



Gibside access (forest roads red, vehicle access purple, pedestrian and ATV orange)

N



Scale: 1: 10,000

Legend

- ▲ Definitive Properties (GB)
- NT Ownership (GB)
- NT Leasehold (GB)



0.50 0 0.25 0.50 Kilometers

British_National_Grid

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GIBSIDE CONSERVATION AREA

(i) INTRODUCTION

Gibside Conservation Area was designated on 4 August 1989. A Character Statement for the Area was approved by the Council on 27 August 1997. A conservation Strategy for Gibside was adopted as Council policy on 28 April 1989.

(ii) CHARACTER STATEMENT

Introduction

Gibside Conservation Area is situated east of Rowlands Gill in the Derwent Valley. It embraces the central and most important part of the historic Gibside Estate, including the major buildings, and Old Hollinside, the remains of a fortified medieval manor house. The estate is included on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest (grade I)

Historical Development

The first recorded owners of Gibside were the Marleys, around 1200, but in 1450 it passed to Roger Blakiston. Old Hollinside was first recorded in 1317 when Thomas de Holinside granted it to William de Boineton. It later passed to the Harding family who held it until around 1700 when it became part of the Gibside Estate and was subsequently reduced to the status of a tenant farm. Gibside came into the possession of the Bowes Family in 1713 and was inherited by George Bowes in 1722. It was the wealth that he obtained from the coal trade together with his vision which created the estate that can be seen today.

In fact, the core of the main house predates Bowes' ownership of the estate as it was built between 1603 and 1620. The creation of the landscape of the estate and the erection of the principal buildings took place between 1722 and 1812. The landscape design was completely planned but it is not known by whom. It has been attributed to Stephen Switzer, a notable landscape designer of the early-eighteenth century. However, Bowes may have designed it himself following Switzer's principles. Later, William Joyce became an important figure in the evolution of the design. It represents a compromise between continental formality and the English taste for informal parkland. One of Switzer's techniques was to incorporate an entire estate within a single design by establishing one or two great axial avenues or bold view lines, a technique evident at Gibside. New buildings (some since lost) included a bath house (1736) and walk, and Daniel Garrett designed a gothick tower (1743), the Banqueting House (c. 1746) and Stables (c. 1752). The Monument to British Liberty (1750-57) was begun by Garrett and completed by James Paine. At the same time the house was remodelled and a new wing added and the chapel, also by Paine, was begun in 1760. By common consent the finest building on the estate, it was not completed until 1812.

George Bowes died in 1760. Subsequent developments were in the main complementary to the character that he had established. The principal building project during this period was the construction of an orangery between 1772 and 1774. Various modifications to the Hall were undertaken, including a major remodelling and extension in 1805 by Alexander Gilkie. The Hall was inhabited until the late nineteenth century following which it declined, culminating in it being gutted in 1920. Much of the original woodland was felled in the 1930s and afforestation, mainly in conifers and overlying and obscuring much of the original landscape design, took place in the 1950s. In 1964 the National Trust was bequeathed the Chapel, Chapel House, a small area of woodland and part of the Grand Walk leading to the Monument to Liberty. In 1980 the Landmark Trust acquired and restored the Banqueting House as a holiday home. In 1995 the National Trust acquired the freehold of the bulk of the remainder of the historic Estate and commenced a long term programme of restoration and management works to the landscape and the structures. The Trust is continuing to take steps to acquire and control some of the adjacent areas of land that formed part of the original Bowes landholding but which were subsequently sold, substantially reducing the extent of the eighteenth century estate.

Character Description

The topography of the estate reflects the fact that it is on the south-east side of the Derwent valley so there is a general fall to the north-west. It contains topographical features ranging from the steeply sloping Snipes Dene in the north to flat areas such as Lady Haugh and Warren's Haugh, and including several precipitous slopes overlooking the river.

