ID Number: 20026012

The Sizewell C Project, Ref. EN010012

Response to Request from ExA for more information (ASI, 10th June 2021)

Suffolk County Council Registration ID Number: 20026012

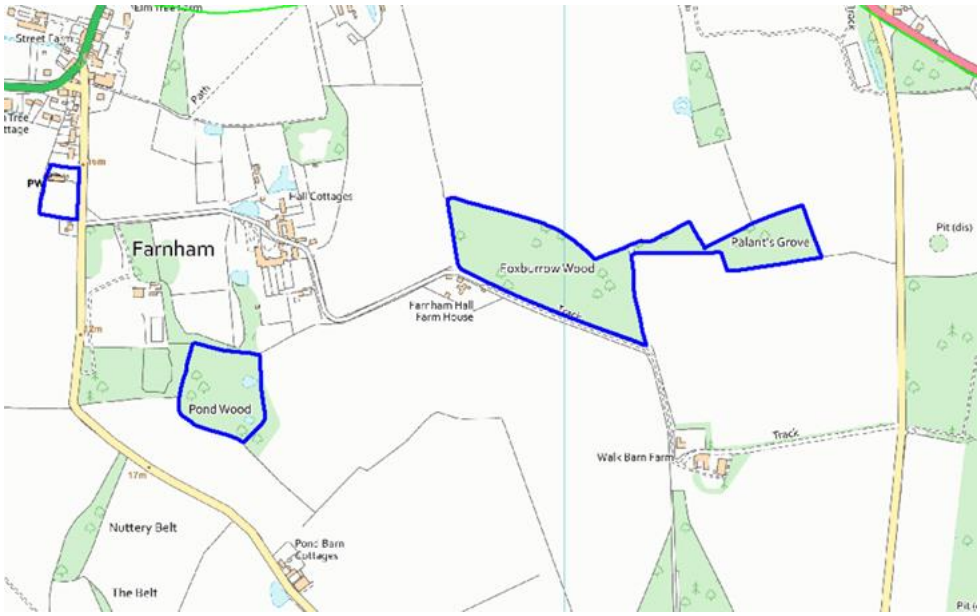
Deadline 3 **24 June 2021**

Purpose of this submission

1. At the ASI of the Two Villages By-Pass on 10 June 2021, John Pitchford for Suffolk County Council offered to provide a map of the County Wildlife Site (CWS) at Foxburrow Wood, where there was some discussion as to the status of the woodland linking the main part of Foxburrow Wood with the smaller Palant's Grove.
2. At the ASI of Yoxford Roundabout on 10 June 2021, the ExA requested from the Suffolk County Council ecologist additional information about the Sandy Stiltball mushroom species, with the Roadside Nature Reserve 197 adjacent to the proposed roundabout being scheduled for this protected species of fungi. This submission includes photos and information about Sandy Stiltball.

Information Regarding Foxburrow Wood

3. The part of woodland linking Foxburrow Wood with Palant's Grove is no longer shown as Ancient Woodland (AW) but, as the plan below shows, remains defined as CWS (edged in blue).



4. The citation for this site reads:

Distcode	Suffolk Coastal 68
Site Name	FOXBURROW WOOD
Grid Reference	TM370598
Parish	FARNHAM
District	Suffolk Coastal
Overlap District	
Area (ha)	4.38
Description	This is an ancient wood on sandy soils with a variety of tree species including oak, ash and beech (some of which are very mature) in the canopy and also hazel, field maple, hawthorn and hornbeam coppice. In the shrub layer, elder and holly are also present. The perimeter of the wood is marked by a ditch and bank boundary with one very old oak pollard on the northern edge. The ground flora includes ferns and carpets of bluebell, with dog's-mercury dominant in parts

5. The non-Ancient Woodland part of the CWS joins the two larger parts of the woodland and remains important for its ecological functioning.

Information regarding Sandy Stiltball (*Battarrea phalloides*)

1. Sandy Stiltball is an inedible species of mushroom. It has a woody, slender, and shaggy or scaly stem that is typically up to about 40 centimetres (15.7 in) in length. On top of the stem is a spore sac, which, in maturity, ruptures to release the spores. This species is generally found in dry, sandy locations throughout the world, and has been recorded in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America.
2. Despite the wide distribution, it is a relatively rare species, but may be locally abundant in some locations.

