

Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve Management Plan 2017 - 2026



City of Edinburgh Council
Forestry and Natural Heritage
Inverleith Farmhouse, Inverleith Park
5 Arboretum Place, Edinburgh
EH3 5NY
0131 529 2401/0131 311 7078

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20064/parks_and_green_spaces

Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Overview	1
1.1.1	Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve	1
1.1.2	Forestry and Natural Heritage	1
1.2	Purpose of the plan	2
1.3	The Management Plan in relation to the wider policy and legislative context	3
1.3.1	Legislation	3
1.3.2	Designations and Listings	7
1.3.3	Policy/ Strategic Documents	11
1.4	Site Information	14
2.	EVALUATION	15
2.1	Partnerships	15
2.2	Marketing and Events	16
2.3	Interpretation	18
2.4	Safety	20
2.5	Sustainability	21
2.5.1	Edinburgh Living Landscape Project	22
2.6	Maintenance	23
2.6.1	Litter	23
2.6.2	Confirm®	23
2.6.3	Park Quality Assessments (PQA) and Green Flag	24
2.6.4	Ezytreev	26
3.	STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	27
3.1	Vision	28
3.2	Significant Key Features	29
3.2.1	Cultural Heritage	29
3.2.1.1	Archaeology	29

3.2.1.2	Built structures	30
3.2.2	Natural Heritage	34
3.2.2.1	Topography, Drainage and Soils	34
3.2.2.2	Geology	35
3.2.2.3	Habitat	36
3.2.2.4	Woodland	37
3.2.2.4.1	Oak/Birch Woodland	38
3.2.2.4.2	Mixed Broadleaf Woodland	39
3.2.2.4.3	Policy Woodland	40
3.2.2.4.4	Woodland Management	41
3.2.2.5	Fauna	41
3.2.2.6	Flora	43
3.2.2.6.1	Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)	44
3.2.2.6.2	Invasive Native Species (INS)	45
3.2.3.	Social Significance	46
3.2.3.1	Access routes	46
3.2.3.2	Recreation	46
4.	OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES	47
4.1	Workplan	48
5.	APPENDICES	
5.1	Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve Boundary Map	57
5.2	Scottish Wildlife Trust INNS Map 1	58
5.3	Scottish Wildlife Trust INNS Map 2	59
5.4	Scottish Wildlife Trust INNS Map 3	60
5.5	Corstorphine Hill LNR woodland compartments	61
5.6	SWT Corstorphine Hill LNR woodland features	62
5.7	Corstorphine Hill LNR PQA score 2015	63
5.8	Core path, local path and Public Rights of Way (PROW) map	65
5.9	Orientation panel	66
6.	REFERENCES/FURTHER INFORMATION	68

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve

Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is the largest and perhaps the most valuable of Edinburgh's urban woodlands. It is a prominent feature of Edinburgh's skyline, extending to almost 2.4km in length, at its widest 800m and rising to a height of 161m above sea level.

Corstorphine Hill is a thin outcrop running approximately north – south and located about 5.5km west of Edinburgh city centre. The hill has been a public park since 1924 and since then its recreational significance and importance as a wildlife refuge has grown as housing areas have crept closer. The hill now lies in the midst of the highly populated areas of Corstorphine, Clermiston and Blackhall/Hillpark. In recognition of its special value, the site was designated Edinburgh's first Local Nature Reserve in 1993.

Corstorphine Hill (LNR) is managed by the City of Edinburgh Council Forestry and Natural Heritage (FNH).

1.1.2 Forestry and Natural Heritage (FNH)

The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) FNH manages 13 countryside sites across the city including the Pentland Hills Regional Park with an emphasis on conservation of the natural, cultural and historical interest. The FNH also seeks to increase public understanding, appreciation and care for the countryside in and around Edinburgh. The service is also responsible for the city's public tree stock.

In relation to Edinburgh's Natural Heritage Sites, the FNH undertakes this by;

- Ensuring that our 13 sites are clean, safe and well maintained;

- Providing a service that responds to the various needs of our local communities and customers;
- Working in partnership with other organisations for the benefit of the sites and the local communities;
- Working in conjunction with Friends and local community groups to ensure that the public are involved with the management of the sites; and,
- Ensuring that we are efficient in how we work and that our work is of a high standard.

Services that are provided include conservation management, community involvement, corporate volunteering, interpretation and environmental educational facilitation.

1.2 Purpose of the plan

The purpose of this plan is to be a site-specific document, produced by Forestry and Natural Heritage, to offer guidance and direction on all aspects of management of Corstorphine Hill LNR. It is intended to be a continuation of the previous plans while also providing additional information on various operational aspects. It is a ten-year plan with a review to be undertaken in 2021 and annual reporting to be carried out on the progress of the work plan.

Previous plans have included "Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve 1998 -2003" written by CEC Countryside Ranger Service and "Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve Woodland Management Plan 2004 – 2013" written by an external consultant on behalf of CEC Countryside Ranger Service for the application and subsequent implementation of a Stewardship Grant which was available for woodland management works. A further grant opportunity existed in the form of the Woodland In and Around Towns Challenge Fund (WIAT) which was launched by the Forestry Commission in June 2004. The Stewardship Grants that were available covered activities such as improving timber quality, reducing deer numbers, native woodlands, improving woodland biodiversity, landscape improvement, developing alternative systems to clear-felling and woodland recreation. Of particular relevance for Corstorphine Hill are the Stewardship Grants relating to improving

woodland biodiversity and woodland recreation. A total of around £400,000 was spent from 2004 on safety felling and re-stocking, improvements to path networks including associated drainage infrastructure, habitat boxes, seating and signage.

1.3 The Management Plan in relation to the wider policy and legislative context

At present the following legislation, designations and policies are upheld and followed by the Natural Heritage Service in managing Corstorphine Hill LNR:

1.3.1 Legislation

There have been a number of changes over the years in legislation which affect the management of sites like Corstorphine Hill LNR, the most notable are:

- Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011- This Act amends three pieces of primary legislation:
 - The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953;
 - The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979; and
 - The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conversation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

The Act harmonise aspects of historic environment legislation with the planning regime; improves the ability of central and local government to work with developers and their partners; and improve the capacity to deal with urgent threats and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of deterrents (Historic Scotland Website). If a monument is both listed and scheduled, only Scheduled Monument Consent is required for any work. However, listed building consent may still be required for any structures outside the scheduled area. For Corstorphine Hill LNR the Natural Heritage Service will be required to consult with Historic Scotland and CEC Archaeological Services over consent required to carry out works on this site.

- The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003- this has opened the area up to use by a much wider range of people and recreational pursuits, which, at times can cause conflict. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code, produced by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), explains people’s access rights and responsibilities and has three key aspects which include; taking responsibility for your own actions; respecting the interest of others; and, caring for the environment. The area is regularly inspected and monitored by the Natural Heritage Service and volunteers, who provide advice to users on responsible access.
- The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 - Aspects under the Act for which the Natural Heritage Service have responsibility in relation to the management of land and water, are as follows:

1 Biodiversity

Duty to further the conservation of biodiversity

(1) It is the duty of every public body and office-holder, in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.

Public bodies operating in Scotland are obliged to give proper consideration to, and account for, the impacts which their activities and policies have on the overall balance and health of the natural biological environment; at a local, regional, national and international level. CEC are required to act, in ways which are consistent with the exercise of their other statutory functions, in order to ensure that the conservation of that naturally-occurring biological diversity is encouraged and advanced.

- The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (WANE) – The Act amends a number of other pieces of legislation and aims to modernise game laws, introduces new wildlife offences (vicarious liability), adds further regulation to snaring, updates to the ways Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) are dealt with, updates to the licensing system, amendments to deer stalking and deer

management, strengthens protection of badgers, makes changes to Muirburn practices and operational changes to Site of Special Scientific Interest management.

- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 - Badgers and their setts are comprehensively protected by this Act as amended by the WANE Act 2011.

It is an offence to:

- wilfully kill, injure, take or attempt to kill a badger;
- possess a dead badger or any part of a dead badger;
- cruelly ill-treat a badger;
- use badger tongs in the course of killing, taking or attempting to kill a badger;
- dig for a badger;
- possess, sell or offer for sale any live badger;
- mark, tag or ring a badger.

It is also a crime to interfere with a badger sett by intentionally or recklessly causing or allowing:

- damage to a sett or any part of it;
- destruction of it;
- sett access to be obstructed, or any entrance of it;
- a dog to enter it;
- disturbance to a badger when it is occupying it.

- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 - The Act aims to end the discrimination that many disabled people face. This Act has been significantly extended, including by the Disability Discrimination Act (2005). It now gives disabled people rights in the areas of: employment, education, access to goods, facilities and services. The Act requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. As land managers, CEC have to ensure as much of the space as possible is accessible to people who have problems walking, for those who use wheelchairs and buggies.
- The Equality Act 2010 – The Act requires to ensure decision makers have regard for the desirability of reducing socio-economic inequalities; to reform and harmonise

equality law; to enable certain employers to be required to publish information about the differences in pay between male and female employees; to prohibit victimisation in certain circumstances; to enable duties to be imposed in relation to the exercise of public procurement functions; to increase equality of opportunity; to amend the law relating to rights and responsibilities in family relationships; and for connected purposes.

- Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003- The Act has 2 principal aims. The first of these is to amend the offence of dog fouling so that the offence consists of failing to clear up after a dog rather than of allowing a dog to foul. The second aim is to establish new enforcement provisions in connection with the offence by enabling local authorities and police constables to issue fixed penalty notices to persons suspected of committing the offence.

In addition, there is also established legislation which relates to Corstorphine Hill LNR, which includes:

- Occupiers' Liability (Scotland) Act 1960- The City of Edinburgh Council's liability to users of Parks owned by the Council derives from this Act. This act makes provision regarding any hazards or dangers on land. It requires the owner
in respect of any dangers which are due to the state of the premises or to anything done....on them...[to take] such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that the person will not suffer injury or damage by reason of any such danger.

Scottish law does not allow the transfer of liability where the landowner is negligent.

- The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) (Section 21) - Under the Act, Local Authorities have exclusive statutory powers to set up and manage Local Nature Reserves (LNR). A LNR is a place with special local natural interest, set up to protect nature, and for people to enjoy and appreciate.

1.3.2 Designations and Listings

Corstorphine Hill LNR has the following designations/listings placed upon it.

Local Nature Reserve: A Local Nature Reserve is a place with a special local natural interest, which is designated to afford protection to nature and to allow people to enjoy and learn about nature. They are characterised by a natural or semi-natural environment, in contrast to formal open green spaces such as parks and gardens.

Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, local authorities set up and manage LNRs in consultation with SNH. In Edinburgh, there are six LNRs all of which are valued for their biodiversity, recreational and community involvement interest. In addition, the Scottish Wildlife Trust has a number of reserves in the Edinburgh area which contribute to local biodiversity conservation. Corstorphine Hill was designated a LNR by the District Council on 3 November 1993 under Sections 1, 9 and 21 of the Act in recognition of its importance to Nature Conservation. The Act defines the expression "Nature Reserve" as:

"land managed for the purpose (a) 'of providing, under suitable conditions and control, special opportunities for the study of, and research into, matters relating to the flora and fauna of Great Britain and the physical conditions in which they live, and for the study of geological and physiographical features of special interest in the area, or (b) of preserving flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features of special interest in the area, or for both these purposes."

Listed Wildlife Site: The wooded spine of the hill has been recorded by the Scottish Wildlife Trust as a Listed Wildlife Site.

Urban Wildlife Site: The site was included as part of the wider North - Western Green Wedge in the 1992 Edinburgh Urban Wildlife Strategy, produced for the District Council by the Department of Planning. The site description section notes a number of threats and broad management proposals that relate to Corstorphine Hill in particular.

Local Geodiversity Site (LGS) formerly a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site (RIGS): Sites of geological and geomorphological importance across Scotland are threatened by quarry landfill, afforestation, quarrying, building development, modification of natural dynamic drainage systems and other developments. While SNH affords protection to the national and international network of statutory Sites of Special Scientific Interest, assets and resources of regional or local significance are also under threat. RIGS are designated by local RIGS groups with the aim of conserving, enhancing and interpreting regionally-important sites which do not enjoy statutory protection. Corstorphine Hill was designated as a RIGS on 14th July 2000. The site has been recognised as a valuable geological feature in terms of its educational and interpretive potential, and for the range of interesting geological features to be found within the site.

Long Established Woodland: The Nature Conservancy Council's Inventory of Ancient, Long-Established & Semi-Natural Woodland lists 887 hectares of Edinburgh woodland in these categories, most of which is classed as long-established plantation (wooded for at least 130 years). Corstorphine Hill on its own makes up 49ha of this small woodland resource and is thus a significant and important component of the mature woodland of Edinburgh. In the woodland inventory Corstorphine Hill is classified as Long Established Plantation Woodland, consisting of both coniferous and broadleaved components, although the proportion of conifers is far outweighed by broadleaves. The more recent Scottish semi-natural Woodland Inventory classifies Corstorphine Hill as Semi-natural Broadleaf Woodland.

Tree Preservation Orders: A number of tree preservation orders have been applied to individual trees and woodland areas in the vicinity of Corstorphine Wood. The trees on Corstorphine Hill itself are protected by the Local Nature Reserve status carried by the site.

The relevant sections of the local authority will be consulted regarding proposed tree removal operations.

Listed Buildings: Corstorphine Hill Tower (also known as the Scott Tower, Clermiston Tower, Scott Centenary Memorial) - Category B building and was listed on 14/12/1970.