Much of the estate is wooded, the planting being used both as a contrast to open parkland and as a frame for a series of intersecting axial avenues which in turn accommodate buildings and other features at termination and intersection points in carefully designed set-pieces. There is also a serpentine drive through the woodland designed to afford brief and changing views of the Estate. Most of the woodland comprises modern coniferous planting but some pockets of deciduous woodland from earlier centuries remain and the intent of the designer can still be appreciated. Areas of post-war coniferous forestry are progressively being felled enhancing the landscape character of the estate. The principal and most spectacular axis includes the Grand Walk, a raised avenue of Turkey oaks, which connects the Chapel and the Monument.

Gibside Hall lies to the north of the Grand Walk. It was gutted in 1920 and partly demolished in 1958 and continues to suffer from depredation. In ashlar, it has a symmetrical south front of two storeys and five bays with mullioned and transomed windows. Formerly embattled on all sides, the battlements to the south have been lost through vandalism. To the north and east, because of the fall in the land, it appears tower-like. Curiously, it is not incorporated in any of the formal axes.

The stables, to the east of the Hall, are of ashlar in a generally plain style but with a Palladian east front with pedimented central section, built on a square plan around a courtyard and in 2005 were successfully and sensitively been repaired

and brought into use for display, visitor facilities and accommodation. To the east of the stables, beyond an octagonal pond and occupying a commanding position at the highest point of the estate, is the Banqueting House, a pretty, ornate and whimsical building, which has been described as "a gem of early Gothic Revival".

At the north end of the Grand Walk, the Monument to British Liberty is a 140 foot-high Roman Doric column surmounted by a 12 foot-high figure; because of its size it is a prominent landmark not only in the estate but in the wider Derwent valley. Overlooking open land west of the Hall are the ruins of the Orangery which was successfully consolidated. It comprises a single storey Tuscan arcade with ashlar returns with much of its brick internal structure exposed. Close to the Orangery lie a brick-walled garden and, built into its north-west corner, a two storey white-painted cottage, Garden House.

At the southern end of the Grand Walk lies the Chapel, the finest building architecturally amongst a fine collection on the estate. Incorporating a mausoleum, it is built in a Greek cross plan in "the most select classical style", its most notable features being its central dome raised on a high drum and, on the north east elevation, a double portico carrying a pediment surmounted by a plain parapet with four urns. All the richness of the building is concentrated on this face as it terminates the view down the Grand Walk; elsewhere decoration is sparing. Close to the Chapel is Chapel House, a simple single-storey nineteenth century house in ashlar.

In the northern part of the Conservation Area, outside the formally laid out part of the estate, lie the ruins of Old Hollinside, a medieval fortified manor house built in a defensible position at the top of a wooded escarpment. Although roofless and containing little of the internal structure, the core of the building, which has been consolidated, substantially survives to eaves level.

(iii) Progress in Implementing Gibside Strategy

A great deal of progress has been made in implementing Gibside Strategy since it was adopted in 1989. Consequently the Strategy has been replaced by paragraph 3.12 and Policy E9 of the adopted Gateshead Unitary Development Plan and Policy ENV15 of the Gateshead Unitary Development Plan: Re-Deposit Draft Replacement Plan, and the following statement.

The key events in the development of the Strategy, which was predicated by the National Trust's acquisition of the Chapel and 13 acres of adjacent land in 1974, has been its purchase of Strathmore Estate's freehold. This encompassed much of the historic estate, including Cut Thorn Farm along the eastern edge of the estate, and large tracts of agricultural land located within the estate. Major extensions to public access throughout the Estate have been achieved by the Trust, principally through the purchase of a shooting lease that extended over much of Gibside.

A wide range of repair and restoration works to buildings, structures and the historic landscape have been started. However, it is recognised that the proper restoration of the estate will take many years to achieve. The Council is assisting

in the restoration of the estate in a variety of ways including the compulsory purchase of Gibside Stables with its immediate resale to the Trust which has resulted in the successful repair scheme of 2005.

