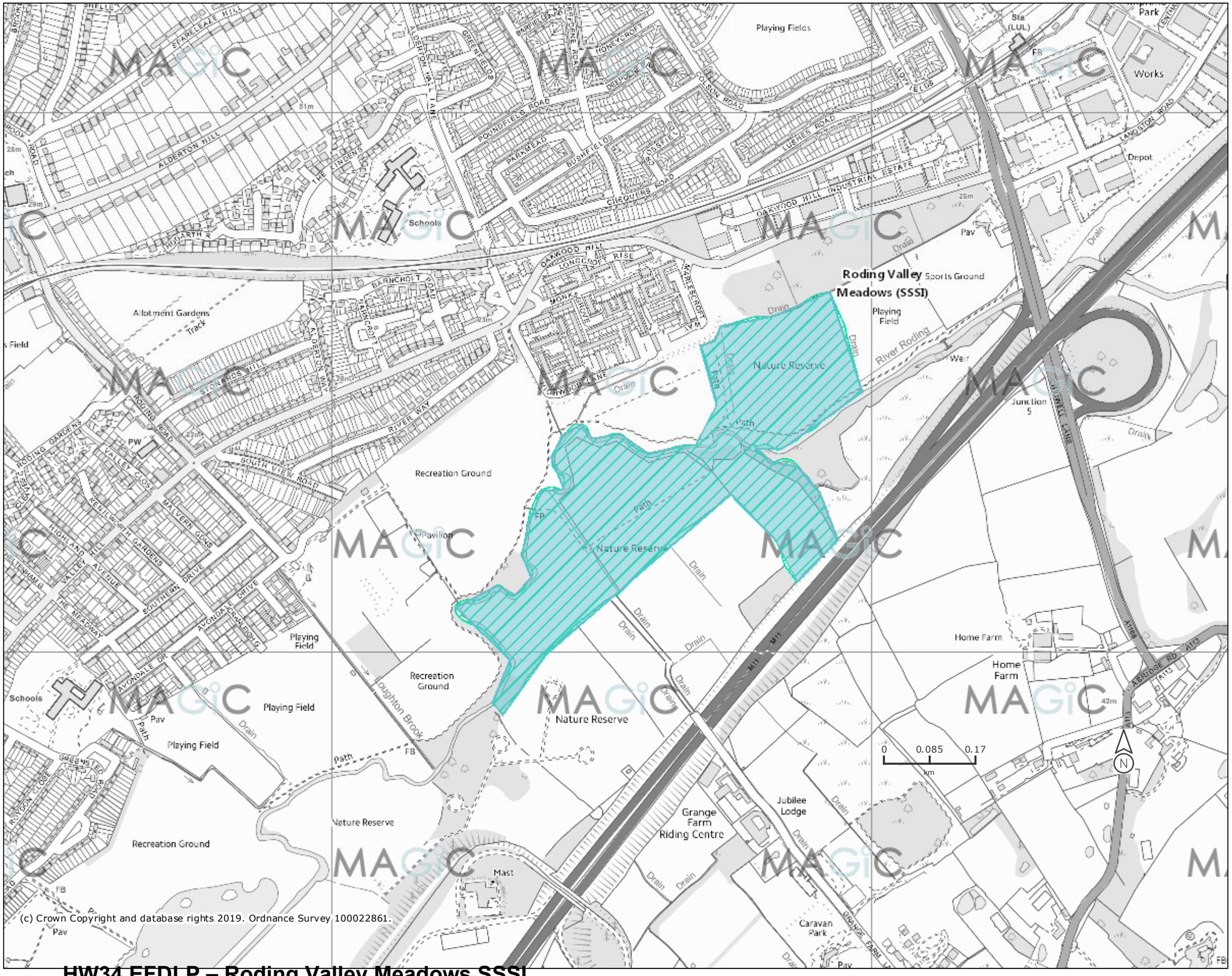
MAGiC

# Roding Valley Meadows SSSI - Map






## Legend

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 542100
ymin = 194400
xmax = 545000
ymax = 196200

0 0.1 0.2
km

Map produced by MAGIC on 4 July, 2019.

