

Land at the northern section of Coombe Wood Thundersley

Authority to make Article 4(1) Direction

Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order
1995

In accordance with the resolution and Minute of the Council's Planning
Committee of 4th December 2007, the attached Direction is now to be made.

Signed..... *S Arlogers*
Dated..... *29th October* 2008

Steve Rogers

Head of Regeneration and Homes

Attachments

1. Direction under Article 4(1) of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
2. Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500 showing land edged red
3. Statement of Reasons for Making Direction

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED
DEVELOPMENT) ORDER 1995**

DIRECTION MADE UNDER ARTICLE 4(1)

WHEREAS the Borough Council of Castle Point being the appropriate local planning authority within the meaning of article 4(6) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, is satisfied that it is expedient that development of the description(s) set out in the Schedule below should not be carried out on the land shown edged/coloured red on the attached plan, unless permission is granted on an application made under Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

NOW THEREFORE the said Council in pursuance of the power conferred on them by article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 hereby direct that the permission granted by article 3 of the said Order shall not apply to development on the said land of the description(s) set out in the Schedule below.

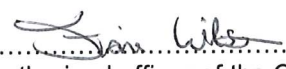
SCHEDULE 1 The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure, within Class A of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the 1995 Order,

And

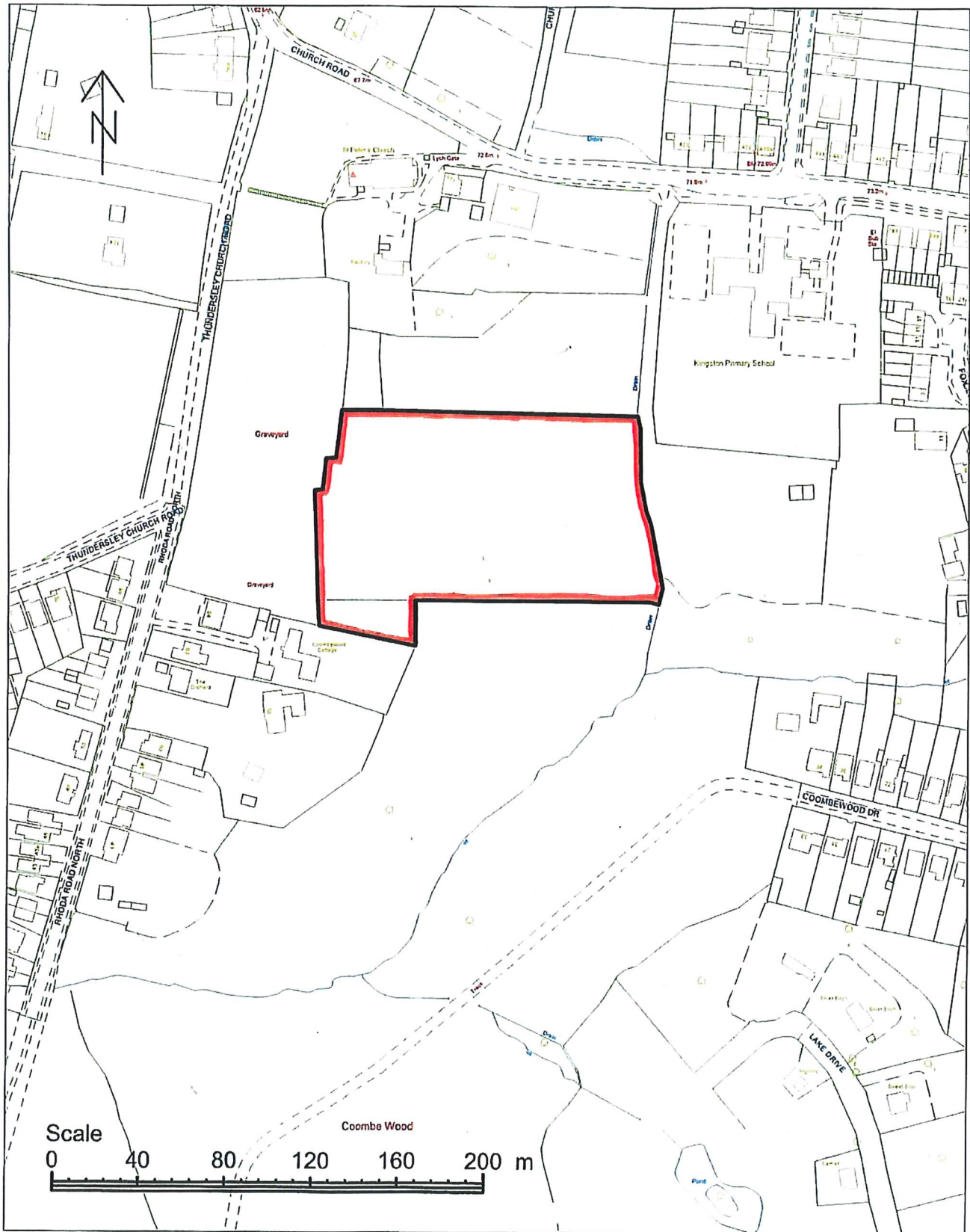
SCHEDULE 2 The siting of caravans and/or mobile homes, and the use of the land as a caravan site, being development comprised within Class A, of Part 5 of Schedule 2 to the 1995 Order, and not being development comprised within any other Class.

