

### 3 Background to Application and the Proposed Scheme

#### Background to Application

- 3.1 Approximately 150 years ago, Pondhead Inclosure (to the west of the site), Parkhill Lawn and Denny Inclosure were subject to significant drainage modifications, specifically the straightening of a watercourse to link in with Matley Bog to improve ground conditions for forestry and grazing.
- 3.2 Across Parkhill Lawn, the artificial channel was not dug into the lowest point of the floodplain. Due to the limited gradient in the area, water tends to overtop the artificial channel and stand on the lawn for long periods of time which is considered to have an adverse effect on grazing.
- 3.3 The western side channel arising from Pondhead Farm is deep and wide, with eroding banksides and large spoil heaps along its length. It is being colonised by trees and scrub, and is a hazard to stock. The second side channel less than 100m to the east is also deeply incised.
- 3.4 Within Denny Inclosure, the artificially deepened channel is causing increased erosion within the riverine woodland habitat. As a result of this over-deepened (and in some cases straightened) channel and the associated spoil banks, there is limited seasonal inundation and inconsistent interaction with the floodplain. As a result, the adjacent riverine woodland habitat is adversely affected.
- 3.5 Consequently, the units (386 and 387) of the SSSI at Pondhead are currently classed by Natural England as being in 'unfavourable recovering condition'<sup>1</sup>, it is understood the assessment of 'recovering' is made due to the units' inclusion within the Forest Design Plan and wetland restoration programme. The Forestry Commission has a legal responsibility under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006) to restore and maintain Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and SSSI designated land and features where the habitat has been assessed by Natural England as being in unfavourable condition.
- 3.6 This scheme seeks to improve the condition of the SSSI unit and the New Forest SAC and is in line with the New Forest Wetland Management Plan 2006-2016<sup>2</sup> which seeks to "*ensure the continued long term sustainability and integrated management of water-courses and wetland habitats*" which "*will prevent further decline of SAC habitats and bring them into favourable condition*".

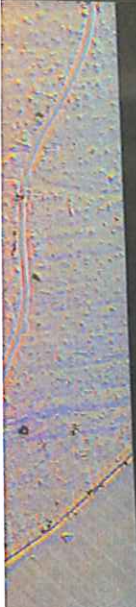
<sup>1</sup> New Forest SSSI Unit Information Page, Natural England. Retrieved from <http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/Special/sssi/reportAction.cfm?report=sdrt13&category=S&reference=1003036> on 30 April 2014

<sup>2</sup> New Forest Wetland Management Plan 2006 – 2016. Retrieved from [http://www.hlsnewforest.org.uk/hls/downloads/download/8/new\\_forest\\_wetland\\_management\\_plan\\_2006-2016](http://www.hlsnewforest.org.uk/hls/downloads/download/8/new_forest_wetland_management_plan_2006-2016) on 30 April 2014

'Heritage Mapping' Exhibition, Lyndhurst New Forest Visitors Centre  
September 2015 - January 2016

This panel makes the process clear: HLS NF Lidar images overlaid  
with the Drew's survey map ~ unfortunately FC have not done this!

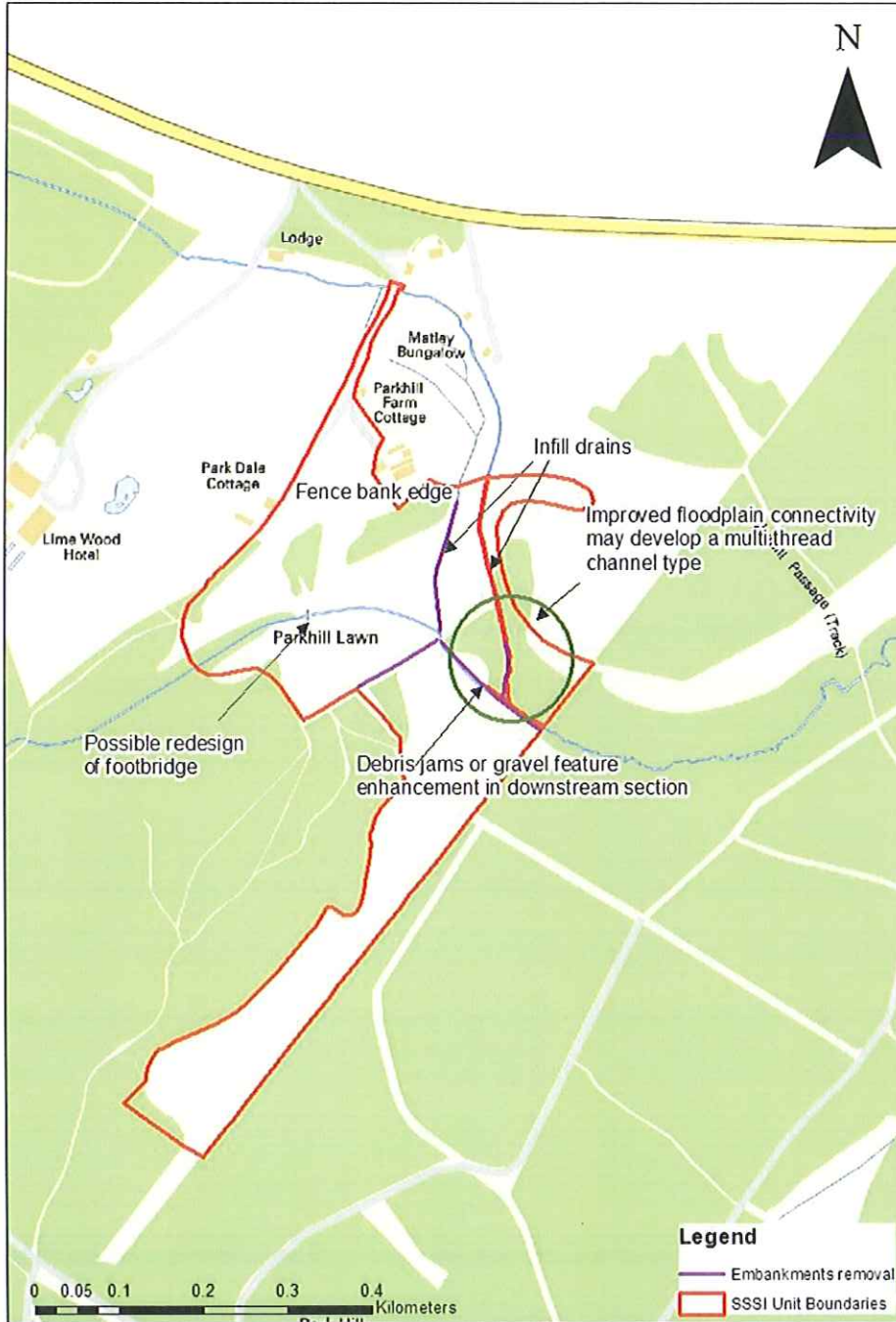
# Mapping meanders



As well as being used to identify archaeological features, the Lidar images also provide us with the ability to locate the old winding courses of the streams before they were straightened in the 19th and 20th centuries. This combined with historic maps help to ensure the wetland restorations are undertaken in the right place.

Natural England Geomorphological Survey  
 Annex L: Parkhill lawn  
 March 2014

Figure 1-8: Proposed restoration measures for SSSI Unit 386



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These proposals mention nothing about the stream over Parkhill lawn, yet the final application recommends infilling and moving.