 Chapter 2 of the report is an overview of ATE E, summarising the training facilities and use. Chapter 3 then sets the Regional context of the report, providing an overview of the key characteristics of the East, including its demographics and the general public access resources. Chapter 4 summarises the current situation of public access on ATE East and the key opportunities arising from the research. Individual reports for each site within ATE East are included in Appendix B.
- 1.11 It should be noted that the recommendations made in this report have not been costed, nor has funding been identified to meet any such cost. If the recommendations are implemented, this would be part of a rolling programme of improvements.
- 1.12 In addition, this study has been undertaken at the same time as the implications of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) are emerging. The report reflects the current situation in relation to ATE E, at the time of production of the report.
- 1.13 In the wider context, this study does not take into consideration any change in the current situation that may arise in light of the Byelaw Review that is currently being carried out by DE. Following publication of the outcome of this review, it may be necessary to revisit some of the recommendations.

### **Consultation Process**

- 1.14 The consultation process adopted for all 12 Regional Reports is to send an initial confidential draft to the Countryside Agency, the relevant local authorities and other relevant statutory bodies. Following their comment, the consultation report will be more widely distributed at the regional level to all interested parties.
- 1.15 It is expected that the individual site reports and proposals will be incorporated in the development of the MOD's Environmental Management System (EMS) for each Training Area, and further consultation will be undertaken as the recommendations are implemented.



## 2 Army Training Estate East

### Training Areas – Summary Details

2.1 The ATE E comprises some twelve separate Training Areas and range complexes, which offer a range of training opportunities, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Details of Training Areas and Ranges

LOCATION	Total Area (ha)	Dry Training Area (DTA)	Ranges	Field Firing	Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV)	Operating In Built up Area (OBUA)	Driver Tr'g
<b>East Midlands Training Area</b>							
- Beccingham & Fulbeck TA	582	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
- Dukeries TA & Proteus Camp	382	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
- Yardley Chase Training Area	193	✓	-	-	-	-	-
<b>East Anglia Training Area</b>							
- Barton Road Rifle Range	218	-	✓	-	-	-	-
- Middlewick Ranges	370	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
- Fingringhoe Ranges	733	✓	✓*	✓	-	✓	-
- Friday Woods TA	492	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
- Kelling & Salthouse Heaths TA	187	✓	-	-	-	-	-
- Stradishall Training Area	251	✓	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Stanford Training Area (STANTA)</b>							
- Stanford Training Area	10528	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
- Watton Airfield	200	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
- Sculthorpe Airfield	540	✓	-	-	-	-	✓

\* Including mechanical moving training target range (MMTTR)

2.2 The location of the sites is shown in Figure 2. The Training Areas cover a large geographical region encompassing both East Anglia and the East Midlands and stretch from Colchester in the south to Nottingham in the north.

Figure 2 Map of ATE East



- 2.3 The sites stretch across the whole of eastern England and consequently display a wide variety of land uses and habitat types. The sites around Colchester are lowland grassland, woodland, wetlands and marsh, those around Thetford display a mix of woodland, heath and arable cropping, whilst the north Norfolk coast around Kelling and Salthouse Heaths encompass important glacial outwash plain habitats associated with the coastal fringe.
- 2.4 A large proportion of ATE E is considered important for its nature conservation value, including sites with local, national and European designations:
- 1 Ramsar site
  - 3 candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) and 2 Special Protection Areas (SPA)
  - 17 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Several Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

### **Training Area Management and Use**

- 2.5 ATE E falls under the authority of the Commander ATE E, based at the Headquarters at West Tofts Camp, Thetford.
- 2.6 Usage of the facilities is dominated by:
- Regular Units (Tri Service);
  - Territorial Army Units;
  - Cadets;
  - Police.

It is also used by:

- Tenants;
- Conservation Groups;
- Organised tours;
- A wide variety of civilian gun clubs;
- Casual visitors.



## 3 Public Access in the East

---

### Regional Make-up

3.1 The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of the regional facts and statistics covering demographics, linear and open access to ATE E as defined in Figure 2. The geographical areas covered by ATE E includes the following counties (shown in Figure 3 overleaf), although not all these counties contain Training Areas or ranges:

- Bedfordshire
- Cambridgeshire (containing Barton Road)
- Derbyshire
- Essex (containing Colchester)
- Hertfordshire
- Leicestershire
- Lincolnshire (containing Beckingham and Fulbeck)
- Northamptonshire (containing Yardley Chase)
- Norfolk (containing STANTA and Kelling & Salthouse Heaths)
- Nottinghamshire (containing Dukeries)
- Rutland
- Suffolk (containing Stradishall)
- Peterborough Unitary Authority

3.2 Although the access resources in the East are undoubtedly used by members of the public who live outside these authority boundaries, the demographics and access statistics for the rest of the UK are considered in greater depth in other ATE Access Reports. For the purposes of this report, the study area will only cover those counties listed above.

### Demographics

3.3 The East Region has 8.4 million inhabitants according to the 2001 census and comprises both the East Midlands and East of England regions. The average population densities for the Region are shown in Table 2 below. Since 1991 the population of the East has been expanding by more than 0.5% per annum, almost twice the rate of the UK population. The Region has varying demographic social and economic structure due to in-migration from London and the rest of the south east, particularly in the southern counties.

Figure 3: ATE East in relation to the regional study area



3.4 The East Region has an average population density of 2.8 persons per hectare. However, there are significant regional variations in population densities. For example, at a density of 1.1 persons per hectare, Lincolnshire is the fourth most sparsely populated county in England, whilst Hertfordshire has a population density of 6.3 persons per hectare. The most sparsely populated areas are mostly in the north eastern parts of the Region and include the Cambridgeshire fens, between Ely and March, parts of Breckland, north-west Norfolk, mid to east Suffolk and Lincolnshire. Access to these areas is poor due to inadequate road and rail infrastructure. In parts of these areas the density of population falls to 0.6 persons per hectare (DEFRA).

**Table 2 : Average Population Densities for the East Region**

County	Population (‘000s)	Density (population per hectare)
Bedfordshire	381,572	3.2
Cambridgeshire	552,658	1.8
Derbyshire	784,585	2.9
Essex	1,310,835	3.8
Hertfordshire	1,033,977	6.3
Leicestershire	609,578	2.9
Lincolnshire	646,645	1.1
Northamptonshire	629,645	2.7
Norfolk	796,728	1.5
Nottinghamshire	748,510	3.6
Peterborough	156,061	4.5
Rutland	34,563	0.9
Suffolk	668,553	1.8
<b>East Region</b>	<b>8,353,910</b>	<b>2.8 (average)</b>
<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>47,054,789</b>	<b>3.61</b>

Source: Census 2001(National Statistics)

- 3.5 Population trends show that the rural population has generally grown faster than its non-rural counterpart. The rural population has increased appreciably over the past 15 years and makes up a greater proportion of the total regional population than in England as a whole. The population of the East of England in 1998 was 5.4 million, with some 2.3 million (43%) living in predominantly rural districts. Similarly, The East Midlands region is home to nearly 4.2 million people, nearly 40% of whom live predominantly in the rural districts. In 1998 an estimated 39.7% of residents in the East Midlands lived in rural areas, compared with 28.1% for England (State of the Countryside 2000). Between 1984 and 1998, the population of rural districts in the East Midlands grew by 164,709 (11%), compared with a growth of 131,368 (5.5%) in non-rural districts. Whilst the Region has some of the fastest growing populations of the country, young people are leaving the rural areas, which consequently have an ageing population ([www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)).

## Access Resources

### General Geography

- 3.8 The East of England region (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk & Suffolk) covers some 19,000 km<sup>2</sup>. It is predominantly a low lying area, with the majority of the land being below 60m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum), with much of the fens and central lowlands being at or below sea level. Whilst the region is the driest in England, the coast and lowest lying areas are under serious threat from imminent sea level rise ([www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)). Agriculture has shaped the region for centuries and a long history of settlement has left a diverse landscape character. This ranges from the flat fenlands and lowland farmland to the beaches and dunes of the coast, all of which are interspersed with lakes, rivers and associated wetlands. Many of the coastal areas, wetlands and pastoral vales are subject to national and international protection measures and together with a wealth of archaeological and built heritage features are a great attraction to visitors, none more so than the Broads National Park (Countryside Agency 2000).
- 3.9 The East Midlands cover an area of 15,627 km<sup>2</sup>, the landscape (Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland) is more varied, ranging from the farmland of Northamptonshire, the Peak District of Derbyshire, to the low, flat landscape of the Lincolnshire Wolds.
- 3.10 The Region as a whole is predominantly rural with a rich heritage of small market towns and a few large metropolitan centres and has not experienced the kind of urban coalescence seen in other English regions. Some parts of the Region are still relatively inaccessible, just as others are close to significant conurbations, whilst London exerts a significant influence on the economies of the southern counties in the region. Agriculture still has a considerable influence over the rural economy by virtue of the favourable geology, climate and relief of the area (Countryside Agency East of England 2002). The numerous characteristic landscapes make the area very attractive to visitors.
- 3.11 The location of the Region makes it well placed to take advantage of the strategic Trans-European routes within the UK and the growth links between the European mainland and other areas of England. The East Coast includes the seaports at Felixstowe, Harwich, Lowestoft and Tilbury. Harwich handles 4 million tonnes of freight and 2 million passengers per annum. The A1 and M1 span the region north to south with important cross links such as the A14, A/M42, A46/M69, A 50/A52 and A43. The road network, including the A14, A11 and M11 increases the access to the ports from the centre of the Region.

## Linear Access

- 3.12 There are a total of 44,009 kms of Public Rights of Way (PROW) within the Region, made up as shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3 : Length of Public Rights of Way by type, for each county**

County	Public Footpath (km)	Public Bridleway (km)	RUPP (km)	BOAT (km)	Total (km)
Bedfordshire	1543	565	2	47	2157
Cambridgeshire	2202	516	0	401	3119
Derbyshire	4800	456	22	0	5278
Essex	6505	800	0	194	7499
Hertfordshire	2228	577	123	137	3065
Leicestershire	2429	504	10	74	3017
Lincolnshire	3040	782	143	23	3988
Northamptonshire	2146	810	0	105	3061
Norfolk	2628	499	489	40	3656
Nottinghamshire	2368	815	44	3	3230
Peterborough	165	89	0	5	259
Rutland	191	124	0	6	321
Suffolk	4482	558	153	166	5359
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,727</b>	<b>7,095</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>1,201</b>	<b>44,009</b>
<b>Total for England</b>					<b>188,529</b>

3.13 In 2000, a sample survey of classified paths showed that Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire had some of the lowest proportion of paths which were 'easy to follow' (83.3% and 84.1% respectively) amongst all English counties. Lincolnshire also had one of the lowest proportions of paths 'easy to use' (80%) while Nottinghamshire has one of the lowest proportion of paths 'easy to find' (54%) (Countryside Agency : East Midlands State of the Countryside 2002). By comparison, Suffolk (99.4%) and Hertfordshire (99.7%) in the East of England have a very high proportion of easy to follow paths.

**Table 4 : A comparison of Public Rights of Way by type in East Region and England**

Type Of PROW	Length (km)		Length as % of total in the area by type of PROW	
	England	East region	England	East region
Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT)	3,812	1,201	1.9	2.7
Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPP)*	6,098	986	3.0	2.3
Bridleways	35,896	7,095	17.8	16.1
Footpaths	156,214	34,727	77.3	78.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>202,021</b>	<b>44,009</b>		

*\*RUPPS (Roads Used as Public Paths) to be reclassified to reflect precise status as Footpath, Bridleway or Byway*

3.14 Table 4 above indicates that the East Region has a higher proportion of public footpaths and BOATs than the nation as a whole, but a lower proportions of bridleways and RUPPs.

3.15 A comparison of total length of PROW in the East Region against population, relative to the whole of England indicates that the Region has, on average, a better provision of public rights of ways compared to the country as a whole, as shown in Table 5 overleaf.

**Table 5 : Indicator of Supply and Demand for PROW**

Geographical Area	Total Length of PROW (km)	Population (millions)	Length (km) of PROW / person
England	188, 531	49.5	0.0038
East	44,009	8.4	0.0052

- 3.16 Within this overall network, there are several promoted routes of regional and national significance, as shown in Table 6. This Table, whilst not a definitive list, represents the main regional and national trails found in this area.
- 3.17 There are two National Trails in the regional study area. In the East of England is the 150 km long Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path. This is an ancient and historic route, based on a Roman military road. The path heads north west for the coast, through heathland, forestry plantations and farmland, crossing the Brecks Environmentally Sensitive Area and running along the North Norfolk Heritage Coast. The coast path is entirely within the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A survey in 1996-97 of this trail estimated annual use at 91,668 user days (Norfolk CC, 1997). In the East Midlands, the Pennine Way extends for 412km, from Edale, Derbyshire to Kirk Yetholm, Scotland. The 330km long Pennine Bridleway is also under development for horse riders and cyclists as well as walkers. Whilst such National Trails are considered to be the 'flagships' of a region's PROW network they only represent a small fraction of access opportunities in the East, although the economic benefits of tourism and recreational access to rural areas is considerable as documented in many studies.
- 3.18 The region also has a number of 'regional' routes, which use existing or permissive rights of way. The 170km long Icknield Way links the Ridgeway, Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast National trails. The Fen Rivers Way, developed by Norfolk and Cambridgeshire County councils, runs for nearly 50 miles between Cambridge and Kings Lynn alongside rivers that drain slowly across the fens into the Wash. Long distance routes, such as the Midshires Way, the Ivanhoe Way, Leighfield Way and the Ashby Wold Heritage Way extend to a total of 400km.
- 3.19 Sustrans has developed a number of cycle routes (some 480km in the East Midlands, including the Hull to Harwich route and useable parts of the Pennine Cycleway) around the region, including the long distance routes described in Table 6.

3.20 The British Horse Society (BHS) also promotes recreational rides around the region including the Icknield Way, the Midshires Way, the Peddars Way and the Marriott's Way, all as listed in Table 6. There are also some new routes under development, such as The East Anglian Coastal Bridleroute and the Peterborough to Peddars Way Bridleroute.

3.21 The relatively flat landscape of the East of England provides many suitable opportunities for cycling. An average of 110 kms per person per year was covered by cycle, by far the furthest distance among the regions of England. However, whilst cyclists are well catered for, horse riders consider they are poorly served (Countryside Agency 2000) and efforts are being made in the region to improve the access for both cyclists and horse riders.

**Table 6: National and Regional Walking, Riding and Cycling Trails**

Significance	Route	Type of Access
<b>National Long Distance Trails</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peddars Way &amp; Norfolk Coast Path</li> <li>• Pennine Way</li> </ul>	<p>Walking (riding and cycling on Peddars Way only) Walking</p>
<b>Regional Network Routes and Paths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Icknield Way (Bedfordshire/Cambridgeshire/Hertfordshire/Suffolk)</li> <li>• Three Shires Way (Bedfordshire/Buckinghamshire/Cambridgeshire)</li> <li>• Marriott's Way (Norfolk)</li> <li>• Midshires Way (Buckinghamshire/Derbyshire/Northamptonshire/Nottinghamshire)</li> <li>• The Fen Rivers Way (Norfolk/Cambridgeshire)</li> <li>• The Ivanhoe Way</li> <li>• The Leighfield Way</li> <li>• The Ashby Wold Heritage Way</li> <li>• Sustrans Derbyshire Regional Route 66</li> <li>• Sustrans Derbyshire &amp; Leicestershire Route 6</li> <li>• Sustrans Rutland, Leicestershire &amp; Derbyshire Route 63</li> <li>• Sustrans Regional Route 71</li> <li>• Sustrans Nottinghamshire &amp; Lincolnshire Routes 64 &amp; 1</li> <li>• Sustrans Derbyshire &amp; Leicestershire Route 6</li> <li>• Sustrans Cambridgeshire Routes 11/12/63/51</li> <li>• Sustrans Bedfordshire Routes 12/51/6</li> <li>• Sustrans Essex Routes 1/11/13/16</li> <li>• Sustrans Hertfordshire Routes 61/6/12</li> <li>• Sustrans Norfolk Route 30</li> <li>• Sustrans Suffolk Routes 1/13/51</li> </ul>	<p>Walking and riding</p> <p>Walking, cycling &amp; riding Walking, cycling &amp; riding Walking and riding</p> <p>Walking Walking Walking Walking</p> <p>Cycling Cycling Cycling</p> <p>Cycling Cycling</p> <p>Cycling Cycling Cycling Cycling Cycling Cycling Cycling</p>



Significance	Route	Type of Access
County Network Routes and Paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clopton Way (Cambridgeshire)</li> <li>• Harcamlow Way (Cambridgeshire)</li> <li>• Port Way (Cambridgeshire)</li> <li>• <b>Whitewell Way (Cambridgeshire)</b></li> <li>• Wimpole Way (Cambridgeshire)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking</li> <li>Walking and cycling</li> <li>Walking and cycling</li> <li>Walking</li> <li>Walking and cycling</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essex Way (Essex)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milton Keynes Boundary Walk (Northamptonshire)</li> <li>• Sustrans Milton Keynes Routes 6/51</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking</li> <li>Cycling</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Angles Way (Norfolk)</li> <li>• <b>Great Eastern Pingo Trail (Norfolk)</b></li> <li>• Hereward Way (Norfolk)</li> <li>• Little Ouse Path (Norfolk)</li> <li>• Norfolk Circular Walks (Norfolk)</li> <li>• <b>Pingoland Explorer Trail (Norfolk)</b></li> <li>• St Edwards Way (Norfolk)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking</li> <li>Walking</li> <li>Walking</li> <li>Walking</li> <li>Walking</li> <li>Walking</li> <li>Walking</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Robin Hood Way (Nottinghamshire)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustrans Peterborough Routes 12/63/53</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cycling</li> </ul>

*NOTE: Those routes passing through or adjacent to ATE East Training Areas are shown in bold type*

#### Area Access

3.22 There are no datasheets, which report on the area of land presently available for public access, although the Countryside Agency is currently mapping the extent of the access areas under CROW. The Act will create a right of access on foot to open country (mountain, moor, heath and down) and registered common land and is likely to have a significant impact on the amount of land available for such recreational purposes in the East Region. Substantial areas of land are already classed as urban commons and so are available for public access under Section 193 of the Law of Property Act 1925. In addition, water companies, Forest Enterprise and the National Trust generally have a policy of open public access to land under their ownership/control where this does not conflict with their land management activities.

3.23 The CROW Act includes provisions for land to be closed for public access during certain times of the year for reasons of land management and/or the need for national defence. A section on the Act and its implications for the Training Areas and ranges in ATE E, is included in the next chapter.

3.24 Aside from PROW, the general public have access to open spaces, country parks, picnic sites, most beaches and canal towpaths, open country/coastline owned by the National Trust, most commons near older towns and cities, some woods and forest and land with access agreements. In the case of the latter, some land is covered by voluntary access agreements with the landowner. In addition the Rural Development Programme administered by DEFRA has several schemes which encourage farmers and other landowners to protect and improve the landscape and its wildlife, and allow the public to visit these conservation areas. There are a variety of such sites in the East Region, incorporating conservation walks and rides which link into the existing rights of way network, details of which are listed in the DEFRA Conservation Walks and Rides Register. This can be accessed through the DEFRA website ([www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)).

## Summary and Conclusion

3.25 The East Region is characterised by:

- An increasing population, with high growth rates around the urban centres, in particular Cambridge, and an ageing rural population.
- A PROW network that is higher, proportionate to population, than national statistics. The PROW network has a higher number of footpaths and byways than national statistics, but a deficiency in other PROW.
- Large areas of land liable to become more accessible under CROW.
- Several promoted regional and national trails designed for all types of users.
- Some existing countryside access in designated open spaces, country parks, picnic sites, most beaches and canal towpaths, most commons near older towns and cities, some woods and forest and land with largely voluntary access agreements.

3.26 It is reasonable to conclude therefore that visiting the countryside is becoming increasingly popular and there is likely to be more pressure on the existing access resources owing to the increasing regional population in the East. Pressure on access is likely to be greatest around urban fringes and Community Forests, the Peak District and Broads National Parks and the Norfolk Coast AONB.

## 4 Access to the Training Estate

---

### Introduction

- 4.1 The ATE E covers a broad expanse of eastern England and displays a wide variety of landscape types and predominantly rural land uses. The region offers extensive access through both informal use and managed activities. This chapter summarises the baseline of access onto ATE E and explores where there are opportunities to improve the current situation with reference to the Estate Strategy, in terms of quantity, quality and certainty. More detailed descriptions of each site are given in the Site Reports at Appendix B.

