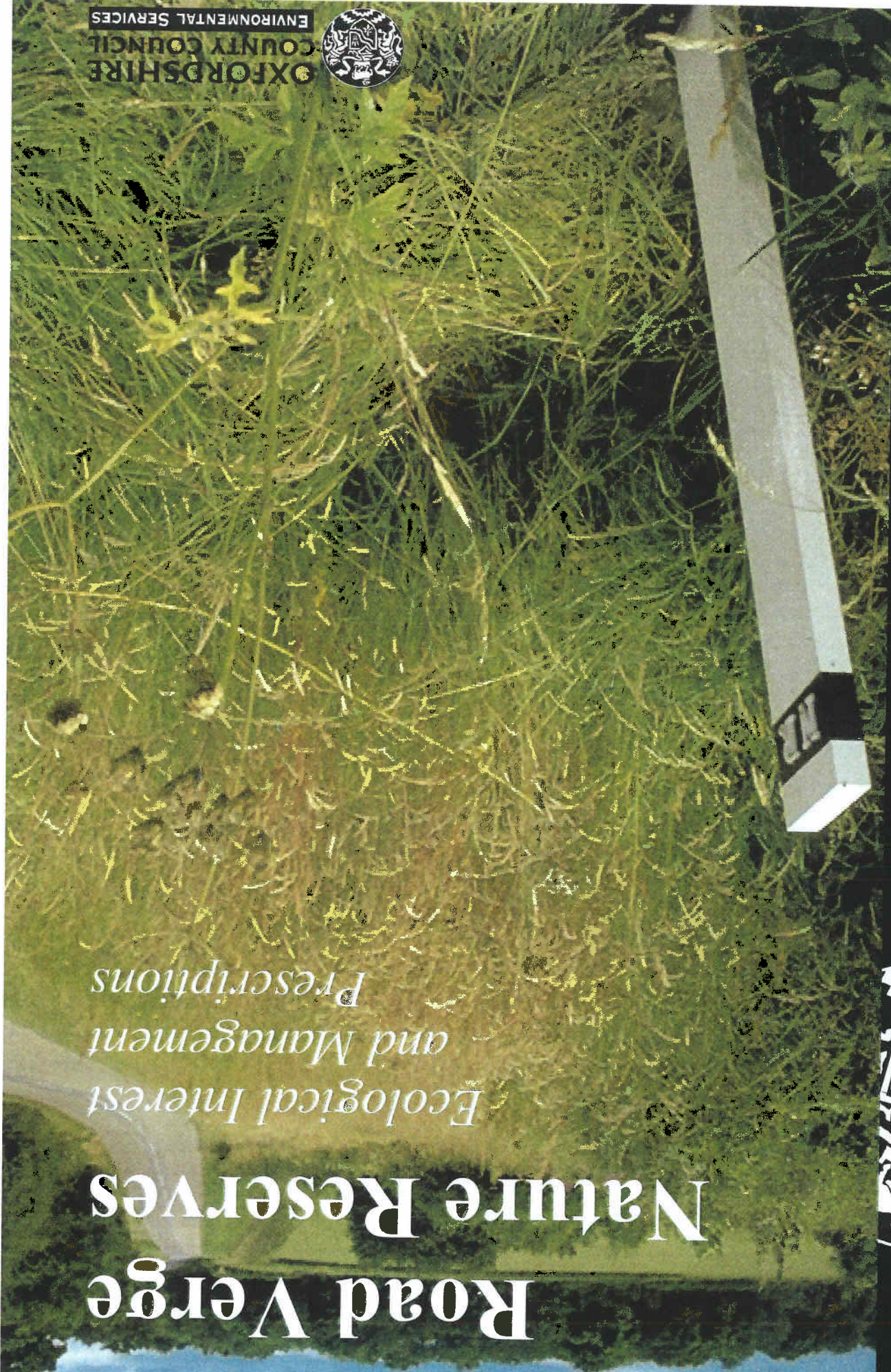


Road Verge Nature Reserves

*Ecological Interest
and Management
Prescriptions*

OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Road Verges Nature Reserves

Introduction

Background

Over the years a number of road verges in Oxfordshire have been identified as having some ecological interest. An initial list of 55 verges was compiled based on existing records, and a survey was organised during 1991 to update and clarify this information.

The work was undertaken primarily by a number of experienced volunteers and as a result of their efforts it was possible to locate 16 out of 55 verges as being of

particular ecological interest. The interest was either general in that it represented a range of plant species characteristic of a particular grassland habitat i.e. limestone grassland or alternatively there was a more specific interest associated with individual plant species.

The purpose of the exercise was to highlight those verges which merited special protection and management. Where appropriate, these verges will be marked with "Nature Reserve" posts which will indicate the length of verge to be safeguarded and maintained.

Each of the 'notified' verges will be given a full annual cut to encourage seed dispersal and prevent dominance by coarse vegetation or scrub.

The specific interest and management prescription responsibility is summarised on the following record sheets. These are also accompanied by a location map for each verge.

