

Appendix 5: Extract (pages 1 and 2 and Figure 1) from report by Environmental Advisory Unit Limited of Liverpool University, 1992

(NB 'The Binsted Wood Complex' did not then contain most of Tortington Common, see map of study area. Tortington Common was added to the 'Binsted Woods Complex SNCI' in 2003)

**THE BINSTED WOOD COMPLEX:
A BRIEF APPRAISAL**

OCTOBER 1992

THE BINSTED WOOD COMPLEX: A BRIEF APPRAISAL OF ITS
CONSERVATION VALUE AND CONTEXT

SUMMARY

1. The 200 ha Binsted woodland complex contains approximately 100 ha of Ancient Semi-Natural woodland, including the largest single stand of this habitat on the West Sussex coastal plain. Ancient Semi-natural woodland is a Nationally Scarce habitat that covers only 1.6 per cent of the land area of England.
2. A number of Nationally, Regionally and Locally Scarce species have been recorded from the site.
3. The data indicates that this site is of national importance, both because of the extent of Ancient Semi-natural woodland habitat, and also because of the significant assemblage of important plant and animal species present.
4. The destruction, or significant fragmentation of the woodland complex would substantially damage its National importance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The following gives a breakdown of the pertinent details which make this 200 ha woodland area (see fig. 1) of significant nature conservation interest and of national importance.

The Binsted woodland "complex" is referred to as such in order to emphasise its mosaic nature. This complex not only holds ancient woodland, but also a variety of habitats including coppice, old pasture and heathland. It should be noted that whilst a number of the woodland compartments are at most 200 years old, and therefore cannot be regarded as Ancient Semi-natural woodland, the flora in these compartments are locally rich and include a number of uncommon species.

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2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Flora

The woodland complex holds a variety of habitats including old meadows, ancient woodland, coppice and heathland. Reflecting this diversity, surveys by the Sussex Wildlife Trust and Sussex Botanical Recording Society, with additional species added by Mr. K Lewis, indicate that over 250 plant species may be found here. The woodland areas alone hold between 150 and 170 plant species and, since the NCC Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs (NCC, 1989) states that a woodland holding between 100-200 plant species should be considered rich in absolute terms, it is clear that this woodland is of great conservation significance.

2.2 Fauna

2.2.1 Butterflies

The site holds an assemblage in excess of 30 butterfly species, approximately half of the British list. Such a number indicates that the site is of high nature conservation value.

2.2.2 Moths and other Invertebrates

Two moth trapping sessions have revealed 70 moth species, there is a high potential for a substantial increase in this list given such a yield from a small sample. A number of other invertebrate species of interest have also been recorded.

2.2.3 Mammals

Observations have revealed the presence of 15 mammal species including Badgers and five species of Bat.

2.2.4 Amphibians and Reptiles

Seven species of herpetile (amphibian and reptile) have been recorded from the site.

2.2.5 Birds

In excess of 48 species of bird have been recorded in the study area, including Nightjar, Nightingale, and Woodcock.