### Current Situation

#### Quantity

- 4.2 Access to ATE E is primarily by informal use of linear routes or by licence. The Training Areas have many PROWs across them, including both footpaths and bridleways, and also the less common RUPPs (to be redefined as restricted byways under CROW) and BOATs. These PROWs (totalling around 63 kms) are illustrated on the figures included with the Site Reports in Appendix B. In addition, the permissive routes at Friday Woods and Watton Brook contribute a further 10.4kms of linear access.
- 4.3 In some cases the Training Areas are also close or adjacent to popular recreational and leisure facilities. For e.g. Dukeries is immediately adjacent to Sherwood Forest Park, STANTA next to the popular Thetford Forest and Kelling & Salthouse Heaths close to the North Norfolk Coast AONB which is under increasing pressure from recreational users.
- 4.4 The majority of the Barton Road, Colchester and STANTA Training Areas are covered by military byelaws. The aim of the byelaws is to ensure safety of the public by regulating access to Training Areas and ranges when they are being used for military activity. The details of each set of byelaws is set out in the relevant site report (see Appendix B) and will be dependent upon the type of military activity taking place and the associated risks.
- 4.5 Access to the training estate is also granted via a licensing system for a wide range of organised activities. Licences are issued by DE in consultation with the

Commandants. Examples of the types of activity undertaken under licence are given in Table 7. Note that this is not intended to be a comprehensive list, merely indicative.

**Table 7: Indicative List of Licensed Activities**

<b>Activity</b>
Educational visits/research
Fairs/shows
Fishing
Horse Riding events
Model aircraft flying
Motor/motorcycle events
Nature Conservation Visits/Research
Open days/Charity events
Police training
Shooting
Use of Ranges by civilian clubs

### **Quality**

4.6 The definition of quality of access is subjective and will reflect an individual's differing needs and values. However, for the purposes of this report, quality of access can be considered as a function of the following criteria:

- Condition of the paths/ open access areas;
- Linkages between paths/ open access areas;
- Facilities provided by organisations/landowners in the area;
- What there is available to see during the visit;
- Less tangible aspects of quality including quiet enjoyment, freedom to wander, remoteness and level of use;
- Level and type of information available detailing access opportunities.

4.7 Since there is no existing open access in ATE E, the condition of PROWs is particularly important. Condition can be measured in several different ways including overall ease to find, ease to follow and ease to use. Ease to use will take account of such practical issues as incidence of obstacles, which may render a path unusable and level of signposting (Countryside Agency, National Condition Survey 2001). In

2000, the results of the Rights of Way Condition Survey undertaken by the Countryside Agency concluded that no survey region had attained the overall national target for path maintenance (over 95% of paths easy to find, easy to follow & easy to use), with no regions reaching the national target for paths 'easy to find'.

- 4.8 It must be stated that no formal condition assessment was undertaken during the site visits to the training estate, however in the East Region, only Essex reached two national targets (over 95%) for paths 'easy to follow' and 'easy to use', whilst Lincolnshire and Norfolk failed to reach the national target for any of the three categories. In all survey regions within ATE E the percentage change between 1994 and 2000 in following a route was positive, again with the exception of Lincolnshire (-10.2%) and Nottinghamshire (-6.1%). Generally, there was an improvement in the level of signposting in all survey regions except two, one of which was Nottinghamshire which saw a 10.1% decline in provision between 1994 and 2000, although Norfolk still has less than 50% of routes signposted or waymarked.
- 4.9 DE in association with WS Atkins have been developing a survey methodology for assessing the condition of paths on some MOD sites. The methodology has now been tested in a pilot study and it is anticipated that this survey programme will be extended to other Training Areas in due course, including those in ATE E.
- 4.10 Linkages are important where opportunities are provided for circular routes and connections between urban areas. Within the Training Areas and ranges of ATE E, many of the PROWs link in with others crossing surrounding land, and therefore provide vital contributions to the overall PROW network of the area. Examples include the links between the paths through Budby SSSI and Sherwood Forest Country Park at Dukeries, links between existing routes and the circular walk at Friday Woods and links between existing roads provided by the Watton Brook walk at STANTA.
- 4.11 A variety of landscape types attract visitors including large areas of open spaces, woodland and coastline environments. ATE E is of high interest in terms of ecology and archaeology, with many of the Training Areas including sites with national or international designations (SSSI/SAC/SPA). The area around STANTA, for example, which has not be intensively farmed for the last sixty years has barely changed and is of major conservation importance with ten SSSIs covering around 6800 hectares, the largest single ownership in lowland Britain, 2 cSAs and 1 SPA. On a smaller scale the important glacial outwash plains at Kelling and Salthouse Heaths are covered by both nature conservation (SSSI) and landscape (AONB) designations.

- 4.12 Many people value remoteness, peace and quiet in the countryside; conversely others enjoy company. Remoteness is valued, as amongst other reasons, it may be a challenging environment, provides a contrast with the more populous areas, and provides a 'wilderness' experience. Wilderness areas have a low perceptual carrying capacity, which can be defined as the maximum level of (recreational) use above which there is a decline the quality of experience from the point of view of the participant (MOD, 2001). An individual's perception of quality of access is also affected by the availability of free-ranging access, although this depends on the user; for example walkers value this while mountain bikers often require defined routes. The quality of a visit would also depend on the amount of other people in the area at the same time. Over-use of an area is difficult to define and will depend on the nature of the site, tradition and expectation of visitors (National Trust, 1995). It will be possible to test both the quality and quantity of experience through visitor surveys at ATE E sites once the survey methodology developed by DE to assess access and recreational experience on MOD Training Areas is rolled out across the defence estate.
- 4.13 The ATE E encompasses both more remote, open spaces and those closer to either larger centres of population or popular recreational facilities. For example, the sites in Norfolk (STANTA/Kelling & Salthouse) and Lincolnshire (Beckingham/Fulbeck) are in the most sparsely populated and remote parts of ATE E. The North Norfolk Coast is habitually referred to as wild, remote and open, whilst the Training Area at Stanford is described as mysterious, wild and lonely. Conversely, those sites close to Cambridge (Barton Road), Colchester (Friday Woods) and Sherwood Forest (Dukeries) are valued less for remoteness, but more for specific landscape and recreational qualities.
- 4.14 The MOD has been proactive in producing information on the access opportunities across parts of the ATE E as described in 4.16. This is inextricably linked to the quality of experience for the visitor and the certainty of access discussed below. Further initiatives that might be considered in this respect are investigated in the individual site reports and summarised in 4.36.

#### **Certainty**

- 4.15 The certainty of access for recreational purposes of the Training Areas and ranges will depend on the understanding of the general public as to where they can go and when. The notification of live firing times, signs positioned at appropriate places and the flying of red flags all helps to provide this information. At all ATE E Training Areas where live firing takes places, whilst the normal notification procedure in accordance with the byelaws is undertaken, a regular newsletter is also sent to Parish Councils

and tenants informing them of forthcoming large exercises and planned military activity. The Commandant also offers to attend Parish Council or other local meetings. Well located, good quality signage is imperative in transferring information to the public regarding access opportunities or restrictions and efforts are ongoing, for example at Friday Woods, to make signage more user-friendly. On a strategic level, improvements to general MOD signage are discussed at 4.33 below.

- 4.16 Some areas and routes throughout the region are promoted by the Countryside Agency (e.g. the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path & Greenwood Community Forest), relevant highway authority rights of way departments (e.g. Essex Way (Essex CC), Pingoland Explorer Trail (Breckland Council, Norfolk), tourist information centres (eg. Sherwood Forest) and other interested parties (e.g. routes such as the Midshires Way by the BHS or cycle routes by Sustrans).
- 4.17 The MOD promotes access to parts of the ATE E by three key means. Firstly, via the Public Information Leaflet for the Stanford Training Area (STANTA) available on the ATE website ([www.army.mod.uk/ate](http://www.army.mod.uk/ate)). This provides the historical context to military training at STANTA, together with training facts, conservation works and an explanation as to why unsupervised access is generally not possible on the grounds of public safety. Secondly, information regarding general access opportunities on PROWs across some of the Training Areas is available on the DE website (Barton Road, Beckingham, Middlewick/Friday Woods), in the MOD leaflet "What do you know about ..... Access to the Defence Estate", which provides a contact telephone number (01842 855235) for East, and in the MOD booklet "Walks on MOD Lands" (Beckingham). Thirdly, the MOD booklet promotes permissive routes that have been developed at Friday Woods (circular woodland walk) and at Watton Brook (linear walk along river valley). Individual leaflets for distribution locally (at tourist information centres, Post Offices etc.) have not yet been produced for these routes. The MOD booklet also gives other information regarding the Training Areas featured, including telephone numbers for the Range Officers at Colchester and STANTA who provide information on non-firing days and MOD/Forest Enterprise contact telephone numbers.

#### **Pressures and Constraints**

- 4.18 This study has highlighted both pressures and constraints in providing public access to the sites of ATE E.
- 4.19 There are a number of constraints that the existing provision of public access must work within, and these would need to be fully taken into account in the further development of access within ATE E. The principal constraints are:-

- The immediate needs of military training and public safety.
- The continued development and evolution of military training.
- The protection of the environmental 'assets', including nationally and internationally designated areas of ecology.
- The financial and manpower means required to maintain the access resources and to manage the more anti-social aspects of access, especially close to an urban environment e.g. flytipping, vandalism and unrestrained dogs.

4.20 The extensive nature conservation interests of STANTA are of particular significance, with most of the site being protected under the following international designations:

- The Breckland cSAC
- The Norfolk Valley Fens cSAC
- The Breckland cSPA

However, conservation interests are safeguarded by a management agreement with English Nature and the STANTA won the Silver Otter Trophy for its management of conservation. In addition, an Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP) was implemented at STANTA in July 2001. Its purpose was to identify all the principal interests in the Training Area (military training, agriculture, conservation and recreation) and reflect these in an integrated plan that will guide the ongoing management and development of STANTA in the future. This included a Component Management Plan (CMP) covering public access and recreation and projects identified in this CMP are now being taken forward as part of the overall Action Plan, details of which are included in the site report.

4.21 The Training Area at Fingringhoe is also of international importance and sensitive prize winning management of the ranges has resulted in the English Nature Conservation Award. Most of the site is protected under the following international designations:

- The Essex Estuaries cSAC
- The Colne Estuary SPA
- The Colne Estuary Ramsar site

4.22 Notwithstanding current initiatives, increased pressure for future public access to the ATE necessitates MOD to continually seek to improve the management of these sensitive areas to ensure that any potential damage resulting from public access is kept to a minimum.



4.23 The importance of protecting the ecological assets of ATE E has been highlighted by both English Nature and the Countryside Agency. Some of the points raised with regards public access at specific sites are as follows:-

- Protection of the most sensitive areas of the Roman River SSSI at Friday Woods from disturbance.
- Protection of nesting birds in the Norfolk Coast AONB (including Kelling & Salthouse Heaths) from disturbance by walkers and uncontrolled dogs.
- Protection of ground nesting birds (particularly Stone Curlews) at STANTA from disturbance by walkers.
- Protection of the rare Basil-Thyme Case Bearer moth, found at STANTA, from disturbance.
- Protection of Nightjars and Woodlarks at Budby.

## **Future Changes and Opportunities**

### **Introduction**

- 4.24 There are opportunities for improving the quantity, quality and certainty of public access to the Training Areas and ranges that constitute ATE E. However, these need reconciling with the constraints related to military training needs, safety considerations, nature conservation, other land issues and the availability of MOD (or other) resources, as summarised above. Proposals will be therefore be incorporated into the EMS for each training site, which uses the ILMP for STANTA and Rural Management Plans for other sites.
- 4.25 The possibilities proposed below are offered as indicative of the types of improved access that could be offered but without full consideration of these other constraints. Where the proposals are likely to have a significant effect on SSSIs, SACs or SPAs (habitats that are designated under the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive respectively for their European importance), an appropriate assessment may need to be carried out.
- 4.26 Some of these opportunities have been identified as best practice from other sites; some are already being explored by MOD/DE; others may involve a proactive approach that would involve third parties (e.g. tenants, neighbouring landowners, user representatives, other statutory bodies).

- 4.27 The initial section focuses on the impacts of the CROW Act to ATE E and the actions that will need to be taken, along with additional recommendations to consider. Following this, the main recommendations on improving access are summarised.

#### Impact of the CROW Act

- 4.28 The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 will create a right of access on foot to open country (mountain, moor, heath and down) and registered common land in England and Wales (separate legislation is being taken forward in Scotland). It will also allow land to be dedicated by the landowner for public access under Section 16.
- 4.29 Schedule 1 of the Act defines certain types of land use to be 'excepted land', which will, whilst being defined as open country, not be designated as access land. One category of such 'excepted land' is land covered by military byelaws.
- 4.30 Owners of access land will be able to restrict public access to that land generally up to a maximum of 28 days per year but within certain rules and restrictions. CROW also provides the opportunity for additional closures for particular reasons of land management (Section 24), safety (Section 25), and the need for defence or national security (Section 28).
- 4.31 The areas covered by the ATE E are split between different regions in relation to the mapping programme of the Countryside Agency. The table below sets out this programme and which Training Areas are in each region.

**Table 8: Timetable for CROW Act Mapping**

Region (as defined by Countryside Agency)	Draft Map Issue Date	Provisional Map Produced	Training Areas covered
West (Area 7)	30 June 2003	No	Yardley Chase
East (Area 8)	Due Autumn 2003	No	Barton Road, Beckingham & Fulbeck, Colchester (Middlewick, Friday Woods and Fingringhoe), Dukeries, Kelling & Salthouse, STANTA (inc. Sculthorpe & Watton), Stradishall

- 4.32 Following a three month public consultation period on the draft maps, the Countryside Agency will produce provisional maps. Beyond this stage, only someone with a legal interest in land mapped as access land will be entitled to appeal against the land's inclusion on the maps. Others have no entitlement to make an appeal after the initial three month consultation period. If no appeals are received, or when appeals have been heard and determined, the Countryside Agency will produce conclusive maps.

The aim is for conclusive maps of the whole country to be available by 2005 but with a staged commencement of the right of access.

- 4.33 Areas 7 (West) and 8 (East) are the last areas of the country to be mapped under CROW and the draft maps have not yet been produced for any of the sites within ATE E. Consequently, it is not possible to specify the exact extent of land mapped as open country as a result of CROW, although indications of areas that are expected to be included are listed under the relevant site reports.
- 4.34 A procedure has however been established by the MOD for reviewing and commenting on these maps. Firstly, military byelaws have primacy over CROW access land. So, subject to any review of these byelaws, any land that meets the criteria for open country and/or registered common land will be mapped as 'excepted land'. As a consequence, public access could remain as at present, even after the implementation of the CROW Act. Outside the byelawed areas, where MOD land is mapped as access land, MOD will need to decide whether or not to seek exclusions under Section 28.
- 4.35 Part II of the Act (Rights of Way) will provide opportunities for landowners to apply for diversions or closures of public rights of way (PROW). It will also empower the public to apply to the local highway authority for orders to remove obstructions. There may be opportunities to modify the PROW network in some places to everyone's advantage, although in practice these may be difficult to effect.
- 4.36 The CROW Act also requires access authorities (Highway and National Park Authorities) to prepare Rights of Way Improvement Plans (RoWIP) and to establish Local Access Forums (LAF). LAFs will have a responsibility to consider a wide range of access issues, not just issues related to Part I of the CROW Act. MOD has developed policy which states representation on these forums will be at observer status, which includes ATE E.

#### **Proposals for Improvements to the Existing Access Situation**

- 4.37 It is important to note that reducing the restrictions on access could increase risks to public health and safety if any such reductions are overly dependent on either the deployment of MOD resources to supervise such access or on visitors following instructions. With these points in mind, the following paragraphs consider the potential strategic improvements that could be considered for ATE E.

### *New/Revised Legislation*

- **Through the Byelaw Review**

A review of the primary legislation affecting military byelaws is ongoing, as stated in section 1.13. In association with this review, the MOD should consider what action needs to be taken to address the confusion that results from the wording of the existing Military Lands Byelaws which seem to imply open access to Training Areas when they are not in use and which are not interpreted in a consistent way throughout the ATE regions. Indeed DEFRA have already raised the issue of interpretation of these byelaws as part of this study, in respect to the extent to which they allow open access to the Training Area. MOD should also explore the extent to which a flexible approach to the application of the byelaws for individual Training Areas might facilitate improved access.

- **Implications of the CROW Act 2000**

Once the East has been mapped, ATE E should follow a similar approach as in other areas by working, through the relevant DE representatives, with the Countryside Agency and Ordnance Survey on the mapping of 'Excepted Land', to avoid any confusion to the general public on where open access is available.

There is also the strategic issue of how to handle land mapped as 'open country' but falling outside the byelaws in a consistent manner across all UK Training Areas. For example, a potential issue has already been highlighted at STANTA where areas of heathland regeneration that are not covered by the byelaws may be mapped as open country. Negotiations with the Countryside Agency and English Nature are ongoing with regards to how or if such access can be incorporated so as not to compromise the nature conservation objectives of the site. Whilst it is recommended that a detailed appraisal is conducted of what steps, if any, should be taken to restrict access at this site, it must be undertaken within the context of a strategic policy on this issue.

Where land is designated as open country it is imperative that MOD signage is not in breach of Section 14 relating to false or misleading notices.

The progress made with implementing Part II of CROW Act should be carefully monitored and necessary representations made to local access fora with regards routes crossing the Training Areas.

## *Provision of Access*

- **Circular routes/permissive paths**

Suitable circular routes should be identified using existing PROW and permissive paths that link villages, conservation and heritage sites, recreational facilities and promoted routes in the vicinity. The routes should be selected in order to achieve the aim of providing a good walk whilst mitigating against potential damage to sites of importance for nature conservation and preventing disruption to military training.

- **A Guide for Riders**

The BHS has requested that the MOD look into the possibilities of promoting ridden access on all suitable areas of the defence estate, and of producing a guide similar to that which has already been published for walkers (*Walks on MOD lands*). Whilst this is a strategic issue, which is relevant to much of the ATE, a leaflet could be produced for ATE E defining the opportunities for riders. The MOD would need to discuss with the BHS the issues arising when considering safe access by riders with a view to providing appropriate guidance for visitors. It may also be possible to incorporate cycle routes into such a publication since many routes provide opportunities for both horse riders and cyclists.

- **Path Condition Surveys**

Further to the pilot study, which was undertaken to assess the condition of paths on a Training Area outside ATE E, develop an ongoing programme of condition assessments of PROW, giving priority to the promoted routes that would be more widely used, to ensure condition and signage is maintained. This should be undertaken in liaison with the local authority and with regard to their statutory duties with regards to PROW. In addition local user groups could be approached to provide assistance with this programme on a voluntary basis.

- **Visitor Surveys**

Further to the pilot visitor surveys undertaken elsewhere on the ATE, the survey methodology developed to assess the quality and quantity of the access and recreation experience on MOD Training Areas should be tested on other sites throughout the ATE, including ATE E.

## *Information/promotion*

- **Interpretation Boards**

In conjunction with the circular routes proposed in this report and/or at other appropriate points within the Training Area, interpretation boards should be introduced which provide visitors with general information about the area. Consultation would need to be carried out between the various stakeholders of the area. In this way it is hoped that visitors will gain a better understanding of the Training Area and also the need for military training. Information that could be presented on an interpretation board includes:-

- General information on the area, including the geography/geology of the area and any ecological and archaeological points of interest;
- A map illustrating the area and what public access is available and where;
- Educational facts informing the public on potential hazards of the Training Area and the need for signs;
- Information on the military history of the area and current military training activities;
- An 'Easy to Understand' version of access rights and a code of conduct ;
- Details of where to get information on non-firing times or other details on access opportunities.

- **Improving Signs**

Work with the relevant authorities to improve signs generally so that the public are clear about PROW across the area, especially along the promoted routes which may be used by visitors to the area who are not familiar with the military presence. For example, at STANTA where the Peddars Way national route passes alongside the military Training Area. All signs also need to be user-friendly and where possible vandal and theft proof, although experience at ATE E is that all signage is vandalised.

- **Local Promotion**

Improve the promotion of the PROWs and permissive routes on ATE E by producing individual leaflets or 'walk cards' for the walks featured in the MOD booklet "Walks on MOD Lands". These should be available locally (tourist information centres, Post Offices etc.) for distribution to day visitors or those who do not require the complete booklet.