File ref:

**County:** Essex **Site Name: Roding Valley Meadows**

**District:** Epping Forest

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Epping Forest District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TQ 436953 **Area:** 19.8 (ha) 48.92 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000:** 167, 177 **1: 10 000:** TQ 09 NW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** - **Date of Last Revision:** -

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1987 **Date of Last Revision:** -

**Other Information:**

This is a new site. The site is part of a proposed Local Nature Reserve under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

**Description and Reasons for Notification:**

Roding Valley Meadows form one of the largest continuous areas of species-rich grassland in Essex, comprising traditionally managed hay meadows, flood meadows and marsh. Situated in the gently sloping floodplain of the River Roding, the area is divided into several small fields by a long-established system of hedges and ditches. The meadow and marshland communities include a diverse assemblage of plant species, many of which are uncommon in Essex, and the site includes the largest known bed of the Brown Sedge *Carex disticha* in Essex.

The hay meadows are dominated by a mixture of grasses, including Meadow Foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, Meadow Fescue *Festuca pratensis* and Red Fescue *F. rubra* with frequent Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Crested Dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, Meadow Barley *Hordeum secalinum*, Yellow Oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens* and Meadow Brome *Bromus commutatus*. The uncommon Fescue - Rye-grass hybrid *Festulolium loliaceum* is also present. The grassland is herb-rich and includes Common Knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, Burnet-saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga*, Sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica*, Pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus* and Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis*. The flood meadows are of particular interest since they contain a number of species which are uncommon and declining in Essex, including the Carnation Sedge *Carex panicea*, Marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris* and Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*. In places where the water-table is high, the meadows grade into marsh characterised by a dense

cont.....

**Roding Valley Meadows (cont...)**

growth of sedges, including the Brown Sedge *Carex disticha* which is known from only eleven sites in Essex. A number of species, such as Cuckoo flower *Cardamine pratensis* and Ragged-Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, occur throughout the grassland and marsh.

The River Roding and associated riparian fringe is an integral and valuable part of the site. Aquatic and semi-aquatic plants include Yellow Loosestrife *Lysimachia vulgaris*, Water Plantain *Alisma plantago-aquatica* and Arrowhead *Sagittaria sagittifolia*.

The network of mature hedges bounding the fields is typical of a traditional pattern of management formerly widespread in East Anglia which is now uncommon as a result of agricultural change. They include tree and shrub species, such as Midland Hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata*, Crab Apple *Malus sylvestris* and Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, and form valuable additional habitat for invertebrates and birds.

# Views About Management

**A statement of English Nature's views about the management of Roding Valley Meadows 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 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

Neutral hay meadows require active management if they are to retain their conservation interest. In order to maintain a species-rich sward, each year's growth of vegetation must be removed. Otherwise the sward becomes progressively dominated by tall and vigorous grasses which, together with an associated build up of dead plant matter, suppress less vigorous species and reduce the botanical diversity of the site. In neutral hay meadows, the above objective is traditionally achieved by closing the fields to stock in the autumn and cutting the resultant growth as hay, usually in early July. The precise timing of the cut depends on local factors, including past management and current weather conditions, but should be after ground-nesting birds have fledged their young and any short-lived, characteristic plants have set seed. The aftermath is then grazed in late summer/autumn. Aftermath grazing is important for maintaining a species-rich sward, both through controlling competitive grasses and through hoof-prints providing suitable sites for seedlings to establish. Heavy poaching must be avoided, however. Any surrounding, well managed hedgerows may considerably add to the habitat in providing shelter for invertebrates. The application of pesticides including herbicides or fertilizers would be damaging but periodic dressings of well-rotted farmyard manure may be acceptable if the sward does not receive regular input of nutrients from flooding.

