

Open Countryside and Protected Areas

Section 1 – Open Countryside and Protected Areas in Danbury

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in Danbury

SSSI's are nationally protected and should be given significant weight in plan making. Any plan should support their protection and Natural England would need to be consulted if impacts to any SSSI were expected - this would include SSSIs that are close to but not inside the plan area. Natural England was consulted as a part of our Visions and Objectives Consultation and their response is attached.

These areas also contain Priority Habitats which can be viewed here:

<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx> Priority habitats should be protected in the event of any growth.

Lingwood Common (20 ha) is a part of the Blake's Wood and Lingwood Common SSSI and National Trust Reserve (Blakes Wood and Ling Wood sit just outside of the parish boundary in Little Baddow).

Danbury Common SSSI (approx 70 ha) is a designated local wildlife site, and National Trust Reserve. It includes Hitchcock's Meadow SSSI (10 acres) and Backwarden SSSI (30 acres) that are managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust.

Scrubs Wood SSSI (10 acres) is a part of the Essex Wildlife Trust Danbury Ridge Nature Reserves.

Danbury Common and Lingwood are described on the Visit Chelmsford website <http://www.visitchelmsford.co.uk/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=0248424> as follows:

Danbury Common is made up of a mosaic of habitats: lowland woodland, lowland heath, ponds, woodland and acid grassland. It is the second largest heathland in Essex. **Lingwood Common** is made up of lowland woodland and lowland heathland.

There are three walking trails between Danbury Common, Lingwood Common and Blakes Wood which can be found here: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/danbury-commons-and-blakes-wood/activities>

Scrubs wood, Hitchcock's Meadow and Backwarden are described on the Essex Wildlife's website <http://www.essexwt.org.uk/reserves/danbury-ridge>.

The Danbury Ridge Nature Reserves and SSSI's adjacent to or close to the Plan Area Boundary

The Danbury Ridge Nature Reserves (250 acres) extend beyond the Danbury Parish area and include Birch Wood SSSI, Little Baddow Heath (mostly SSSI), Pheasant House Wood SSSI, Pools Piece SSSI, Smaller Pools Piece SSSI and Woodham Walter Common SSSI. Blakes Wood and Ling Wood are a part of the Blakes Wood and Lingwood Common SSSI owned by the National Trust.

Local Wildlife Sites (LoWs)

There are local wildlife sites at Danbury Palace, Bellhill Wood, Charlie's Bit, Scrub Wood, Hall Wood and Hyde Wood (only part of which is within the plan area). They do not benefit from any legal protection but there is some protection through the planning system and the Plan could,

therefore support their protection. In the Chelmsford City Council Local Wildlife Site review 2016, Danbury Park and Riffhams Lane Wood were added as a local Wildlife Site and Danbury Palace LoWs had significant deletions made. Charlie's Bit has recently become owned and managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust as an extension to Hitchcock's Meadow, it is in a poor but improving condition.

Danbury Country Park

Danbury Country Park is owned by Essex County Council and offers ornamental gardens, lakes, woodland and meadows. It was originally part of a private estate dating back to the 13th Century and is popular with dog walkers and families. <http://www.visitparks.co.uk/places/danbury-country-park/>

Woods

Danbury has a number of woods, including a part of Hyde Wood, Hall Wood, Old Hare Wood and Slough House Wood. These do not have open access.

Protected Lanes

From the 2010 Chelmsford City Council Protected Lanes Study, Danbury has 8 protected lanes. These are Sporhams Lane up to its junction with Fitzwalter Lane, Woodhill Common Road between Sporhams Lane and Woodhill Road, Riffhams Lane between Graces Lane and Elms Green Lane, Graces Lane, Gay Bowers Road, Capons Lane, Gay Bowers Lane and a short section of Mill Lane.

2 additional lanes have been added in 2017 and these are Twitty Fee and Slough Road. Hyde Lane (South) and Gay Bowers Road (North East) were reassessed but not considered to be suitable.