This will ensure that all of the principal buildings and monuments located within the original eighteenth century landscape other than the Banqueting House, which is owned by the Landmark Trust, will be in the ownership and care of the National Trust. The Trust has prepared a conservation and management plan which provides a framework for the design and implementation of a comprehensive range of landscape and building restoration works. The Council will continue to work closely with the National Trust and other bodies including Forestry Enterprise and English Nature.

At the southern end of the Great Walk, the Chapel, the finest building architecturally amongst a fine collection of buildings, incorporating a mansardum, it is built in a Greek cross plan in the most select classical style, its front portico features being the central dome raised on a high drum and, on the north west elevation, a double portico carrying a pediment surrounded by a plain pediment with four Ionic columns. At the highest of the building is concentrated on the face as it terminates the view down the Grand Walk, a square, two-story, classical canopy. Close to the Chapel is Chapel House, a single single-story, nineteenth century house in Italian style.

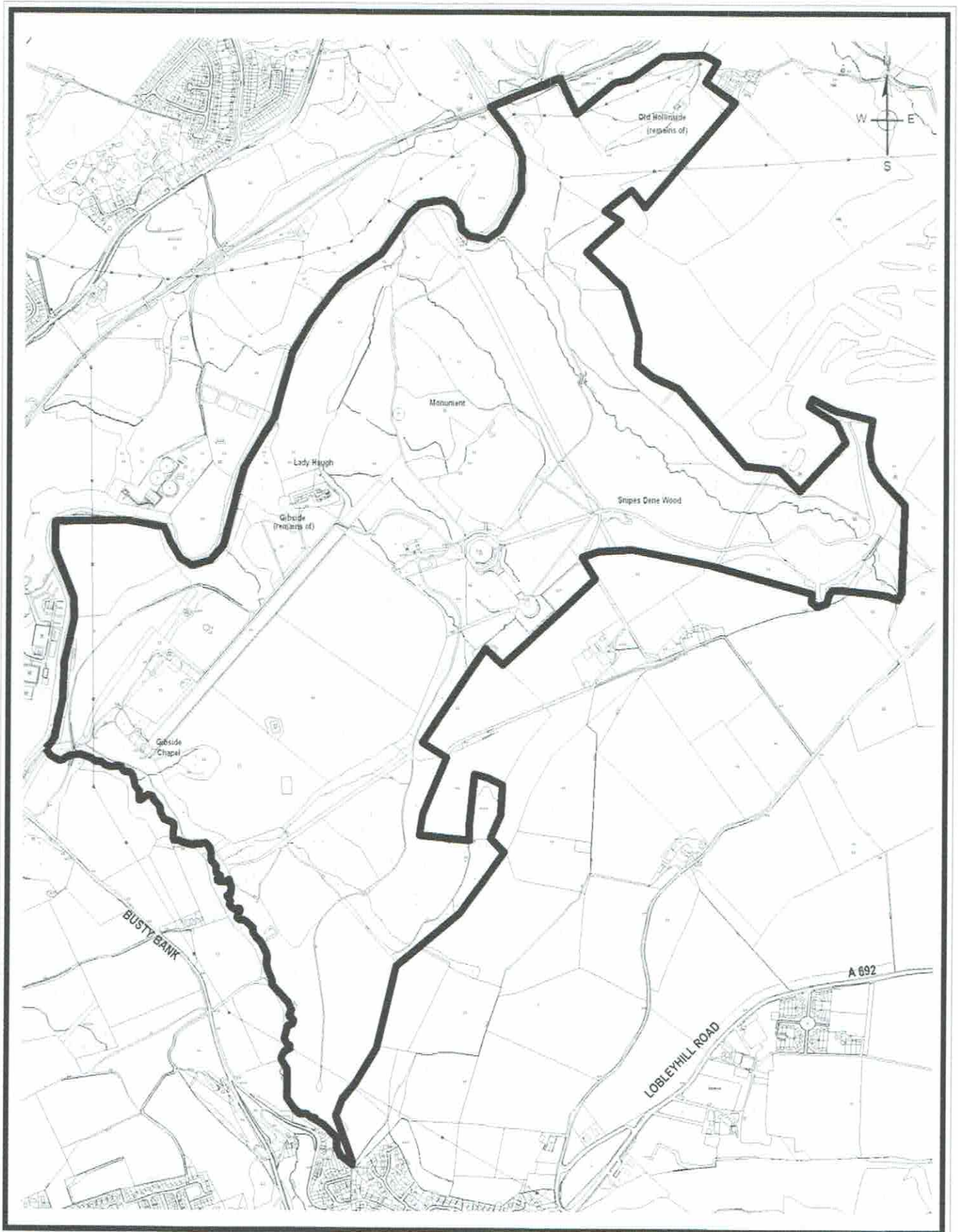
In the northern part of the Conservation Area, outside the formerly laid out part of the estate, the ruins of Old Hollinide, a medieval timbered manor house built in a defensive position at the top of a wooded escarpment. Although walls and foundations little of the interior structure, the base of the building, which has been consolidated, still remain, survive to date.