- **Websites**

The DE access website could be developed to promote access opportunities across the whole of ATE E and/or a specific ATE E website created, developed in a similar way to that for Dartmoor by ATE SW.

#### *Liaison*

- **Liaison with Third Parties**

Set up a formal liaison procedure with tenants and neighbouring landowners (e.g. the Forestry Commission) and local access authorities to review access plans, investigate the possibility of instigating joint projects and working with them to address the anti-social issues associated with access discussed below.

#### *Anti-Social Impact*

In order to improve the quality of the access opportunities at the Training Areas and ranges of ATE E, there is a need to address the anti-social issues associated with access e.g. vandalism, flytipping, burnt out cars etc. The following lists a range of actions that should be implemented across ATE E to help deal with these issues, where possible in association with other agencies experiencing similar problems:-

- **Encourage locals to be 'your eyes and ears'**

Hold presentations for local parish councils and other local community groups on the importance of the Training Area for military training, the nature conservation interests, and the access opportunities available. Encourage the reporting of vandalism and fly tipping as a way of working together to sustain the area.

- **Improve understanding**

Where appropriate erect signs to encourage the public to report fly tipping and warning of the illegal nature of some activities (e.g. it is a criminal offence to use footpaths and bridleways by motorised vehicles). However, a plethora of confusing signage should be avoided.

- **Develop vandal/theft proof signage**

Vandalism to plastic signs and theft of metal signage is an ongoing problem throughout the whole of the training estate. However, development of innovative new signage to address this issue should be considered, together with alternative and more secure ways of fixing signs.

- **Adopt measures to prevent the abandonment of cars on the Training Area and the illegal use of vehicles**

Install measures e.g. sand traps, ditches, bollards or 'dragons teeth', to act as serious deterrents to normal vehicles (i.e. 2WD vehicles). Bollards or gates could also been employed to alleviate problems associated with the unlawful use of mechanically propelled vehicles on footpaths and bridleways. Where this is a particular problem prosecutions under S.34 of the Road Traffic Act 1998 should be considered.

- 4.38 In addition to those of a strategic nature, this study has highlighted a number of specific opportunities for some of the Training Areas and ranges of ATE E. These are summarised in Table 9 below. A more detailed description is provided in the site reports in Appendix B.

**Table 9: Summary of Proposals and Recommendations**

Site	Proposals and Recommendations
EMTA	
Beckingham & Fulbeck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with the local highway authority regarding the clear signposting of existing footpaths and future footpath diversions.</li> </ul>
Dukeries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the existing management plans and incorporate appropriate management proposals for those areas which may be mapped as open country under CROW (i.e. Budby SSSI).</li> <li>• Examine the possibility of establishing a circular waymarked conservation walk in Budby SSSI, in liaison with the landowner.</li> </ul>
Yardley Chase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No opportunities identified but prospects exist for future public access initiatives outside the ATE area.</li> </ul>
EATA	
Barton Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider potential further use of the range for local gun and rifle clubs if there is a demand.</li> </ul>
Middlewick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a visitor survey (inc. Friday Woods) to analyse visitor patterns and aspirations, assess possible new routes, address anti-social problems and make access management recommendations in association with the EMS.</li> </ul>



Site	Proposals and Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of the visitor survey consider the establishment of a waymarked route through Donyland Woods and along the Roman River, linked to the existing walk at Friday Woods.</li> </ul>
Friday Woods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a visitor survey (inc. Middlewick) to analyse visitor patterns and aspirations, assess possible new routes, address anti-social problems including uncontrolled access and make access management recommendations in association with the EMS.</li> <li>As part of the visitor survey consider the formation of a link between the existing Friday Woods walk and a possible proposed permissive path at Middlewick (see above).</li> <li>As part of the EMS and in association with the results of the visitor survey, review the management objectives for the Roman River SSSI, in liaison with English Nature, to balance requirements of access and nature conservation.</li> <li>Preparation of detailed interpretation of the Colchester Military Lands Byelaws with regards to the extent of public access they allow, within the context of a consistent strategic framework (see 4.33 above).</li> <li>Consider engaging a warden to communicate access opportunities and restrictions to visitors and help manage uncontrolled access.</li> </ul>
Fingringhoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No opportunities identified.</li> </ul>
Kelling & Salthouse Heaths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In liaison with the landowner, consider the preparation of an access management plan for those areas which may be mapped as open country under CROW.</li> <li>In liaison with the landowner, consider the development of a waymarked circular route to actively manage future access and protect most sensitive areas from disturbance.</li> </ul>
Stradishall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of guided conservation walks outside the nesting season, in association with the active Conservation Group.</li> </ul>
STANTA	
STANTA Main Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through the ILMP process and in liaison with the local highway authority ensure there is clear signposting of existing rights of way in</li> </ul>

Site	Proposals and Recommendations
	<p>the leasehold areas and along the permissive path at Watton Brook.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce strategically located information boards explaining the nature conservation initiatives and reasons for access restrictions e.g. along Peddars Way and Watton Brook walk.</li> <li>• Negotiations with the Countryside Agency/English Nature/DEFRA regarding mapping of heathland regeneration areas as open country under CROW, to ensure that future public access does not impinge on the nature conservation and military training objectives. To include a detailed appraisal of what steps, if any, should be taken to restrict access to the site, within the context of a consistent strategic policy.</li> <li>• Review access opportunities in the 'Northern Extension' outside the Danger Area that were highlighted as a result of the ILMP. Many of these will be of particular benefit to local residents and include the following possible routes/walks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional paths in the area of Watton Brook permissive path;</li> <li>- A bridleway along the A1065 between Hilborough and Forest Enterprise land;</li> <li>- A circular route north of Bodney village;</li> <li>- A circular route at Lingham Farm, starting and finishing at the end of Home Lane;</li> <li>- The Green Lane track across Little Cressingham Common (in association with the local highway authority);</li> <li>- An educational facility (hide) with route from the road at Fowl Mere;</li> <li>- A cycle route between The Arms and Peddars Way.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Sculthorpe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No opportunities identified but prospects exist for future public access initiatives outside the ATE area.</li> </ul>
Watton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a Sustrans cycle route along the south-west boundary to Griston (in association with the Home Office).</li> </ul>

## **Appendix A**

---

### **Proforma for Site Visits**

**Public Access Study  
Draft Proforma for Baseline Studies and Reporting**

<b>Basic Information</b>			
1. ATE:			
2. Training Area/Facility:			
3. Managed by (HQ Land, ATRA etc)			
4. Size	Acres/Ha	5. Map Attached?	
6. Are any areas not owned freehold by the MoD ?			
7. If Yes, give brief details and explain any use restrictions/ limitations:			
8. Is there any registered common land (& give details)			
9. Training Activities (✓?)	AFV live firing (LF)		AFV manoeuvre
	Arty LF		Mortar LF
	Field firing		Small arms ranges
	RAF/heli LF		FGA/Heli trg (dry)
	Engineer trg		FIBUA trg
	Dismount. dry trg		Other dry trg
9a. Is there a guide to the Training Area/ATE for visiting units (if yes, obtain copy)			
10. Major Users			
<b>Danger Area</b>			
11. Does the Training Area map show (a) land Danger Area(s)?			
12. Size of the land Danger Area		Acres/Ha	
12a. Confirm that firing templates always remain within this/these Danger Area(s) (if no – explain)			
13. Is there also an inner Impact Area ?			
14. Is there also a Sea Danger Area?			
15. Size of the Sea Danger Area?		Acres/Ha	
16. Copy of the Sea Danger Area attached?			
16a. Other information (e.g. pattern of use):			
<b>Byelaws</b>			

17. Is any part of the Training Area/facility covered by byelaws?	
18. When were the byelaws last reviewed/updated?	
19. Copy of the byelaws attached?	
17. Does the byelaw boundary follow the Danger Area boundary?	
18. Explain any differences	
19. Do the byelaws enable parts of the byelawed area to be managed independently?	
20. If so, describe	
21. Do the byelaws describe any local arrangements or exceptions?	
22. If so, describe	
23. Which activities do the byelaws require MoD to restrict access for?	
24. Are there byelaws covering a sea Danger Area?	
25. Explain the operation of these byelaws	
26. Other byelaws information	
<b>Live Firing Notification</b>	
27. Does the Training Area issue a live firing warning/notice in advance?	
28. How often is this published?	Weekly / Monthly / Bi-monthly / Quarterly / Yearly
28. How far in advance of the period covered is the notice published?	
29. Where is the notice published?	
30. Attach copies of the notices for the training year 1999/2000	
31. Do the notices show that individual Danger Areas are managed separately (where possible?)	

32. Do the notices provide any public access info. as well as basic firing info?	
33. Are the notices compiled strictly on the basis of bids received? (or is 'slack' built into the programme)	
34. Give any reasons for 'no' to questions 31, 32 and 33	
35. What happens if training is cancelled and a booked area is free from training. Are flags etc taken down?	
36. If no, why not?	
37. What other measures are taken to let people know?	
38. What are the normal live firing hours	
39. How many nights of night firing per month?	
40. What hours constitute "night firing"	
41. Are there any planning conditions or other agreements that set max. live firing levels/hours etc?	
42. If yes, provide details	
<b>Dry Training</b>	
43. Does dry training involve the use of blank ammo/BATSIM/pyrotechnics/trip wires?	
44. If so, please detail use of relevant areas?	
45. Are any measures adopted currently to minimise conflict with public access e.g. no use of blanks near footpaths?	
46. If yes, provide details	
<b>Extent of Public Access</b>	
47. Is there any area-wide access at present within the Training Area?	
48. If yes, explain basis and provide details	

<p><b>49. Are there any public car parks, picnic sites, holiday accommodation, visitor centres or other formal facilities within the MoD estate?</b> (NB include facilities provided by tenants)</p>	
<p><b>50. If yes, provide details</b></p>	
<p><b>51. Are any of the rights of way set out at Table 1 below part of a National Trail ?</b></p>	
<p><b>52. If yes, provide details</b></p>	
<p><b>53. Are any of the footpaths set out below part of any other promoted walks/trails e.g. by SUSTRANS, the County Council ?</b></p>	
<p><b>54. If yes, provide details</b></p>	
<p><b>55. Are there any routes within the byelawed area that are available for public access at all times?</b></p>	
<p><b>56. On what basis is this access provided ?</b></p>	
<p><b>57. Has the MoD produced or collaborated on any leaflets/guides/books on local access opportunities?</b></p>	
<p><b>58. If yes, provide details</b></p>	
<p><b>59. Has the MoD ever received requests for new access routes within the Training Area/estate?</b></p>	
<p><b>60. What was the outcome?</b></p>	
<p><b>61. Does the MoD have any aspirations for new routes, as yet unfulfilled?</b></p>	
<p><b>62. If Yes, what has prevented progress?</b></p>	
<p><b>63. Are there any special projects/programmes that will improve access opportunities, e.g. Millennium projects?</b> (If yes – give details)</p>	
<p><b>64. Are there are ongoing problems of trespass or misuses of access opportunities (lawful or unlawful)?</b> (If yes – give details)</p>	
<p><b>65. (For areas with live firing) How many <u>published</u> non firing (public access) days were there in 1997/1998, 1998/1999 and 1999/2000?</b></p>	<p>1997/988 - 1998/99 - 1999/00 -</p>
<p><b>66. What is the public allowed to use/do on non-firing days?</b></p>	

67. Are any certain non firing days always available every year, e.g. by custom, agreement etc (e.g. lambing, Bank Holidays etc)?	
68. If yes, provide details	
69. Have the location of warning signs and flags ever been reviewed?	
70. If yes, when and with what result?	
71. Is there any other info for the public "on the ground" other than red flags and lamps, warning notices and copies of the byelaws?	
72. If yes, provide details	
73. Are there any other opportunities as yet unmentioned, e.g, organised motor sport events, access for climbing, water sports, orienteering etc?	
74. Please provide details	
75. Are there any arrangements for liaison with the public/groups about access issues, e.g. through ESG, Conservation Group, access group etc?	
76. If yes, provide details	
77. Does any educational access take place, e.g. visits by University courses	
78. If yes, provide details	
79. Are any areas affected by unexploded ordnance (UXO)?	
80. If yes, provide details and/or obtain copy of any map	
<b>Management of Access</b>	
81. What is the general Training Area/facility policy or practice towards access?	
82. Who is responsible for managing access and how is this done?	
83. Is there an ILMP or Estate Management Plan in either draft or final form? What does it say about current and future access (obtain copy if possible)	



## **Appendix D**

---

### **Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations**

## Military Terms

<b>AFV</b>	Armoured Fighting Vehicle
<b>ATE</b>	Army Training Estate
<b>ATE E</b>	Army Training Estate East
<b>ATR</b>	Army Training Regiment
<b>DE</b>	Defence Estates
<b>DTA</b>	Dry Training Area
<b>ETR</b>	Electric Target Range
<b>OBUA</b>	Operating In Built-Up Area
<b>HQ Land</b>	Headquarters Land Command
<b>ILMP</b>	Integrated Land Management Plan
<b>MMTTR</b>	Mechanical Moving Training Target Range
<b>MOD</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>OTC</b>	Officer Training Corp
<b>RFCA</b>	Reserve Forces and Cadets Association
<b>RMAS</b>	Royal Military Academy Sandhurst
<b>STANTA</b>	Stanford Training Area
<b>Trg Area</b>	Training Area
<b>UXO</b>	Unexploded Ordnance

## Access Terms

<b>Access Land</b>	Areas of countryside to which the public are afforded a right of passage as a result of the implementation of the CROW Act. This will include mountain, moor, heath, down, common land and land dedicated for access under Section 16.
<b>BOAT</b>	Byway Open to All Traffic A route that is available to users on foot, on horseback, bicycle, driving a horse-drawn carriage, and motorised vehicles.
<b>Bridleway</b>	A linear route to which rights of access are limited to passage on foot, horseback (or leading a horse) and by bicycle (although cyclists are required to give way to other users).
<b>CROW Act</b>	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
<b>Footpath</b>	A linear route to which rights of access are limited to passage on foot.
<b>LAF</b>	Local Access Forum  Formed under CROW Act
<b>Linear Access</b>	A route to which access is limited to the route itself and not the surrounding areas which it crosses.
<b>Open Access</b>	Areas in which passage by visitors is not restricted to linear routes.
<b>Open Country</b>	Four categories of land (mountain, moor, heath and down) to which access will be given as a right, as a result of the CROW Act.
<b>Permissive Route</b>	A route to which access has been granted by the landowner on a non-permanent basis. No right of way is created.
<b>PROW</b>	Public Right of Way
<b>RUPP</b>	Road Used as a Public Path (now changed to Restricted Byway)  A right of way whose status has not been confirmed but is used as a road. On these routes, the public enjoy the same rights as on a bridleway, but are also entitled to drive a horse-drawn carriage along it.

## **ATE East**

### **East Midlands Training Area: Beckingham & Fulbeck Training Areas**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities comprise the Dry Training Areas (DTA) near the village of Beckingham, some 5 kilometres east of Newark-on-Trent and the DTA at Fulbeck Airfield, some 3 kilometres south-east of Beckingham. The area is characterised by generally flat open grassland lying in the floodplain of the River Witham and arable cropping. (See Figure 5).

#### **2. Designations**

There are no designated nature conservation sites at Beckingham or Fulbeck.

There are no local or national landscape designations covering either site but the Beckingham Training Area lies adjacent to Stapleford Woods.

#### **3. Training Use**

Beckingham is used for dry training using pyrotechnics and for live firing of small arms on a fixed range. There is also a fixed template for antitank weapons and grenades. There is a Respiratory Testing Chamber on the site with a 100m safety/danger area. The Training Area is also used by helicopters, primarily for dropping troops.

Fulbeck is used for dry training, in particular logistics and refuelling exercises.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

There is a designated Range Danger Area lying on both sides of the River Witham at Beckingham.

There is no Danger Area at Fulbeck.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

There are no byelaws in operation at either Beckingham or Fulbeck.

## **6. Signage**

At Beckingham the Danger Area is clearly marked with red flags/lights and appropriate signage. There are also signs around the boundary of the Training Area. At Fulbeck there is no fence but the boundary is marked with standard MOD signs.

## **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

At Beckingham the MOD send out live firing notices to the local Parish Councils, the tenants, RAF/ATC and the police. Notification about large exercises, especially involving helicopters, is also sent to the villages and outside organisations.

## **8. Non-Firing Days**

At Beckingham the range is used every day, including weekends. There is a tendency for firing to cease in the first two weeks of September for maintenance. The drainage board (responsible for Stapleford Drain) also timetable any maintenance work during this non-firing period.

Firing takes place between 09:00 and 15:30 hours on Monday-Friday, 09:00 and 16:00 hours on Saturdays and 09:00 and 15:00 on Sundays. There may be some night firing between the hours of 18:00 and 23:00 hours.

## **9. UXO**

There is a potential UXO risk at Beckingham as the danger area was previously used for mortars but it is thought highly unlikely that there are areas of UXO at Fulbeck.

## **10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

At Beckingham there are no PROW crossing the live firing Danger Area and no public access is allowed in this area at any time. However, there is a network of PROW mainly in the western area of the site. In addition there is public access along the northern part of Clay Lane. These are not heavily used. (See Figure 5)

There are no PROW across the Fulbeck Airfield.

## **11. Other Existing Opportunities**

At Beckingham Range the police and rifle clubs come on the site to use the Range.

At Fulbeck a local go-kart club uses the area under licence. They come and set up the area and provide marshals. This happens about once a month during the spring/summer/autumn at times the area is not used for training.

There is Forest Enterprise land adjacent to Beckingham at Stapleford Woods. This is open to the public by permission of the landowner and access incorporates walks/trails and picnic facilities. There are also two routes with public access through the woodland called Highfield Drive and Lodge Drive. The latter joins the footpath along Moor Lane.

There is a Conservation Walk at Woodgate House Farm, which lies immediately to the east of the Beckingham Training Area. This comprising a permissive footpath some 1.2 kilometres in length, looping around Hanley Farm to the north.

## **12. Management of Training Areas**

The Beckingham and Fulbeck Training Areas are both owned by the MOD on a freehold basis. At Beckingham approximately 5% of the land is under arable farming and the remainder is grazing for sheep and cattle under the management of seven tenant farmers. The Fulbeck site is also leased to tenant farmers where a high percentage of land is under crops. The MOD retains training rights. Deer management is undertaken.

## **13. Promotion**

Public footpath access across the Beckingham Training Area is promoted by MOD in its "Walks on MOD Lands" publication, although no specific details of walks or leaflets are available at present. However contact details are included for both MOD and Forest Enterprise.

PROW in the area are promoted by Lincolnshire County Council.

The Woodgate House Farm Conservation Walk is promoted by DEFRA on the Country Walks website.

## **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

There are no known pressures for additional public access.

## **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

There are no particular access problems at Beckingham, although there is an issue associated with the incorrect mapping of PROW on the definitive map, which is presently being addressed by EMTA with the local highway authority. As a result local access provision via PROW is under review,

including some minor footpath diversion proposals (e.g. north of the Beckingham Camp) to provide more practical routes for walkers.

Whilst there are no PROW at Fulbeck, there are a number of access points from Sutton Road and Stragglethorpe Lane. New inhabitants from Fenton tend to walk up the private estate road, ignoring the barrier and standard military sign. When seen, range staff advise them that it is not a PROW.

Flytipping is a problem at all Training Areas, with a resultant cost of around £10,000 per annum over the whole EMTA.

The East Region has yet to be mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. Draft maps are expected to be published and available for comment by autumn 2003.

## 16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed

To address the existing issues, the following recommendations are made:-

- At Beckingham, when the footpath mapping issue has been resolved, it is important that all PROW are clearly signed, including any that have been diverted. EMTA to work in liaison with the local highway authority in this respect.
- Consideration should be given to the provision of a north-west permissive path link on the eastern boundary of the Training Area outside the danger area, to join the proposed path to the north of Top Covert Farm and the proposed footpath diversion to the north of the Beckingham Camp.
- At Fulbeck, better signage on Sutton Road and Stragglethorpe Lane should be considered to ensure that local users do not stray inadvertently into the Training Area.
- The problem of flytipping is considered under the strategic recommendations made in the main report.