2.3 Designated Sites

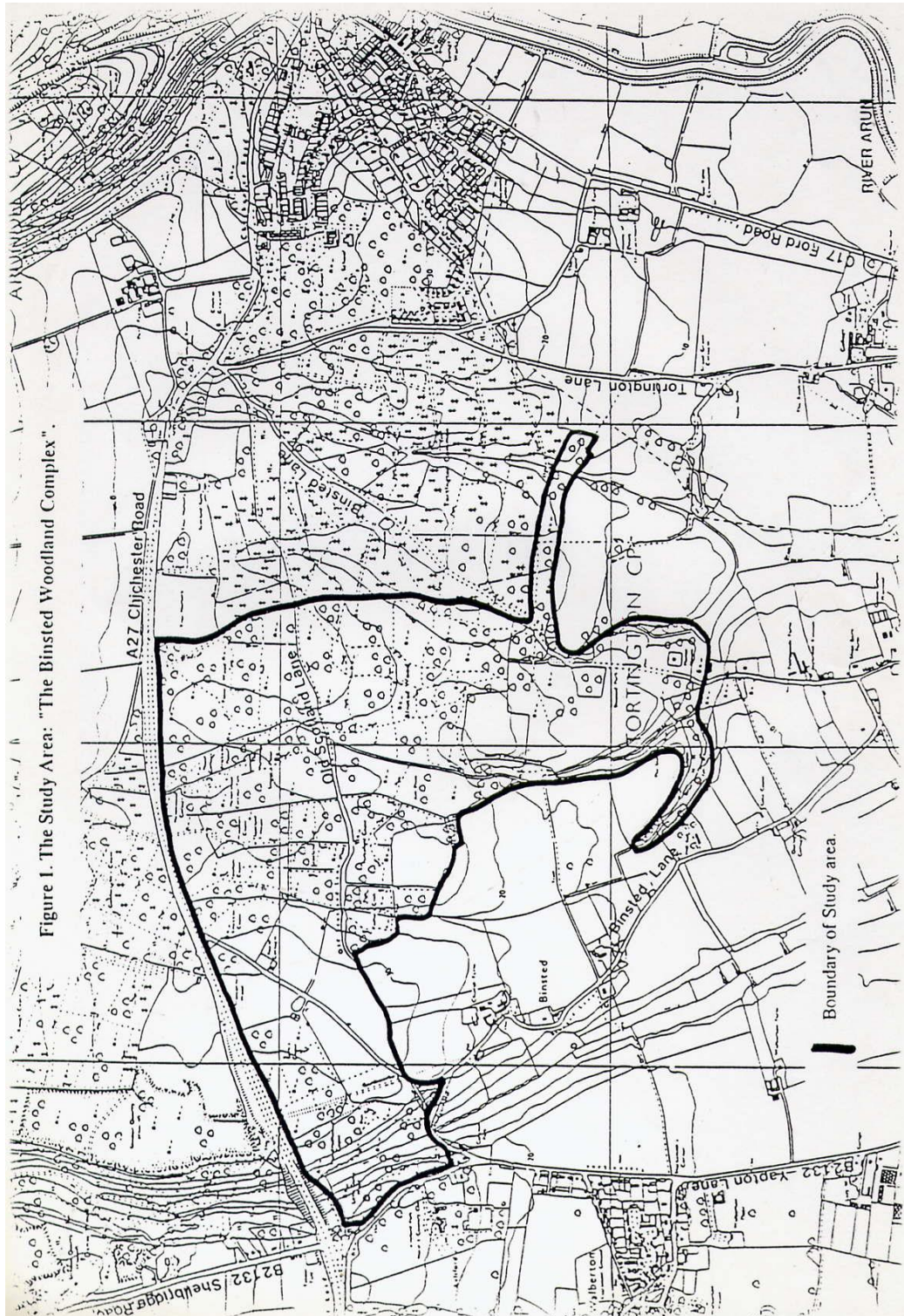
The following conservation designations are present within the Binsted Wood Complex:

2.3.1 Ancient Woodlands

Ancient Woodlands are defined by English Nature, the successor body of the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) in England, as having been continuously wooded since 1600. They represent our most complex and diverse ecosystems, supporting a wide range of fauna and flora.

Approximately 100 ha of the Binsted woodland complex may be classified as Ancient. This is by far the largest area of Ancient Semi-natural woodland on the West Sussex coastal plain (see section 2.2.2). These ancient woodland areas are cited in the Ancient Woodland Register compiled by the NCC (see fig. 2).

Such ancient woodland contains a number of species that are generally not found elsewhere; these species are called ancient woodland indicator species. In one survey, out of a total of 158 plant species recorded on the site, the woodland areas were found to hold 52 ancient woodland indicators, and Hundred House copse alone was found to hold 38 indicator species (anything over 30 may be considered to indicate a high quality site).



(Appendix 6 continued: extract from EAULUL study of Binsted Woods, 1992)