Its description reads, “1871 for William Macfie. 5-stage, square plan, crenelated tower with turret. Rubble sandstone; bull-faced dressings. Angle buttresses; dividing band courses; quoins; long and short surrounds to openings; corbelled battlements; moulded eaves.

W (ENTRANCE) ELEVATION: inscription over panelled cast-iron door at ground; single rectangular opening to each stage aligned above. N, E AND S ELEVATIONS: as previous, except single round arch blocked opening at ground. INTERIOR: spiral iron staircase of 100 steps.

Formerly entitled Corstorphine Hill Tower, erected by William Macfie of Clermiston to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Walter Scott. The tower was presented in 1932 to the City of Edinburgh by W G Walker. It is notable for its panoramic view of Edinburgh, the Pentlands and the Firth of Forth”. (Historic Environment Scotland website)

John Muir Way: One of the main paths through the site has been designated as one of Scotland’s Great Trails as part of the coast to coast long distance path, The John Muir Way. Scotland’s Great Trails are nationally promoted routes of more than 25 miles. For more on Scotland’s Great Trails see <http://www.snh.gov.uk/enjoying-the-outdoors/where-to-go/routes-to-explore/scotlands-great-trails>. For more on The John Muir Way see <http://johnmuirway.org>.

Edinburgh Green Belt: The Edinburgh Green Belt was established in 1957 with the prime objectives of controlling urban growth, protecting the character and setting of Edinburgh and protecting the integrity of the surrounding towns and settlements (i.e. preventing coalescence). The Green Belt is largely responsible for the present-day compact urban form

of the City, and is in addition an invaluable landscape, recreational, and biodiversity resource which contributes significantly to the quality of life in the Lothians.

Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS): Corstorphine Hill is listed in the Edinburgh City Local Plan both as a Local Biodiversity Site: Corstorphine Hill & Ravelston - mixed and pure woodland and developed scrub (217.6 ha) and a Local Geodiversity Site illustrating a combination of geomorphological landforms and geological outcrops.

Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV): Traditionally, effort has focused on identifying landscape areas of special value for protection against the possible adverse impact of development proposals. AGLVs were defined by local authorities in development plans under the requirements of Circular 2/1962 with a view to safeguarding areas of local or regional landscape importance from inappropriate development. AGLV's are in the process of being superseded by Special Landscape Areas (SLA).

Candidate Special Landscape Area (SLA): Corstorphine Hill (cSLA 10): From a city-wide perspective, Corstorphine Hill is conspicuous amongst Edinburgh's urban hills, comprising a distinctive and scenically attractive, low, elongated northsouth ridge and having a locally unique wooded character, which contrasts with surrounding built development. At closer range, the qualities of its lower slopes combine with the hill's tree-covered crest, including: Davidson's Mains, Ravelston Golf Course and Ravelston Woods, grazing land on the more gentle slopes to the east; the steep, well treed grounds of Edinburgh Zoo to the south; alongside those of Clerwood, Hillwood, Craigmock Castle and Beechwood House; and semi-improved grassland north of the former Beechhill Nurseries on Corstorphine Road.

It is important to manage these principles at a more local level. An assessment of boundary condition and audit of landscape significance should be undertaken within the lifetime of this plan

1.3.3 Policy/ Strategic Documents

There are many policies and plans that the Scottish Government and the Council have produced which impact on Corstorphine Hill LNR in some way, these include:

Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) - This sets out Scottish Ministers' policies, providing direction for Historic Scotland and a policy framework that informs the work of a wide range of public sector organisations.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) - Scottish Government policy on nationally important land use planning matters.

Planning Advice Note (PAN) 2/2011: Planning and Archaeology - The updated Archaeology PAN reflects 17 years of accumulated changes in the policy context, the statutory planning system, the key stakeholders and in archaeological practices. Similar to its 1994 predecessor (PAN 42) it provides advice to planning authorities and developers on dealing with archaeological remains. But it does so with a fresh emphasis which is proportionate to the relative value of the remains and of the developments under consideration.

Edinburgh City Local Plan 2010 - Sets out the Council's policies to guide development in the city and its proposals for specific sites. The Plan covers the whole of the urban area, and part of its rural Green Belt fringe. The Edinburgh City Local Plan is a replacement for five existing local plans, prepared at various times since 1992, covering different parts of the same area.

Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016 - 2018 - The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on all public bodies, including the City of Edinburgh Council, to further the conservation of biodiversity in the course of carrying out their responsibilities. In complying with this Biodiversity Duty, public bodies must have regard to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. The 2004 document, 'Scotland's Biodiversity: It's in Your Hands' and the 2013 supplement, '2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity' together comprise the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. The Strategy encourages local authorities to support fully

Local Biodiversity Action Plans as a mechanism for local delivery. Phase 4 for Edinburgh includes:

- Strengthening green networks through reviewing the management of the Local Biodiversity Sites network;
- Identification of landscape and river catchment scale strategic habitat projects with a focus on woodland creation, natural flood management opportunities and invasive species control;
- Continuing to protect, monitor and conserve the coastal and marine areas which are of international importance;
- Promotion of green infrastructure particularly in the built environment to deliver biodiversity gain and climate change adaptation;
- Further engaging communities in long term biodiversity monitoring and data collection through training and capacity building, with an initial focus on monitoring important pollinating insects;
- Expanding the naturalisation of Parks and Greenspace through the Edinburgh Living Landscapes initiative.

The Action Plan is available at

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20065/conservation/247/biodiversity_in_edinburgh

Public Rights of Way (PROW) - To be a right of way, a route must meet all the following conditions:

- It must join two public places (e.g. public roads or other rights of way); and
- It must follow a more or less defined route; and
- It must have been used, openly and peaceably, by the general public, as a matter of right, i.e. not just with the permission of the landowner; and
- It must have been used without substantial interruption for at least 20 years.

(<https://www.scotways.com/faq/rights-of-way-law/213-how-does-a-route-become-a-right-of-way>). There are four PROW on Corstorphine Hill LNR, LC 22, 23, 24 and 25.

Edinburgh Core Path Plan 2008 – This was produced, through consultation, as a requirement under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. It identifies key routes for non-motorised

access throughout Edinburgh. In essence it supports sustainable transport objectives, contributes to better health, provides social benefits and contributes to tackling climate change. CEC 14 Corstorphine Hill is an important network of paths from Barnton Golf Course, over Corstorphine Hill to Corstorphine and Carrick Knowe. Approximate distance is 7km. For more information, see

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/63/edinburgh_s_core_path_plan

Capitalising on Access – An Access Strategy for the City of Edinburgh – The City of Edinburgh Council – September 2003- The Strategy sets out a framework for developing inclusive access for everyone who lives in, works in, and visits Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Public Parks and Gardens Strategy – The City of Edinburgh Council, March 2006 - The purpose of the Strategy is that it sets realistic aspirations and shows the way forward to achieving them. The Strategy is a means of matching the availability, function and role of parks and gardens with the changing requirements as identified by user surveys. The study focused on parks and gardens within the urban area including Corstorphine Hill LNR. Under the parks classification system recommended in the Strategy Corstorphine Hill LNR is classed as a Natural Heritage Park. Natural Heritage parks are described as follows:

These are generally large areas, the functions of which are determined by topography and ecology. In the main, these parks will tend to be dominated by woodland but also include coastal areas with topographical features such as hills and river valleys. The semi-natural character of these parks means that management for biodiversity is of fundamental importance, many of which are designated or proposed Local Nature Reserves, Urban Wildlife Sites or Sites of interest for Nature Conservation as defined in the Edinburgh Urban Nature Conservation Strategy and Local Plans. Therefore these areas are well suited to informal environmental education. Access is likely to be via car hence they will generally include designated car parking areas within their boundaries.

1.4 Site Information

National Grid Reference: NT 320597 674243 (centre)

Postcode: EH12 6UP

Location: Corstorphine Hill LNR and associated woodlands are located to the northwest of the City of Edinburgh, about 5.5 km from the city centre. Corstorphine Hill LNR lies between the two major approach roads of Corstorphine Road, and Queensferry Road, and the populated areas of Corstorphine, Clermiston, and Blackhall.

Size: The hill itself is a thin outcrop ridge running approximately north – south, is approximately 2.4 km in length and 800m (0.8km) wide (at its widest). The total area covers approximately 75.8ha. It rises to 161m above sea level.

Ownership: Corstorphine Hill was acquired in 1924 by the City of Edinburgh.

Main contact: City of Edinburgh Council
Forestry and Natural Heritage
Inverleith Farmhouse, Inverleith Park
5 Arboretum Place, Edinburgh
EH3 5NY
0131 529 2401/0131 311 7078

E-mail: naturalheritageservice@edinburgh.gov.uk

Stakeholders: Corstorphine Hill is open to all members of the public who wish to use the site in a responsible manner. Corstorphine Hill lies in the North West Locality in Drumbrae/Gyle ward.

Main users: Corstorphine Hill LNR is used by a number of different user groups including: walkers, schools for educational activities, dog walkers, cyclists, horse riding and as a location for events such as weddings, theatre productions, orienteering competitions and geocaching. The John Muir Way takes in a small section of Corstorphine Hill: the route launch took place in April 2014 with the Edinburgh section publicised with a walk from the Water of Leith Walkway at Lanark Road to Corstorphine Hill Tower following a small section of the route.

2. EVALUATION

The following section outlines what has been carried out in the past and what is being done at present.

2.1 Partnerships

The City of Edinburgh Council Forestry and Natural Heritage (formerly the City of Edinburgh Council Countryside Ranger Service and separate Forestry Service) has been operating for over 20 years and as such several partnerships and working relationships have developed over that time. Internally, although the FNH manage the site, several other departments within the City of Edinburgh Council are also involved, these include: Natural and Built Environment (Planning), other members within the Parks and Greenspace unit such as Specialist Grounds Maintenance, Inverleith Workshops and Taskforce and the North West Locality Team. Also included are Archaeological Services (CECAS) who provide an archaeological curatorial advisory and management service for the Council, who advise on impact of any new landscaping / development scheme and also on aspects related to heritage interpretation and promotion.

The Friends of Corstorphine Hill (FoCH) are a registered charitable organisation who were founded in the mid – late 1990's and have a proud history of being involved in working with the FNH in the management of the site. For example, through the transformation of the

neglected run-down walled garden once associated with Hillwood House, now a fantastic microcosm of Corstorphine Hill with plants and features of interest, ample and unusual seating and information provision. They also assist through undertaking conservation activities, production of seasonal newsletters and litter picks. They also undertake fundraising for other projects. A comprehensive summer walk and winter talk programme is always available.

The FNH also co-ordinate and provide guidance to a large number of volunteer groups and organisations who carry out tasks throughout the Natural Heritage estate. The Trust for Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and on occasion Lothian Conservation Volunteers (LCV) have worked on a range of conservation activities onsite, a period in June has become a regular voluntary exercise for S4, 5 and 6 students from George Heriot's School undertaking conservation activities, Stenhouse Primary School pupils undertake elements of their John Muir Award seasonally, Corstorphine Rotary Club undertake annual litter clearances, Dalry Primary School Forest School sessions have run on Corstorphine Hill for a number of years, many corporate groups see such activities as vital in showing commitment to the local environment and value the team building experience. In addition, the FNH has its own network of volunteers looking for experience in land based industry with the possibility of voluntary work leading to full time employment, regularly undertaking tasks on Corstorphine Hill LNR.

Edinburgh Southern Orienteering Club (ESOC) has a permanent course set up over Corstorphine Hill which is available to the public at all times, in addition to the regular programme of events. Maps can be obtained from the visitor centres at Cammo Estate and the Hermitage of Braid and online at www.esoc.org.uk

2.2 Marketing and Events

The CEC Parks and Greenspace website, http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20064/parks_and_green_spaces is to inform the public about Edinburgh's variety of Parks and Greenspaces, how to get to them, what's happening

in those spaces and all relevant contact information. The publicity statement regarding Corstorphine Hill LNR on the website reads as:

Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve is a natural heritage park with large areas of mature woodland and grassland. At its highest point 531 feet (161 metres) visitors get stunning views of the city. On a clear day you can see the summit of Ben Lomond in the west, exceptional views of the Forth Estuary and Fife to the north, to the east central Edinburgh, the Lammermuir Hills and flatter terrain of East Lothian and to the south the rolling backdrop of the Pentland Hills. The park has been awarded a Green Flag since 2010, in recognition of it being a quality greenspace.

Corstorphine Hill Tower is a memorial to Sir Walter Scott. You may also find cup markings on the west slopes of the Hill. They were probably part of a sacred landscape of Neolithic or Bronze Age (c3600-1500 BC) but their precise purpose remains unknown. Artefacts were also found nearby.

This is a mature woodland site, where you will find mostly oak and birch. You will also see areas of open ground consisting of bare rock, and grassland. Whilst out exploring Corstorphine Hill you may see foxes, badgers and buzzards and look closely for nationally and regionally important flora like small balsam, lords and ladies, spring beauty and common spotted orchid.

The Hill is a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphologic Site (RIGS) because the rocks and other interesting landforms are easily accessible. This compliments earlier designations of Edinburgh's Green Belt, Area of Great Landscape Value, Nature Conservation Site and Listed Wildlife Site.

The City of Edinburgh Council's Parks and Greenspace department promotes parks through the website, but also through a number of other ways, such as Park Surveys, which allow the council to actively recruit the public's opinions about the parks they visit regularly. Social Media platforms are also used such as Twitter and Facebook facilitated through Edinburgh Outdoors, see <https://www.edinburghoutdoors.org.uk>. Other things such as a parks photo competition also increase the visibility and recognition of the City of Edinburgh Parks.