## 17. Sources

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) : Beckingham & Fulbeck 1998

MOD Map (NTS) : Public Access MOD Training Area & Ranges Beckingham Camp 28.8.97

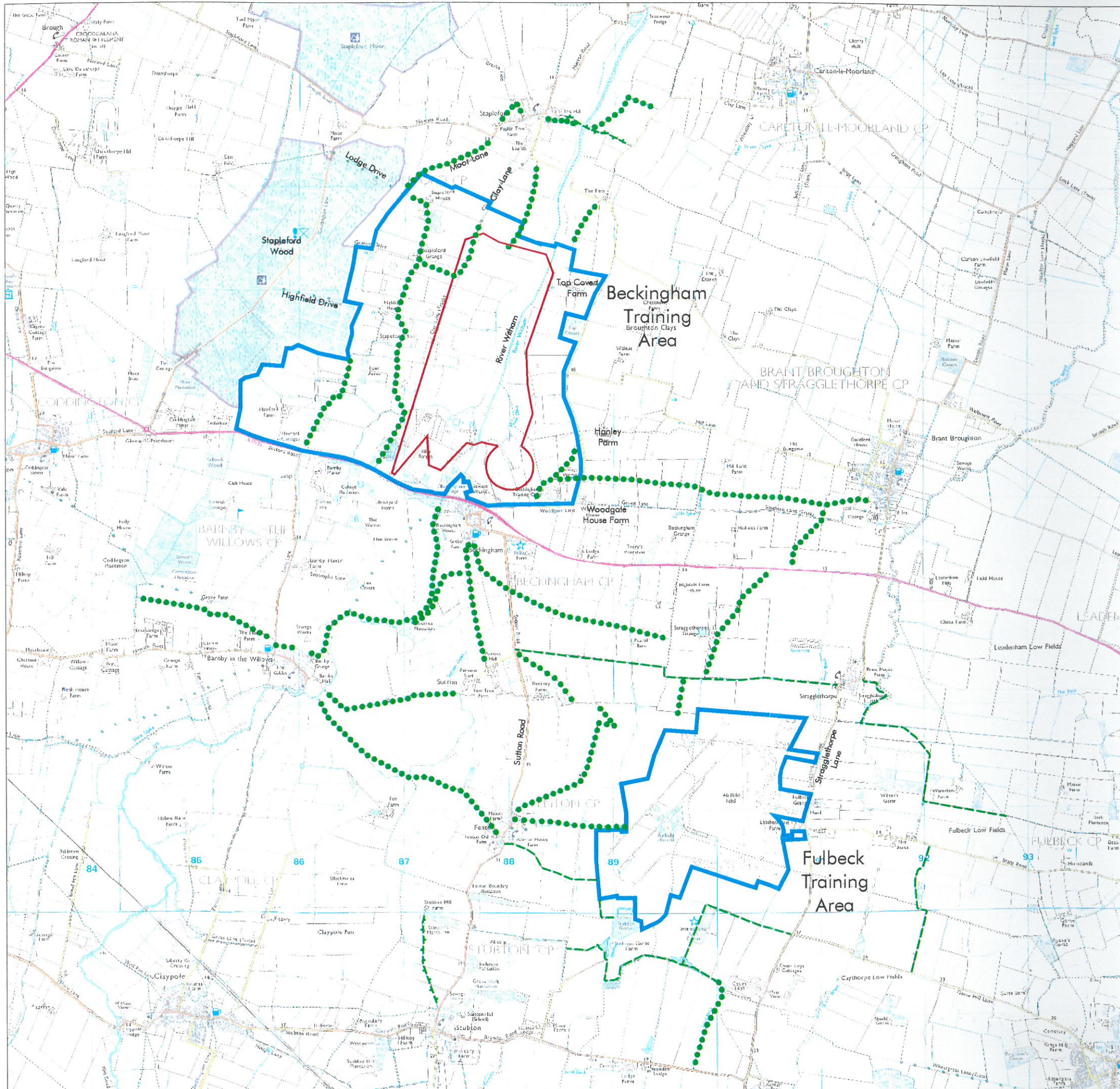
MOD : Walks of Ministry of Defence Lands 2001

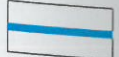



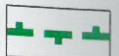
Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions.





- Legend
-  MOD Boundary
  -  Danger Area
  -  Public Footpath
  -  Public Bridleway
  -  RUPP

**RPS** Planning, Transport and Environment

Project  
ATE East

Title  
Beckingham and Fulbeck

Project Number  
JR4078B

Drawing Number  
Figure 5

Scale  
NTS

Date  
July 2003

V:\Cadwork\4078\ATE East\Beckingham and Fulbeck.dwg



## **ATE East**

### **East Midlands Training Area: Dukeries Training Area**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities at Dukeries cover an area of 382 hectares and provide all types of dry training facilities. The Training Areas are located near the village of Edwinstowe, some 12 kilometres north-east of Mansfield in Nottinghamshire. The area is characterised by predominantly broadleaved woodland, heath and scrub with some open areas, and lies immediately north of the Sherwood Forest Country Park. (See Figure 6).

#### **2. Designations**

Around 80% of the Dukeries Training Area including Budby South Forest is designated as an SSSI. Only the camp area totalling around 22 hectares, Area C (Clay Pits) and the eastern part of Area A (Ollerton Corner) is outside the designation.

The area of licensed land immediately to the west of the Proteus Camp and a small triangle within Area C form part of the Birklands and Bilhaugh Special Areas of Conservation, together with the Sherwood Forest Country Park.

Greenwood Community Forest, covering 161 square miles, lies to the south-west and joins historic Sherwood Forest.

#### **3. Training Use**

The Training Area is used for all types of dry training. The use of pyrotechnics is limited to Budby.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

There are no Danger Areas.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

There are no byelaws in operation.

**6. Signage**

Along the boundary of the Training Area 'Troops Training' and 'Don't Touch Military Objects' signs have been erected. Some areas are also fenced for grazing.

**7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

Not applicable to this Training Area.

**8. Non-Firing Days**

Not applicable to this Training Area.

**9. UXO**

Historically, Mills bombs have been found on the site. The Training Area has been leased since WW2, originally for ammunition storage (potentially underground). However, live firing and the destruction of munitions have also been carried out on the site.

**10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

A network of PROW run through and along the edge of Budby South Forest. This includes the Robin Hood Way recreational path and Sustrans cycle route along the western boundary. Those running north-south link with PROW through Sherwood Forest to the south. (See Figure 6)

There is no public access in Area A (Ollerton Corner) or Area C (Clay Pits). Two areas of licensed land at Bilhaugh and the cSAC designated area immediately to the west of the Proteus Camp are out of bounds for all purposes.

**11. Other Existing Opportunities**

Occasionally members of the public are given licences to undertake various events.

Sherwood Forest Country Park to the immediate south offers a variety of recreational opportunities. Forest walks start at the Visitor Centre and include the 3.5 mile long Sherwood Forest Walk. Further recreational facilities are offered at Rufford Country Park, some 3 kilometres to the south.

The Robin Hood Way recreational path network, including a Sustrans cycle route, which runs along the western boundary of the Training Area and through Sherwood Forest.

Of national importance is the Greenwood Community Forest to the south-west of the Training Area, stretching from Nottingham to Mansfield, which was initiated by the former Countryside Commission in 1989. There are a wide variety of recreational opportunities within Greenwood, including country parks, nature reserves, farm parks, pleasure parks, museum and heritage sites, and arts and craft centres.

## **12. Management of Training Areas**

Land at Dukeries is held by the MOD on a long-term lease. The current term expires in September 2003.

Under the Standing Orders training in the Budby South SSSI is restricted. MOD are aware that management of this important heathland site must carefully balance training and conservation needs and objectives. On Budby, the Proteus Conservation Group has been active, and the area was fenced, with installation of gates and cattle grids at certain points. Hebridian sheep were also introduced to control invading weeds and this grazing is used in conjunction with an ongoing programme of brash clearance by MOD.

## **13. Promotion**

ATE E does not promote public access across the Training Area.

PROW in the area are promoted by Nottinghamshire County Council with information available on their website and at the Council Offices. The County Council also promotes other walks, paths, trails and rural cycle rides.

Access and visitor facilities at Sherwood Forest are promoted by Nottinghamshire Tourism and the Sherwood Forest Walk is promoted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

Greenwood Community Forest is promoted nationally by the Countryside Agency.

## **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

There are no known pressures to create additional public access.

## **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

The East Region (Area 8) has yet to be mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. Draft maps are expected to be published and available for comment by autumn 2003. It is likely that the Budby SSSI area of heathland will be classified as open country.

There are no current access problems on foot across the Training Area but severe problems do arise from illegal motorcycle access, which is degrading part of the Budby SSSI.

It is difficult to predict the level of future usage resulting from increased open access to Budby as a result of CROW. However, whilst it might reasonably be assumed that most recreational needs in this immediate area will be adequately catered for in the adjacent Sherwood Forest, Rufford Country Park some 3 kilometres to the south and the long distance Robin Hood Way recreational path network, which runs through/adjacent to both, future management proposals do need to reflect the possibility of an increased use by locals. More strategic needs are likely to be satisfied by the range of facilities on offer within the Greenwood Community Forest.

There is a problem relating to the dumping on burnt out cars on the Training Area.

#### **16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed**

To address the existing issues, the following recommendations are made: -

- Should Budby SSSI be mapped as open country, a review of the existing management plans should be undertaken to incorporate appropriate proposals for the active management of general access to the area. Such proposals will need to be prepared in consultation with English Nature and the landowner and may include applications for access restrictions for nature conservation purposes, on safety grounds or to facilitate uninterrupted military training. Further areas of fencing may be required as a result.
- Since the intrinsic appeal of the SSSI lies in its nature conservation value, it would also be appropriate to examine the possibility of establishing a circular waymarked conservation walk in Budby SSSI, in liaison with the landowner. This might be accomplished by using the two existing PROW running north-south through the area, together with one of the linking tracks on the southern edge of leasehold boundary.
- Strategic recommendations to deal with the problem of illegal access by motor bikes are contained in the main report. However, the presence of MOD Police at Budby would help to address the problem.

#### **17. Sources**

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) : Dukeries & Proteus June 2000

MOD Map (NTS) : Public Access Dukeries Army Training 19.03.98

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

Nottinghamshire County Council website : [www.nottscc.gov.uk](http://www.nottscc.gov.uk)

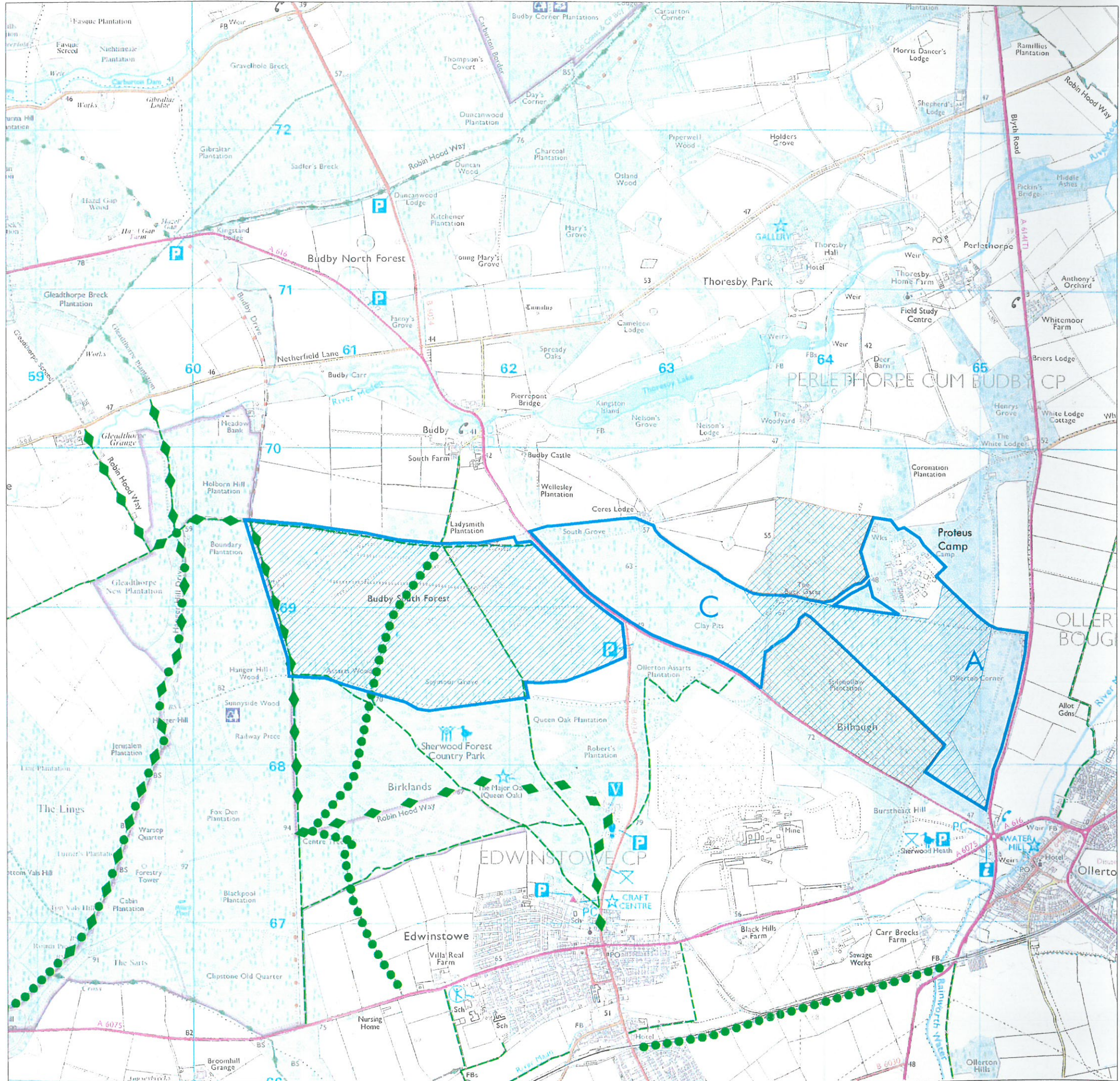
Joint Nature Conservation Committee website : [www.jncc.gov.uk](http://www.jncc.gov.uk)





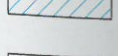
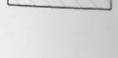
Greenwood Community Forest website : [www.greenwoodforest.org.uk](http://www.greenwoodforest.org.uk)

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions

Site visit undertaken on 25 January 2001





- Legend**
-  MOD Boundary
  -  Public Footpath
  -  Public Bridleway
  -  Recreational Path
  -  SSSI
  -  Licensed Areas

**RPS** Planning, Transport and Environment

Project  
**ATE East**

Title  
**Dukeries**

Project Number  
JR4078B

Drawing Number  
Figure 6

Scale  
1:25,000 @ A3

Date  
July 2003

V:\Cadwork\4078\ATE East\Dukeries.dwg



## **ATE East**

### **East Midlands Training Area: Yardley Chase Training Area**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities comprise DTAs near the village of Yardley Hastings, some 5 kilometres north-west of Olney and 10 kilometres south-east of Northampton. The area has a strong landscape character, largely due to the continued presence of large areas of ancient woodland. The Training Area, much of which was originally a Norman Hunting Chase, is characterised by woodland, pasture and parkland. (See Figure 7).

#### **2. Designations**

Around 70% of the Training Area is designated as a SSSI for its variety of semi-natural habitat types including woodland, unimproved neutral grassland and biologically rich pools.

There are no local or national landscape designations covering the site.

#### **3. Training Use**

Yardley Chase is used for dry training with use of pyrotechnics. There are no accommodation facilities on the site. There are 29 disused bunkers on the site, together with associated hazardous borrow pits that are mostly flooded.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

There is no Danger Area.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

There are no byelaws in operation.

#### **6. Signage**

The perimeter of the Training Area is fenced and the boundary is marked with standard MOD signs.

#### **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

Not applicable to this site.



## 8. Non-Firing Days

Not applicable to this site.

## 9. UXO

The area used to be an ammunition depot and there are twenty nine disused ammunition bunkers.

## 10. Public Access Resources/Facilities

There are no PROW across the Training Area.

## 11. Other Existing Opportunities

Occasionally members of the public are given licenses to undertake various events.

There is a network of PROW in the local area. (See Figure 7). Of more strategic importance is the Milton Keynes Boundary Walk, a recreational path that runs to the south and east of Yardley Chase and the Midshires Way recreational path to the south-west.

To the south-west lies The Royal Forest of Salcey, which is owned by the Forestry Commission. Historically, Yardley Chase was part of the Royal Forest from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, which now comprises the remnant of the medieval royal hunting forest with miles of ancient woodbanks, building remains and ancient trees. The land is open to the public by permission and a wide range of amenities and activities are offered. These include forest walks and trails, cycling, horse riding, picnic and play areas, as well as a permanent orienteering course. There are associated information, parking, toilet and eating facilities. The Midshires Way runs through Salcey Forest.

## 12. Management of Training Areas

The Training Area comprises 193 hectares of land held by MOD on a freehold basis. The surrounding land is owned by the Lord of Northamptonshire.

The SSSI is managed to balance the military and conservation objectives of the Training Area and to ensure that the nature conservation value of the site is enhanced. Digging is only permitted in the wooded areas and all operations are in accordance with the Standing Orders.

The MOD is preparing records of the ancient woodland, which currently includes around 120 ancient trees.

### **13. Promotion**

Access across the Yardley Chase Training Area is not promoted by ATE E.

PROW in the area are promoted by Northamptonshire County Council. The Midshires Way is promoted by the British Horse Society and recreational facilities at Salcey Forest are promoted by the Forestry Commission.

### **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

The site has quite a low profile and there have been no pressures to create public access, although the Northamptonshire Area Ramblers Association has mentioned the lack of PROW across the Training Area.

### **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

There are no known access problems or issues at the present time.

The West Region (Area 7) has been mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. The Draft Map was published in June 2003 and has no impact on the land at Yardley Chase.

### **16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed**

There are few access issues at Yardley Chase except for The Ramblers Association comments. However, there are no real opportunities of providing public access for a number of reasons. Firstly, the site has quite a high level of usage for troop training and the training facilities comprising bunkers and borrow pits are fairly evenly spread over the site. The borrow pits, together with lengths of disused railway tracks would pose particular public safety problems. Furthermore the only possible points of access are via the main entrance off Denton Road or the public footpath to the south near Chase Park Farm.

The significant tract of dismantled railway running to the west of Yardley Chase, stretching from Northampton in the north, past Olney in the south offers potential as a long distance route but this is outside the ownership of the MOD and the scope of this study.