(iii) Progress in Implementing Gibside Strategy

A great deal of progress has been made in implementing Gibside Strategy since it was adopted in 1989. Consequently the Strategy has been replaced by paragraphs 2.14 and Policy 50 of the current Council's Unitary Development Plan and Policy 50.11 of the General Policy Development Plan, Re-Deposit Unit Development Plan, and the following statement:

The key events in the development of the Strategy, which was initiated by the National Trust's acquisition of the Chapel and 13 acres of adjacent land in 1971, has been its purchase of Staircase Farm's farmstead. This encompassed much of the historic watercourse, including the farm, along the eastern edge of the estate and large tracts of agricultural land located within the estate. Major extensions to public access throughout the estate have been achieved by the Trust, principally through the purchase of a woodland area that extends over much of Gibside.

A wide range of repair and restoration work is ongoing, structures and the historic landscape have been restored. However, it is recognised that the future repair of the estate will only be achieved if the Council's funding



Title
GIDSIDE
CONSERVATION AREA

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Scale 1:13000	Date 5th January 2007	Drawing number EX20MR13
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Development and Enterprise, Civic Centre,
 Regent Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH

Views About Management

A statement of English Nature's views about the management of Gibside Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

This statement represents English Nature's views about the management of the SSSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the site's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. English Nature has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the SSSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the SSSI. Also, there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation. English Nature's written consent is still required before carrying out any operation likely to damage the features of special interest (see your SSSI notification papers for a list of these operations). English Nature welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the SSSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

Management Principles

Introduction

Gibside is an estate that was landscaped in the eighteenth century. Its ponds and their nearby surrounding vegetation support one of the most important reptile and amphibian assemblages in north east England, which includes all three native species of Newt, as well as Adder, Grass Snake and Slow Worm. These habitats and patches of broadleaved woodland support a rich invertebrate fauna, and trees and abandoned buildings provide roosts for a range of bat species, including Natterer's and Noctule Bats.

Ponds and their surrounding habitats

Any management of the three ponds and their surrounding habitats should take place between October and February, to avoid breeding seasons.

The submerged and floating aquatic vegetation of the ponds is very important to the amphibians and invertebrates, and management should aim to retain this. The principal of minimal interference should suffice, but patches may need to be removed if growth becomes too dense.

Marginal invasive species such as Bulrush must be prevented from encroaching into the bodies of the ponds. Regular manual cutting, as low under the water as possible, will be needed to achieve this. Regular short term (2-3 year) coppicing is also necessary on any marginal patches of wet willow woodland, to protect the ponds from excessive shade.

Management should aim to maintain the surrounding vegetation as species rich, wet, heathy grassland, with a diversity of heights to benefit the amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates. This is best maintained by manual cutting to a height of approximately 10cm on a two or three year cycle in alternating bands. It can also be useful to cut small circles (less than 1m in diameter) of very short vegetation (less than 1cm) within previous years cuttings, to provide reptile basking areas. Any existing patches of trackways and other bare sandy ground should be retained, which are also important reptile basking areas.