For important events, or to advertise information about local community group activities and projects, the FNH makes use of press releases, both in smaller local newspapers as well as the Edinburgh Evening News. These press releases are important to reach out to different groups and promote knowledge of the park and activities.

Recently, a new Google Map based QR Heritage Trail has been created by Graham Checkley, a longstanding volunteer. See



2.3 Interpretation

Corstorphine Hill LNR retains its rugged nature without feeling as though it is intensively managed. Its heritage can be seen in the remains of old boundary walls once belonging to the grand houses such as Beechmount House, Hillwood House and Clerwood House to name a few standing at the foot of its slopes; the old quarries and wells; and Corstorphine Hill and Ravelston Towers.

There is currently an orientation panel at Clermiston Road North car park, Queensferry Road, Tower Drive, Hillpark, Corstorphine Road and Kaimes/Cairnmuir entrances that also contain some interpretive material. Display cases are available at four of these locations. Corstorphine Hill Community Walled Garden also contains a wealth of information available in the wall mounted display case or from volunteers who regularly work in the garden

throughout the season on Tuesday mornings, Thursday afternoons and Saturday mornings. Several leaflets and a book entitled “Corstorphine Hill, The Finest Views the Eye Can Feast On”, written by Alison MacKintosh (ISBN987-0-9557379-0-9) and funded by the Friends of Corstorphine Hill are available. There is an A1 size lectern style panel situated at Rest and be Thankful detailing the history of that particular spot and providing information on the magical view across Edinburgh from here.

The main audience to this area is people who live in the local area and visit the area regularly. There are occasionally visitors and tourists from further afield, and even local people do not always know much about the area’s history.

The message conveyed by any interpretation should reflect the park’s fascinating history and importance as a home, in the past to people and today to a surprisingly wide range of animals and plants.

The FNH manages 13 sites throughout the city and therefore wishes to keep interpretation on these sites within recognisable style guidelines. These are:

- The interpretation should match the style and colouring of previous interpretation produced on Natural Heritage sites
- Made from sustainable hard wearing material, vandal proof, can either be easily replaced or cleaned
- Must include CEC logo and the logo of any grant providers
- Fonts must be easy to read and distinguish letters in good contrasting colours
- Must be physically accessible to all complying with government legislation.

The content and final media which would be used will, within the aforementioned guidelines, be decided in conjunction with local people. This may include a variety of media or keep to only one; the decision will be made once the local community have been consulted. The content will include information about the history of the area as well as the wildlife that use it today; the past and present will be explained through interpretation – either by an interactive trail, art or other media. Areas of particular interest include the

Towers and quarries where it may be suitable to have some interpretation panels explaining the significance of the site. An audit of current signage provision should be undertaken with a view to producing a brief for future management.

2.4 Safety

FNH has always informed the police of certain types of anti-social behaviour on Corstorphine Hill. The service has also developed a good working relationship with the Wildlife Crime Officers within Police Scotland in order to monitor any suspicious activity regarding wild animals such as badgers, foxes or raptors in our parks.

The lighting of fires seems to be a regular activity even though it is advised against doing so by the City of Edinburgh Council's Park Management Rules. Liaison was undertaken from 2014 and has continued with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service detailing appropriate access for fire appliances, 4x4 vehicles and fire-fighters on foot, where sources of water can be found on the Hill and the logging of incidents attended by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Any woodland work or conservation activities where arisings are generated are kept from path edges/accessible areas at the request of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Trees and Woodlands Officers use a software package called Ezytreev, a database to monitor the condition of trees that are next to roads, paths, buildings etc. Unfortunately, sometimes due to storm damage or the age of some of the trees and their susceptibility to disease some older and younger trees do have to be felled for public safety. Wherever possible these are monolithed to maintain as much biodiversity value as possible in addition to stumps being retained on site.

The Environmental Wardens who are based within Localities through the Community Safety teams assist FNH by providing a high visibility presence in Corstorphine Hill LNR with the aim of reducing dog fouling and littering offences. They will take enforcement against anyone found to be contravening the Dog fouling (Scotland) Act 2003. Any person found failing to pick up immediately after their dog is issued a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60, reduced to £40 if paid within 28 days. They also take the issue of littering very seriously, leaving or depositing

litter is a criminal offence, therefore anyone seen to be contravening the Environmental Protection Act 1990, will be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice of £50.

2.5 Sustainability

As Corstorphine Hill LNR is a Natural Heritage Park, it does not use plantings that require peat.

Leaf litter, tree branches and fallen wood are left in situ if this is safe, or moved to areas away from paths if necessary, but are not taken away as waste. Any large items of rubbish removed from the park, particularly any fly-tipping, are taken to the local recycling centre where it can be separated rather than deposited in landfill.

Unfortunately, Corstorphine Hill LNR suffers badly from Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) of the floral variety. These are managed in a number of ways detailed in section 3.2.2.6.1 of this document.

At present, herbicide application is only used when cultural practises will not provide adequate control i.e. on ivy roots on the remains of buildings and latterly on the out of control Himalayan balsam population and pockets of Japanese knotweed. Only affected areas are treated and only then using strategies that are sensitive to the needs of the public and the environment i.e. stem injection technology. All operatives are trained to the approved certification level for the application of chemicals and appropriate records are kept.

Corstorphine Hill LNR is well served by the local bus routes, particularly along Queensferry Road, Corstorphine Road and the Clermiston Roads, see <https://lothianbuses.co.uk>.

There is only a small amount of car parking available at the car park on Clermiston Road North but on-street parking is available along all the Western flanks. There is another small lay-by at the junction of Kaimes Road and Cairnmuir Road again with plenty of on street parking available. Visitors are encouraged to walk or cycle to the area if they live

locally, or use the bus. The site has one of Edinburgh's Core Paths (CEC 14) running through further encouraging sustainable travel to the park and through the city.

2.5.1 Edinburgh Living Landscape Project

The Edinburgh Living Landscape is a partnership project that creates, restores and connects green areas of the city to make attractive and biodiverse landscapes, enjoyed by residents and visitors. Landscapes will be healthy, nature rich and resilient to climate change. For parks and green spaces, Edinburgh Living Landscape will mean changes to how some of our outdoor spaces will look. The project involves a range of measures such as

- creation of meadows
- reducing how often some areas of grass are cut, and leaving some areas to grow naturally
- creating woodlands
- allowing natural grassland to thrive
- mowing walkways through areas of long grass so they can still be explored and enjoyed.

Allowing grassland habitats to develop in a more natural manner in urban settings by reducing grass cutting or sowing flowering plants offers these benefits:

- biodiversity will be increased as birds, mammals and insects are attracted to wilder or more natural areas
- costs of intensively maintained areas of grassland can be reduced
- planting flowering species will add colour to the cityscape throughout the seasons
- less regular cutting reduces CO2 release and helps lock-up carbon in soils.

The key partners involved in the project are:

- City of Edinburgh Council
- Scottish Wildlife Trust

- Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust
- Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
- GreenSurge

Corstorphine Hill LNR consists of large areas of grassland on its western slopes which historically have been maintained as Standard Amenity Grass (SAG). These areas have now had relaxed cutting regimes implemented and the site is reaping the rewards in line with the benefits detailed above.

2.6 Maintenance

This aspect is managed by FNH, Parks Workshops, West Taskforce and Specialist Grounds Maintenance. Work is identified and if it cannot be remedied immediately while on site it is then reported and prioritised. Alternatively, volunteers may be brought in to assist or a contractor depending on the requirements. Once the work is completed records in the Parks Asset Database are then brought up to date. Latterly, a framework contract has been developed whereby a grounds maintenance specialist can be utilised for additional grounds maintenance needs.

CEC have adopted an assessment standard entitled Landscape Quality Standards which are a means of defining levels of measurable quality. Features which are present on Corstorphine Hill LNR are as followings: Standard Amenity Grass (SAG), Low Maintenance Grass (or Relaxed Grass), Informal Hedge, Biodiversity/ Meadow, Newly Planted Woodland, Established Woodlands, Scrub and Path/hard standing.

2.6.1 Litter

There are six litter bins available for visitors to the park. These are located at main entrance points. They are emptied on a regular basis by Taskforce.

Litter is picked by FNH staff while carrying out site inspections and any fly-tipping is removed as soon as possible. The Friends of Corstorphine Hill, Corstorphine Rotary Club and other local organisations such as Brownie/Guide and Cub/Scout groups also undertake litter sweep of the site. This ensures that the site is kept to a high standard of cleanliness. There is an expectation that all responsible users take their rubbish home with them or use the bins provided.

Keep Scotland Beautiful National Spring Clean events are usually scheduled on an annual basis.

2.6.2 Confirm®

Confirm® is an enterprise asset management solution from Pitney Bowes Software specifically designed to empower public bodies with the insight to make informed decisions on repair, maintenance and investment for critical public infrastructure assets against tightly constrained budgets and timescales. Confirm enables stakeholders to make informed and accurate decisions on multiple asset types including: urban roads and highways, bridges, structures, parks and green spaces, trees, street lights, signage, street furniture, property, cleansing resources, refuse collection and management resources.

Services for Communities have been working with the Confirm® system since 2013. FNH has been inputting all asset and infrastructure data to the system with the intention of utilising the system across all Natural Heritage estate by 2017.

2.6.3 Park Quality Assessment and Green Flag

CEC carries out a quality assessment of its parks and gardens annually. The results are recorded as a Park Quality Assessment (PQA) score. The scoring system and criteria used is based on the Green Flag Award. CEC's medium-term aim is for all sites to attain a PQA score of 'good' or better. Corstorphine Hill LNR has consistently scored well, 2015 scoring in appendix 5.

The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces. The award scheme began in 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the

country. It was also seen as a way of encouraging others to achieve the same high environmental standards, creating a benchmark of excellence in recreational green areas. In 2008, 24 staff across Services for Communities were trained to Green Flag assessor standard, and subsequently undertook CEC's first city-wide quality assessment of parks and greenspaces.

Each park/greenspace was surveyed by a team of assessors at least twice, and the median scores used to provide a baseline Parks Quality Score - which is placed into a bandwidth appropriate to the type of site being assessed. Essentially, the Council is now using the Green Flag Award criteria as the quality performance tool for the management of all its recreational greenspace estate; and for this reason was invited to partner a number of English local authorities in developing and piloting a Green Flag Authority group award.

The Group Award status attained means that although the Council will still be required to have newly proposed sites judged externally, it is able to self-assess those sites that have already secured a Green Flag Award. These sites will be subject to external mystery shopping, which will be undertaken to ensure that standards are not slipping, and where they may be, will give CEC information on matters requiring improvement.

As a Green Flag Authority there is also a requirement for CEC to be peer reviewed periodically by qualified Green Flag Award judges. This initially took the form of a review of Council greenspace strategies, management policies and practices, and a sample field assessment.

Judges expect to see that the greenspace estate is being managed with consideration of green flag criteria throughout policy, strategic and operational levels, and look for evidence of sustained commitment to promoting and developing Green Flag; that we are undertaking regular self-assessments of parks and greenspace using the Green Flag Award criteria; are committed to engaging user views on a regular basis and are committed to exploring how communities are involved in the assessments.

The Green Flag scheme in Scotland is currently administered by Keep Scotland Beautiful (see <http://www.keeptoscotlandbeautiful.org>) and CEC holds 26 Green Flag Awards.

Corstorphine Hill Community Walled Garden is also the recipient of Scotland's first Green Pennant Award (now Green Flag Community Award).

2.6.4 Ezytreev

Ezytreev is a data management tool used by FNH Trees and Woodlands Officers for onsite tree data collection, surveying and reinspection. Tree works can be ordered and budgeted. Enquiries can be logged on a complaints management system. There are digital mapping and GIS capabilities and it provides a complete tree risk management strategy is followed.

3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Corstorphine Hill LNR is the largest of Edinburgh's urban woodlands. As such it has a special importance in terms of its amenity, recreational, nature conservation and landscape value.

The scenic value of the site is massive; it is one of Edinburgh's famous seven hills upon which the city is built; when entering the city from the west, Corstorphine Hill one of the first majestic landforms you encounter; views both in and out of the site are to be preserved and enjoyed. Despite its relatively low altitude the prominence of the site and the esteem in which the people of Edinburgh hold it makes the site extremely sensitive to landscape change.

Ecological interest in the site is in both its habitat and its flora and fauna. The semi-ancient woodland relics, associated parkland habitat, semi-improved grassland, rudderal and scrub vegetation, the rich and diverse fauna (particularly badgers and birds), the number of plant species of restricted distribution and the ecological history all contribute to the significant ecological value that has led to designation as a Local Nature Conservation Site and as a Local Nature Reserve. The site is particularly noted for its population of badgers, and is host to a number of other priority species listed under the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan. Badgers and their setts are protected by statute and operations in the vicinity of setts are required to be carefully planned, timed and licensed to avoid disturbance.

Over the last few decades, there has been woodland plantings carried out successfully in the mid 1970s, and in the period after, the management of the woodlands has been dominated by control measures and sanitary felling to combat Dutch Elm Disease (DED) and has been otherwise re-active to circumstances as they arise (for instance the clearance of wind damaged trees).

In 1987-88 some of the paths were upgraded by the Lothian Regional Council and some rhododendron clearance and the removal of sycamore from selected areas, has been carried out in the intervening period with the help of the Lothian Conservation Volunteers,

the Edinburgh Green Team, the Trust for Conservation Volunteers and multiple corporate volunteers.

