

23rd November 2017

To whom it may concern

Chalky Meadow, Thaxted nature reserve

Essex Wildlife Trust would very much support the local community in Thaxted in their wish to create a 'nature reserve' to protect the land off Guelphs Lane, Thaxted.

Having visited the site previously we are aware that it is an area of unimproved flower rich grassland developed on chalky boulder clay soils.

On a visit some years ago I noted 100+ pyramidal orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis* flower spikes (more to the south of the site) both common spotted *Dactylorhiza fuchsia* and bee orchid *Ophrys apifera* occurs on site with abundant Agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*, Field Scabious *Knautia arvensis*.

Common butterfly species were evident and interestingly 10+ Marbled white *Melanargia galathea* and a single Brimstone *Gonepteryx rhamni*

The key feature on the site is the flower rich grassland. To ensure continuity the site needs some sensitive scrub removal over the next two or three winters if the grassland interest is not to be lost.

There is an opportunity to improve a hedge and create connectivity to adjacent woodland.

This site is not registered as a Local Wildlife Site (LoWS). This is as designation which is recognised within planning guidance and carries a presumption against development. However it carries no legal status and does not protect the site from damage or destruction.

I would recommend this site is surveyed and if it meets the LoWS criteria be formally designated as a LoWS with Uttlesford DC.

In addition I would propose that Thaxted PC adopt the site as a nature reserve – to raise the profile of the site and involve the local community and raise support

Essex Wildlife Trust would be willing to support the Thaxted Parish Council and local residents in advising how the site is best managed for wildlife and access.

Should you have any further questions or require any help or advice please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes



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