All cut vegetation should be collected and placed on the compost heap within the site. This is valuable breeding ground for grass snakes which lay their eggs in the rotting organic matter.

Great crested newt

Great crested newts are dependent on both terrestrial habitats (to provide foraging areas and refuge) and aquatic habitats (for breeding) and it is important that their terrestrial and aquatic habitat requirements are considered together.

Great crested newts preferentially breed in unshaded, medium-sized ponds (100-300m²), up to 4m deep, in the vicinity of suitable terrestrial habitat and located close to other breeding ponds. Breeding pools should ideally have gently sloping sides and shallow areas that will warm up quickly in sunlight and deeper areas to provide additional cover. The most suitable pond conditions are provided by a relatively open aspect, without excessive shade from over-hanging branches. Some fringing trees or scrub can be valuable as terrestrial newt habitat but these are best limited to the northern sides of the pond. Breeding ponds should contain a medium to high cover of aquatic plants. Some ponds may dry out naturally in summer and this can be beneficial as it prevents the build-up of aquatic predators. Fish and wildfowl are generally detrimental and should not be introduced. Any pond management work is best carried out in late autumn or early winter, after adult newts have left the pond but before ground conditions become too wet.

A mosaic of different terrestrial habitats including rough grassland, scrub and woodland provide suitable foraging areas as well as important refuge habitat for the newts, which is important for providing shelter from extremes of weather and predation. Suitable habitats that provide the shelter required during hibernation include piles of stone, logs and rubble, dry stone walls, old hedgerow bases and tree roots. Hedgerows and well-vegetated ditches may be valuable in providing dispersal corridors between areas of suitable foraging and breeding habitat. It is important that barriers to newt movement are avoided, so that dispersal between breeding ponds can be maintained.

Woodlands with invertebrate interest

When managed accordingly, woodlands can provide suitable habitat for a rich invertebrate fauna. Many endangered butterfly species inhabit open clearings, whilst dead and decaying wood can house a range of 'saproxylic' invertebrates.

Open clearings provide warmth from sunlight and shelter from the wind, and these encapsulated, herb-rich habitats often support a rich ground flora. This provides areas for insects to bask and forage within. Many species require nectar as a source of energy, whilst others feed directly on plant material such as leaves and stems. Open areas provide an abundance of this resource within a sheltered and sunlit environment, and are best promoted by coppicing, and by the creation and maintenance of glades and rides.

As some invertebrates are presumed to have a poor mechanism for long distance dispersal, a 'joined up' coppice regime is preferable, with new coups created adjacent to each other. Tree cover within the coups should be sparse, with some trees left to grow in an open situation, where they can grow to a large size with a spreading crown.

Any existing glades and rides within the woodland should be retained, and lightly grazed or mown to reduce natural succession. However, it is near impossible to try and keep glades and rides in exact successional states without a lot of management. Instead, a dynamic system could be promoted, with a number of these features in varying states over the whole site. However, this may not be appropriate with smaller woodlands, where there are more formal pathways and glades, or where another species interest (such as a rare butterfly) prohibits the loss or successional change in a critical area.

Scrub within glades and rides should be promoted and allowed to develop to either form a patchwork or a transition zone between the highforest and the glade/ride sward. Hawthorn, willow and birch are of particular high value to invertebrates. With appropriate orientation, a glade/ride width of 1 – 1.5 times the height of the surrounding trees should be sufficient to maintain adequate levels of sunlight. It is often effective to mow the central strip several times a year to create short turf and bare ground, whilst the outer margins are mown on a much less frequent rotation with some shrubs retained.

To promote saproxylic invertebrate habitat, wherever possible, old standard trees must be left to age naturally. Dead wood that has fallen should be left *in situ*. Where dead and dying trees are in short supply, pollarding or artificially wounding live trees could be considered.