From the early 2000's the Hill has had a significant amount of investment; works include replenishing tree stocks, upgrading of paths, new orientation panels and information display boxes, new seats and picnic benches throughout, installation of over 40 habitat boxes and installation of waymarking.

The Friends of Corstorphine Hill have been active in the restoration of the Community Walled Garden on Corstorphine Hill (now a recipient of the former Green Pennant Award now Community Green Flag Award) where the project featured on the BBC TV Beechgrove Garden programme. A vast amount of work has been done since and the garden will continue to develop over a number of years where continued interest and input from the community is essential.

Corstorphine Hill LNR plays an important part in outdoor educational activities for local schools and groups. The site was used for a Forest School pilot in 2006/7 where groups of children visited the site weekly for a minimum of 8-12 weeks undertaking woodland studies, responsible tool use, shelter building, safe fire lighting procedures and undertake practical conservation tasks. This was a very successful pilot and future programmes have and will continue to use the Hill and other Natural Heritage Parks throughout Edinburgh for this purpose.

3.1 Vision

To protect, enhance and conserve Corstorphine Hill LNR and its historic built features as an area of wild natural high quality greenspace through appropriate management, for the residents of western Edinburgh, the wider community of Edinburgh and visitors to Edinburgh while ensuring the Hill retains its accessibility and its wild and rugged nature without seeming neglected.

Corstorphine Hill LNR will:

- Be a site of excellence and a model of good practice in benefiting both nature and people
- Increase the biodiversity of Western Edinburgh
- Be a site with high quality habitats and historical features
- Be a site of excellence and a model of good practice in benefiting both nature and people
- Be a quality location for recreation, physical activity and relaxation
- Provide a diverse and interesting educational resource for residents of and visitors to Edinburgh
- Be an area of appropriately managed woodland and maintained landscape which will enhance the visual appearance of Western Edinburgh and provide visual enhancements to those arriving on the main arterial routes into Edinburgh from the North and West of Scotland.

3.2 Significant Key Features

3.2.1. Cultural Heritage

3.2.1.1 Archaeology

There are a number of features of historic and archaeological interest which have been discovered on or in the vicinity of Corstorphine Hill. These include Neolithic cup markings, flint tools and fragments of Roman pottery, in addition to the various built structures that remain on the site.

In October 2004, CEC commissioned Headland Archaeology Ltd to undertake an archaeological assessment of Corstorphine Hill in advance of Woodland in and Around Towns grant funded works. Results showed a total of ten discrete archaeological sites identified along with an area of designed landscape. This includes five records of archaeological artefacts collected on the hill previously. The remaining sites are a group of prehistoric cup marks, 19th century quarries, a modern well, a 19th century monument

(Tower) which sits inside the designed landscape and a 20th century military bunker. With the exception of the designed landscape, all the sites have been previously recorded in the National Monuments Record.

Available evidence indicates that there has been activity on Corstorphine Hill from the Neolithic period onwards. The earliest known activity on the hill is exemplified in the group of cup marks found towards a central location within the site. These are examples of a site type common in some areas of Scotland but relatively rare in the south east. It is possible more cup marks may be present on Corstorphine Hill. It is also suggested there may be an unreported alignment of the cup mark cluster and linear pattern to the setting sun summer solstice position. This should be further explored.

In 1993, a prehistoric flint scraper was found again presumed Neolithic further evidencing prehistoric site use.

In 2012, further archaeological investigations were undertaken by the Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society, however, no more information was gained. Several other interested individuals have submitted archaeological fieldwork associated with Corstorphine Hill over the years however without qualification, these can only be presumed to assist in completing the overall historical package.

3.2.1.2 Built structures

Masts: there are two large and prominent communications masts located near the top of Corstorphine Hill. These are owned and managed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Several mobile phone and data companies utilise the site mast as well.

A further communications mast is located near the northern end of the woodland, on the western edge of the former nuclear bunker, and just out with the management area with another in the locality of Edinburgh Zoo.

Corstorphine Hill Tower: see section 1.3.2 Designations and Listings.

Ravelston Tower: built in the 18th century and commonly believed to be a beacon tower from the Napoleonic Wars. This is unlikely due to the fact that such defensive beacons were established by an Act of Parliament and Corstorphine Hill is not mentioned in the Act. It appears that the structure is a scenic viewpoint from the early days of landscape design. It is suggested a Mr Keith of Ravelston built the two walls crossing each other which ties in with the archaeological exploration of 2004 indicating the area is a historic designed landscape.

Walls: a number of wall features are associated with the LNR. These include retaining walls forming the boundary of the site to the north and west of the area, and old derelict estate wall features which can still be seen throughout the woodland, in various states of disrepair. Should any of these walls present a health and safety risk, they would be made safe immediately, which would be identified through routine site inspections and annual asset surveys.

Corstorphine Hill Community Walled Garden: Corstorphine Hill Community Walled Garden lies adjacent to the grounds of Hillwood House and was at one time associated with the house. The garden now forms part of the LNR and was adopted by the Friends of Corstorphine Hill, and is currently being managed as a Community Walled Garden.

From the late 90's, the Friends of Corstorphine Hill have completed the transformation of a neglected run down historic walled garden into the fantastic community space it now is. This has been recognised by the acclaim of the Green Pennant Award (now Green Flag Community Award), the first one in Scotland. The Friends of Corstorphine Hill have a letter of comfort with CEC whereby all grounds maintenance, security, interpretation and provision within is carried out by the Friends. FNH provides expertise, knowledge and materials to assist in managing the garden. This is supplemented by monthly reporting provision at Friends of Corstorphine Hill committee meetings combined with quarterly officer attendance.

In 2014, approximately £15,000 was spent on path and drainage improvements, wall re-pointing and capping.

Quarry features: due to the geology of the hill, it made it attractive for quarrying. The dolerite quarry yielded whinstone for roads, the pavement quarry produced flagstones, and sandstone from the hill was used for building. In the late 1600's, Parliament House and George Heriot's School was built from Corstorphine Hill stone. A map of 1855 shows ten quarries on the hill, six of them being worked and two of those very large (Alison MacKintosh 2008).

Today, to the north of the area is the disused Barnton Quarry areas, one of which is still actively used by CEC Roads Department as a depot and is fenced out with the LNR.

Nuclear Bunker: Barnton Quarry Command Centre was built during the Second World War as a secret operations room for RAF Fighter Command at Turnhouse Airport. It was used throughout the 1950's and 60's. It later became redundant and deteriorated through vandalism and arson attacks. In 1987 Lothian Regional Council sold the site to a developer. Today the site is currently half way through a 5 year redevelopment programme aimed at bringing the facility back to its original condition with the intention of opening it to the public. Conferencing and other facilities will be incorporated. See www.barntonquarry.org.uk for further information.

Due to the close proximity of the facility to the LNR and right of access the owners have through the LNR, it is imperative the close working relationship already established between FNH and the Barnton Quarry R4 ROTOR Complex is maintained.

Wells: there are several wells located on Corstorphine Hill. The wells are no longer in use, but are of some archaeological interest. However, it is recognised that they present an obvious risk particularly to the young and curious. Therefore, the known wells are capped with either steel plating or poured concrete caps and fenced off with steel weldmesh enclosure.

Further work is required in producing a detailed map of the exact number of wells on site, the locations of the wells and a visual assessment of current condition. All wells which are known and accessible are inspected as part of routine site inspections and annual asset surveys however, more information and accurate mapping is required.

History

Corstorphine Hill features heavily throughout Edinburgh's development. From the Neolithic period to present day an abundance of information is available in relation to Corstorphine Hill. See appendix 10 for sources of historical and other additional site information.

Landscape and Scenery

According to government guidance, 'natural heritage' encompasses plants, animals, landforms and geology, as well as less tangible (but no less important) concepts such as natural beauty and amenity (National Planning Policy Guideline 14 : Natural Heritage).

Government policy for the natural environment is founded on a sustainable approach, and seeks to ensure that the natural heritage is conserved and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations. The very word 'heritage' signals a valued heirloom which is stewarded and maintained by successive generations (CEC Natural Heritage and Open Space, Natural Heritage Designations).

Internally, looking out, a series of clearings offer elevated views towards Ben Lomond in the west, the Forth Estuary and Fife to the north; to the east, central Edinburgh, the Lammermuir Hills and flatter terrain of East Lothian; and to the south, the Pentland Hills. Scheduled openings of the 19th century Corstorphine Tower, a memorial to Sir Walter Scott, enable a 360° panorama. The hill's legible geomorphology, historic land use and built heritage emphasise generations of cultural associations between people and place. This is continued by the attraction of Edinburgh Zoo, the hill's popularity as a viewpoint, recreational environment and semi-natural resource within the city.

The listings and designations placed upon Corstorphine Hill should ensure its landform, aesthetic value and character are maintained, enhanced and protected from development. However, pressures upon landscape integrity are inevitable: Inappropriate development or poor quality design affecting landscape character, in particular the pattern of tree and woodland cover, or impacting adversely on key views from surrounding areas is a constant issue. The cumulative effects of development upon landscape character and visual amenity result from the increased recreational demand. Long term woodland change associated with pest, disease, weather threats and climate trends are also factors of contention.

The proposed Special Landscape Area (SLA) makes for enhancement potential: Landscape management for recreation and wildlife benefit should seek to promote a diverse age and species structure of woodland cover, whilst retaining important view corridors and the balance of open parkland and scrub vegetation. Landscape management of designed landscape features should be employed. Despite the hill's continuity of character, opportunities exist to enhance areas of degraded land within this landscape unit e.g. former Barnton Quarry, defence and communications installations (although out with the scope of this plan). The proposed SLA is within the Edinburgh and Lothians Forest Habitat Network Priority Area and opportunities for grant funding to improve the site should be explored.

3.2.2 Natural Heritage

3.2.2.1 Topography, Drainage and Soils

Corstorphine Hill is an ice sculpted dolerite sill orientated generally north – south. The eastern face of the hill has been scraped smoothed by the passage of ice and has formed an even slope rising to the summit. The hill rises to a height of 161m. There is little depth of soil on the eastern edge of the hill, with a thin covering of skeletal brown earth overlying the bedrock on the higher slope, lower down lie deep rich alluvia together with localised areas of younger organic matter and a few slight hollows in the east face have accumulated a greater depth of soil and provide an increased rooting depth for trees and shrubs.

The western face of the Hill is steeper and craggier, and material deposited from the glacial flow has resulted in a greater depth of soil on this face, particularly on the lower slopes. The soils are forest brown earths. Some of the upper parts of the slope have eroded or been quarried exposing bare rock faces and boulder clay deposits and lower slopes covered with boulder clay.

Corstorphine Hill lies within the catchment of both the Leith Water to the east and The River Almond to the west, and thus forms part of the watershed between these two catchments.

3.2.2.2 Geology

There are many features of geological interest across Corstorphine Hill which provide a clear indication of how the hill was formed and shaped in the past by geological forces.

The exposure of rock strata by quarrying activity and the presence of rock outcrops, along with the distinctive overall shape of the hill provide a clear interpretive resource, and the significance of the site has been recognised in its designation as a RIGS.

Repeated glaciations have softened the shape of the hill and the obvious work of the ice sheets can be seen in the polished and striated surfaces of exposed rocks on western slopes. In 1840 the Swiss geologist Louis Agassiz visited the area and deduced that ice had travelled over the hill in an east – north – easterly direction.

Corstorphine's volcanic sill is similar in some respects to that which led to the formation of Salisbury Crags, but the latter dips to the east rather than the west. At Corstorphine the sill intruded into sandstones and shales of the Wardie group, part of the oil-shale series and which includes a band of fossil shells. Underneath are sandstones of the Granton group of the type quarried at Craigmillar, now the site of a retail park.

For further information on the geology of Corstorphine Hill see the Edinburgh Geological Society website for a downloadable leaflet

http://www.edinburghgeolsoc.org/downloads/rigsleaflet_corstorphinea4.pdf.

3.2.2.3 Habitat

Deciduous woodland is the predominant habitat on Corstorphine Hill, most of it planted in the 19th century. Smaller patches of scrub and grassland are also found. A good variety of typical woodland flowers such as bluebells and red campion grow here. Birds are also abundant, including sparrowhawks, jays, nuthatch, woodpeckers and occasionally woodcock. The hill is home to several clans of badgers who have learnt to co-exist with the many walkers and their dogs.

The woodland area of Corstorphine Hill LNR extends to some 42ha, from oak/birch mixes to beech interspersed with conifer. Any deadwood will be left standing if safe to do so or left to rot on the ground, only diseased elm timber will be removed from site or burnt. There are many benefits in conservation terms to be gained by retaining standing deadwood to allow colonisation by fungi, mosses and other plants, invertebrates and hence provide feeding and nesting sites for birds. It is therefore not at all desirable to remove standing dead trees within woodland areas. However, it is appropriate to remove standing dead and dangerous trees where they are likely to fall across main paths or to damage property, fence or walls. Fallen trees in these circumstances not only present a danger to public safety and property, but lend an unwelcome atmosphere of neglect as opposed to “wilderness”. See section 2.6.4 Ezytreev.

Ground and field layer vegetation within the wooded areas varies heavily whereby you encounter fine and sparse areas with such species as small balsam (*Impatiens parviflora*) and elder (*Sambucus nigra*) present through to thickets of rhododendron, brambles and raspberries forming impenetrable layers. The dominance of INNS such as Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*) amongst others has been prolific over the last decade. This is attributed to the vigour of these types of species and also the mechanisms of dispersal available. Concerted time, resource and finance should be applied over the period of this plan to ensure the spread of INNS in Corstorphine Hill LNR is contained and reduced.

