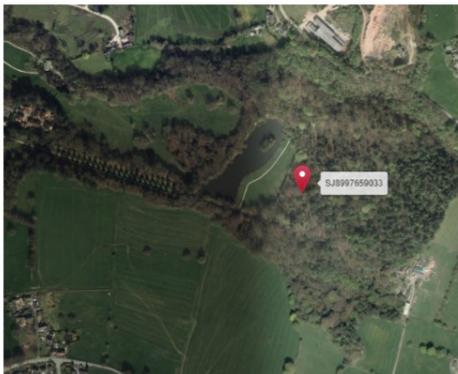


Site	<b>Spring Wood, part of Biddulph Grange Country Park and Picnic Area</b>  <b>Ancient &amp; Semi-Natural Woodland. Accessible country park</b>
Grid Reference / Post Code	SJ 89679 59058
Brief Description	This site is an important area of ancient and semi-ancient woodland found within the historic Biddulph Grange Country Park. It is used frequently by walkers, dog walkers and various groups (scouts / guides etc).

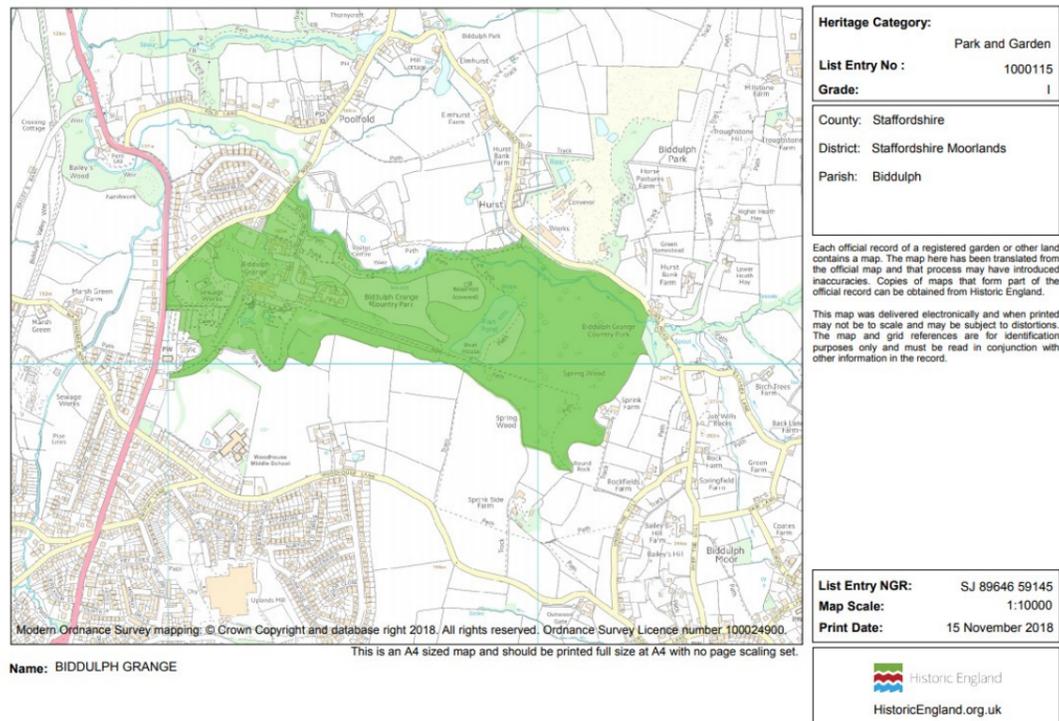
Criteria.		
Location <i>In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves</i>	√	Accessible from local houses and the wider town and countryside via the footpath network. Visited by many from further afield. Serviced by a car park and visitors centre with toilets. Managed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
Local Significance <i>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife.</i>	√	<p><b>History:</b> Biddulph Grange became the main house of James (1811-97) and Maria Bateman in 1840, the year after their marriage. Until then it had been Biddulph's vicarage house, and occupied the site of a medieval grange of Hulton Abbey. After their arrival at Biddulph the house was extended, conservatories added, and an ambitious garden and extensive pleasure grounds created. After 1849 the garden's development was a collaborative venture between the Batemans and Edward Cooke (1811-80), a painter, botanical engraver, and enthusiastic amateur gardener. By the late 1860s the cost of maintaining the Biddulph gardens was proving beyond the Batemans' resources; in 1868 the house was passed to their son, who sold it three years later to Robert Heath, a leading Staffordshire industrialist. Gardens and house were maintained to a high standard and further altered, but in 1896 after the property had passed to Heath's son the house was largely destroyed by fire. It was rebuilt, in 1923 becoming a hospital in which use it remained until the 1980s. Alterations to house and gardens took place during that phase of the site's history, and there was increasing neglect and vandalism in the 1960s, but in 1988 when the National Trust acquired the main gardens their basic form and structure still remained and by the mid 1990s an extensive restoration was largely complete. The majority of the pleasure grounds and woodland were designated as a Country Park (managed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council).</p> <p>A small park extended east of Biddulph Grange, principally embracing <b>Spring Wood</b>, which was managed from 1848 as Estate Woodland. A fishpond lies within the western part of the wood. From a wrought-iron screen and gates at the end of the Wellingtonia Avenue (within National Trust land) the Obelisk Walk runs 450m east through Spring Wood. The Obelisk Walk took its name from the optical illusion the steeply rising path created, when seen from the west, of a stone obelisk against a dark sky. A cave surmounted the top of the obelisk, which still stands today.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity:</b> Spring Wood is an ancient and semi-natural woodland consisting of a mature canopy of oak, ash, sycamore, beech, chestnut, Scots pine and larch. A number of different bats have been recorded in</p>

		this area including Pipistrelle bats, Whiskered / Brandt's bat, Daubenton's bat and the Noctule bat. English bluebells can be seen in the Spring and there is a wide diversity of fungi in the autumn.
Size, Scale <i>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.</i>	√	18 ha (within a wider country park)
Recommendation		Suitable for Local Green Space Designation

Pictures:



Maps:



The area (shaded green above) is Grade 1 registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest. Spring Wood is an Ancient and Semi-natural woodland within this wider site.