### **17. Sources**

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) : Yardley Chase 1996

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

British Horse Society website : [www.ride-uk.org.uk](http://www.ride-uk.org.uk)

Forestry Commission website : [www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

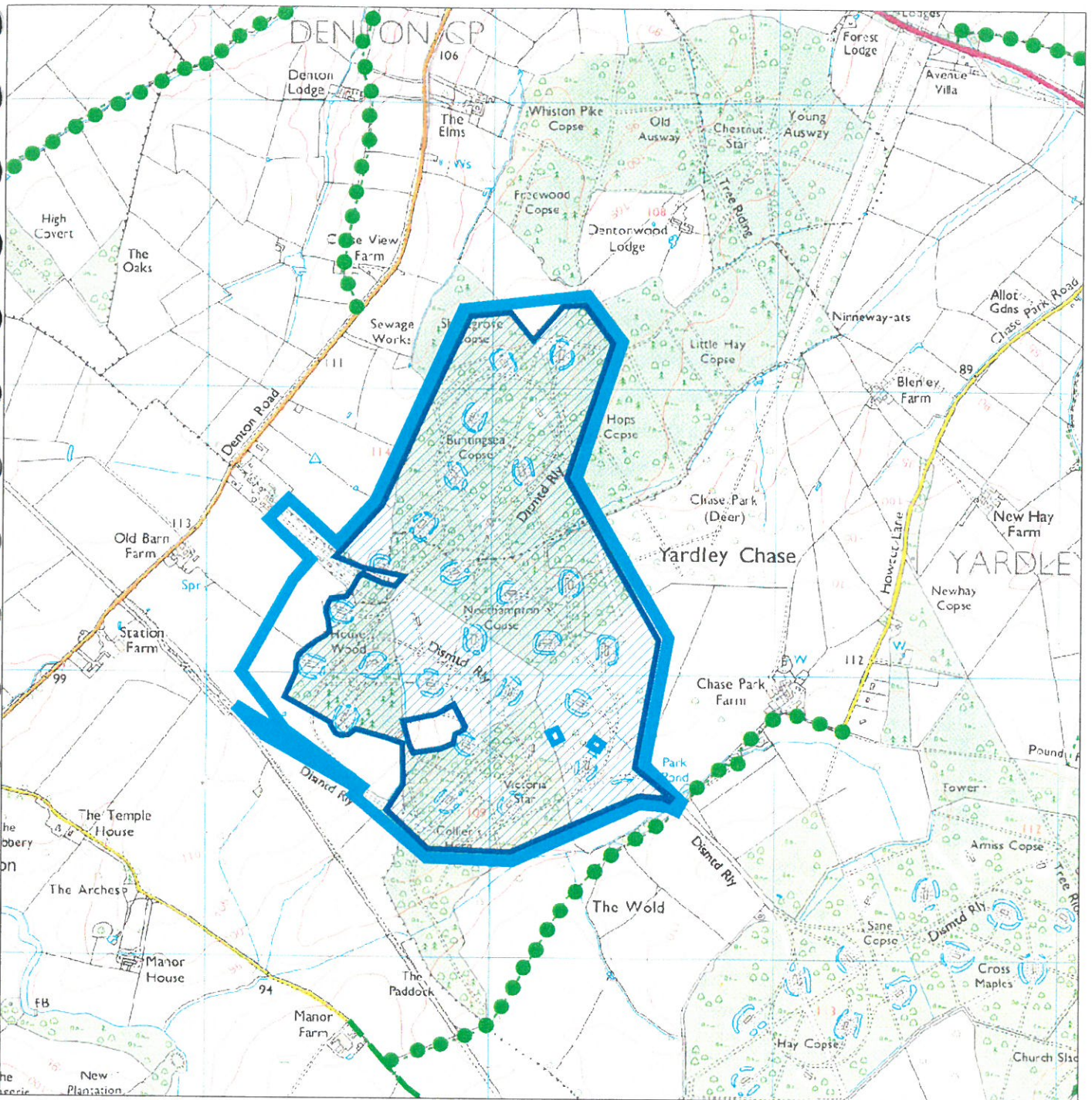
Northamptonshire County Council website : [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk)

OS Landranger Map Sheet 152





Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions

Site visit undertaken on 25 January 2001





Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Digital Data with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown copyright reserved. Licence Number AL854522

- Legend**
-  Training Area
  -  SSSI Boundary
  -  Public Footpath
  -  Public Bridleway

**RPS** Planning, Transport and Environment



Project	
ATE East	
Title	
ATE Yardley Chase	
Project Number	Drawing Number
4078	Figure 7
Scale	Date
NTS	July 2003
V:\Cadwork\4078\ATE East\Yardley Chase.dwg	

## ATE East

### East Anglia Training Area : Colchester

The Colchester Training Area consists of an area of around 1000 hectares in and close to the town of Colchester, Essex. Within this area there are three training facilities comprising the main Training Area incorporating Friday Woods, the Middlewick Ranges and the Fingringhoe Ranges. The figure below illustrates their location in relation to each other.

**Figure 10 Colchester Training Area**



The following site reports provide details of the Colchester Training Area, set out in three separate reports; Middlewick Ranges, Friday Woods Training Area and Fingringhoe Ranges.



# ATE East

## East Anglia Training Area

The East Anglia Training Area (EATA) covers the counties of Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk. Within these counties four Training Areas are located at Barton Road (Cambridgeshire), Colchester (Essex), Kelling and Salthouse Heaths (Norfolk) and Stradishall (Suffolk). Together these areas total 2250 hectares. The figure below illustrates their location in relation to each other.

Figure 8 East Anglia Training Area



The following site reports provide details of the EATA, set out in four separate reports; Barton Road Rifle Range, Colchester (Middlewick Ranges, Friday Woods Training Area, Fingringhoe Ranges), Kelling and Salthouse Heaths and Stradishall Training Area.

## **ATE East**

### **East Anglia Training Area: Barton Road Rifle Range**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities are located some 4 kilometres south-west of Cambridge, between the villages of Barton and Comberton. The Training Area is situated on a slight ridge running between the Bin and Bourn Brooks, and is characterised by undulating open farmland with a small area of woodland. (See Figure 9).

#### **2. Designations**

There are no nature conservation designations covering the site.

There are no local or national landscape designations covering the site.

#### **3. Training Use**

Barton Road is used as a rifle range for the firing of rifles, revolvers, light machine guns and machine carbines and for all activities ancillary to such firing. There are no dry training facilities.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

There is a Danger Area associated with the rifle range.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

The range is covered by The Barton Road Rifle Range Byelaws, which came into operation on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1971. These byelaws allow for the area to be closed during live firing and prohibit access through the Danger Area at such times. Byelaw signs are located at the site entrance, on the footpaths and RUPP and on each side of the bridleway, which runs in front of the butts.

#### **6. Signage**

The Danger Area is clearly marked using a red flag/lamp system, together with a sentry.

## **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

MOD send out live firing notices to the local councils, tenants, post offices and the police at least seven days in advance, giving details of date, time and duration of firing. This may be during the day or at night.

## **8. Non-Firing Days**

Non firing days are determined by Range Control.

## **9. UXO**

It is unlikely that there are any areas of UXO, but since the site has been occupied by the military for many years this cannot be guaranteed.

## **10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

There is a small network of PROW crossing the Training Area, including the locally promoted Whitewell Way footpath, which is open at all times. (See Figure 9).

Access is prohibited to the range danger area during live firing.

## **11. Other Existing Opportunities**

The range is used from time to time by various groups under licence e.g. local rifle clubs, the police and Cambridge University.

There is a network of PROW in the vicinity, including locally promoted recreation routes (Port Way/Whitewell Way/Harcamlow Way/ Wimpole Way) connecting the villages to Cambridge City centre.

There are three conservation walks close to the range. One runs for 1.6kms south of Barton and includes the stretch of the Bourn Brook between Barton Bridge and Lords Bridge; one covers 0.5kms between Barton and the M11; the third, a 2.5km route known as the Coton Walk, lies immediately to the south of the village of Coton between the Range and Grantchester Road.

Further south lies the 350 acre Wimpole Park, some 9 miles south-west of Cambridge. Free public access is allowed throughout and there are several waymarked walks of varying length. The Wimpole and Clopton Way long distance footpaths originate from here.



## **12. Management of Training Areas**

The Training Area comprises approximately 218 hectares of land owned by MOD on a freehold basis, which is let to tenant farmers for arable crop production.

## **13. Promotion**

General access opportunities at Barton Road are promoted by DE on their website ([www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)).

PROW in the area are promoted by Cambridgeshire County Council.

## **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

There have been no pressures to create additional public access.

## **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

There are no known problems regarding access.

The East Region has yet to be mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. Draft maps are expected to be published and available for comment by autumn 2003.

## **16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed**

There are no known issues pertaining to the provision of public access on or in the vicinity of the rifle range and no third parties have expressed an interest in the creation of additional recreational facilities. The existing PROW network is already promoted by MOD and these link to locally promoted recreational routes via the Whitewell Way.

Given the nature of the site the possibility of extending its use further to other local gun and rifle clubs under licence may be a possibility, if there proves to be a demand and if it can be accommodated within the existing military programme.

There are proposals for a working farm to be developed outside the eastern boundary of the Training Area, incorporating a picnic area. However, future problems relating to this are not anticipated.

## **17. Sources**

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

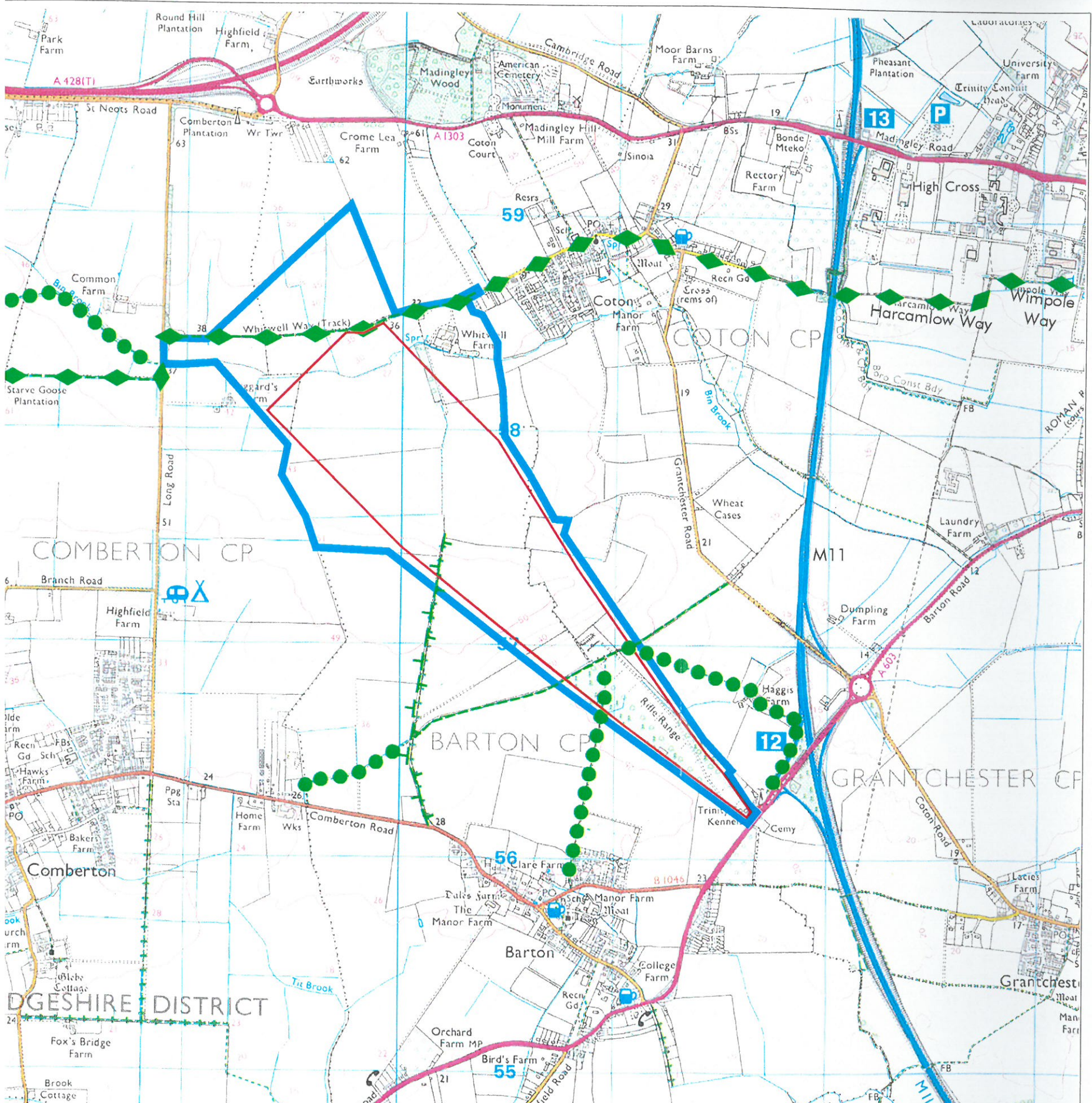
Cambridgeshire County Council website : [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

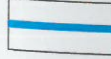
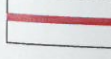



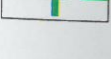
OS Explorer Map Sheet 209

OS Landranger Map Sheet 154

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003  
and other discussions





- Legend**
-  MOD Boundary
  -  Danger Area
  -  Public Footpath
  -  Public Bridleway
  -  Recreational Path
  -  RUPP

**RPS** Planning, Transport and Environment

Project

**ATE East**

Title

**Barton Road Training Area**





## **ATE East**

### **East Anglia Training Area: Colchester Middlewick Range**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities are located on the southern edge of the large garrison town of Colchester. The area is characterised by a patchwork of open grassland, scrub and heath with tracts of ancient woodland, dissected by two watercourses, Roman River and Birch Brook. Local authority housing areas surround the northern part of the Training Area. (See Figure 11).

**Photograph 1: Housing along the edge of Middlewick Ranges**



#### **2. Designations**

Part of the Roman River Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located in the southern area of the site. The Range lies immediately to the west of the Coastal Protection Belt designated under the Essex Structure Plan.

There are no landscape designations covering the site.

### 3. Training Use

Middlewick comprises three rifle ranges for the firing of small arms and for all activities ancillary to such firing. The ranges are used by the regular Army and the Territorial Army about 3-4 times a week, giving an average utilisation of 47%. The southern area of the ranges are sometimes used for dry training when no living firing is taken place, in association with the adjacent area of Friday Woods (refer to Friday Woods site report for details of dry training facilities).

### 4. Danger Areas

The Danger Area covers all three ranges together with all associated highways.

### 5. Byelaws/Control

The Range is covered by The Middlewick Ranges Byelaws, which came into operation on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1965 and The Colchester & District Military Lands Byelaws, which came into operation on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1973. These Byelaws allow for the area to be closed during live firing and prohibit access into the Danger Area at such times. Byelaw signs are located at the entrances into the Range.

**Photograph 2 : Road Closed and other signage**



## **6. Signage**

The Danger Area is clearly marked using a red flag/lamp system and notice boards. During live firing gates are closed and sentries posted.

## **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

There is no notification of day firing. MOD provide public notification of night firing by publishing a notice in the local newspapers not less than seven days before the event, stating the intended date, time and duration of firing. This is generally published once a month.

## **8. Non-Firing Days**

The Ranges are closed in August, at Christmas and for two days per month. Night firing is limited to two weekdays.

## **9. UXO**

A residual risk of unexploded bombs exists on the Range.

## **10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

A network of PROW cross the Training Area. In addition general public access is permitted under The Colchester & District Military Lands Byelaws 1973, subject to restrictions, but in practice members of the public are required to remain on PROW at all times because of the dangers presented by unexploded ordnance. In reality the public walk anywhere during non-firing periods, showing little regard for either the byelaws or the PROW.

Access to the Range Danger Area is prohibited during live firing.

## **11. Other Existing Opportunities**

The Ranges are used from time to time by public groups under licence e.g. local rifle clubs, police etc.

There is a good network of PROW in the vicinity, including paths on both sides of the River Colne. Recreational facilities are also available at Friday Woods, Fingringhoe and Abberton Reservoir.

North of Colchester is the High Woods Country Park and the Essex Way long distance recreational path.

## **12. Management of Training Areas**

The Training Area comprises 370.20 hectares of land owned by MOD on a freehold basis. Parts of the area are leased to agricultural tenants, although the MOD retains full training rights.

## **13. Promotion**

DE promote general access opportunities along PROW across the Middlewick Ranges on their website ([www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)).

PROW in the area are promoted by Essex County Council.

## **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

There are no known pressures to create additional public access.

## **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

There is a significant problem with vandalism of Council owned fences around the Training Area, resulting in the need for major repairs. Attempts were made by ATE to undertake additional security fencing adjacent housing areas and along the Mersea Road, but this had to be abandoned because of continual vandalism. There is also a problem with flytipping across the whole of the Training Area.

The East Region (Area 8) has yet to be mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. Draft maps are expected to be published and available for comment by autumn 2003.

## **16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed**

To address the existing issues, the following recommendations are made: -

- Strategic proposals relating to vandalism and flytipping are included in Chapter 4.
- Since DE has now developed the survey methodology to assess the quality and quantity of the access and recreation experience on MOD Training Areas, a visitor survey should be undertaken across both the Middlewick and Friday Woods Training Areas. The results could be used to analyse current visitor patterns and aspirations (particularly with regard to non-use of PROW), assess whether any new routes are required, address the local issues of vandalism and flytipping and generally aid access management going forward.

- Whilst there are no known specific local pressures to extend walks within the ranges at present, there are proactive measures that could be taken to further facilitate well managed access. As part of a visitor study this might include considering the creation of a waymarked route through Donyland Woods outside the Danger Area and along Roman River, starting and finishing in Fingringhoe village. This could be linked to the existing route around Friday Woods at Ball Farm and incorporate the existing byway between West House Farm and Upper Haye Farm. Careful thought would need to be directed to any crossing of the Mersea Road at this point and also access across areas of excessively wet ground. Emphasis would be placed on signage explaining the nature conservation importance of the site and how this is managed along with military training activities as part of the EMS.

## 17. Sources

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) : Colchester Ranges

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

Essex County Council website : [www.essexcc.gov.uk](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk)

OS Explorer Map Sheet 184

OS Landranger Map Sheet 168

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at a meeting on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions

Site visit undertaken on 25 January 2001



## **ATE East**

### **East Anglia Training Area: Colchester Friday Woods Training Area**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities are located on the southern edge of the large garrison town of Colchester. The area is characterised by a patchwork of open grassland, scrub and heath with tracts of ancient woodland and the Roman River running through the southern area. (See Figure 11)

**Photograph 1: Entrance to Friday Woods**



#### **2. Designations**

Friday Woods is an area of mainly ancient woodland and is part of the Roman River SSSI.

There are no local or national landscape designations covering the site.

#### **3. Training Use**

Friday Woods is used for dry training, principally for tactical training by local units and helicopters.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

There is no Danger Area.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

Friday Woods is covered by The Colchester & District Military Lands Byelaws, which came into operation on 10th December 1973. Whilst these byelaws allow for the area to be closed during training activities, in practice this is proving difficult to enforce. The byelaw signs are located in numerous places, including the main entry points to the Training Area.

#### **6. Signage**

There are signs at the main access points saying "Troops Training", together with "active/not active" signage to indicate the current activity to members of the public, which is changed by the unit involved in the training. The use of this signage is currently under review.

#### **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

Live firing notification is not applicable to Friday Woods, but the Byelaws specify that the MOD must issue notification of the troop training activities and this is facilitated via notices in the local newspapers.

#### **8. Non-Firing Days**

The Training Area is closed for military training in August and at Christmas.

#### **9. UXO**

There is a residual danger of unexploded bombs within the Training Area.

#### **10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

A network of PROW crosses the Training Area. In addition general public access on foot is permitted under The Colchester & District Military Lands Byelaws 1973, subject to restrictions, but in practice members of the public are required to remain on PROW or permissive paths at all times because of the dangers presented by unexploded ordnance.

Access is generally prohibited when the area is being used for military training, including the Friday Woods circular woodland walk, but this is difficult to enforce. A number of small areas containing residential properties are out of bounds for all purposes.

The area is particularly popular with dog walkers.

**Photograph 2 : Dog walkers at Friday Woods**



The most popular area for public access is near the car park off Bounstead Road and a public noticeboard has been erected here to give information on the Friday Woods circular walk. This walk, using PROW and permissive paths was developed to improve the quality and quantity of public access on the Training Area and is waymarked.

**Photograph 2 : Bridleway through Friday Woods**



The development and establishment of the new route was a joint initiative between Colchester Borough Council, English Nature, DE and the ATE East. The path was opened in October 2001.

#### **11. Other Existing Opportunities**

There is a good network of PROW in the vicinity. Recreational facilities are also available at Cheshunt Field to the north-west of the site, at Fingringhoe and Abberton Reservoir.

North of Colchester is the High Woods Country Park and the Essex Way long distance recreational path.

#### **12. Management of Training Areas**

The Training Area comprises 491.50 hectares of land owned by MOD on a freehold basis. Parts of the area are leased to agricultural tenants but the MOD retains full training rights.

Around 32% of the combined Middlewick and Friday Woods Training Areas are covered by the Roman River SSSI, totalling 275.55 hectares. The MOD recently undertook clearance work on a 7 hectare area of scrub vegetation, as part of the restoration programme to safeguard the more valuable open heathland habitats. Management of the SSSI is undertaken in association with advice from English Nature. Deer management is also undertaken.

#### **13. Promotion**

DE promote general access opportunities across Friday Woods on their website ([www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)) and the new permissive path is featured in the MOD booklet "Walks on MOD Lands".

PROW in the area are promoted by Essex County Council.

#### **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

There are no known pressures to create additional public access.

#### **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

Visitor numbers have grown in recent years and uncontrolled access over the entire Training Area is causing management problems. It is proving extremely difficult to enforce the byelaws restricting public access during training activities with walkers ignoring the 'Troops Training' signs. At other times they do not keep to the paths. Failure to address this issue will affect the long term effectiveness of the whole DTA (Friday Woods/Middlewick) and a proper access policy for the area is required, in line with a strategic policy approach by MOD for the entire defence estate.