The contrasting southern slope consists of unimproved and improved rough grassland, scrub with rudderal vegetation, fantastic habitat for smaller birds and also an extremely healthy rabbit population is present. A local botanist expressed much delight in this particular area of Corstorphine Hill due to it being:

“A true species rich heathland dominated variously by gorses, groves of native and introduced trees and shrubs, herb rich grassland all unevenly grazed by rabbits and intentionally put to fire in localised patches. It is plainly an outlier of the Pentland Hills – in all respects” (Dr Moffat, distinguished botanist, 2010).

The more manicured western slope consists of approximately 12ha of SAG and from 2015 this heavy cutting regime has been significantly relaxed meaning perhaps only one or two full cuts per season may be required, even then this may only be topping. Accessible cut routes will be maintained - see section 2.5.1 for further information on the Living Landscape Project. The longer term aim would be to introduce more floristic diversity within the sward with the implementation of a cut and lift regime should resource allow.

3.2.2.4 Woodland

The woodland areas are of a mixed and varied composition throughout the area of the LNR. However, there are three main woodland character types which can be distinguished, relating to the topography of the Hill, the location and extent of the soil types covering the area, and the origins of the woodland areas.

Corstorphine Hill is a low dolerite sill oriented north to south. In general, the top of the hill and the slopes of the hill to the northwest are composed of thin skeletal soils overlying the dolerite sill, which outcrops in places. There are pockets of deeper soils, which have formed in hollows and previously excavated areas but these tend to be small non-continuous features.

The eastern and southern edges of the hill are covered with deeper brown earth soils, increasing in depth and fertility in a downhill direction. These slopes are well wooded and, on sections where ground cover is lacking, subject to erosion.

The three woodland types are identified as follows: -

- Oak/Birch Woodland
- Mixed Broadleaf Woodland
- Policy Woodland

(Refer to appendix 5.6)

3.2.2.4.1 Oak/Birch Woodland

The National Vegetation Classification (NVC) woodland type generally associated with these thin soils is Lowland Mixed Broadleaf Woodland with Wild Hyacinth (NVC W10). This is primarily composed of oak and birch. Other woodland components typical of this woodland type include rowan, hazel, and wild cherry.

In the case of Corstorphine Hill these areas extend to approximately 15 ha, and are composed of an open broken canopy, with bare rock and unimproved grassland associated with the intervening open ground. Along with the typical woodland components dog rose and gorse are also present in the shrub layer alongside INNS notably Salmonberry.

Where the soil depth restricts rooting depth the mature oak is stunted and scrubby, and grows in a low twisted form. There is some birch and rowan regeneration but very little oak regeneration is occurring.

Sycamore and beech have been introduced into these areas where the soil depth increases, and both sycamore and beech regeneration is occurring and encroaching into the oak and birch areas.

3.2.2.4.2 Mixed Broadleaf Woodland

The NVC woodland type indicated by the deeper soils associated with the lower slopes of the hill is Lowland Mixed Broadleaf woodland with Dogs Mercury (NVC W8). Of the overall woodland areas at Corstorphine Hill, approximately 21 ha of the woodland area are of this type. Woodlands of this type are composed primarily of Ash, Oak and Elm with other components including birch, rowan, wild cherry, holly and crab apple.

Currently elm in the Edinburgh is affected by Dutch Elm Disease (DED) and the emphasis is on the sanitary felling and control of the disease.

The woodlands on Corstorphine Hill are composed of a number of the native woodland components, but also consist of a number of policy woodland species introduced when the woodland were first established. Introduced species include sycamore, lime, Norway maple, horse chestnut, sweet chestnut, and beech, and an element of various conifers including Scots pine, sitka spruce, larch, western hemlock and yew. Sycamore is also scattered throughout the area, and is represented by a number of large statuesque mature specimens. However, the presence of sycamore is also represented on the hill by extensive regeneration that has occurred at various stages throughout the history of the woodland, resulting in an un-even aged distribution ranging from 1-70 years.

Generally the beech represents the oldest elements within the woodland and a number of the large specimens scattered through the woodland are dropping limbs and showing signs of decay. A limited amount of beech regeneration is occurring but is not widespread. A few copper beech have been established within the woodland creating visual interest in the canopy. Lime is present on the site and may have at one time formed avenue features along access routes through the woodland. Individual specimens of horse and sweet chestnut are scattered through the woodland, primarily on the western edge of the hill.

Coniferous elements are present within the woodland, represented by Scots pine and larch, with some western hemlock regeneration on the eastern slopes and a number of other

conifer species present within and associated with the policy woodlands around Clerwood and Hillwood houses.

The proportion of sycamore within the woodland areas is increasing and is of concern as its expansion is to the detriment of other native woodland elements.

3.2.2.4.3 Policy Woodland

On the west and southern slopes of the hill are areas of policy woodland associated with both Hillwood and Clerwood Houses, extending to approximately 11 ha of woodland.

These woodland areas have been established on deep brown earth soils and are more formally planted than the remainder of the woodland areas, and are composed of a variety of native, and non-native broadleaf and coniferous trees typical of a policy woodland. In addition there are a number of other woodland features typical of a designed landscape associated with an estate house, in the form of avenues, shelterbelt features, parkland trees and hedgerows. Avenue, shelterbelt and parkland features are generally mature or over-mature, and in anticipation of the loss of these features management intervention to rejuvenate these features is required.

The main hedge feature associated with the LNR has recently been established along the edge of Clermiston Road. The hedge has been established in shrub shelters and includes hawthorn, hazel, and dog-rose. The hedge has established successfully over large sections, but success is generally patchy as a result of vandalism in the form of physical damage and the removal of shelters allowing herbivore predation. The protective roadside fence has similarly been damaged, and the worst area of damage corresponds with the poorest sections of the hedge.

Periodically over the last management plan timeframe, beating up and infilling of the hedge has been undertaken with assistance from the Friends of Corstorphine Hill, other local community volunteer groups and through utilising the Woodland Trust hedgerow tree packs

which can be claimed for. Sections of poor conditioned now redundant post and wire fencing have been removed with other sections towards the south end of Clermiston Road requiring removal.

3.2.2.4.4 Woodland Management

In 2003/4 Corstorphine Hill was the recipient of a successful woodland grant called Woodlands in and Around Towns (WIAT) administered through the Forestry Grants Scheme Scotland by the Forestry Commission Scotland. A woodland management plan was written entitled “Corstorphine Hill Woodland Management Plan 2004 -2013” which enabled the successful grant to be delivered on the ground (see appendix 3 for woodland compartment map). Prescribed actions included woodland sanitisation, thinning of regen, minor clear felling with restocking, improved path infrastructure, new mechanisms to display information and orientation panels, the purchase and installation of habitat boxes and engagement/consultation with local community/stakeholders regarding the scope of works. The whole project was a huge success for the safeguarding and enhancement of Corstorphine Hill at the time.

These improvements are now approaching 15 years and significant change can happen over that period. Changes include ground vegetation cover, the quality of the path infrastructure and the provision of habitat boxes. There is a need to update the previous woodland management plan with a premise of applying for future woodland/forestry grants applicable to Corstorphine Hill.

3.2.2.5 Fauna

Corstorphine Hill supports several badger populations. Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and any prescribed works within a certain distance of a sett require licensing by SNH. The population associated with the hill is of a relatively high concentration. There are a number sett complexes which are mostly used and it was once believed the site is a net exporter of badgers to surrounding areas. Whether this is still the

case or not needs further investigation – with high density housing developments being built on the site margins recently, increased traffic volume and high levels of recreational activity on site, it would be worthwhile making an assessment of the general health of the Corstorphine Hill badger population as the last comprehensive survey was undertaken mid 1990's with the previous survey undertaken some 30 years prior.

The known setts are monitored regularly in terms of activity but an accurate population count would be beneficial as pressures for new housing developments in the urban area will only grow stronger. Any suspicious activity is immediately report to Police Scotland Wildlife Crime Officers.

There is a healthy fox population on Corstorphine Hill; rabbits are present in large numbers not only in the gorse and open grassy areas which they prefer but in wooded areas given the evidential bark stripping. It has also been noted that the high rates of regeneration of elder (which is unpalatable to rabbits) on site indicate an indirect result of rabbit feeding on regenerating trees thus enabling elder to compete more effectively. However, this may also be attributed to badgers and their love of elderberries as a food source facilitating seed distribution.

Roe deer are thought to be occasional visitors to Corstorphine Hill, likely to be used as a winter stopover for younger animals prior to seeking less disturbed territories in early spring. However, over the last few years sightings and evidence has been ever-increasing leading to thoughts there may be a resident population between Corstorphine Hill, Ravelston Woods and the golf courses. There is a confirmed resident population over Queensferry Road which is likely to have expanded.

Bats, both pipistrelle and brown long-eared, forage over the site and the latter species tend to roost in the cavities of walls. Bats and their roosts are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994. The glade areas and woodland edges provide ideal foraging habitat which will improve with Edinburgh's Living Landscape initiative.

There are around 60 species of birds recorded on Corstorphine Hill to date. Significant numbers of jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) and nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*) have been encountered with both thought to have bred on site.

Further recorded mammal species are woodmouse, bank vole, short tailed field vole, common shrew, mole, stoat and weasel. Site records are held by The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC).

3.2.2.6 Flora

Ground vegetation within the LNR site is varied and reflects the range of habitats present on the site. Open areas support unimproved and semi-improved grassland areas, some of which are maintained by mowing for amenity and public access.

Within the woodland areas on Corstorphine Hill there are a number of garden escapees and exotic species present. Although most of these are present as isolated cases, and generally add to the interest and biodiversity of the area, others can establish and spread to such an extent control is required to safeguard native elements of the woodland which they threaten to out-compete (e.g. salmonberry – *Rubus spectabilis*, rhododendron – *Rhododendron sp.*, Japanese knotweed - *Fallopia japonica*, small balsam – *Impatiens parviflora*, snowberry – *Symphoricarpos rivularis*, Himalayan balsam – *Impatiens glanduliferan*, common spiraea – *Spireae sp.*).

Native woodland flora is also present below the woodland canopy but is generally scarce as a result of shading or competition.

Gaps in the woodland created by sanitary fellings and windblow are colonised quickly by willowherb, bramble and elder, forming impenetrable thickets.

A species list can be seen in appendix 8 supplied by the Wildlife Information Centre.

3.2.2.6.1 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

Invasive non-native species and invasive native species can cause problems in the natural environment. There are 3 priority species to target on Corstorphine Hill:

Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) has been slowly increasing its presence on Corstorphine Hill over the past 2 - 3 decades. Most stands are relatively small (less than 100 stems). However, an area near to the Barnton Bunker towards the northern end of the hill was, from the 1950's through to the late 1980's, used as a dumping area/midden. The adjacent area today is still utilised by CEC Forestry as a timber storage area with movement of machinery in the area quite regular. This has led to the development in that locality of a dense stand of Japanese knotweed. Located on very uneven and steep ground, this is now the only localised population left on the hill. From 2010 a targeted approach has been established jointly with the Friends of Corstorphine Hill utilising stem injection technology aimed at eradicating the small stands apparent across the rest of the site. This has been completed with regular checking for any regrowth with a great deal of success. This plan will aim to draw funding aimed at eradicating Japanese knotweed from this LNR over the plan period.

Salmonberry – *Rubus spectabilis* although not a notifiable INNS has become a real issue specific to Corstorphine Hill. Small stands have been encountered on the Water of Leith Walkway, at a location in Colinton towards the south of the city and in other areas in NW Scotland. The thin soils and damp dark conditions of the eastern slopes of Corstorphine Hill are ideal for salmonberry. Pinpointing the avenue that salmonberry took to gain its stronghold on the hill is difficult but local garden escapology is likely.

Sustained efforts utilising differing control techniques have been employed over the period of the last site management plan, latterly becoming more targeted, successful and coordinated whereby early controls were done very ad-hoc and did not have the desired effect. Control methods employed at present are cutting and digging out all plant material and removal of such arisings. This is done out with the bird nesting season from September to March. All regrowth in cleared areas is treated with a glyphosate based herbicide for the

following season or 2 then move on. This approach should be continued throughout the period of this plan with resource and finance targeted towards such controls.

Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) spread on Corstorphine Hill seems to coincide with the woodland works conducted around 2003/4. The population has increased exponentially since then and is hugely problematic requiring concerted control efforts within the LNR. This species is prolific at dispersing seed which gets trapped in mud on walkers shoes/dogs feet, caught in animal fur, sticks to muddy off road vehicle tyres...etc. Sustained efforts have been made through hand pulling, piling and trampling which has limited success and is very labour intensive – this approach will be maintained where the plant is interspersed with native floral species we want to encourage. Where hugely dense populations occur, a glyphosate based herbicide is used and has been very effective. Due to the seedbank viability, this approach has to be maintained for a minimum of 3 years (see appendices 2a, b and c).

Also evident is remnants of past plantings relating to designed landscapes. Concentrated to the rear of Clerwood House are vast stands of rhododendron species. Some control measures have been implemented in the past but not sustained. The stands are relatively contained through boundary fences, adjacent mowing regimes and footpaths. There is a requirement to survey and monitor the rhododendron species. This would then indicate whether or not control measures are actually required.

