
1. OVERVIEW

1.1 Site Name and location:	Ringmore area, including Ayrmer Cove, Ayrmer woods, Nodden Mill, Lower Manor, Higher Manor and Toby's point.
1.2 Grid Reference:	SX650456
1.6 Designations:	AONB, heritage coast and SSSI impact risk zone (to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites) cover the whole site.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Main Description:

The parish of Ringmore has historically been a farming community. The land owned by the National Trust consists principally of agricultural fields covering approximately 121 hectares which are managed by three tenant farmers all in Higher Level Stewardship which directs a sensitive grazing regime to help protect the ground. It supports areas of both arable and pasture, the latter grazed with either cattle or sheep. The coastal strip is of highly significant nature conservation value, and the farmland has not been managed for maximum agricultural productivity in the past - as a result it supports significant nature conservation interest and has greater biological interest than many lowland National Trust farms. Adjacent to the farmland there is a mixed deciduous woodland covering approximately 2.8ha which also houses the Ringmore Community Orchard (0.25ha) started in 2006 and acts as a key community focus with the NT. The remains of Nodden Mill (archaeological feature) are located in the valley between the farm lands and consist of the remaining walls of the original building but without a roof. The walls were capped in 2002 to try and slow the buildings deterioration. The mill is accompanied by an old unmanaged willow bed. The NT is responsible for 0.75 miles of coast which includes Ayrmer Cove beach, a small sandy bay which is locally important for the community and is used by a number of stakeholders such as local outdoor enthusiasts.

Current Management:

- The fields in the area are managed by our tenants under their HLS prescriptions with sensitive grazing.
- The woodland is managed in-hand following the prescriptions of the EWGS with the community orchard run by a local volunteer group with assistance from the NT.
- The SWCP and other footpaths are on an annual cutting schedule - as and when required.
- The hedge boundaries of Smugglers path are in a yearly laying rotation.
- The beach is cleaned by local volunteers and stowed in storage bins at the rear of the beach. Ranger team then collects the litter when the storage area is full.
- A spring clean the beach event is held annually just before the Easter holidays for the local community and visitors to assist us in cleaning the beach.
- Regular attendance and contact with Parish Council and Parish Council meetings

Conservation Interest:

Nature: The coastal strip alongside the SWCP is an important wildlife corridor linking adjacent land area and supported by the NT ownership, both in farmland under HLS and in woodland and orchards. Cirl buntings have been seen along the hedgerow on the Western boundary but as numbers are not significant they have not been surveyed by RSPB. In 2007 the site underwent a NT Biosurvey which found that the Farmland overall supported a range of significant features and species: Red List & UK BAP Priority birds, especially significant is cirl bunting, but others include yellowhammer, skylark and grey partridge; Arable areas falling within the UK BAP Arable Field Margins Priority Habitat; Areas of grassland reverting to more herb-rich swards, especially adjoining the coastal strip. These natural and semi-natural habitats are restricted to the cliffs themselves and a narrow cliff-top zone. They support:

- some scarce plants including Portland spurge;
- a variety of scarce and threatened invertebrates, which include at least one Red Data Book and seven Nationally Scarce species, encompassing crickets, beetles and bees, some of which are specialist south-western sea-cliff species of open habitats, and a few are also rare internationally.

The arable field margins support declining arable plants that appear on the Red Data Book (RDB) List of vascular plants, these include field woundwort (Near Threatened), and corn spurrey, corn marigold (but not seen in recent years) and lesser snapdragon (all Vulnerable). In addition there is an unconfirmed record for a further RDB species - prickly poppy (Vulnerable).

Other notable arable plants include the locally distributed bugloss and henbit deadnettle (both rare in Devon).

Archaeology and Buildings: Nodden Mill is recorded on maps from 1809 and referred to as Nodden Mill from at least 1885. This watermill adjoined the cottage, with its millpond higher up, probably once powering an overshot waterwheel. James Taylor was the miller here in 1850, listed in White's Directory of Devonshire, which suggests the mill served the villagers as well as the farm at Noddon. WATERMILL (Early 19th C to Late 19th C - 1809 AD to 1886 AD). MILL HOUSE (Mid 19th C to Early 20th C - 1842 AD to 1906 AD).

The Trust consolidated the mill buildings in 2002 and has an annual visual inspection to ensure the buildings are in a safe condition and that the trees surrounding the building are safe.

Woodlands and Trees (inc. Ancient and Notable trees): Ringmore wood is part of the South Devon Woodland Grant scheme and is managed as a mixed deciduous woodland. This woodland also has a Community orchard at the Northern top corner which has approximately 48 fruiting trees. The local community are very actively involved in the orchards and the first apple pressing event was held in 2016 which was very well attended. At present this woodland has not been surveyed for ancient and notable trees.

In the valley near Nodden Mill is an overgrown Willow bed which needs to be taken back into management. Willow type needs to be assessed for use and value and appropriate management can then be designed .

Coastline: Ringmore has just under a mile of coastline on this stretch all part of the SWCP. The boundaries to the fields have been moved inland to allow a wide sweep of land for visitors to walk on away from the cliff edge. The beach and surrounding geology (Lower Devonian Meadfoot beds which comprise mainly of sandstone, siltstone and shales) are visually stunning and attract many visitors and are used by local interest groups for activities such as the Scouts and canoe groups.

Threats or Issues:

- Inadequate grazing leading to failure of Stewardship and decrease in the biodiversity of the site.
- Incorrect land management – ensure that tenants are abiding by their tenancies and stewardships to maintain the adequate management and habitats on site.
- Flooding – Valley floods changing the habitat and the management of the site creating difficulty for the tenant to graze and restricts access to all fields and vehicle access to the beach.
- Cliff erosion / slumping – Loss of the SWCP due to unstable cliff edges.
- Storm damage – storms having impact upon the beach and beach levels
- Coastal pollution – items washed up on the beach
- Soil erosion – wash off from inadequate management of the valley slopes and woodland. This should not occur as long as the stewardship recommendations and EWGS are followed.
- Loss of main links to Local community
- Inappropriate development which impacts on the present undeveloped landscape.