For the damper meadows, regular and careful maintenance of surface drainage including ditches and drains can be necessary to prevent adverse changes in the plant species composition of the sward. Deepening of surface drainage should be avoided.

## Operations likely to damage the special interest

**Site name: Roding Valley Meadows, Essex**

**OLD1002138**

| 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 or intensity or seasonal pattern of grazing and cessation of grazing). |
| 3 | The introduction of stock feeding and changes in stock feeding practice. |
| 4 | 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*, 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 or turf. |
| 12 | Tree and/or woodland management+ and changes in tree and/or woodland management+. |
| 13a | Drainage (including the use of mole, tile, tunnel or 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, or marshes. |
| 16a | 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 peat, sand and gravel, topsoil, subsoil, 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. |
| 26 | Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage or disturb the flora or fauna. |
| 27 | Recreational or other activities likely to damage the flora or fauna. |
| 28 | Introduction of game or waterfowl management and changes in game and waterfowl management and hunting practice. |

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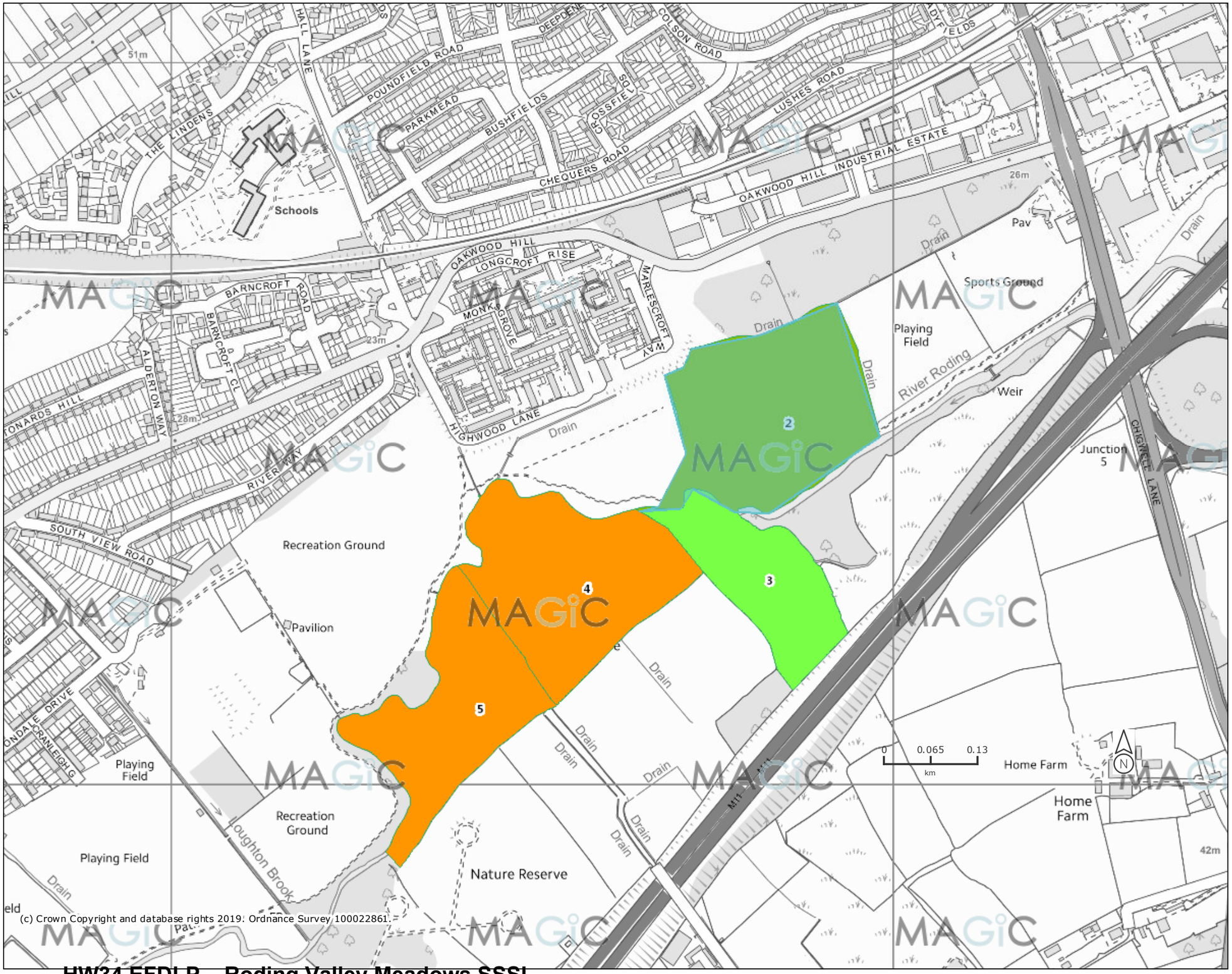
* ‘animal’ includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate.