3.2.2.6.2 Invasive Native Species (INS)

A certain amount of precedence is given towards invasive non-native species. However, there are several native species that can cause similar problems through vigour, shading and out competing. Where this impacts on a fragile habitat or an area of environmental sensitivity, an assessment should initially be made with a recommended course of action. The new Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan recognises this and intimates action. The south slope of Corstorphine Hill has a huge amount of biodiversity: unimproved and semi improved rough grassland, scrub, an abundance of liverworts and lichen, pockets of willowherb, policy woodland remnants. It would be worthwhile undertaking an ecological

assessment of the southern slope with a view to mapping the changes in habitat types over time and acting should the requirement arise.

3.2.3. Social Significance

3.2.3.1 Access routes

The site is served by an extensive network of formal and informal footpaths, providing a range of routes through the area. The paths vary in terms of widths surfacing and gradients, providing gentle walks suitable for all ages, and some more challenging routes. The path network provides access links to most areas of the LNR. There are two asserted rights of way recorded on the site. The first runs north south generally along the spine of Corstorphine Hill and extends the entire length of the site linking Corstorphine and Clermiston Roads. A second right of way approaches the site from the east from Ravelston Dykes Road. CEC 14 Core Path runs over Corstorphine Hill linking to other paths within the Core Path network. In addition to these routes the site is approached by paths from all sides of the hill, most of which are well used and have been accommodated in the form of the provision of formal access points into the area. Most formal access points have a bin and orientation panel located at them apart from the access leading from Ravelston Dykes Road. This access should be improved through better signage and waymarking from the main road.

The John Muir Way utilises a section of Corstorphine Hill: Balgreen Rd/Corstorphine Road to the Tower area and down to Clermiston Road, see <http://johnmuirway.org/route>.

3.2.3.2 Recreation

The highly accessible nature of the site and the fact that the site lies immediately adjacent to large residential areas, make the site ideal for recreational use.

The site is served by two car parking facilities, and if full, parking in nearby side streets is available. The site is located on a few bus routes (see <https://lothianbuses.co.uk>). Thus, the site can be readily accessed by people out with the immediate vicinity of the site.

Among the activities taking place on the site are orienteering, jogging, dog walking, horse riding, cycling and organised walks. From observations carried out by staff whilst undertaking site inspections many different groups and individuals were noted as carrying out the following activities:

- Walking- either in group such as the Ramblers or as independent users
- Dog walking either as paid 'professional' dog walkers or as independent owners
- Cycling- both commuting and recreationally
- Camping- only noted as an occasional activity
- Fitness training- sports clubs and individuals/small groups

There is a need to ensure everyone can enjoy Corstorphine Hill equally. Promotion of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code is undertaken and all user groups are expected to act in the responsible ways detailed in the code. FNH will undertake what is reasonable to ensure site users act in a responsible manner.

4. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

As stated earlier within this plan, the overall aims are to protect, enhance and conserve Corstorphine Hill LNR and its historic built features as an area of wild natural high quality greenspace through appropriate management, for the residents of western Edinburgh, the wider community of Edinburgh and visitors to Edinburgh while ensuring the Hill retains its accessibility and its wild and rugged nature without seeming neglected.

Corstorphine Hill LNR will:

- Be a site of excellence and a model of good practice in benefiting both nature and people
- Increase the biodiversity of Western Edinburgh
- Be a site with high quality habitats and historical features
- Be a site of excellence and a model of good practice in benefiting both nature and people
- Be a quality location for recreation, physical activity and relaxation
- Provide a diverse and interesting educational resource for residents of and visitors to Edinburgh
- Be an area of appropriately managed woodland and maintained landscape which will enhance the visual appearance of Western Edinburgh and provide visual enhancements to those arriving on the main arterial routes into Edinburgh from the North and West of Scotland.

Other outcomes highlighted within the body of preceding text would be to maintain the existing archaeological and historical interest and to enhance this without impacting on existing ecological interest.

For the purposes of work planning, three distinct categories are apparent, namely ecological, historical and social. The ecological category can be further divided into three sections: habitat, flora and fauna.

4.1 Workplan

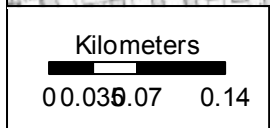
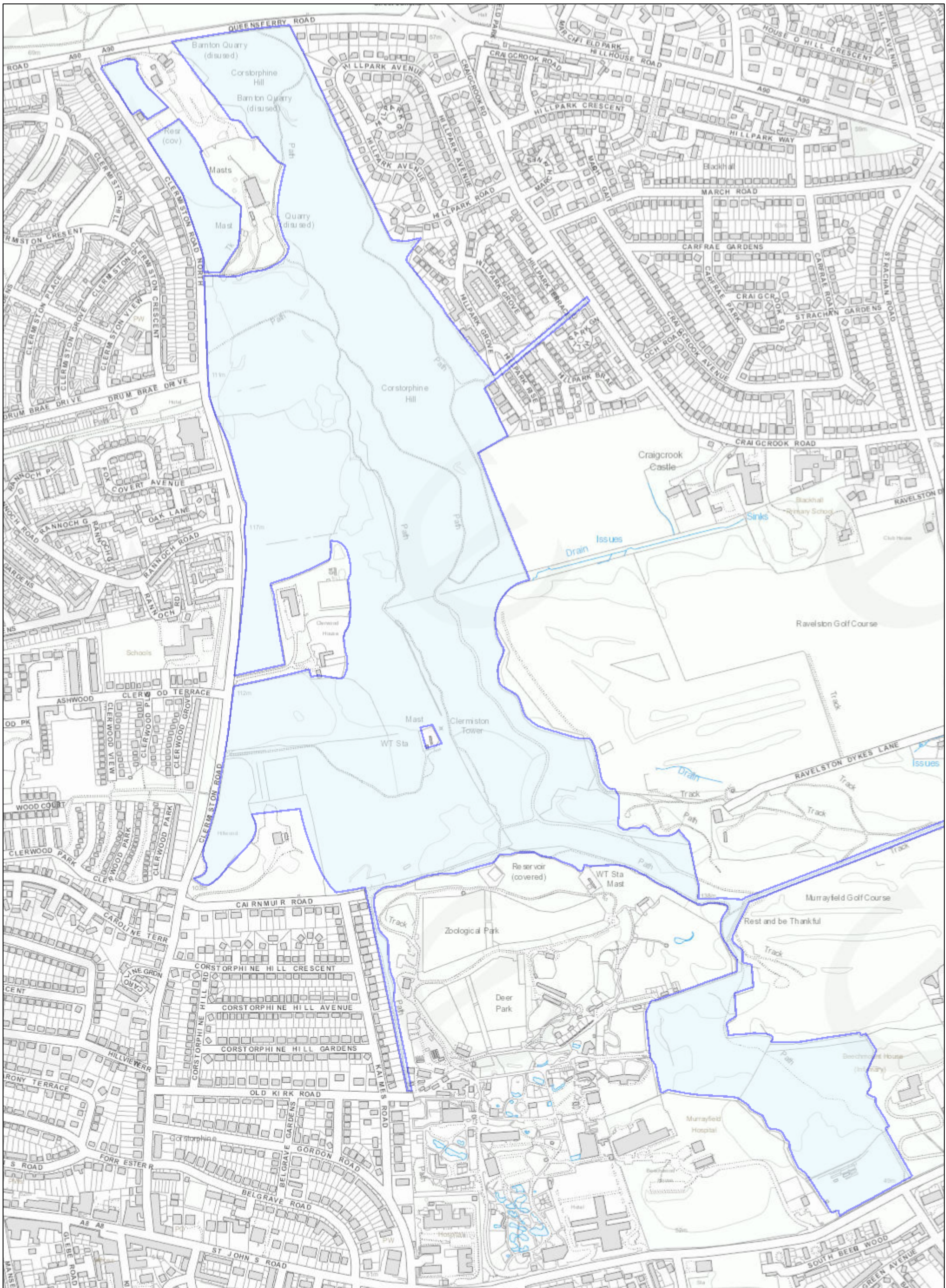
Operational objective	Prescription	Location (Cmpt)	Detail	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	By whom
Ecological - Habitat														
Maintain and enhance parkland habitat	Implement Edinburgh Living Landscape principles	2a, 2f, 3a, 3c, 3d	Relax the cutting schedule across all former standard amenity grass. Maintain suitable access through cutting amenity and maintenance strips	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	SGM
Maintain and enhance woodland habitat	Retain old tree stumps, felled trees as standing or fallen deadwood	Throughout woodland areas	If safe to do so leave monoliths of 4 - 6 metres	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain and enhance woodland habitat	Encourage ash and elm regeneration	1, 4a, 4b, 4d, 4e	Clear INNS, thin sycamore	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain and enhance woodland habitat	Control DED	Throughout woodland areas	Continue DED sanitisation programme	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain and enhance woodland habitat	Monitor ash dieback	Throughout woodland areas	Implement controls of ash dieback in line with current CEC and industry guidelines	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain and enhance woodland habitat	Produce new woodland management plan	Whole site	The last explicit woodland plan dates from 2002/3. Produce updated woodland management plan										■	FNH, Consultant
Enhance woodland understorey diversity	Clear areas dominated by salmonberry (<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>)	4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f, 4g, 5a, 5b	Continue programme of targeted cut, dig, burn and treated herbicide regrowth	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH, FoCH, Vols
Enhance woodland understorey diversity	Clear areas dominated by Himalayan balsam (<i>Impatiens glanduliferan</i>)	3b, 3c, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f	Continue programme of hand pulling, strimming and herbicide treatment	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH, FoCH, Vols
Enhance woodland understorey diversity	Continue active programme of stem injection at known small isolated stands of Japanese knotweed (<i>Fallopia japonica</i>)		Certified FoCH member has systematically controlled stands since 2012. to continue when encountered	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH, FoCH, Vols

Enhance woodland understorey diversity	Clear single large stand of Japanese knotweed (<i>Fallopia japonica</i>)	3e/4b boundary	Due to slope/gradient, approach specialist contractor for costs to stem inject with follow ups		■	■	■								Specialist
Maintain fungal interest	Invite fungi experts and interested parties to survey site	Throughout woodland areas						■						■	
Maintain fungal interest	Retain old tree stumps and dead wood where appropriate	Throughout woodland areas		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Ecological - Flora															
Parkland flora	Survey for flowering plants throughout relaxed grass sward	2a, 2f, 3a, 3c, 3d		■			■			■				■	FNH, FoCH, Vols
Parkland flora	Survey for Common Spotted Orchid ensuring appropriate cutting regime (especially roadside verge on Clermiston Road opposite Fox Covert Avenue).	3a		■			■			■				■	FNH, FoCH, Vols
Parkland flora	Supplement parkland sward by introducing native flowering species	2a, 2f, 3a, 3c, 3d	Spray, rotivate and seed small areas (no larger than 16m2) with Mavisbank Edinburgh Enhancement Mix 2015 and/or yellowrattle (<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>) throughout relaxed grass areas		■			■				■			FNH, FoCH, Vols
Parkland flora	Continue Glade cutting, limited to end of year cut	2c	Ensure flowering plants have gone over, cut mid/late October depending on seasonality. Ideally arisings should be removed	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain wall flora	Minimise the use of pesticides and herbicides where possible	Throughout site		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	All
Enhance ground flora diversity	Clear areas dominated by salmonberry (<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>)	4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f, 4g, 5a, 5b	Continue programme of targetted cut, dig, burn and treated herbicide regrowth	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH, FoCH, Vols

Enhance ground flora diversity	Clear areas dominated by Himalayan balsam (<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>)	3b, 3c, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f	Continue programme of hand pulling, strimming and herbicide treatment	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH, FoCH, Vols
Enhance ground flora diversity	Clear single large stand of Japanese knotweed (<i>Fallopia japonica</i>)	3e/4b boundary	Due to slope/gradient, approach specialist contractor for costs to stem inject with follow ups		■	■	■								Specialist
Enhance ground flora diversity	Update SWT INNS mapping	Throughout site							■						FNH, Vols
Ecological - Fauna															
Survey and monitor badger populations	Count active entrances, evidence of bedding, scratching posts and latrines around known setts	Throughout site		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH, ELB
Avoid damage to setts and entrances	Liaise with Edinburgh and Lothian Badger Group and SNH when required	Throughout site		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Restrict access to setts	Restrict access by public within and around setts through the retention of vegetation cover	Throughout site		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain woodland bird interest	Develop transect route and undertake Breeding Bird Survey in April, March and May annually	Over prescribed 1km transect	April, March and May annually, 06:00 start, 1km transect		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH, FoCH, Vols
Maintain woodland bird interest	Maintain diversity of scrub and understorey habitat	Throughout site	Ensure woodland bird interest is considered when undertaking tree work	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain woodland bird interest	Retain old tree stumps, felled trees as standing or fallen deadwood	Throughout woodland areas	If safe to do so leave monoliths of 4 - 6 metres	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain woodland bird interest	Fundraise, purchase and install more bird boxes	Throughout woodland areas	Purchase budget wooden boxes, install and map locations		■	■							■	■	NH, FoCH, Vols

