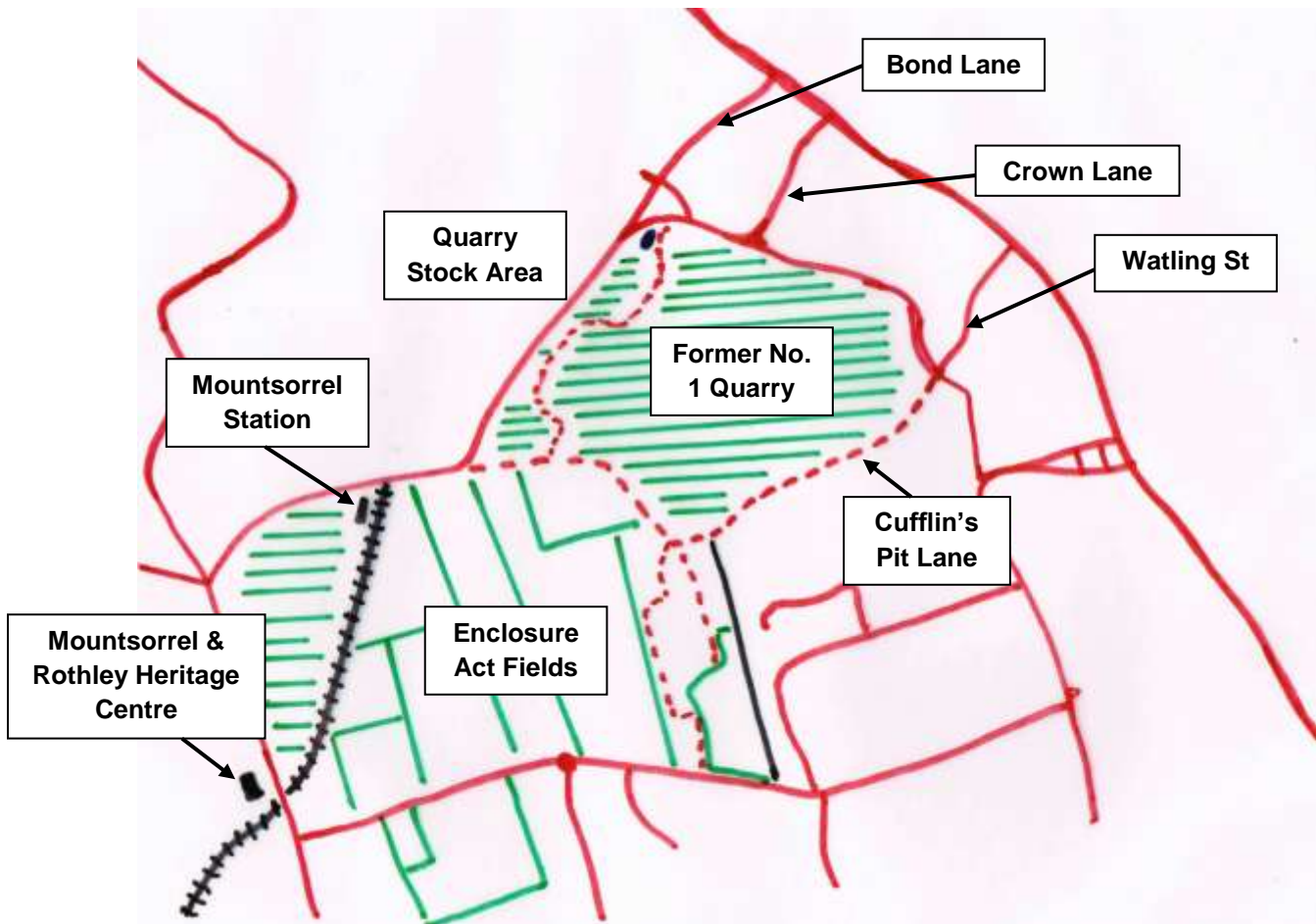


Mountsorrel Wildlife Sites 2016

Broad Hill



As marked on the ordnance survey maps Broad Hill covers the fields between Halstead Rd and Bond Lane, the former Mountsorrel Granite Company No 1 Quarry site – Castle Hill Quarry (now a reconstituted hill) and the present quarry stock area.