## 17. Sources

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) : Colchester Ranges

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

Essex County Council website : [www.essexcc.gov.uk](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk)

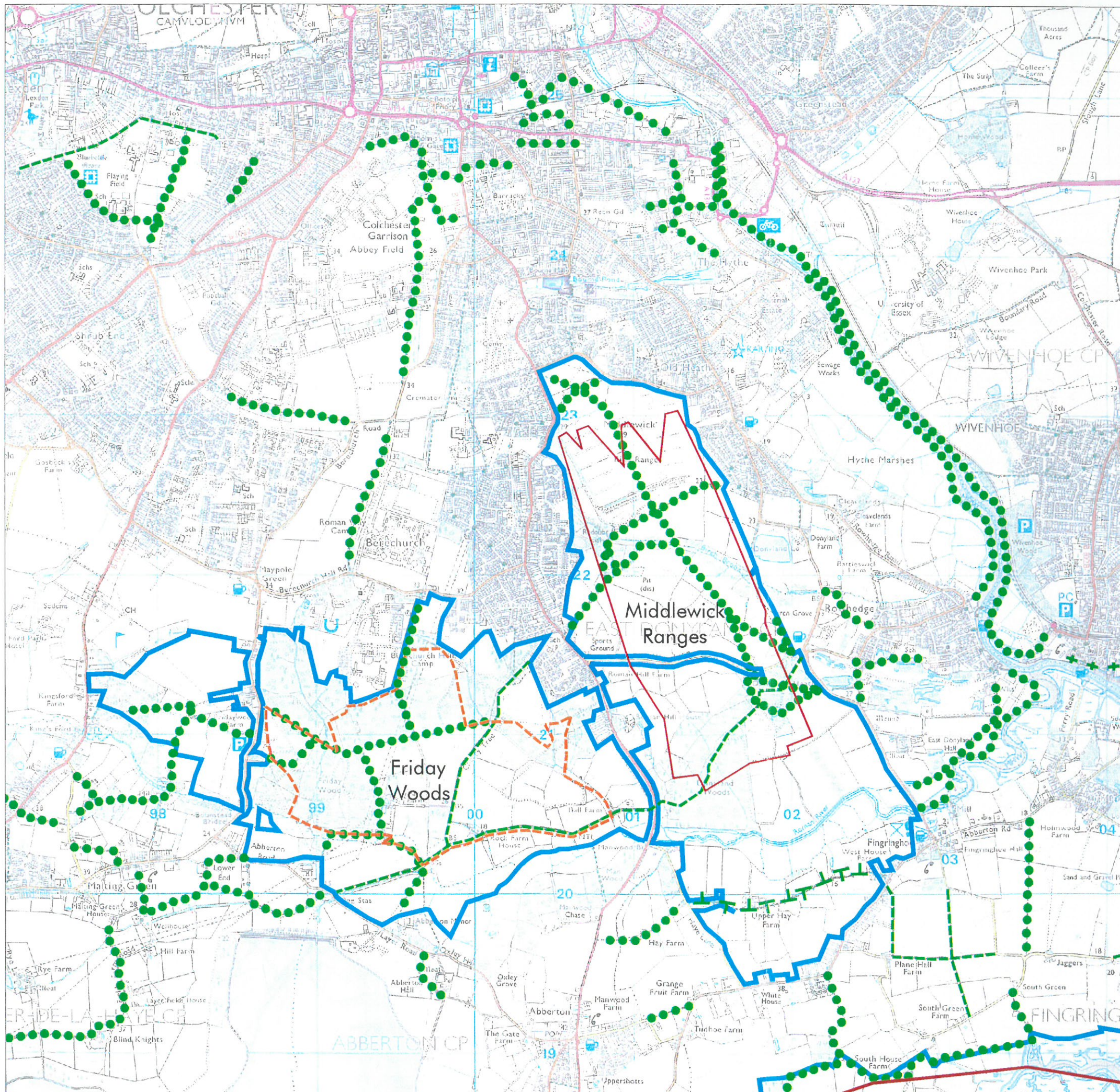
OS Explorer Map Sheet 184

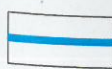
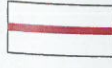


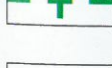
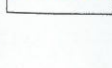
OS Landranger Map Sheet 168

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions.

Site visit undertaken on 25 January 2001





- Legend**
-  MOD Boundary
  -  Danger Area
  -  Public Footpath
  -  Public Bridleway
  -  RUPP
  -  Permissive Footpath

**RPS** Planning, Transport and Environment



Project  
**ATE East**

Title  
**Colchester - Middlewick and Friday Woods Ranges**

Project Number  
JR4078B

Drawing Number  
Figure 11

Scale  
1:25,000 @ A3

Date  
July 2003

V:\Cadwork\4078\ATE East\Colchester.dwg



## **ATE East**

### **East Anglia Training Area: Colchester Fingringhoe Ranges**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities are located to the south of the large garrison town of Colchester. This remote area is part of the tidal estuary of the River Colne and is characterised by a mixed estuarine habitat of salt marshes and pastures, and lagoons. The majority of the area is below sea level. (See Figure 12)

#### **2. Designations**

The marshland area of Fingringhoe Ranges is part of the Colne Estuary SSSI. It is also a designated RAMSAR site and a proposed SPA. The Ranges also form part of the Essex Estuaries cSAC.

The Essex Structure Plan has designated the Ranges within their Coastal Protection Belt.

There are no local or national landscape designations covering the site.

#### **3. Training Use**

Fingringhoe is principally a rifle range used for low level field firing and limited dry training. It may be used for the firing of all descriptions of machine guns, machine carbines, rifles, revolvers, mortars, grenades, rocket launchers and infantry anti-tank weapons and for all activities ancillary to such firing. The ranges are utilised over 50% of the time for some types of firing.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

The Danger Area covers the majority of the freehold area.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

The Range is covered by The Fingringhoe Ranges Byelaws, which came into operation on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1974. These byelaws allow for the prohibition of access through the Danger Area when it is being used for any live firing. Byelaw signs are located around the perimeter of the Range, including the main entry points.

## **6. Signage**

The Danger Area is clearly marked using a red flag/lamp system. There are also warning signs. When a vessel is within the Danger Area an additional red flag by day and red light by night may be hoisted below the flags in order to notify the master of the vessel that his vessel is within the Danger Area. There is also an observation post on the bank of the South Geedon Creek and close to Rat Island.

There is a closed impact area, which is demarked and signed.

## **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

The byelaws only specify notification requirements for night firing. MOD provide public notification of such firing by publishing a notice in the local newspapers not less than seven days before the event, stating the intended date, time and during of firing. This is generally published once a month. Similar notification must be given to the Superintendent at the Trinity House Depot in Harwich.

Night firing is limited to three weekdays and Saturdays. Demolition up to 2Kg is also permitted.

## **8. Non-Firing Days**

The range is closed in August and at Christmas.

## **9. UXO**

A danger of unexploded ordnance exists on the range and a revised risk assessment is due to be produced shortly.

## **10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

There are no PROW within the Danger Area and land access is only allowed on a managed basis due to the UXO risk. However, access by water into North and South Geedon Creeks from the estuary is allowed during non-firing periods.

There is a footpath in the far western area, running north-south just outside the Danger Area. This links to another footpath which runs along part of the northern boundary to South Green. (See Figure 12)

## **11. Other Existing Opportunities**

Just to the north of the Ranges is the Fingringhoe Wick nature reserve with public access, visitor facilities and parking. This includes three waymarked trails around the reserve.



There is a network of PROW in the vicinity, including a path along the mean high water line on Mersea Island to the south. Other facilities on the Island include the Cudmore Grove Country Park. There is also a river walk along the east bank of the River Colne running from Brightlingsea into Colchester. To the west there are "easy access paths" at Abberton Reservoir, promoted by Essex CC.

## **12. Management of Training Areas**

The Training Area comprises 640.30 hectares of land owned by MOD on a freehold basis, 27.23 hectares of leasehold land and a further 65.07 hectares operated under licence. 589.48 hectares are covered by the SSSI, which equates to over 88% of total area.

The English Nature Conservation Award was gained for management of the Fingringhoe Ranges and in particular the work undertaken to repair the Fingringhoe sea wall to prevent the salt marshes from inundation from the sea and regulating the water on Langenhoe Marsh.

## **13. Promotion**

DE promote general access opportunities along the PROW at Fingringhoe Ranges on their website ([www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)).

PROW in the area are promoted by Essex County Council, who also produce an Essex Directory of Walks and Rides.

## **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

There are no known pressures to create additional public access.

## **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

Jet skiers often ride up the River Colne and into the creeks. A sentry is therefore placed on the corner of the Ranges during live firing.

The East Region has yet to be mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. Draft maps are expected to be published and available for comment by autumn 2003.

## **16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed**

No new access opportunities were identified at Fingringhoe, in part due to the nature of the terrain, much of which is under water at high tide and also due to the UXO risk.

## 17. Sources

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) : Colchester Ranges

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

Essex County Council website : [www.essexcc.gov.uk](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk)

OS Explorer Map Sheet 184

OS Landranger Map Sheet 168

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions.

Site visit undertaken on 25 January 2001

## **ATE East**

### **East Anglia Training Area:**

### **Kelling & Salthouse Heaths Training Areas**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities are located close to the villages of Kelling and Salthouse, some 7 kilometres west of Sheringham on the north Norfolk coast. The area is characterised by extensive areas of dry, acid heathland, together with small areas of acidic grassland. (See Figure 13)

#### **2. Designations**

Both sites are covered by the Kelling Heath SSSI, notified for their glacial outwash plain habitats.

They also lie within the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and fall within the Protection of Areas of Important Landscape Quality category in the Norfolk Structure Plan. The coastline immediately to the north-west of the Training Areas comprises the Heritage Coast stretch of the AONB, which is a Ramsar site, a Biosphere Reserve, a SSSI, a SPA, a cSAC and a Marine SAC.

#### **3. Training Use**

Both sites are used for low level dry training. They are mainly utilised by the Territorial Army (TA) and Cadets, with a licence to use the area for up to 40 days per year.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

There are no Danger Areas.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

There are no byelaws.

#### **6. Signage**

There is no signage.

#### **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

Not applicable to these sites.

## **8. Non-Firing Days**

Not applicable to these sites.

## **9. UXO**

There are no areas of UXO.

## **10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

The area has open access at all times on the authority of the Kelling and Salthouse Trustees (the landlord) - see Figure 13.

## **11. Other Existing Opportunities**

In addition to the network of PROW in the vicinity, there are two routes, which form part of the Norfolk Circular Walks initiative. One runs for around 5 kilometres to the west and south of Salthouse; the other follows 11 kilometres of coast, roads and rights of way around Blakeney and Cley.

There is also a 1.2km circular waymarked path running west from Kelling village, which is part of the Norfolk Coast Partnership Millennium Access Project.

Of strategic importance is the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path, a national long distance trail running for approximately 140 kilometres through the East Anglian countryside from Cromer to Thetford.

## **12. Management of Training Areas**

The Training Areas comprise 186.8 hectares of land licenced from the Kelling and Salthouse Trustees.

The Estate Trustees manage the whole area.

## **13. Promotion**

Since ATE E have no management control over the Kelling and Salthouse Heath Training Areas, they are not in a position to promote access opportunities.

PROW in the area are promoted by Norfolk County Council. The Peddars Way & Norfolk Coast Path is promoted by the Countryside Agency.

#### **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

The Norfolk Coast Partnership promoted the Norfolk Coast Millennium Access Project with the aim of creating more access opportunities for people with disabilities or limited mobility to enjoy the Norfolk Coast AONB. The Partnership worked in partnership with access groups and environmental organisations including English Nature and the Kelling Heath Holiday Park to improve physical access at five sites. It is not known whether there is a need for further initiatives of this kind.

#### **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

Nationally, the Countryside Agency has highlighted the pressures on the AONB, particularly from uncontrolled dogs. In particular the sensitive dune areas are prone to erosion and concerns have been expressed over disturbance to important species of nesting birds. Historically, pressures have been more keenly felt in the summer months but it is increasingly becoming an ongoing problem all year round.

English Nature, the National Trust, RSPB and Norfolk Wildlife Trust have jointly developed "A Vision for Nature Conservation 1997-2022" for the AONB and these organisations will need to be consulted about any increase in access provision on these ecologically important Training Areas.

The East Region (Area 8) has yet to be mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. Draft maps are expected to be published and available for comment by autumn 2003. It is likely that both Kelling and Salthouse Heaths will be classified as open country.

#### **16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed**

Due to the low level of use of the Kelling and Salthouse Training Areas there is no permanent ATE staff presence. In addition ATE East have no management control since management decisions are taken directly by the landlord. Accordingly, ATE can only suggest that the Trustees consider the following measures.

- In order to safeguard this ecologically important habitat from uncontrolled access it is suggested that access is actively managed by providing a clear, waymarked circular route, developed in association with all nature conservation interests. This would enable walkers to be routed so that disturbance to the most sensitive areas of flora and fauna is kept to a minimum, whilst incorporating features of interest along the route and providing educational information on the heathland environment. It may also be necessary to advise walkers that dogs must be kept on leads at all times/during the nesting season. A warden presence would be prove beneficial to the success of this strategy.

- Should Kelling and Salthouse Heaths be mapped as open country under CROW, proposals for the active management of general access, prepared in consultation with English Nature and Norfolk Wildlife Trust, will be even more imperative. These may include applications for access restrictions for nature conservation purposes and fencing of important nesting sites, in addition to the provision of waymarked routes and signage for visitors identified above.

## 17. Sources

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Joint Nature Conservation Council website : [www.incc.gov.uk](http://www.incc.gov.uk)

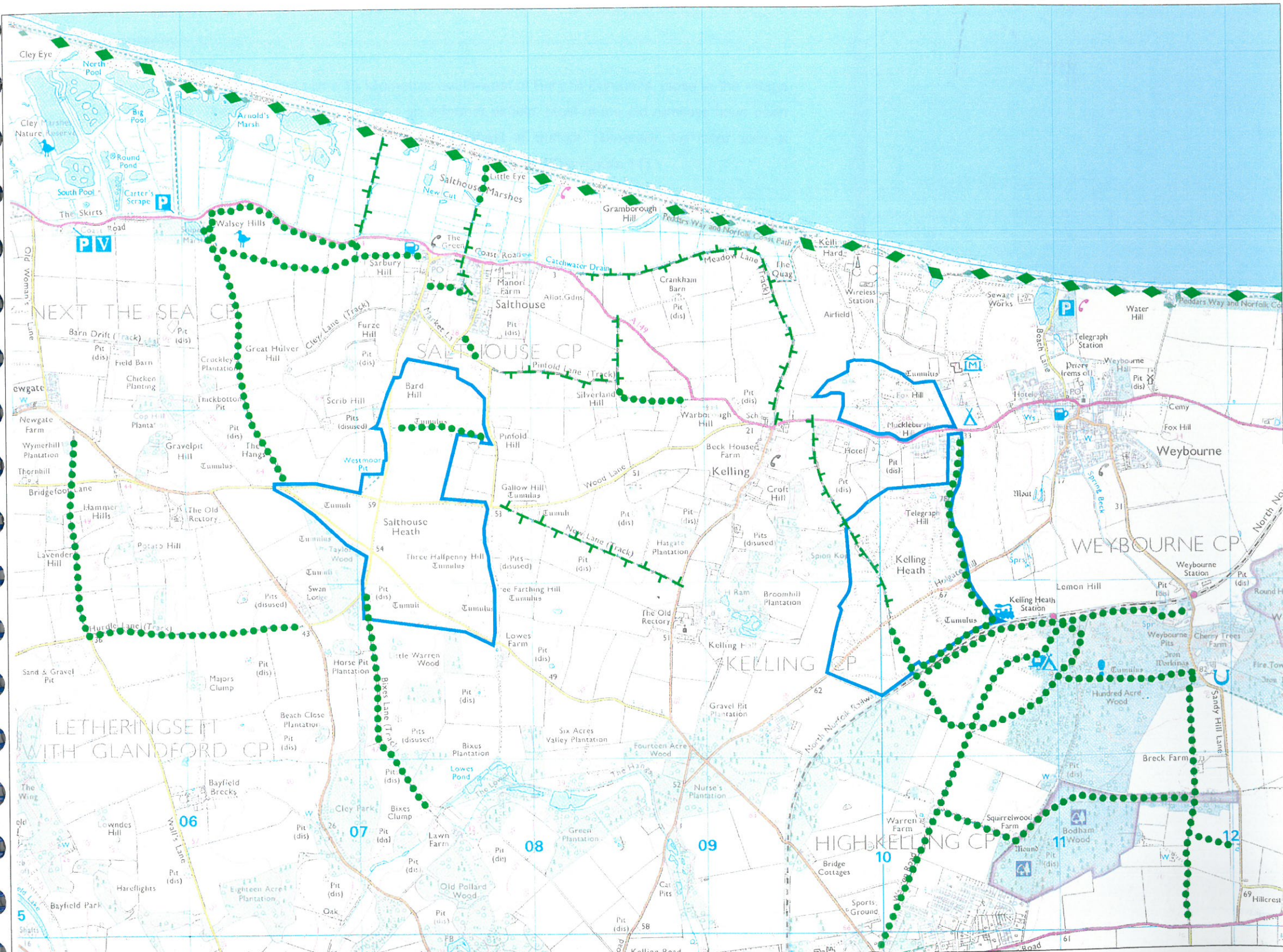
Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

Norfolk County Council website : [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)

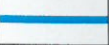



OS Landranger Map Sheet 154

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions.





Legend

-  MOD Boundary
-  Public Footpath
-  RUPP
-  Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path

**RPS** Planning, Transport and Environment



Project  
ATE East

Title  
Kelling and Salthouse Heaths Training Areas

Project Number  
JR4078B

Drawing Number  
Figure 13

Scale  
1:25,000 @ A3

Date  
July 2003

V:\Cadwork\4078\ATE East\Kelling.dwg



## **ATE East**

### **East Anglia Training Area: Stradishall Training Area**

#### **1. Geography**

The ATE facilities are located some 15 kilometres south-west of Bury St Edmunds, close to the village of Stradishall. The Training Area is situated on a former airfield. Most of the old runways have been dug up to form an area of open grassland, the highest in Suffolk. Generally the local area is characterised by arable farmland and a number of large orchards. (See Figure 14)

#### **2. Designations**

There are no designations covering the site.

#### **3. Training Use**

Stradishall is used for low level dry training. Its close proximity to Wattisham means helicopters are able to use the site for various exercises and it is also a good training area for communications and logistics.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

There is no Danger Area.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

The Training Area is not covered by byelaws.

#### **6. Signage**

There are standard MOD signs along the perimeter, although most have been vandalised and need replacing.

#### **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

Not applicable to this site.

**8. Non-Firing Days**

Not applicable to this site.

**9. UXO**

It is probable that there are areas of UXO since the site has been in military occupation since WW2.

**10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

The Training Area is officially closed.

**11. Other Existing Opportunities**

Members of the public do not often use the Training Area but a local model flying club do use the area from time to time under licence.

There is a network of PROW in the vicinity. (See Figure 14)

The Icknield Way long distance route runs to the north of Bury St Edmunds.

At Clare, some 7 kilometres to the south, recreational facilities include the Clare Castle Country Park and Clare Country Walk.

**12. Management of Training Areas**

The Training Area is located on a disused airfield and comprises 225.62 hectares of land owned by MOD on a freehold basis.

The management is low key and the area has therefore developed as an important habitat for nesting birds and exhibits a rich diversity of plant species.

**13. Promotion**

ATE E does not promote access at Stradishall.

PROW in the area are promoted by Suffolk County Council, including the recreational facilities at Clare.

**14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

There are no known pressures to create additional public access.

## 15. Current Access Problems/Issues

The whole site is fenced to stop the dumping of abandoned cars and discourage flytipping. However, local prison staff still access the training area for dog walking, although this does not currently pose a problem. Vandalism of signage is a problem.

The East Region (Area 8) has yet to be mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. Draft maps are expected to be published and available for comment by autumn 2003.

## 16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed

There are few issues associated with either the management of the airfield or the network of public access routes in the vicinity. However, in view of the nature conservation interest associated with the open grassland and the low level of usage for troop training, the possibility of allowing volunteers to become engaged in the ongoing management of the site, in association with the Conservation Group should be considered. It is understood that ATE E do not have the available resources to introduce any guided conservation walks, although it may be possible for the Conservation Group to take round small groups (particularly for educational purposes) outside the nesting season.

Since the theft and vandalism of signage is a problem across the whole of the defence estate, measures to address it are dealt with under the strategic recommendations in the main report.