Maintain and enhance non-woodland bird interest	Implement Edinburgh Living Landscape	2a, 2f, 3a, 3c, 3d		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	SGM
Maintain and enhance non-woodland bird interest	Maintain and enhance scrub cover	1		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain and enhance bat populations	Protect roosts in old trees and trunks, buildings and walls	Throughout site	Liaise with Lothian Bat Group and SNH	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH
Maintain and enhance bat populations	Map existing bat box provision, fund raise and install additional boxes where existing coverage is sparse	Throughout site			■	■							■	■	FNH, FoCH, Vols
Historical															
Preserve and protect built structures	Assess Corstorphine Tower for mortar repointing requirements and undertake	3b	Investigate funding stream to undertake any requirements detailed within 2016 upper outer facade condition survey	■											FNH, CEC Estates
Preserve and protect built structures	Undertake preparation and painting of metal stairs within Corstorphine Tower	3b			■										FNH, CEC Estates
Maintain, restore or enhance selected historic features	Ensure vegetation encroachment into dolerite pavement hosting cup marks is stopped	3b, 3c, 4g	Ensure stepplebush (Spiraea tomentosa) encroachment is contained through removal from periphery of area			■							■		FNH, FoCH, Vols
Maintain, restore or enhance selected historic features	Undertake mapping exercise and exploration for other cup marked features	3b, 3c, 4g	Map all known cup marks, survey areas where vegetation has been cleared for presence of more											■	FNH, FoCH, Vols
Maintain, restore or enhance selected historic features	Map all known well locations, undertake condition survey	Throughout site		■											FNH, CEC Estates
Maintain, restore or enhance selected historic features	Assist FoCH in maintaining Corstorphine Hill Community Walled Garden	2h	Provide assistance for 2 days during winter season with Officer/Estates Team for tidy up works	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	FNH

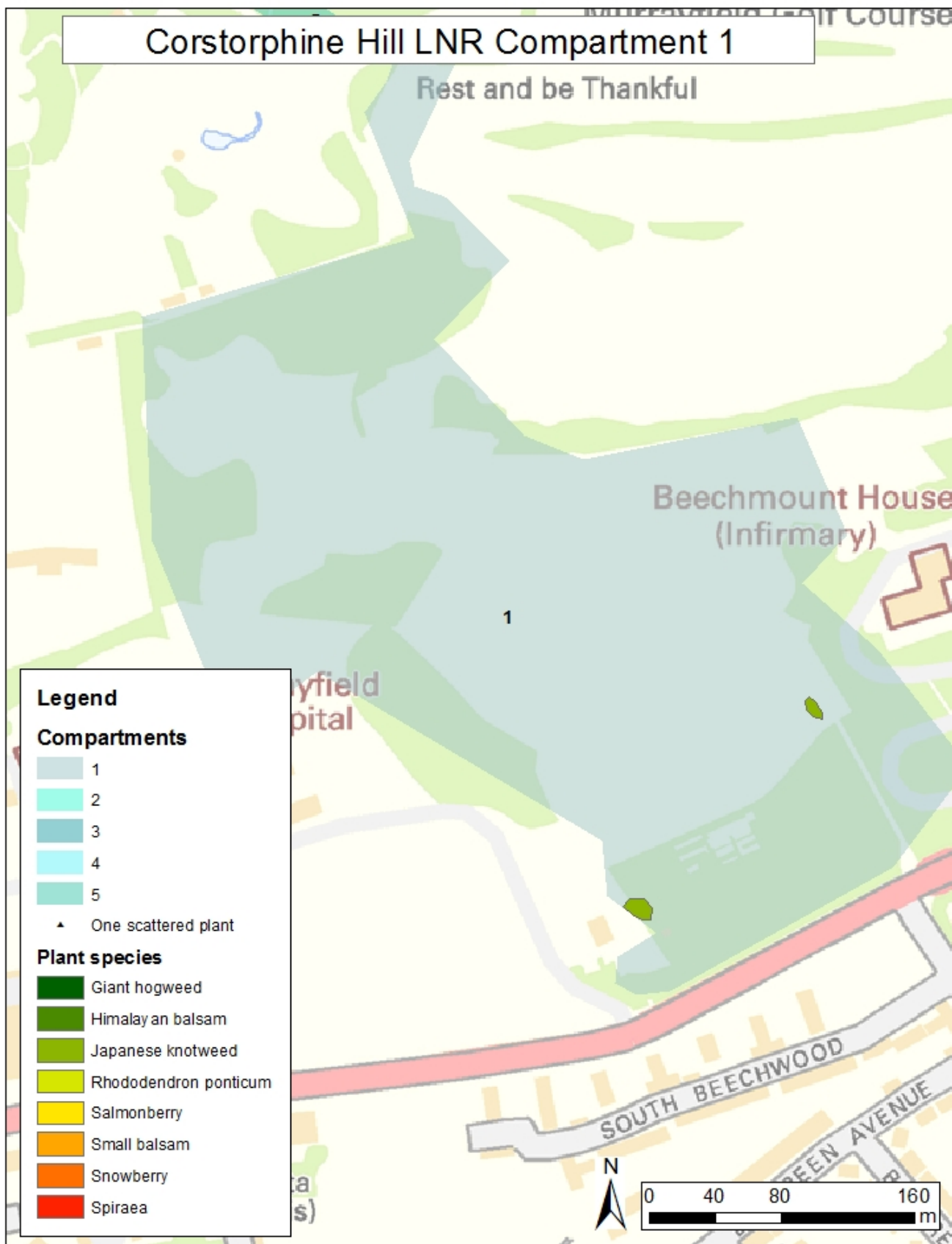
Address dog fouling issues	Liaise with Environmental Wardens in relation to dog and fly-tipping issues	Throughout site		▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	FNH
Mid point review	Make workplan and yearly updates available for review		Provide FoCH Committee and other stakeholders opportunity to comment					▪							
CEC	City of Edinburgh Council														
FNH	Forestry & Natural Heritage														
FoCH	Friends of Corstorphine Hill														
SGM	City of Edinburgh Council Specialist Grounds Maintenance														
ELB	Edinburgh and Lothian Badger Group														
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage														



Corstorphine Hill LNR

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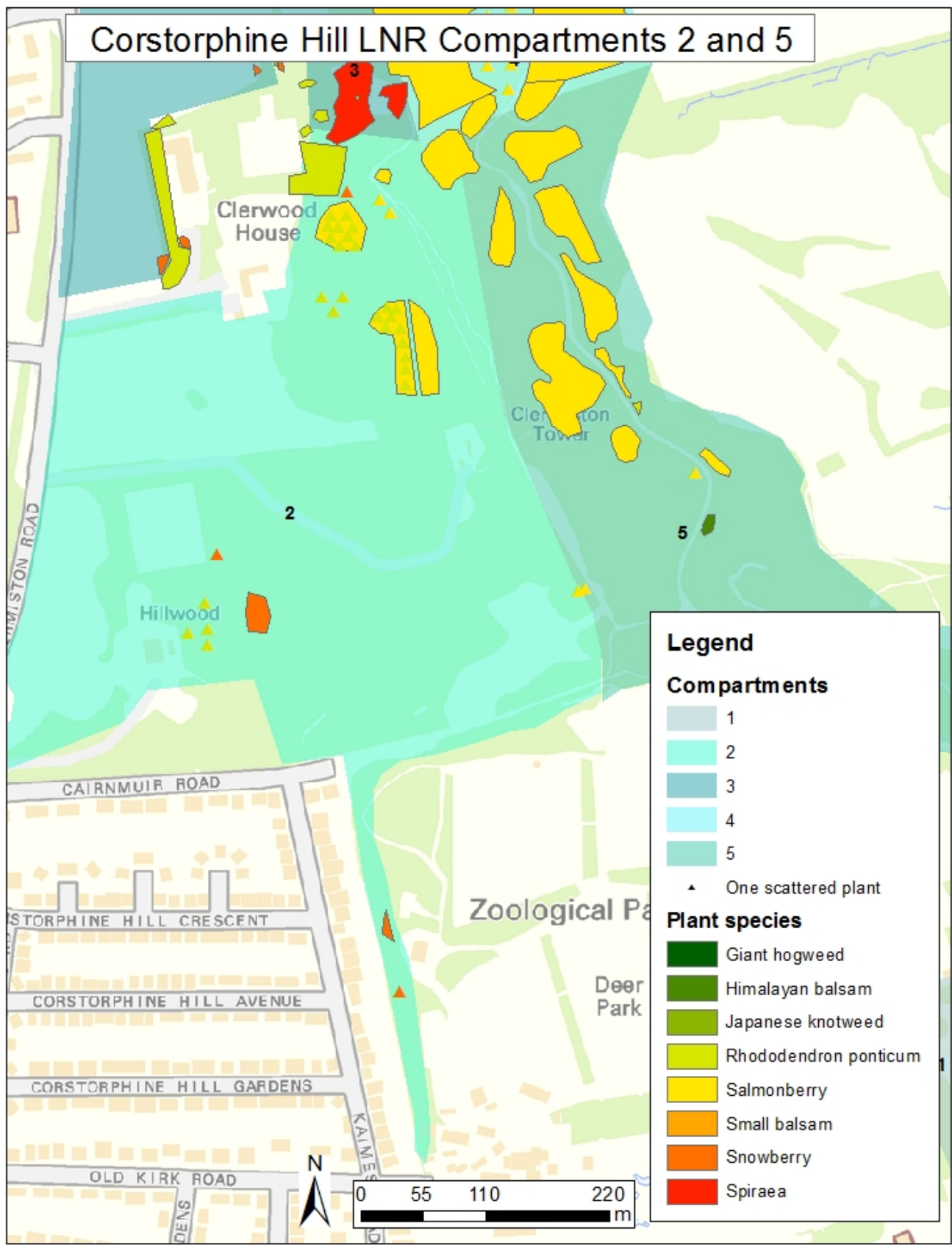
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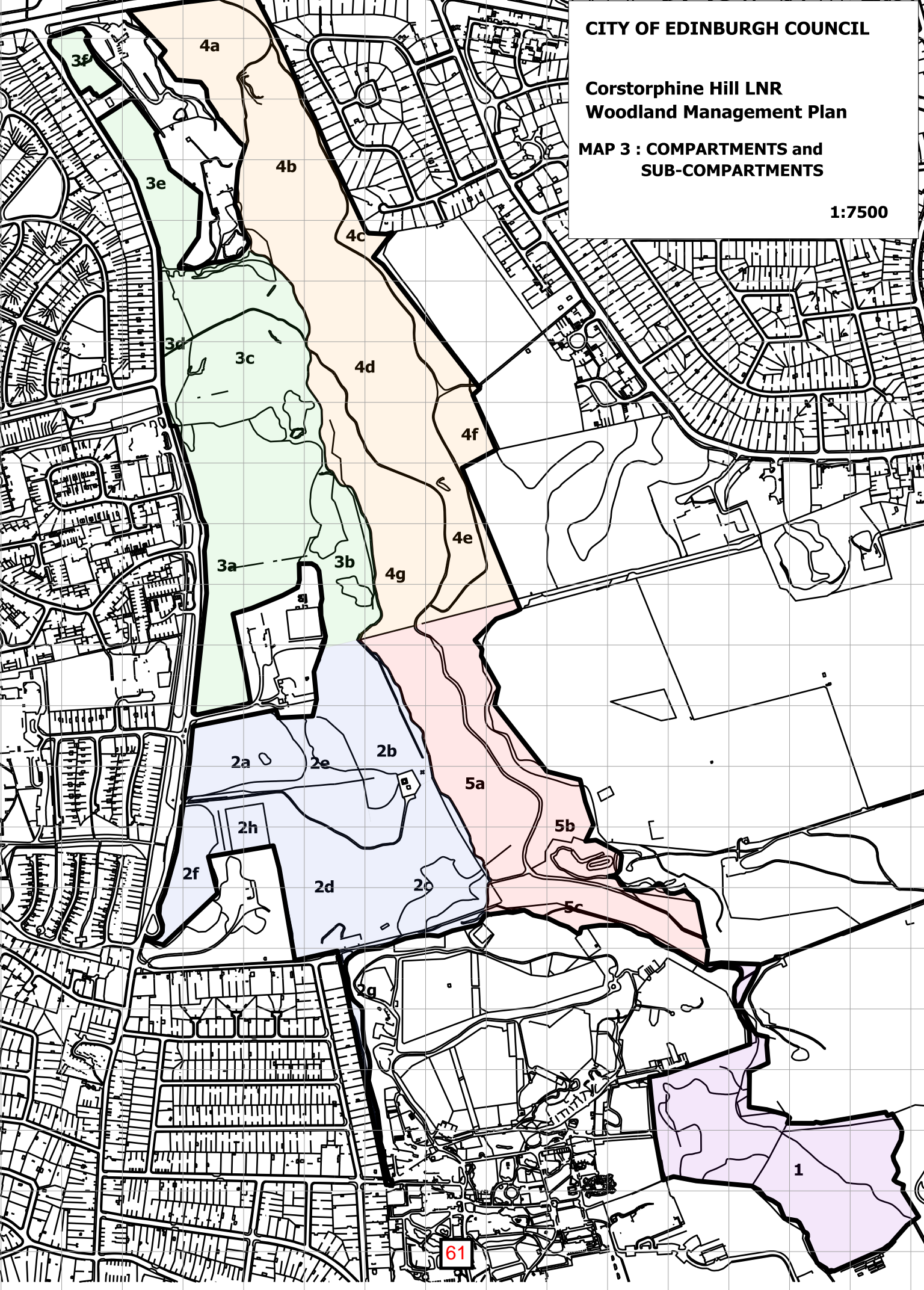
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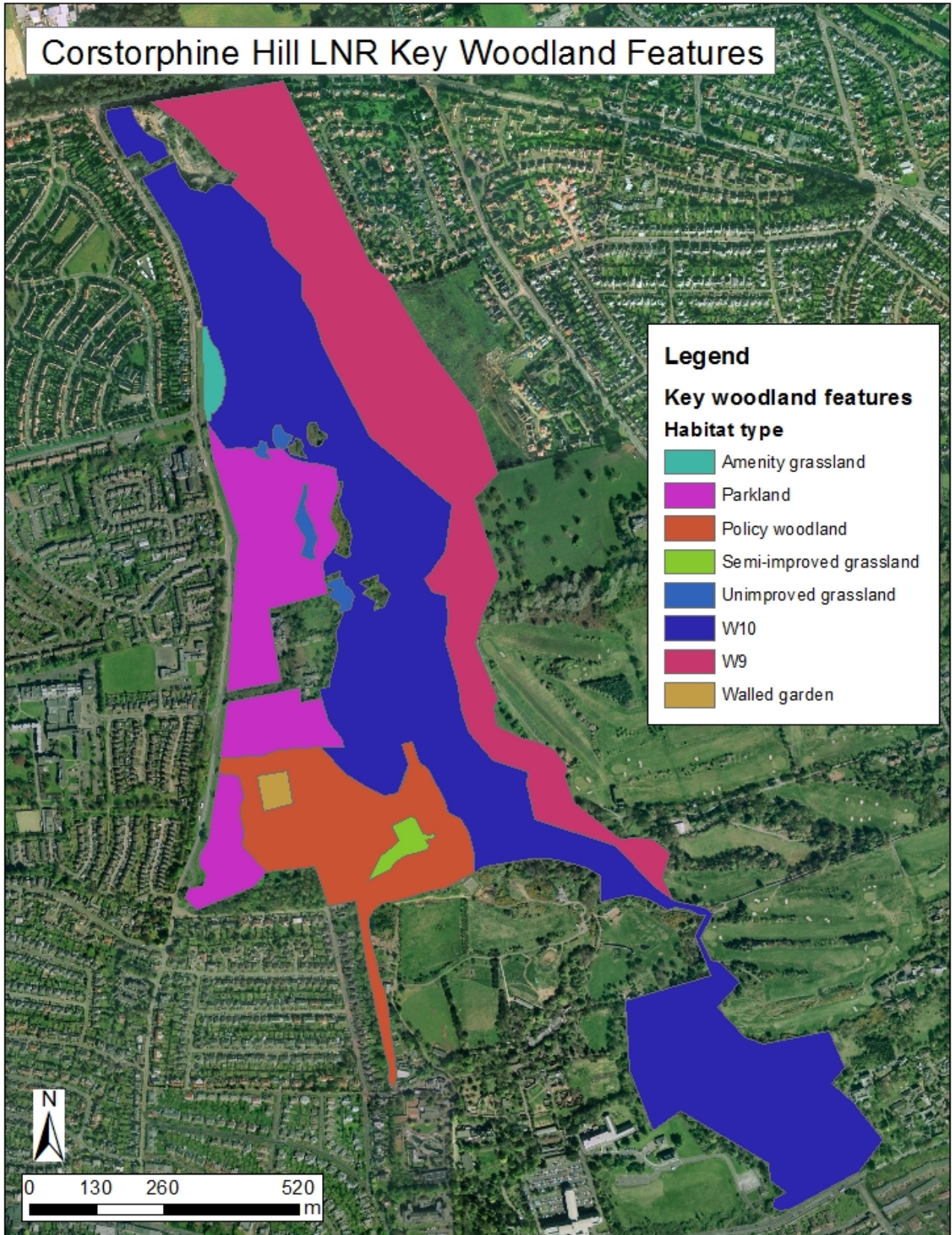
Corstorphine Hill LNR
Woodland Management Plan