Sheep Grazing on Broad Hill – December 2011

The former Castle Hill Quarry is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as “a fine example of granite related, temperature-controlled mineralisation characterised by molybdenite, allanite and topaz, modified by a later introduction of dolomite, sulphides and crystallised chlorites. The quarry also displays what is

probably the most dramatic and well-developed occurrence of asphaltite in Britain upon which international research into the origin of life on Earth has been carried out”.



Broad Hill and the Enclosure Act Fields from the west

Photo December 2014 courtesy of Flitevision.co.uk

As a notified SSSI it is subject to a management plan. Access to the site has been facilitated in recent years by the quarry operators by the introduction of a permissive path from Cufflin’s Pit Lane over the hill to the footpath linking Bond Lane and Crown lane through former quarry yard area.



Permissive Path from Cufflin’s Pit Lane

At the high point there is both a seat and a commemorative sculpture showing a quarryman sett making.



“Albert”

The new hill is still in the early stages of ecological redevelopment and is rough grass covered with developing scrub. Some trees and shrubs (notably buddleia) are now established and more are developing. The area of the clearing pond at the old Quarry Yard entrance to the site and the adjacent shale and rock outcrop are areas of potential wildlife interest.



Shale and Rock Outcrop and clearing pond 2012

Various mosses and lichens are already populating the rocks alongside the permissive path.



Rocks alongside the permissive path 2012

The main change to the overall site in the near future will be the loss of the Enclosure Act fields between Halstead Road and Bond lane for housing development, due to start this spring. This will be a major loss to the village in ecological terms as the fields are the last real open space in the western side of the village. It will in particular be a major loss of bird habitat but this must be balanced by the inclusion within the current development plan of green spaces, dry and wet ponds and a wooded berm around the new proposed cricket pitch. These, if fully delivered, will in the long term provide some replacement habitat. In the short term though there will be a period of upheaval for wildlife.



Enclosure Act Fields from Cufflin's Pit Lane

A further enhancement to the opportunities for wildlife is due to the work done by the Mountsorrel Railway Volunteers during their reinstatement of the former mineral rail line from Swithland Sidings to the former quarry site and the development of Mountsorrel Station. This included a vast amount of scrub clearance, wildflower planting and nest box building along the route of the line and at the station. They have also developed a wildlife area at Nunkley Hill adjacent to the new Mountsorrel and Rothley Heritage Centre. All of this will help, to some degree, to mitigate the loss due new building developments.



Mountsorrel Station and the former Mineral Line cutting 1st Jan 2016

Cufflin's Pit Lane which connects the Common to the village core forms part of the Mountsorrel Conservation Area¹ and at its eastern end runs through the Castle Hill and The Navins wildlife site.



Cufflin's Pit Lane looking east 2012

Species Lists²

Animals

- Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)
- Badger (*Meles meles*)
- Stoat (*Mustela erminea*)
- Weasel (*Mustela nivalis*)
- Muntjac (*Muntiacus reevesi*)

Birds

- Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) – Resident +Winter Migrants
- Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*) – Resident +Summer Migrants
- Blue Tit (*Parus caeruleus*)
- Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)
- Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)
- Canada Goose (*Branta Canadensis*)
- Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*)
- Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*)
- Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*) – Summer Migrant
- Coal Tit (*Parus ater*)
- Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

¹ Charnwood Borough Council – Mountsorrel Conservation Area Appraisal Adopted 22nd March 2007

² Species lists are drawn from MHG Member Records

- Common Gull (*Larus canus*)
- Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)
- Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*) - Occasional Summer Migrant
- Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)
- Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*)
- Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) – Winter Migrant
- Gold Finch (*Carduelis carduelis*)
- Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)
- Great Tit (*Parus major*)
- Green Finch (*Carduelis chloris*)
- Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*)
- Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
- Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)
- Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)
- Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)
- Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*) – Summer Migrant
- Long Tailed Tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*)
- Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*)
- Magpie (*Pica pica*)
- Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*)
- Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)
- Nuthatch (*Sitta europea*)
- Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)
- Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)
- Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*) – Winter Migrant
- Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)
- Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) - Summer Migrant
- Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)
- Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*) – Summer Migrant
- Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)
- Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)
- Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)
- Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)
- Stock Dove (*Columba oenas*)
- Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*)
- Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) – Summer Migrant
- Swift (*Apus apus*) – Summer Migrant
- Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco*)
- Treecreeper (*Certhia familiaris*)
- Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*) – Summer Migrant

- Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – Summer Migrant
- Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*) – Summer Migrant
- Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*)
- Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)
- Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*)