Future Recording

It is important that the notified verges are monitored to ensure that the management description is sympathetic to the long term interest being maintained. It is also important to try and identify other verges throughout the County and build them into the management programme.

The support and help provided by volunteers has been invaluable and it is hoped that they will continue to play a key role in both monitoring and future recording.

It is recommended that a Road Verges Panel be convened which will oversee these

particular functions. This could be based on the key participants in the survey work so far.

Road Verge Nature Reserves



Record Sheet

Number	1	Name	Heythrop C.P.
Grid Reference	343304-344305	Length	300 m x 2
Road	C	Aspect	SE/NW
District	W.O.D.C.	Parish	Swertford
Recorder	R. Hall	Date Surveyed	May/August 1991

Interest

Range of plants including many characteristic species including yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), cowslip (*Primula veris*), early purple orchid (*Orchis mascula*), salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*) and agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*).
 Of particular note is significant colony (166 plants) of autumn crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*).

Management Prescription

Cut alternative sides in August each year.

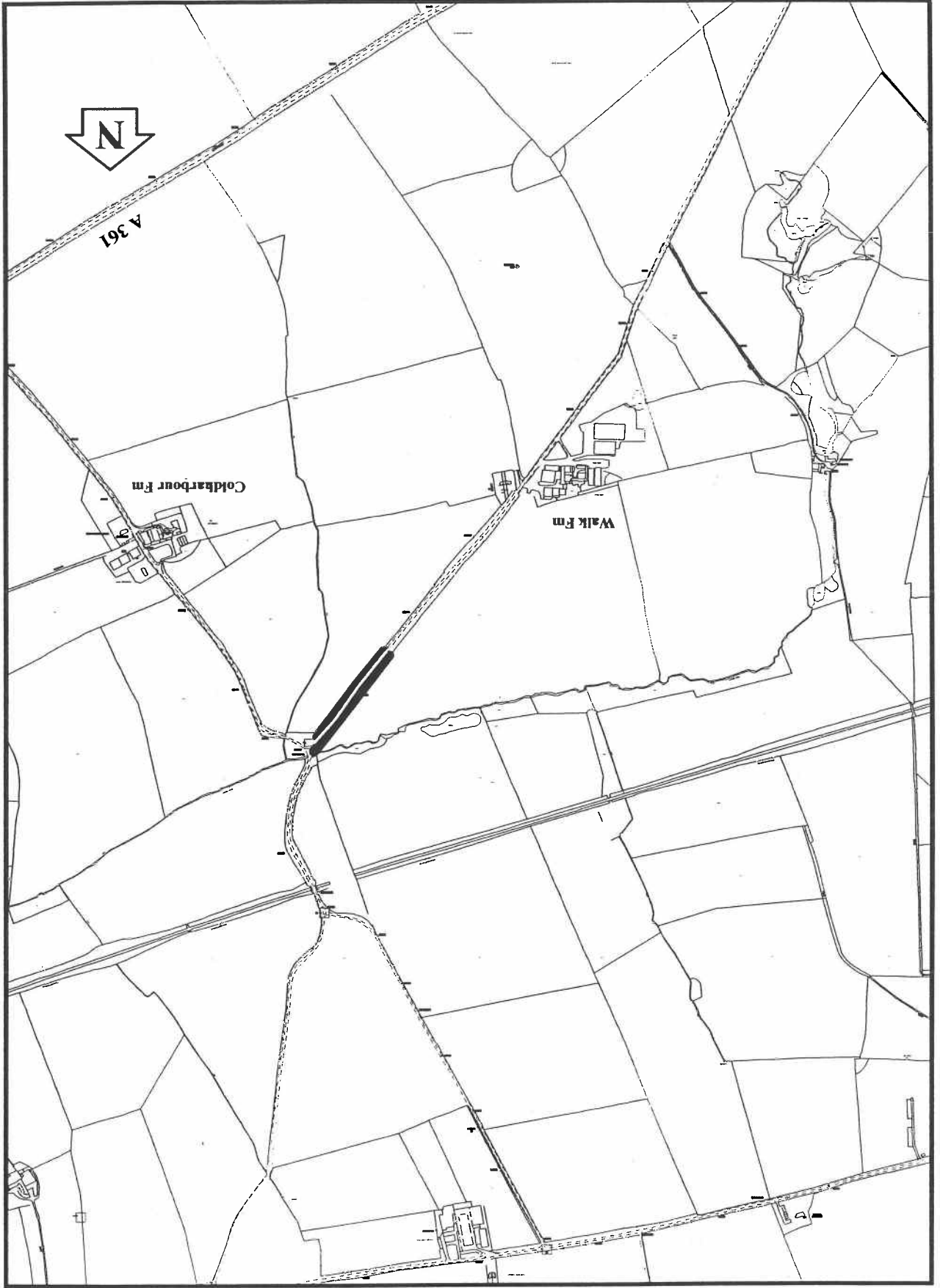
Management Responsibility

Oxfordshire County Council.

Biodiversity Priorities

Key Habitat: Limestone grassland.
Priority Species: None

Road Verge Nature Reserves: Heythrop C.P.