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

# Roding Valley Meadows SSSI Units Map






## Legend

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest Units (England)**

- Favourable Condition
- Unfavourable Recovering
- Unfavourable no change
- Unfavourable Declining
- Part Destroyed
- Destroyed
- Not Assessed

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 542500
ymin = 194800
xmax = 544700
ymax = 196100

0 0.1 0.2
km

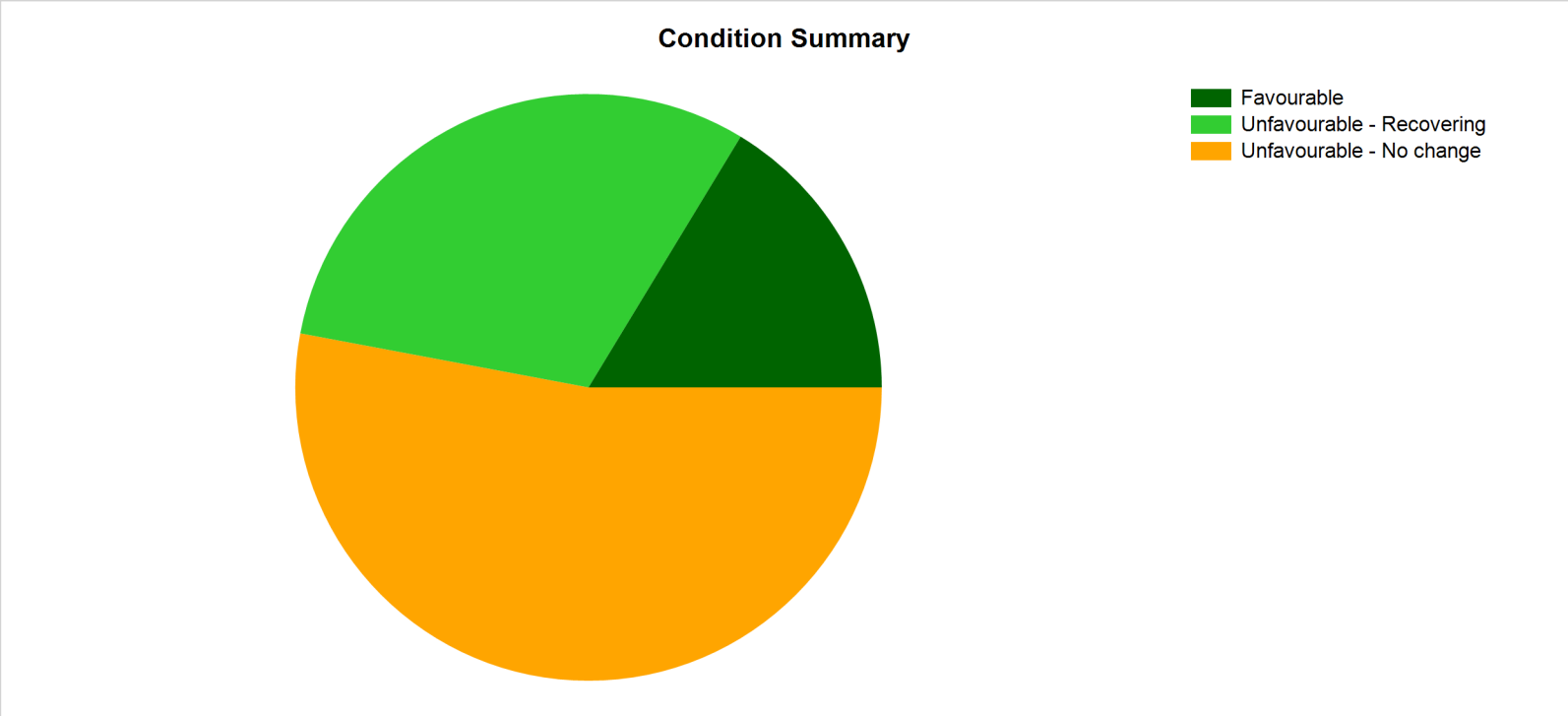
Map produced by MAGIC on 4 July, 2019.