Mixed assemblage of hibernating bats

Hibernating bats require a range of environmental conditions within the hibernation site as different species have different temperature requirements, which vary through the winter. The internal conditions within the hibernation site should remain consistently cool (between 6 and 10 °C) and dark away from the entrances with stable ventilation. Emergence points and flight lines should be maintained as unobstructed and free from artificial light, though vegetated cover around the entrance is desirable.

It is important to avoid disturbance to the bats while they are hibernating. Entrances to the site should be secure to prevent uncontrolled or unauthorised access during the winter months in particular, but should remain unobstructed enough to continue to be accessible to bats. Activities of any kind within the site should be largely avoided during the general period of September – April each year to minimise the risk of disturbance to bats during the sensitive period of hibernation. Building or engineering works taking place within or around the area should be avoided, as should the use of vehicles or machinery that would be likely to produce noise, fumes or heat near roosting sites or access points that may disturb hibernating bats. Pesticides and other chemicals that are used to treat problems such as rot and woodworm can also be extremely harmful to bats and certainly should not be used while bats are present.

The maintenance of some woodland and scrub cover in the vicinity of the hibernation site will provide sheltered and secured access to commuting routes as well as valuable feeding habitat for the bats. This will be important in the spring following hibernation when emerging bats will need to build fat reserves prior to the breeding season. Maintaining hedgerows, uncultivated field margins and extensively managed pasture near the roosting site will also provide appropriate commuting routes and foraging areas to support the bat population.

Bats in woodlands

Woodlands are important foraging sites for bats due to their high insect richness, whilst tree crevices, cracks, splits, hollows, holes and peeling bark can provide important roosting sites. Management should aim to maintain and promote these two important factors.

To maintain and promote the insect richness, felling and replanting regimes should aim to maintain a woodland with a diversity of tree species, with a good age structure, with broadleaved species preferable to coniferous. Some dead, storm damaged and dying trees should not be felled where it is safe to do so, whilst some felled wood should also be left behind. The maintenance of a scrub layer is also important as this can support different assemblages of insects to the trees. This is also true of other habitats within, or contiguous to, a woodland such as ponds, rivers, hedges and grassy verges.

To maintain and promote appropriate roosting sites, it is also useful to leave dead, dying and “veteran” trees in situ rather than felling, and to restock areas with deciduous rather than coniferous species. In woodlands with a particularly low number of roosting sites, such as woodlands dominated by coniferous trees, it is also possible to erect bat nesting boxes. These should be placed as high as possible, and three to a tree, facing north, south east and south west, to provide a variety of aspects with the minimum number of boxes. Surrounding branches may also need removing, to improve access to the box.

Operations likely to damage the special interest

Site name: Gibside, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear

OLD1001121

Ref. No.	Type of Operation
1	Cultivation, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, and re-seeding.
2	The introduction of grazing and changes in the grazing regime (including type of stock, intensity or seasonal pattern of grazing and cessation of grazing).
3	The introduction of stock feeding and changes in stock feeding practice.
4	The introduction of mowing or other methods of cutting vegetation and changes in the mowing or cutting regime (including hay making to silage and cessation).
5	Application of manure, fertilisers and lime.
6	Application of pesticides, including herbicides (weedkillers).
7	Dumping, spreading or discharge of any materials.
8	Burning.
9	The release into the site of any wild, feral or domestic animal*, the introduction of any plant or seed.
10	The killing or removal of any wild animal*, including pest control.
11	The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including tree, shrub, herb, hedge, dead or decaying wood, moss, lichen, fungus, leaf-mould and turf etc.
12	Tree and/or woodland management+ and changes in tree and/or woodland management+.
13a	Drainage (including gripping and the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains).
13b	Modification of the structure of watercourses (eg rivers, streams, springs, ditches, drains), including their banks and beds, as by re-alignment, re-grading and dredging.
13c	Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes.
14	The changing of water levels and tables and water utilisation (including irrigation, storage and abstraction from existing water bodies and through boreholes).
15	Infilling of ditches, drains, ponds, pools, marshes or pits.
16a	The introduction of freshwater fishery production and/or management and changes in freshwater fishery production and/or management, including sporting fishing and angling.
20	Extraction of minerals, including shingle, sand and gravel, topsoil, subsoil, sandstone, shale and spoil.
21	Construction, removal or destruction of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hardstands, banks, ditches or other earthworks, or the laying, maintenance or removal of pipelines and cables, above or below ground.
22	Storage of materials.
23	Erection of permanent or temporary structures, or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling.
24	Modification of natural or man-made features (including built structures), clearance of boulders, large stones, loose rock and battering, buttressing or grading rock-faces and cuttings, infilling of pits and quarries.
26	Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage or disturb features of interest.
27	Recreational or other activities likely to damage or disturb features of interest.
28	Game and waterfowl management and changes in game and waterfowl management and hunting practices.