Scale:1:10000

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Road Verge Nature Reserves



Record Sheet

2	Name	Rangers Lawn
327194-333196	Grid Reference	600 m x 2
B 4437	Road	S/N
W.O.D.C.	District	Chilson/ Short Hampton
U. Fenton	Recorder	May/June/July/August/
		September 1991
	Date Surveyed	

Interest

Rich flora dominated by limestone loving species including salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*), milkwort (*Polygala vulgaris*), bee orchid (*Ophrys apifera*), pyramidal orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*) and rock rose (*Helianthemum chamaecistus*).

Of particular note is clustered bellflower (*Campanula glomerata*), green hellebore (*Helleborus viridis*) and hairy rockcress (*Arabis hirsuta*).

Management Prescription

Verges to be cut annually in September. Avoid cutting narrow embankment supporting *Arabis hirsuta* (see location plan).

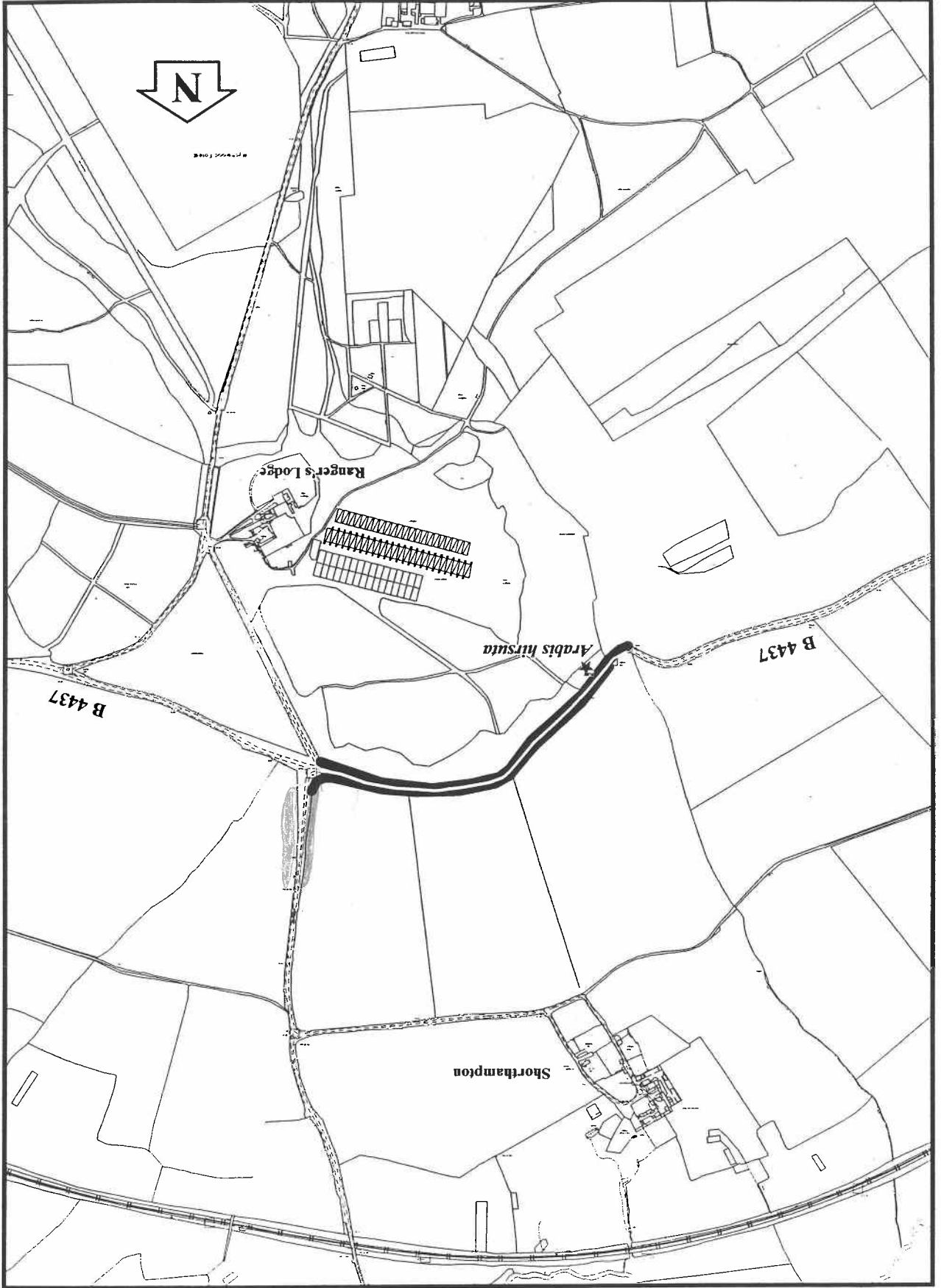
Management Responsibility

Oxfordshire County Council.

Biodiversity Priorities

Key Habitat: Limestone grassland
Priority species: None

Road Verge Nature Reserves: Ranger's Lawn



Scale: 1:10000

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