## 17. Sources

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

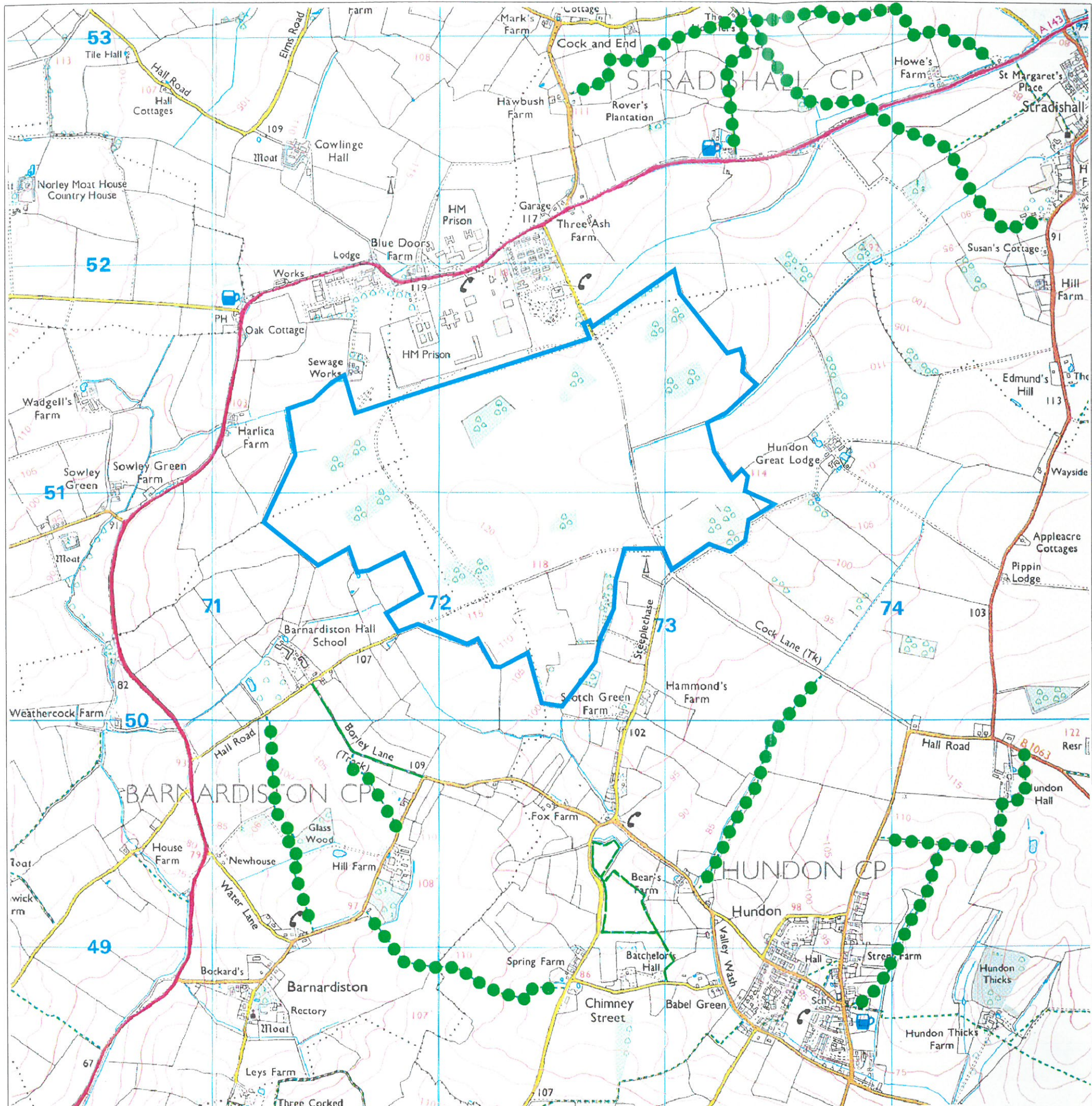
Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)




Suffolk County Council website : [www.suffolkcc.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcc.gov.uk)

OS Landranger Map Sheets 154 and 155

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions.





- Legend
-  MOD Boundary
  -  Public Footpath
  -  Public Bridleway



Project  
ATE East

Title  
Stradishall Training Area

Project Number  
JR4078B

Drawing Number  
Figure 14

Scale  
NTS

Date  
July 2003

V:\Cadwork\4078\ATE East\Stradishall.dwg

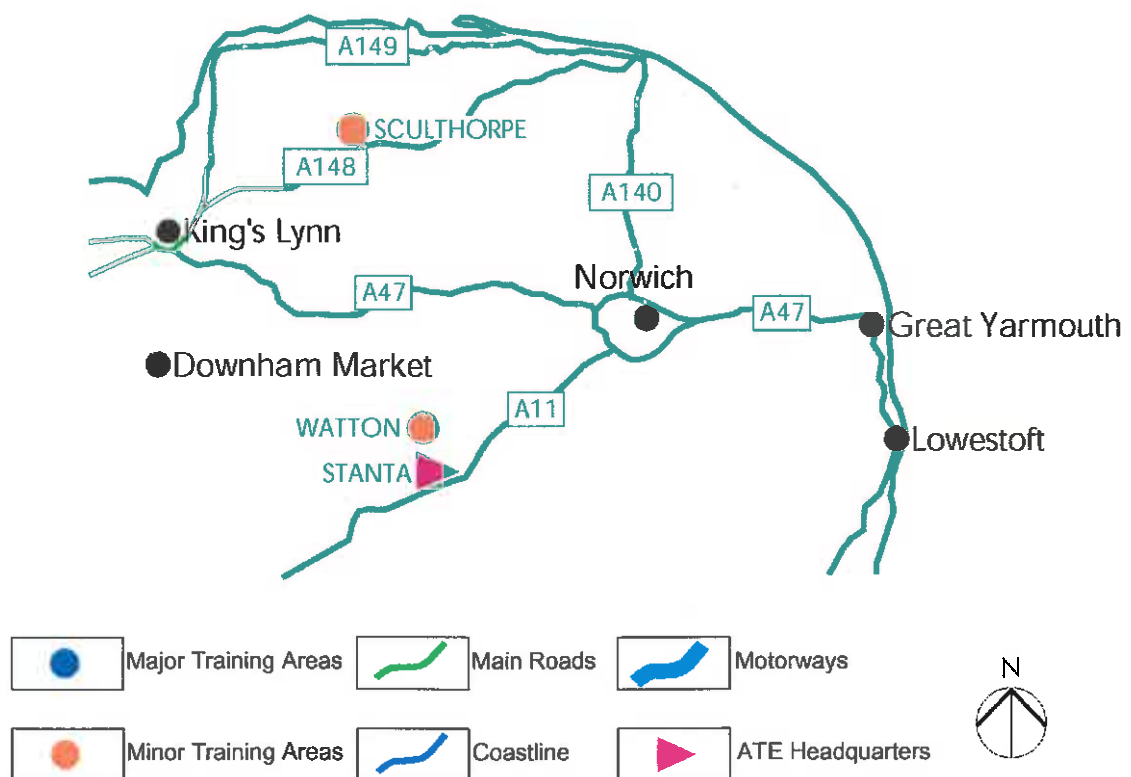


## ATE East

### Stanford Training Area (STANTA)

The Headquarters of the ATE E is based at Stanford in Norfolk, some seven miles north west of Thetford. There are three Training Areas within STANTA comprising the main area at Stanford which covers more than 10,000 hectares; the airfield at Watton some three miles north east of Stanford and the airfield at Sculthorpe, some thirty four miles north of Stanford. Together these areas total 11268 hectares. The figure below illustrates their location in relation to each other.

Figure 15 STANTA



The following site reports provide details of the Stanford Training Area, set out in three separate reports; STANTA (Main area/Grimes Graves/Croxton/Thompson Water/Bridgham Heath), Watton Airfield and Sculthorpe Airfield.



## ATE East

### Stanford Training Area: STANTA

#### Main Training Area

##### 1. Geography

The ATE facilities are located some 10 kilometres north-west of Thetford within a lowland landscape estate. The site covers about 10,500 hectares and is characterised by a varied terrain comprising woodland, pine forests, heath land, lakes, marshes, a river and several streams. Together with the airfields at Watton and Sculthorpe the STANTA estate covers around 90 square kilometres and represents 2% of the County of Norfolk. (See Figure 16).

**Photograph 1: General view of the Training Area**



##### 2. Designations

The area has barely changed for around sixty years and is of major conservation importance. Within the central heathland core there are ten SSSIs covering around 6800 hectares, the largest single ownership in lowland Britain. The majority of this area is part of the Breckland cSAC and the proposed SPA.

The heathland and arable habitats of the Breckland are of major importance to Stone Curlews, which are a Schedule 1 protected species under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and Annex 1 of the EC Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds. It is also a priority species of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. STANTA is also home to one of Europe's rarest moths, the Basil-Thyme Case Bearer.

Thompson Water, Carr and Common is covered by the Norfolk Valley Fens cSAC. Thompson Common is outside the Training Area and is owned by Norfolk Wildlife Trust. It is an important SSSI, exhibiting a dense concentration of pingos - circular ponds created during the Ice Age - and a variety of rare plant species.

**Photograph 2 : Thompson Common (outside the Training Area)**



There are also significant archaeological remains on the site, with 16 scheduled monuments.

### **3. Training Use**

STANTA is used for 350 days each year and is now one of the most extensively used Training Areas in the UK. On average approximately 100,000 troops use the area annually and permanent accommodation can house over 1600 soldiers, with a tented camp increasing this capacity.

The Training Area is used for both live firing at eleven ranges and dry training. The live firing includes direct weapons (rifles), mortars and artillery. These are fired from the perimeter of the Danger Area,

into the Impact Area. The area is also used for parachute landing and helicopter exercises. There are three dropping zones and now that the parachutists are based in Colchester use has increased dramatically.

The northern area is a more recent addition to the Training Area, known as the Northern Extension and in the main comprises the land north of the B1108 Watton Road. There is a planning restriction on this area, which stipulates the level of training allowed (170 days/year) and established exclusion zones around all residential areas.

Several areas are out of bounds for all purposes.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

The Danger Area covers a substantial area in the centre of the Training Area and all of Bridgham Heath. However, for 12-24 weeks of the year the edge of the Training Area becomes the edge of the Danger Area, when it is used for operational training.

The Danger Area may be used for the purposes of service training including the firing of any type of weapon, vehicle training, parachuting, landing and take off of aircraft including helicopters, exploding demolition charges and for all activities ancillary to such purposes.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

The whole of the original freehold area (before the Northern Extension) is covered by the Stanford Training Area Byelaws 1970, as amended by The Stanford Training Area (Amendment) Byelaws 1975, which came into operation on 24th February 1975. Under the byelaws the "Danger Area shall be permanently closed to the public". The byelaws also include 'Thompson' (Carr & Water) but not the Northern Extension or some of the leasehold areas including LYN, CROX, ASH, HOCK and Grimes Graves.

Byelaw signs are located around the perimeter of the Training Area.

#### **6. Signage**

There are signs all around the boundary of the Training Area saying 'MOD Property – KEEP OUT' and around the edge of the Northern Extension signs read 'MOD Training Area'.

The Danger Area is clearly marked using a red flag/lamp/barrier system, with flags also used at the main access points.

**Photograph 3 : Signage at Smugglers Road**



**7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

Under the byelaws MOD must provide public notification of day and night firing by sending notices not less than seven days before the event, stating the intended date, time and during of firing to the local authorities and the police.

In addition, a regular newsletter informs Parish Councils of large forthcoming exercises and planned military activity and the Commandant offers to attend the six-monthly Parish Council meeting.

**8. Non-Firing Days**

The Training Area closes down for two weeks at Christmas but outside this period there are no formal non-firing days. However, there are live firing restrictions, including:

- no live firing during major unit and formation exercises;
- no live firing, except for operational training, during the lambing season from mid-March to mid-April.

There are also restrictions on the areas owned by Forest Enterprise (ASH, LYN, CROX and HOCK). Here blank ammunitions or tracked vehicles cannot be used.



## 9. UXO

STANTA has been used for training since 1942 and there is a residual unexploded ordnance risk over much of the Training Area. There is a closed impact area at Hopton Point and here there is a danger from UXO on account of the ongoing training activities.

**Photograph 4 : Closed Impact Area**



## 10. Public Access Resources/Facilities

DE completed a study on public access opportunities at STANTA in 2000. Generally, only restricted public access is possible to the main Training Area on safety and operational grounds, which manifests itself as follows. (See Figure 16)

The byelaws preclude public access permanently to the whole of the Training Area. However, the MOD does not enforce the byelaws in the Thompson Water area and the Norfolk Wildlife Trust has established a circular walk called the 'Pingo Trail' in this location. The trail is approximately 12 kms in length starting in Thompson village and running through wooded countryside and wetlands including Thompson Common and Thompson Water and along parts of Peddars Way.

The Training Area has two access roads running through it. Smugglers Road runs north to south and is a public road as far as the cattle grid. This is used by locals, who require a pass, which is issued by Range Patrol (Gates 1 & 6). Another road runs east to west, again for authorised access only (Gates 13 & 17).

There is a public footpath on the area of land near Grimes Graves under leasehold tenure, which leads to a cultural heritage site. It is a dead-end and is not popular with walkers. This whole area of leasehold land forms a Danger Area separated from the main body of the Training Area but it is not covered by the byelaws and thus access is not restricted. However, should Grimes Graves be mapped as open country under CROW, ATE HQ has already indicated that access to this area would probably be excluded using the Section 28 provisions.

A condition of the planning permission for the Northern Extension to the Training Area required the MOD to set up a permissive path. A gentle, 4 km linear walk was therefore established through farmland and woodland, running along Watton Brook from Great Cressingham to Bodney on the northern edge of the site. The walk is featured in the Walks on MOD Lands booklet but is rarely used. Access is prohibited when the red flags, situated at each end of the walk, are flying.

**Photograph 5 : Watton Brook**



Another condition of the consent related to the requirement that a number of guided tours are offered. These are restricted to the summer months, outside working hours and by coach, and are preceded by a presentation. The careful control of access has allowed rare forms of flora and fauna to flourish and the MOD are proud to welcome the public to the Training Area on these occasions to demonstrate the results of the conservation management regime.



In addition, 32 interest groups visit STANTA using an access permit system and other accompanied visits are arranged e.g. to the local churches. In total there are around 4000 visitors per year to the Training Area.

Peddars Way, a national long distance route runs along the eastern boundary of STANTA, outside the Training Area.

**Photograph 6 : Peddars Way**



**11. Other Existing Opportunities**

The only groups that are not escorted are the Conservation Groups, who are briefed, issued with passes and liaise with Range Liaison Officer.

Licences are issued by DE for formal recreational activities, including game shooting and fly-fishing. The shoot is divided into five areas and primarily relies on wild birds. Each area is looked after by a part time gamekeeper, who also controls vermin. Rough shooting is also allowed in some areas. Fly-fishing takes place on six beats of the River Wissey and is looked after by two part time river keepers. Coarse fishing is allowed on Buckenham Tofts Lake. The Training Area is also used under licence from time to time by public groups such as local rifle clubs. Care is taken to ensure that such recreational uses do not affect other interests on the site, particularly any nesting stone curlews.

In addition, MOD organise an annual carol service is held at West Tofts Church for the local community.

There is a good network of PROW in the vicinity and public access by permission to extensive Forest Enterprise lands immediately to the west of the Training Area and smaller areas to the east. Here, there are recreational opportunities on foot and cycle, parking and picnic facilities.

To the south of the Training Area, the St Edward and Hereward Way run west from the Peddars Way and to the south-west the Little Ouse Path runs alongside the river from Thetford to Brandon and beyond. At Brandon there is also a country park, close to the settlement within the forest.

The Pingoland Explorer Trail which runs for nearly 20 kms and goes past the Pingo Trail, includes the ancient pingo ponds at Thompson Common and Frost Common and takes in the heath and forest landscapes of the Peddars Way. Other local routes include The Harling Drove, a 16.25 km linear route which takes in Thetford Forest immediately to the west of the Forest Enterprise land at Lyn, The Flint Hunters' Explorer Trail for adult cycling and The Weeting Area offering a network of easy cycling routes.

## **12. Management of Training Areas**

The Training Area comprises 8315.32 hectares of land owned by MOD on a freehold basis, 777.38 hectares held on leasehold tenure and 1435.61 hectares used under licence. Within this area, which makes up thirty separate lettings, there are approximately 1875 hectares of land licensed for arable cropping and around 4050 hectares licensed for grazing, of which over 3800 hectares is heathland. Around 14,000 sheep and other livestock are grazed over this area to keep the grass down and reduce the risk of fire. In addition there are around 1700 hectares of woodland, of which over 1000 hectares are managed by DE. The majority of the Training Area is covered by the Breckland ESA, a scheme operated by DEFRA under their Rural Development Programme, which in this instance aims to conserve and extend the extensive areas of internationally important lowland heath. At STANTA management agreements have been entered into under the ESA scheme for the reversion of suitable land to heathland.

In July 2001 the Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP) was completed and signed by all Steering Group members and projects are now being taken forward from the Action Plan. These include scrub clearance at Thorpe and Bridgham Heaths, fencing and re-introduction of grazing to Grimes Graves, introduction of grazing to the northern end of Hollow Heath and creation of Stone Curlew nesting plots.

The conservation interests are safeguarded by a management agreement with English Nature and STANTA won the Silver Otter trophy for its management of conservation.

Forest Enterprise owns some of the forest within the Training Area (LYN, HOCK, CROX and ASH). The MOD has training rights over this land, but no management responsibility.

### **13. Promotion**

ATE East promotes access opportunities at Watton Brook through the Walks on Ministry of Defence Lands booklet. The ATE website also gives details of the STANTA Training Area with explanations as to why unsupervised access is not possible on the grounds of public safety, although members of the public are welcome to take part in guided tours of the Training Area.

PROW in the area are promoted by Norfolk County Council. Breckland Council promotes local walks and trails including the Pingoland Explorer Trail, The Harling Drove, The Flint Hunters' Explorer Trail and The Weeting Area.

**Photograph 7 : Sheep grazing on Frog Hill**



### **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

The Training Area is immediately adjacent to Thetford Forest, where there is considerable scope for public access opportunities.

Some time ago the Ramblers' Association approached the Commandant about guided walking tours across the Training Area. They were provided with details of how these could be arranged but to date

have not responded. Subsequently, they have asked whether it is possible to designate routes through the Training Area, free from UXO, which might be made available on certain days of the year.

#### 15. Current Access Problems/Issues

The aims for public access at STANTA are to provide high quality provision where it is appropriate to do so. However, public access to the Training Area is difficult to accommodate for safety reasons and because of high troop usage. Live shells and mortar bombs dating from the Second World War onwards are found regularly during clearance operations and whilst military personnel are readily able to identify and deal with these, members of the public are at high risk. The high level of operational training within STANTA and the proximity of military property, equipment and other facilities mitigate against permitting unchecked access and restrictions are therefore necessary. Greater provision is both possible and available in the Northern Extension Area.

The East Region has yet to be mapped by the Countryside Agency under CROW. Draft maps are expected to be published and available for comment by autumn 2003. ATE HQ have already indicated that should areas at Old Bodney Camp, Grimes Graves and Bridgman Heath be mapped as access land then exclusions under Section 28 would be utilised.

In addition, ATE East and DE have flagged the possible conflict between public access and conservation should the areas of heathland re-creation under the Breckland ESA scheme, not protected by the byelaws (The Northern Extension), be mapped as access land. First indications from ATE HQ were that the interpretation of CROW would not allow these sites to be excluded under Section 28. Approaches were subsequently made to English Nature to assess whether they would support exclusion of these areas from mapping and it is considered that English Nature will at best impose access restrictions during the Stone Curlew nesting season from March to July. The issue has also been raised with the ESA Project Officer. There is the fear that if this matter is not resolved satisfactorily it will deter MOD from entering other ESA schemes. **[FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION]**

#### 16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed

To address the existing issues, the following recommendations are made:-

- Through the ILMP process and in liaison with the local highway authority ensure there is clear signposting of existing rights of way in the leasehold areas and along the permissive path at Watton Brook.
- Introduce strategically located information boards explaining the nature conservation initiatives and reasons for access restrictions e.g. along Peddars Way and on the Watton Brook walk.



- Undertake negotiations with or make representations to the Countryside Agency, English Nature and DEFRA regarding the possible mapping of areas of heathland and heathland regeneration as open country under the CROW Act, to ensure that any future public access does not impinge on the nature conservation objectives and military training operations on the site. To include a detailed appraisal of what steps, if any, should be taken to restrict access to the site, within the context of a consistent strategic policy
- Review access opportunities in the 'Northern Extension' outside the Danger Area that were highlighted as a result of the ILMP. Many of these will be of particular benefit to local residents and include the following possible routes/walks:
  - Additional paths in the area of Watton Brook permissive path;
  - A bridleway along the A1065 between Hilborough and Forest Enterprise land;
  - A circular route north of Bodney village;
  - A circular route at Linghills Farm, starting and finishing at the end of Home Lane;
  - The Green Lane track across Little Cressingham Common (in association with the local highway authority);
  - An educational facility (hide) with route from the road at Fowl Mere;
  - A cycle route between The Arms and Peddars Way.