MAP 3 : COMPARTMENTS and
SUB-COMPARTMENTS

1:7500



Corstorphine Hill LNR Key Woodland Features



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Green Flag Park Quality Assessment Scores 2015

Corstorphine Hill

Classification: Natural Heritage Park

PQS: 72% Bandwidth: Very Good

Criteria Score Key 0 = N/A; 1 = Very Poor; 2-4 = Poor; 5-6 = Fair; 7 = Good; 8 = Very Good; 9 = Excellent; 10 = Exceptional

<u>A Welcoming Place</u>	<u>Criteria Score</u>	<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
Welcoming	7	car parks and entrance gates notice boards and info	
Good Safe Access	7	good bus routes from various locations car parking	
Signage	7	the stone are great but felt more required	more directional signs within park
Equal Access	6		the site does not lend its self for people with trouble walking step slops uneven steps and hardcore paths although these are in keeping with site
<u>Healthy, Safe & Secure</u>			
Safe Equipment & Facilities	6		cross drain still require to be cleared
Personal Security in Park	6		this was a difficult one lots of people but lots of areas that could not see around but this is part of the parks attraction
Dog Fouling	6		lots of dogs there was dog poo at side of paths and lots of used bags left around .
Appropriate Provision of Facilities	6		comment about toilets could a notice be put in the notice boards to say nearest public toilets at xxx
Quality of Facilities	7		some walls near golf course in need of attention n
<u>Clean & Well Maintained</u>			
Litter & Waste Management	8		there was area that had a lot of litter and dog fouling
Grounds Maintenance	7	Living landscape	
Building & Infrastructure Maint.	7	benches painted	
Equipment Maintenance	7	is there a way to increase amount of bins ?	
<u>Sustainability</u>			
Environmental Sustainability	6	The score was proposed by the site manager in a desktop exercise based on the following: All current Council policies regarding environmental sustainability are being adhered to in the park.	
Pesticides	10	The score was proposed by the site manager during a desktop exercise based on the following: Herbicide use is not used due to the natural aspect of the site except when NNIS are present and which is applied by certificated staff.	
Peat Use	10	The score was proposed by the site manager during a desktop exercise based on the following: Peat use within the park continues to be monitored with the intention of reducing its use in new planting and seasonal bedding.	
Waste Minimisation	7	The score was proposed by the site manager during a desktop exercise based on the following: Attempts are made to minimise waste on site and most green waste is recycled on site.	
Woodland Management	7		some dead trees standing large beach
<u>Conservation & Heritage</u>			
Conservation Fauna & Flora	8	grass land uncut good mix of sp	can the grass area at Clermiston have plants put in to increase sp



Green Flag Park Quality Assessment Scores 2015

Corstorphine Hill

Classification: Natural Heritage Park

PQS: 72% Bandwidth: Very Good

Criteria Score Key 0 = N/A; 1 = Very Poor; 2-4 = Poor; 5-6 = Fair; 7 = Good; 8 = Very Good; 9 = Excellent; 10 = Exceptional

Conservation Landscape 8

Conservation Buildings 8

Community Involvement

Community Involvement 8 The score was proposed by the site manager during a desktop exercise based on the following: A group exists and hold lots of events.

Community Provision 6 The score was proposed by the site manager during a desktop exercise based on the following: The Council provides support in the form of funding etc.

Marketing & Promotion

Marketing & Promotion 8 The score was proposed by the site manager during a desktop exercise based on the following: The site is advertised on the Council website and Edinburgh Outdoors. Natural Heritage also promote events on site. The site also benefits from additional marketing as a Green Flag Award site.

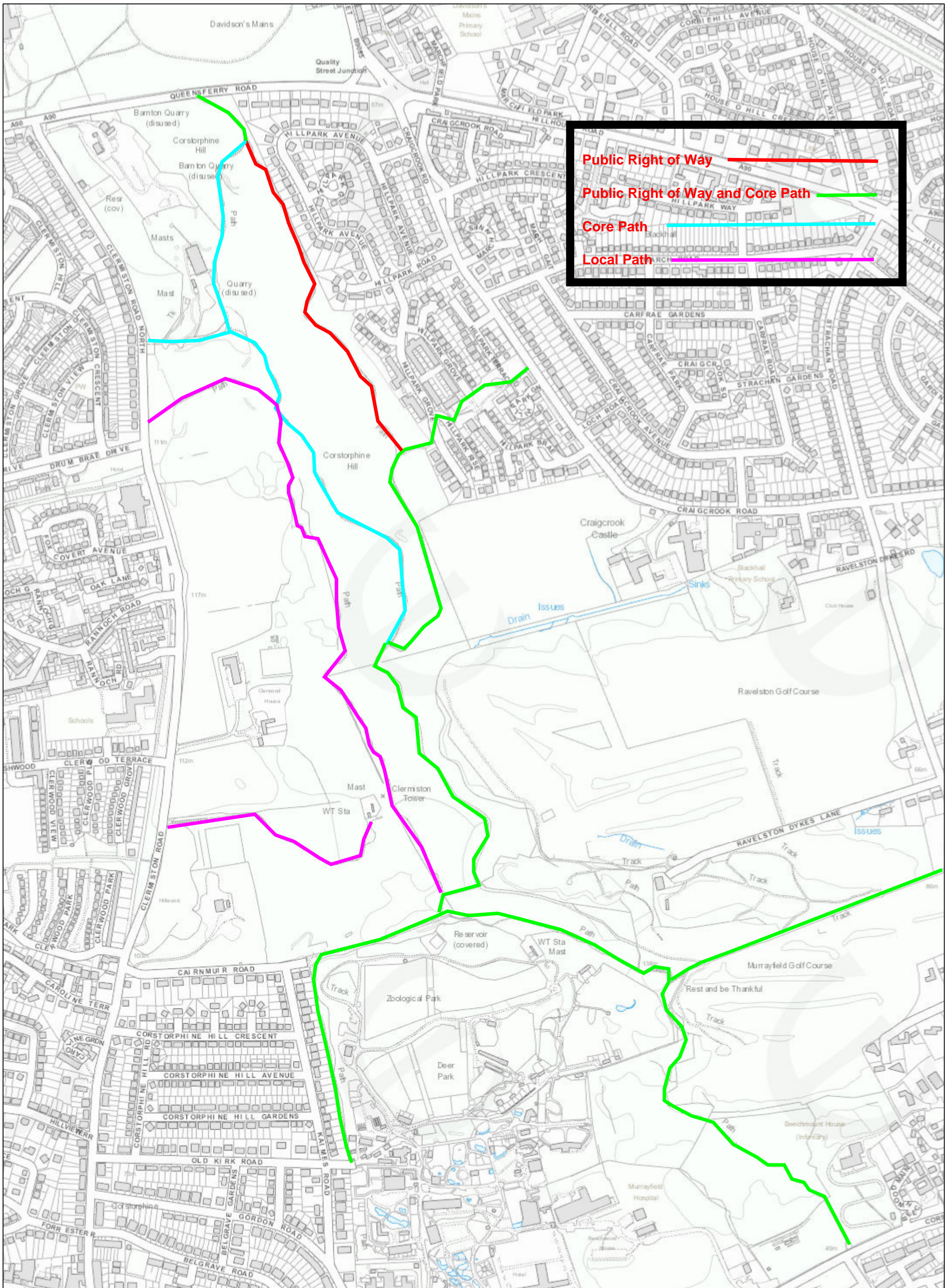
Information Provision 7 signs very generic no info on wildlife or flowers

Educ. & Interpretative Provision 6 consider use of QR code

Management

Management Plan Implementation 0

OverallComments great space lots of routs so you do not have to see other people .

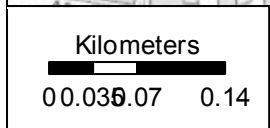


Public Right of Way ————

Public Right of Way and Core Path ————

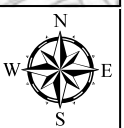
Core Path ————

Local Path ————



Corstorphine Hill LNR Core, Local Paths and PROWs

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Corstorphine Hill LNR

Welcome to Corstorphine Hill Local Nature Reserve – Edinburgh’s largest public woodland. As you walk round the woodland you can see remnants of the past and look for wildlife that lives here today. You may discover Clermiston tower, built in 1871 by William Mackie of Dreghorn to commemorate 100 years after Sir Walter Scott’s birth. It was presented to the city on the centenary of Scott’s death. The tower is open on summer Sundays by the Friends of Corstorphine Hill, and it is worth the climb to see panoramic views of Edinburgh and beyond.

Lots of wildlife lives in this woodland, which is dominated by elm and sycamore, and you will also find oak, beech, ash, Scots pine and birch. You may see sparrowhawk and kestrel during the day or badger and tawny owl at night. Also, listen for the great spotted woodpecker drumming on the trees. Look closely to see nationally and regionally important flora like small balsam, lords and ladies, spring beauty and common spotted orchid.



Lords and Ladies

The area is protected because of its history, geology and wildlife. Look closely at exposed rock to find ‘cup and ring’ marks left on the rock by people about 3 thousand years ago. You should also explore the walled garden, which was in ruin until it was restored by the Friends of Corstorphine Hill in 2001. It is open to the public every day.



You are here
To Craigcrook Road



Pipistrelle bat



Badger

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Kestrel



Beech



Birch

Badger



References and further sources of further information

Corstorphine Hill “The Finest Views the Eye can Feast on”. Alison MacIntosh ISBN 987-0-9557379-0-9

Friends of Corstorphine Hill website

<http://www.corstorphinehill.org.uk>

City of Edinburgh Council Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries website

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20064/parks_and_green_spaces

City of Edinburgh Council Biodiversity

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20065/conservation/247/biodiversity_in_edinburgh

The Wildlife Information Centre

<http://www.wildlifeinformation.co.uk>

Trees in the City Action Plan

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20064/parks_and_green_spaces/256/trees_and_woodlands

Geodiversity

http://www.edinburghgeolsoc.org/downloads/rigsleaflet_corstorphinea4.pdf