Images of Sandy Stiltball from the nearby Kelsale RNR
(Source: https://www.kelsalecarltonpc.org.uk/biodiversity-action-plan/photo-gallery/fungi-gallery/)

3. In Suffolk, we are fortunate to have several locations where these have been recorded and these are (where we are made aware of them) designated as Roadside Nature Reserves[1] (and County Wildlife Sites[2]).
4. Of the approximately 120 Roadside Nature Reserves in Suffolk, only just over half a dozen are scheduled for this fully protected species of fungi. That protection is afforded by Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(as amended), and features as one of only four species of fungi listed in the schedule.
5. The normal period of maturity (for sporing) is between September and November. For much of the rest of the year, the remaining stalk is rather discrete, often resembling a dry stick.
6. The habitat where it is most commonly encountered in Suffolk includes dry hedgerow banks, usually sandy and with Oak and Elm within the hedgerow species. East-facing was also often thought of as a key requirement but this does seem to be variable.
7. More information about Sandy Stiltball can be found on the Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service's fact sheet, which is attached at Appendix A.

Source: East Anglian Daily Times[3]; Picture: Charles Cuthbert - Credit: Archant

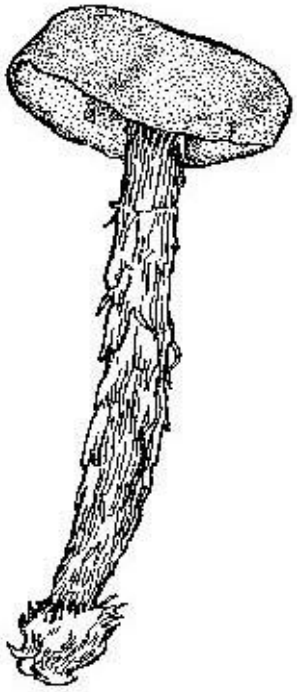
Andrew Murray-Wood, Senior Ecologist, Suffolk County Council

[1] https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/suffolks-countryside-and-wildlife/landscape-and-wildlife/#tab3
[2] http://www.suffolkbis.org.uk/suffolk-sites/cws
[3] https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/volunteers-help-out-after-rare-fungus-found-on-suffolk-roadside-2540954

Appendix A: Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service fact sheet: Sandy Stilt Puffball (*Battarraea phalloides*)

Sandy Stilt Puffball *(Battarraea phalloides)*

The Sandy Stilt Puffball fungus makes appearances in most years in Suffolk, but these remain the most predictable occurrences of the species in the country. Very little is known about its ecology apart from a liking for sandy soils. Hollow trees and perhaps stumps may also be important.



1 Definition

The Sandy Stilt Puffball (*Battarraea phalloides*) was first described from Britain and has a scattered distribution in western Europe. Although it was formerly known from much further north, its main areas of distribution became confined to sites in southern and eastern Europe.

2 Current status

2.1 National

The Sandy Stilt Puffball is one of only four fungi listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, it is also a Red Data Book species. This species has been recorded from a number of counties in southern England, but is only reliably known from Suffolk and Norfolk. *Battarraea phalloides* only appears to be known from about 30 UK sites, of which there are 7 in Suffolk. A number of specimens are held in the National Collection at Kew, mostly from Kent and Surrey, the latest being found in 1981. Those collected in Buckinghamshire and Gloucestershire are very old, though recent

specimens come from Jersey and Norfolk (both 1996) and Oxfordshire (1997). Records exist for Somerset and possibly other southern counties.

Although rare in Europe, it has been recorded from most countries except those in the north, and it is also known from North America.

2.2 Local

There are seven known sites in Suffolk, (one of which remains confidential). Sandy Stilt Puffball has been noted in the parishes of Blyford, Melton, Campsea Ashe, Marlesford and Reydon. This rare fungus appears to have been seen first in England in 1782 in the area of Earsham and Kirby Cane, in south Norfolk, just north of the town of Bungay (Suffolk) and was formally described in 1785.