**Photograph 8 : Great Cressingham at the far north of the Training Area**





## 17. Sources

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) : Stanford

Stanford Training Area Byelaws : Statutory Instruments 1970 No. 909 & 1975 No. 24

Defence Estates website : [www.defence-estates.mod.uk](http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk)

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

Norfolk County Council website : [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)

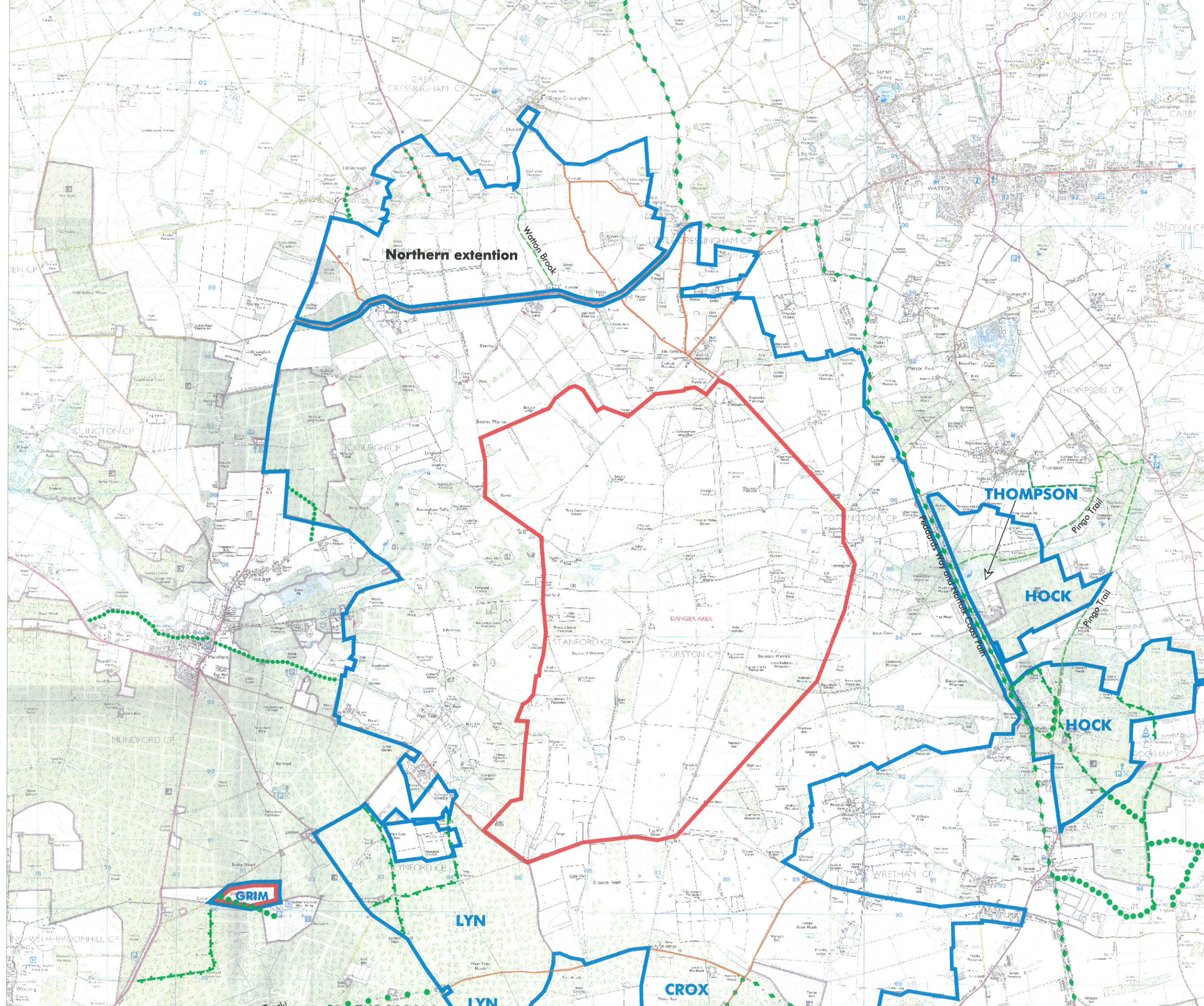
OS Explorer Map Sheet 229

OS Landranger Map Sheet 144









Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15 January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions.

Site visit undertaken on 15 January 2001





Legend

-  MOD Bou
-  Danger Ar
-  Public Foo
-  Public Brid
-  RUPP
-  Other Rou
-  Permissive
-  Public roa



## **ATE East**

### **Stanford Training Area: STANTA Sculthorpe Airfield**

#### **1. Geography**

Sculthorpe Airfield lies approximately 50 kms to the north of the main STANTA Training Area, between the villages of Sculthorpe and Syderstone and around 4 kms west of Fakenham. The area is characterised by open farmland with small areas of heath, woodland and plantations. The site comprises the former RAF airfield and includes extensive runway and taxiway areas, with a variety of usable buildings including two hangars, a control tower and fire station. (See Figure 17)

#### **2. Designations**

There are no landscape or nature conservation designations covering the site.

#### **3. Training Use**

The airfield is used for dry training and parachute/aircraft landing.

#### **4. Danger Areas**

There is no danger area.

#### **5. Byelaws/Control**

There are no byelaws covering the airfield.

#### **6. Signage**

The boundary to the airfield is marked with standard MOD signs.

#### **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

Not applicable to this site.

#### **8. Non-Firing Days**

Not applicable to this site.

## **9. UXO**

There is a bomb dump in the north-east area of the Airfield.

## **10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

There is no public access to the airfield.

## **11. Other Existing Opportunities**

The airfield is used under licence from DE for model aircraft flying and occasionally for some motor vehicle use.

In the locality there is a network of PROW for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including routes through/around Coxford Wood, Coxwood Heath and Syderstone Common to the west of the Airfield. Cycle Hire facilities are available in Sculthorpe. (See Figure 17)

The prehistoric Peddars Way route runs to the west beyond Houghton Park.

## **12. Management of Dry Training Areas**

The airfield covers a total area of 540 hectares in freehold ownership, most of which comprises runways or taxiways or other areas of hardstanding.

## **13. Promotion**

Public access across the airfield is not actively promoted by ATE E.

The PROW in the area are promoted by Norfolk County Council.

## **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

The Ramblers' Association has expressed an interest in seeing some old pre-airfield road connections restored as cycleways/bridleways, namely:

- Syderstone to Dunton;
- New Road, Sculthorpe to Dunton;
- London Lane on the north side of the airfield to Tatterford Longrow on the south side.

However, restoration of any of these routes, where they cross MOD land, is unlikely to be a feasible option since it would require "sterilising" large parts of the Airfield and would render it unfit for purpose. There is also the safety aspect of bringing the public in proximity to the bomb dump.

#### **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

There are no known access problems at the present time.

#### **16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed**

There are no significant issues to be addressed regarding access across the airfield itself and it is not feasible to reinstate any pre-airfield routes where these cross MOD land for the reasons given above. However, the following suggestions may assist in local access provision, although implementation is outside the control of MOD:-

- The Ramblers' Association may like to investigate the possibility of developing a permissive route between New Road, Sculthorpe at Rudham Gate Plantation and Dunton Patch, using existing tracks outside the airfield boundary.

#### **17. Sources**

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) Stanford

OS Explorer Map Sheet 24

ATE website : [www.army.mod.uk/ate](http://www.army.mod.uk/ate)

Norfolk County Council website : [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

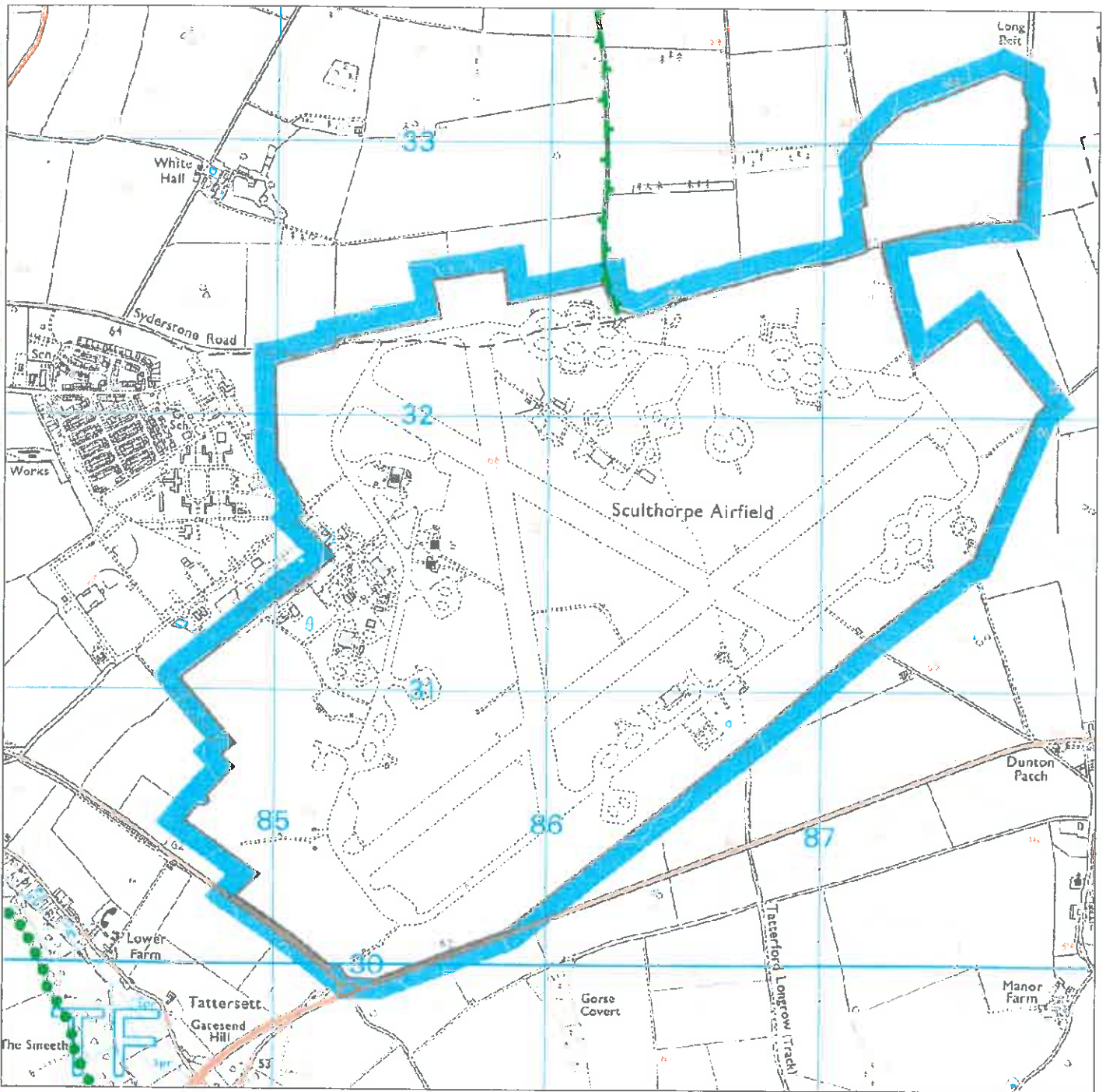
British Horse Society website : [www.ride-uk.org.uk](http://www.ride-uk.org.uk)

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)




Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions

Site visit undertaken on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2001





**Legend**

-  MOD Boundary
-  Public Footpath
-  Road Used as a Public Path

**RPS** Planning, Transport and Environment



Project

**ATE East**

Title

**Sculthorpe**

Project Number  
JR4078B

Drawing Number  
Figure 17

Scale  
1:25,000 @ A4

Date  
July 2003

## **ATE East**

### **Stanford Training Area: STANTA**

#### **Watton Airfield**

##### **1. Geography**

Watton Airfield lies approximately 4.5kms to the north-east of the main STANTA Training Area, to the east of the village of Watton. The area is characterised by farmland with small areas of woodland. The site comprises the former RAF airfield and includes extensive runway and taxiway areas, with a variety of usable buildings including hangar facilities. (See Figure 18)

##### **2. Designations**

The old bomb dump is a county wildlife site.

##### **3. Training Use**

The airfield is used for dry training and parachute/aircraft landing, including use by Hercules aircraft.

##### **4. Danger Areas**

There is no danger area.

##### **5. Byelaws/Control**

There are no byelaws covering the airfield.

##### **6. Signage**

There are standard MOD signs along the perimeter.

##### **7. Live Firing Warning/Notification**

Not applicable to this site.

##### **8. Non-Firing Days**

Not applicable to this site.

## **9. UXO**

There are no known areas of UXO on the Airfield, however since the military have occupied the area for some considerable time this cannot be guaranteed.

## **10. Public Access Resources/Facilities**

There is no public access to the airfield.

## **11. Other Existing Opportunities**

The airfield is used under licence from time to time by various public groups, for example by motorcycle clubs, for vehicle rallies etc.

In the locality there is a good network of PROW for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The prehistoric Peddars Way & North Norfolk Coast national long distance path runs approximately 2.5kms to the west of the airfield and The Great Eastern Pingo Trail approximately 3kms to the south. Close by there a number of circular walks at Watton promoted by Norfolk County Council, including the Wayland Wood Walk, close to the western boundary of the airfield and the Merton Walk.

## **12. Management of Dry Training Areas**

The airfield covers a total area of 200 hectares, most of which comprises runways or taxiways or other areas of hardstanding.

## **13. Promotion**

ATE E does not actively promote public access across the airfield.

Norfolk County Council promotes the PROW in the area. The Peddars Way & North Norfolk Coast long distance route is promoted by the Countryside Agency and the British Horse Society, and The Pingo Trail by Breckland District Council.

## **14. Third Party Aspirations/Pressures**

There are no pressures for general access to the airfield. However, The Ramblers' Association have identified their interest in establishing a useful route for walking along the western edge of the airfield to connect Carbrooke and Griston. However, this is not practicable since the only point of access from the north is via the existing RUPP outside the airfield and this would take walkers through the densest area of on-site facilities. Once on site the only exit would be at the junction of the village road where it

abuts the airfield north of Griston village. Such a route would mean taking the whole of the eastern and part of the southern boundary areas of the airfield out of commission.

The MOD was also approached by Sustrans regarding routing part of their national cycle network through the south-east corner of Watton through to Griston, using the aprons and runways on Watton Airfield. Whilst this proposal proved to be impractical since it would require "sterilising" part of the Airfield in the same way as the previous proposal, DE are currently negotiating with Sustrans regarding the development of a cycle route along the south-west boundary to Griston (in association with the Home Office).

#### **15. Current Access Problems/Issues**

There are no known access problems at the present time.

#### **16. Future Opportunities/Issues to be Addressed**

There are no significant issues to be addressed regarding access across the airfield itself and whilst the aspirations expressed by the Ramblers Association are not practical for the reasons stated above, work on the development of a Sustrans route is ongoing. However, the following suggestion may assist in local access provision although its implementation is beyond the control of MOD:-

- There are significant stretches of dismantled railway running outside the airfield from Watton to Stonebridge, which could be considered by the relevant local authorities to develop a local route to join the Peddars Way. Such a route might satisfy in whole or part the objectives of The Ramblers Association.

#### **17. Sources**

Defence Estates Map (1:25,000) Stanford

ATE website : [www.army.mod.uk/ate](http://www.army.mod.uk/ate)

Norfolk County Council website : [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)

Breckland Council website : [www.breckland.gov.uk](http://www.breckland.gov.uk)

Countryside Agency website : [www.countryside.gov.uk](http://www.countryside.gov.uk)

Joint Nature Conservation Council website : [www.jncc.gov.uk](http://www.jncc.gov.uk)

English Nature website : [www.english-nature.org.uk](http://www.english-nature.org.uk)

British Horse Society website : [www.ride-uk.org.uk](http://www.ride-uk.org.uk)

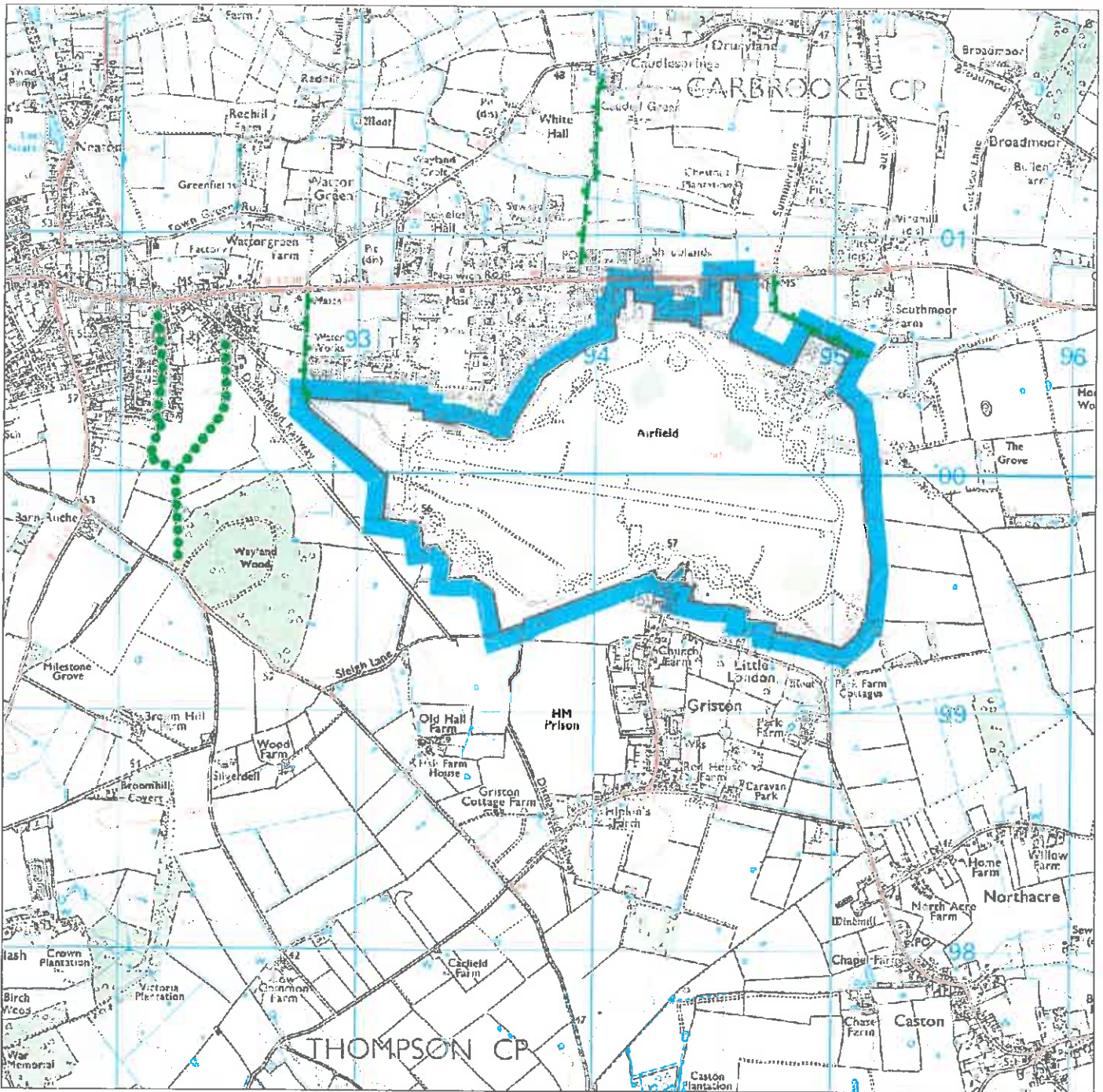
MOD : Walks on Ministry of Defence Lands 2001

Conservation Walks Register at [www.countrywalks.org.uk](http://www.countrywalks.org.uk)

Information supplied by MOD and DE personnel at meetings on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2001 and 5 June 2003 and during other discussions




Site visit undertaken on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2001





Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Digital Data with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown copyright reserved. License Number AL100035267

**Legend**

-  MOD Boundary
-  Public Footpath
-  Road Used as a Public Path



Project

**ATE East**

Title

**Watton**

Project Number  
JR4078B

Drawing Number  
Figure 18

Scale  
1:25,000 @ A4

Date  
July 2003

V:\Cadwork\4078\ATE East\Watton.dwg