## Site: Roding Valley Meadows SSSI

Report generated on: 04 Jul 2019

| | Sites | Units | Units Assessed |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Total number** | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| **Total area (ha)** | 19.34 | 19.34 | 19.34 |

| | % meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering | Favourable | Unfavourable - Recovering | Unfavourable - No change | Unfavourable - Declining | Partially destroyed | Destroyed | Not Recorded |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Area (ha)** | 9.10 | 3.16 | 5.94 | 10.24 | | | | |
| **Percentage** | 47.05% | 16.31% | 30.73% | 52.95% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |


Condition Summary
Favourable
Unfavourable - Recovering
Unfavourable - No change

Report generated on: 04 Jul 2019

| Main Habitat | Responsible Officer | Unit Number | Unit Id | Area (ha) | NNR Overlap Area (ha) | Latest Assessment Date | Assessment Description | Comment | Adverse Condition Reasons |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Roding Valley Meadows SSSI - ESSEX (EPPING FOREST)** | | | | | | | | | |
| NEUTRAL GRASSLAND - Lowland | CHRIS KEELING | 002 | 1004759 | 5.9445 | 0.00 | 11/08/2011 | Unfavourable - Recovering | The unusually hot and dry early spring followed by a very wet late spring summer meant the flowering season was earlier than normal and relativley brief. This in combination with the necessity to adjust the hay cut according to the weather meant that the best flowering period was missed. However, uncut margins did permit condition monitoring provided some indication of floristic diversity/structure. | |
| NEUTRAL GRASSLAND - Lowland | CHRIS KEELING | 003 | 1004757 | 3.1557 | 0.00 | 11/08/2011 | Favourable | Invasive hawthorn was noted during previous visit in May 2011. However, during assessment visit no scrub was noted presumably following hay cut. Although the peak flowering season had been missed a good range of indicator spp were recorded. | |
| NEUTRAL GRASSLAND - Lowland | CHRIS KEELING | 004 | 1027237 | 5.7079 | 0.00 | 29/01/2014 | Unfavourable - No change | | FRESHWATER POLLUTION - WATER POLLUTION - AGRICULTURE/RUN OFF, |
| NEUTRAL GRASSLAND - Lowland | CHRIS KEELING | 005 | 1027238 | 4.5349 | 0.00 | 29/01/2014 | Unfavourable - No change | | FRESHWATER POLLUTION - WATER POLLUTION - AGRICULTURE/RUN OFF, |

