

Strensall Common site Check 5 July 2019

Central and northern areas of Common were walked as part of routine site check. Areas of scrub clearance for winter 2019/20 were also identified with MOD ecologist, Moira Owen who accompanied assessor on visit.

A note was taken of visitor numbers and dogs whilst walking. A total of 17 individuals were noted (three of which were university researchers) during the course of 3 hours (10:45-13:45). Almost all visitors were accompanied by dogs a total of 9 dogs being recorded. Most were off the lead.

Notes were also taken of any other signs of recreational damage and a fire site was noted just south of horse pastures (see photo 21 below). The large fire that took place in May 2019 was also visited. An extensive area (c.10ha) to north of the Common had been effected to the south of Flaxton Road. This was larger than original estimate supplied by DIO. The area was beginning to green up and it appeared that the burn had been quick and shallow, perhaps explained by the fact that large areas of the area were damp underfoot. It is anticipated that the area should recover without long term damage to the site.

Generally the site was looking in good condition. Cattle were grazing the "Hebridean sheep" paddock, and sheep appeared to be concentrated to the south of the Common few being seen outside the danger area. Perhaps worthy of mention is that few sheep were noted in vicinity of the two car parking areas.

There are areas that would clearly benefit from scrub clearance which if not tackled would in time result in site becoming unfavourable. This was very apparent in the "Hebridean" paddock which had extensive birch regeneration present and if considered in isolation would be unfavourable. Photo 10. Areas cleared to the north of the Common in winter 2018/19 had some regrowth and this will be spot treated funding permitting in 2019. It was agreed with MOD ecologist that priority for winter 2019/20 would however be the Hebridean sheep paddock. Two potential fire sites were identified for brash disposal if required .

Kidney scrape was looking in good condition with the drawdown zone supporting extensive *Anagallis tenella*, and *Ranunculus flamula*. Note *Pilularia globulifera* was not recorded and it was subsequently confirmed by Yorkshire Fern Group that although the plant was abundant in 2018 it was scarce in 2019.

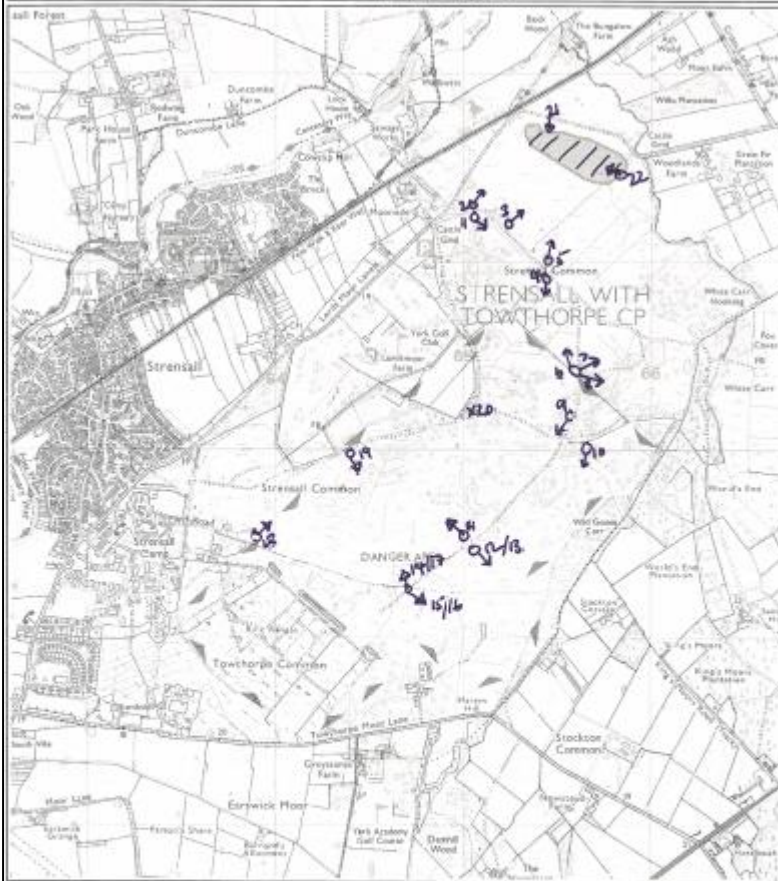
Kidney pond was heavily shaded and there is less open water than historically. There is also scrub encroachment on the Sphagnum mire to north. A discussion was held with MOD ecologist who is of the opinion that this area should be complete non-intervention. Assessor however considers that light touch scrub clearance could benefit the area. Kidney pond always engenders discussion and there is rarely a consensus amongst naturalists visiting!

The small pond on the western side of the Common near gate one appeared to have developed a good flora and *Baldellia* was recorded.

Map below indicators locations of photos during visit.

Simon Christian
17 July 2019

Strensall site check photos 6 July 2019



Key

Ordnance Survey (Ordnance) © Ordnance Survey



APPROX AREA OF BURN c. 10ha



Map Produced from (National) on 15/6/19
Map Projection: British National Grid
Map Scale: At A3: 1:75,000

Contains, or is derived from, information supplied by Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright and database right 2019
Ordnance Survey 10002021

1. Looking south east form grenade range



2. Looking north towards Flaxton Road



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17



18



19



20





22