* 'animal' includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate.

+ including afforestation, planting, clear and selective felling, thinning, coppicing, modification of the stand or underwood, changes in species composition, cessation of management.

County: Tyne & Wear **Site Name:** Gibside

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.

Local Planning Authority: Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council

National Grid Reference: NZ 184590 **Area:** 89.0 (ha) 219.9 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50 000 88 **1:10 000** NZ 15 SE

First Notified: 1989 **Date of Notification:** 08.06.1989

Other Information:

Great crested newts, red squirrel and all species of bats are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.

Common lizards, slow-worms and grass snakes are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (variation of Schedules) Order, 1988.

Description:

Gibside, a landscaped estate established in the late eighteenth century, is now of considerable conservation interest because of the important assemblages of amphibia, reptiles and invertebrates which it supports. It is one of the best herpetological sites between the Tees and the Scottish border being important for five species of amphibian and four species of reptile, including a viable population of grass snakes. An interesting and diverse invertebrate fauna has also been well recorded at Gibside and abandoned buildings provide roosts for bats.

The now partly overgrown ponds are a key feature of this site being used as spawning grounds by the three native British species of newt (smooth, palmate and great crested newts) as well as by common frogs and common toads. They also support a diverse, aquatic invertebrate fauna including uncommon species such as *Ilybius subaenus*, a water beetle found in lowland pools and *Agabus unguicularis*, a flightless water beetle.

Grass snakes, which occur here close to the northern limit of their distribution in Britain, are known to feed particularly in the vicinity of the ponds, but also frequent many of the open trackways throughout the woodland. Bare, unshaded sandy areas along the tracks are also used, in association with other habitats, by other reptiles, namely common lizard, adder and slow-worm. Open ground is also particularly important for some invertebrate species, for example two uncommon species of insect, a solitary bee *Halictus confusus* and a small black weevil *Anthonomus brunnipennis*, favour these situations whilst a locally rare fly *Thrypticus bellus* is found only on muddy trackside pools. In places

a heath type vegetation with heather *Calluna vulgaris*, autumn gentian *Gentianella amarella* and common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* has developed along the woodland rides whilst the open grassland in front of the hall is species-rich, supporting wood crane's-bill *Geranium sylvaticum*, great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* and betony *Stachys officinalis*.

Although much of the woodland is now coniferous plantation parts of the former deciduous woodlands, comprising sessile oak *Quercus petraea*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and wych elm *Ulmus glabra* remain. This supports a diverse insect fauna including several notable species of fly *Diptera* such as *Scoliocentra caesia* and *Neoleria ruficeps*. Two nationally rare woodland invertebrates include a beetle, *Pterostichus cristatus*, which is generally restricted to the Tyne Valley area, and *Limax tenellus*, a small slug which is considered to be an indicator species of ancient woodland. Red squirrel are also found in these woodlands.

The derelict Gibside Hall and outbuildings provide shelter for Natterer's and noctule bats which are of local interest.