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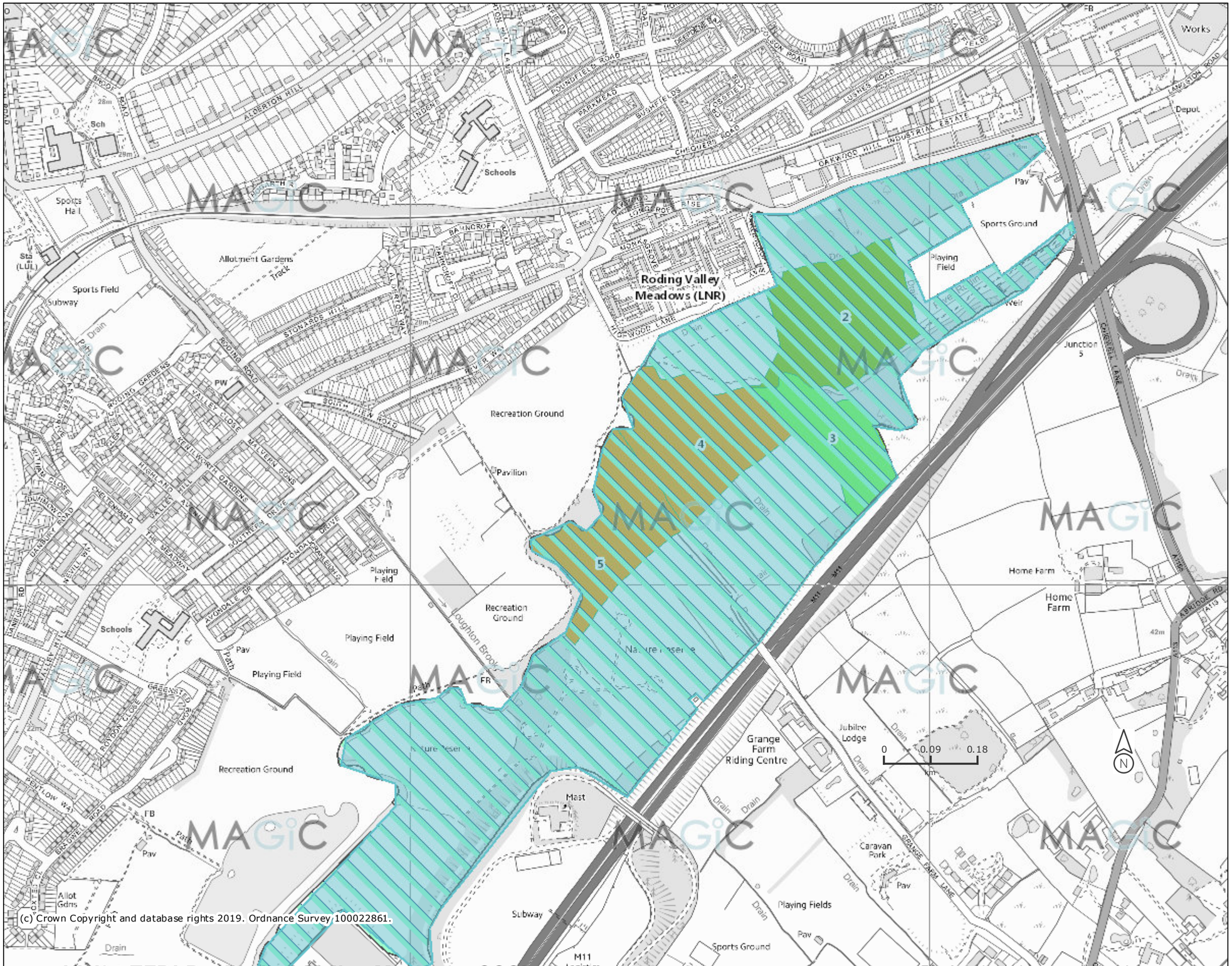
# Roding Valley Meadows LNR showing SSSI units






## Legend

- Local Nature Reserves (England)

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest Units (England)**

- Favourable Condition
- Unfavourable Recovering
- Unfavourable no change
- Unfavourable Declining
- Part Destroyed
- Destroyed
- Not Assessed

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 541900
ymin = 194300
xmax = 544900
ymax = 196100

0 0.1 0.2
km

Map produced by MAGIC on 4 July, 2019.