Given under the Common Seal of the Borough Council of Castle Point
this.....21st.....day of January..... 2008.

The Common Seal of the Council was affixed to this Direction in the presence of


Duly authorised officer of the Council





**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT)
ORDER 1995**

ARTICLE 4(1) DIRECTION

NORTHERN SECTION OF COOMBE WOOD THUNDERSLEY BENFLEET ESSEX

STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR MAKING DIRECTION

1. Site and surrounding area

1.1. The Site

The site of the northern section of Coombe Wood is situated to the east of the junction between Thundersley Church Road and Rhoda Road North in Thundersley. It is a heavily wooded area of land with steep undulations falling generally from north to south and from west to east. The land is crossed by a network of tracks and has one drain at the eastern boundary. The land is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt.

1.2. The character of the surrounding area

The area surrounding the northern section of Coombe Wood is mixed in character and use. The western boundary adjoins the graveyard of St Peter's Church. The northern boundary adjoins the rectory of St Peter's Church and open land. The eastern edge of the site is bounded by a drain that crosses further open land. Part of the southern boundary adjoins residential land, with the remainder being formed by fencing that separates the site from the main area of Coombe Wood to the south. The main area of Coombe Wood was placed under Article 4 Direction in March 2007, and in June 2007 around 60% of this land was also designated Village Green status.

2. The grounds for making the Direction

2.1. Work already undertaken

The northern section of Coombe Wood has already been subject to the erection of a substantial length of security fencing, around 440 metres in total, which almost completely separates this section of woodland from the main part of Coombe Wood to the south. There is a pathway located by the south-western boundary of the fencing allowing access

from the graveyard to the main area of Coombe Wood. The fencing is vandal-proof palisade style galvanised steel, 1.8 metres high, and the majority is coloured black, except where the fencing is hidden within the undergrowth. The work is permitted development. This fencing has an adverse effect on the natural setting of the woodland and prevents access by groups, such as the Scouts and church groups, who have been using this land for over 50 years.

2.2. Potential further works

There is the potential for further works to be carried out to the existing fencing in the future in terms of the replacement of weathered or damaged sections of fencing. There is also evidence that the currently open south western section of this wooded area is under separate ownership and thus more fencing could be erected in the future to establish ownership boundaries on more of the site.

2.3. Damage to interests of acknowledged importance

Security style fences or walls in this natural sylvan setting are likely to erode the special character of this long established and much valued woodland, being completely out of keeping with the natural surroundings. The unique character of this site in ancient woodland terms has been recognised by the Essex Wildlife Trust who designated it as one of the Borough's Local Wildlife Sites, and it has also been recognised in the 2006 Open Space Appraisal of the Borough. Furthermore this area of woodland performs a classic Green Belt function of separation because of its narrowness dividing two distinct settlements in this part of Thundersley.

2.4. Harm from permitted development

The erection of fencing or indeed walls crossing the land and creating irregular parcels would be damaging to this open and wooded section of Green Belt land. Unique to this part of the Coombe Wood, fencing also has the potential to completely block access for the general public into the wood from the northern parts of the surrounding area. In addition, "sub-urbanisation" of the land with fencing or the siting of caravans/mobile homes would represent highly intrusive and damaging work in a sensitive area.

3. Representations

3.1. Owner/occupiers

No representations have yet been received from owners of land as a result of the making of this Direction.

3.2. Friends of Coombe Wood

The Friends of Coombe Wood fully support the Council's action in making an Article 4 Direction, recognising that the damage which could

be caused to the wood by the introduction of further fencing or caravans.

4. Conclusions

4.1. The land

This is a sensitive and wooded area of Green Belt land. The introduction of fencing to delineate ownership has already taken place in part. This work has compromised the character and appearance of the land and greatly reduced access from this site into the remainder of Coombe Wood, much of which has been designated as a Village Green.

4.2. The proposal

Further protection for the land is required in order to prevent yet more fences or walls or the introduction of trailers, caravans or mobile homes.

4.3. The benefit

The Direction will counter a real and serious threat to a highly valued area of natural wooded Green Belt bringing particular development within the Council's control.