The first definite Suffolk record was made by a Mr. Davies of Yoxford, and his specimen was illustrated by Sowerby in 1803 and is included in the National Collection at Kew.

It has appeared at three sites since the last war, principally at Blyford near Halesworth, where over 80 were seen in the mid 1970s. It has appeared in much smaller numbers in most years since then, sometimes in spring as well as summer and autumn. In the period 1984-86 a few fruiting bodies occurred on a hedge bank at Campsea Ashe some 20 miles further south, but none have been recorded at this site since then.

A new location was discovered by D. & C. Orme at Melton, East Suffolk in August 1997, when two large fruiting bodies were noted on a small heap of sand excavated by rabbits under an old oak tree. This verge bank is dry and has little vegetation and faces east.

The Blyford bank faces east and has elm scrub and annual weeds over its 70 metre length. It is backed by a good hedge of Small leaved elm *(Ulmus minor)* for most of its length. The Campsea Ashe bank is less scrubby, but has the same elm at various stages from scrubby bushes to quite tall trees. It faces north and supports mainly weed species in its sandy soil.

At neither site has the fungus been seen inside hollow trees, a habitat mentioned in the National Biodiversity Action Plan, although at Blyford in late August 1997 two fruiting bodies appeared close to the base of a large elm which was felled some years earlier.

2.3 Natural Areas

Suffolk Coast & Heaths.

3 **Current factors causing the loss or decline of the species in Suffolk**

Very little is known about this fungus. Of the 7 sites in Suffolk, only the dry sandy soil and possibly the fact they face north or east appear to be common factors.

As it appears rather randomly, it is possible it has always been rare and therefore may not be significantly more threatened now than it was when discovered two centuries ago.

4 Current Action

4.1 Legal Status

Sandy Stilt Puffball is protected under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(as amended).

4.2 Management, research and guidance

All sites are monitored fairly regularly to check for fruiting bodies. The Reydon site has recently been involved in a planning enquiry, resulting in houses being built just behind the site. The site owner has volunteered to look after the site as a private nature reserve. The fungus is still present here (2003).

The Blyford site will remain uncut until the winter (2003), when it is hoped local volunteers will remove dead vegetation and prune elm suckers. The fungus has not been seen here for the last couple of years.

The confusion between *B. phalloides* and *B. stevenii* is currently being researched at the University of Kent. This research is funded by English Nature, Kew Gardens and Kent University). It is hoped the research will investigate the genetic diversity of *Battarraea phalloides* and *B. stevenii* at and between distinct sites across their natural range by comparison of specific DNA sequences to clear up uncertainties about their likely taxonomy. Molecular diversity measures should also be used to suggest the relative roles of mycelial growth and spore dispersal in population maintenance and spread.

5. Action Plan Objectives and Targets

1. *Maintain seven known Suffolk sites in favourable condition and ensure adequate protection.*
2. *Monitor all sites for appearance of fruiting bodies.*
3. *Encourage local wildlife recorders to search for the fungus at other suitable sites.*

6. Sandy Stilt Puffball proposed action with Lead Agencies

Action	**Date**	**Partners**
POLICY AND LEGISLATION		
Ensure Sandy Stilt Puffball remains on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) and that relevant district councils are aware of its presence.	On-going	**EN**
SITE SAFEGUARD AND MANAGEMENT		
Maintain road verge sites as Roadside Nature Reserves and extend marker posts if the fungus appears again outside the posts.	On-going 2004	**SCC**
Notify all sites as CWS where not already protected as Roadside Verge Reserves.	2006	**SCC**, **SWT**
RESEARCH AND MONITORING		
Co-ordinate monitoring of all sites on an annual basis	On-going	**SCC**
Disseminate findings of national research into the needs of the fungus and its management to relevant people.	On-going	**EN** (Carl Borges), Kent University.
ADVISORY		
Protect from potential damage by roadworks, soil disturbance and trampling. By advising landowners and SCC Highways staff of its presence.	On-going	**SCC**
COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICITY		
Publicise the importance of the sites in local press and county naturalists' journals to increase local awareness and encourage sightings of the fungus.	On-going	**SBRC**, SWT, SCC,