

# Basing Wood Forest Plan

South England Forest District





Date of Commencement of Plan: **1 March, 2014**

Approval Period: **1 March 2014 to 28 February 2024 (10 Years)**

Summary of Activity within Approval Period:

Forestry Activity	Area (ha)			
	Conifer high forest	Broadleaf natural regeneration or replanting	Mixed natural regeneration or replanting	Open
Clearfell in period 2014-2024	1.6	1.6		
Clearfell in period 2025-2034	0			
Management of areas under Low Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)	118			
Management of areas under a Coppice System	0			
Management of old stands or for long-term retention (included in LISS total above)	0			
Management of permanent open space	0.4			
<b>TOTAL AREA</b>	<b>120</b>			

## FOREST ENTERPRISE Application for Forest Plan Approvals

Forest District: **South England Forest District**

FC Geographic Block No: **83**

Woodland / Property Name: **Basing Wood**

FE Plan Reference Number: **304/11/13-14**

Nearest town or village: **Basingstoke, Hampshire**

OS Grid Reference: **SU 642 554 (Centre of Site)**

Local Authority: **Basingstoke & Deane District Council**

I apply for Forest Plan approval for the property described above and in the enclosed Forest Plan.

I undertake to obtain any permissions necessary for the implementation of the approved Plan.

Signed:



Michael Seddon, Deputy Surveyor, South England FD

Date:

**2 April 2014.**

Approved:



Area Director, Forest Services South East & London

Date:

**2/4/14.**

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## Forest Planning

Forest Plans define the long term vision for a woodland or a collection of woodlands, usually looking 50 to 100 years ahead. It sets objectives and illustrates how management will move towards achieving this vision over the initial 10 to 30 years.

This plan represents the first major review of the Basing Wood Forest Design Plan that was previously consulted upon and approved in 2002. The revised Forest Plan has been prepared following a review of the original plan undertaken by FC staff, and in consultation with stakeholders and the public. It has incorporated developments in policy and local initiatives that have occurred in the intervening years.

## Consultation & Approval Process

At key points throughout the Forest Planning process, we will seek the views of external stakeholders, including; local communities and organisations involved with nature conservation, public recreation and the timber industry. Through this consultation process we can ensure that an appropriate balance of objectives is achieved. Details of the Consultation Strategy for this Forest Plan can be found in Appendix B.

Approval of the Forest Plan is granted by the regulatory arm of the Forestry Commission, known as Forest Services. This regulatory approval is usually valid for 10 years and grants a 10 year felling license.

The approved Forest Plan will be reviewed at year 5 to ensure proposals are still relevant, suitable and in line with current policy and guidance. This will also be an opportunity to evaluate the success of management over the 5 year period and engage any amendments to the Forest Plan that may be required.

## Forest Plan Maps

Eight maps are presented with this Forest Plan. Where appropriate the maps are annotated to describe issues on the site.

### *Location*

### *Aerial*

### *Ancient Woodland and Native Species Scoring*

Illustrates the Ancient Woodland status of the woodland and the percentage of native species within various parts of the woodland.

### *Long Term Vision*

Illustrates the long-term structure of the woodlands and other habitats consistent with the Forest Plan objectives. While there is no fixed time scales for the habitat transformations depicted, an indicative term of 10 to 100 years depending on the habitat objectives is assumed.

### *Current Structure*

An overview of the current makeup of the woodland.

### *Habitat Restoration and Felling*

Shows the management proposals in the shorter term, usually up to 30 years. These proposals are the initial stepping stones towards achieving the long term vision.

### *Intended Structure at Year 10*

An overview of the woodland structure at year 10 following management detailed on the Habitat Restoration & Felling Map and Regeneration Plan.

At this map scale (1:5000), it is difficult to show detail of small-scale unplanted areas or retentions. A detailed restocking plan will be produced as part of an operational site assessment for the woodland nearer to the time of implementation. Some small groups or individual character trees may be retained at the time of felling, especially if they add to the amenity of the woodland or contribute to nature conservation value. Any veteran trees or standing dead trees will be retained and protected (except when a potential safety risk to the public).

## Statistics

The plan is supported by charts showing how management proposals contained within the Forest Plan may affect the structure of the woodland over time and other current age and species statistics.

## Production Forecast

The 20 year Production Forecast illustrates the timber volume which would theoretically be extracted from the woodland over the period of this design plan and beyond based on these proposals. This is subject to change as informative data is collected and updated during the period of this Plan.

## Objectives for Basing Wood

- Maintain and enhance native species and semi-natural features within ancient semi-natural woodland.
- Initiate restoration of planted ancient woodland sites to native and honourary native woodland.
- Take opportunities to increase the nature conservation value of other existing habitats.
- Maintain sustainable access and the provision for recreation within the woodland, taking opportunities to enhance the experience where appropriate.
- Maintain and, where possible, increase the species and age diversity of the woodland.
- Provide a regular supply of quality timber to support local employment and local timber processing industries.

## Current Context

### Location

Basing Wood is situated to the immediate north of urban Basingstoke, near the area of Popley.

### Tenure

Forestry Commission leases the woodland from The National Trust.

### Landscape

Basing Wood covers an area of approximately 120 hectares. The woodland is within Natural England's Thames Basin Heaths National Character Area. Being directly adjacent to the northern edge of Basingstoke, urban conurbations surround the woodland on three sides. Only to the north does the landscape become more rural with farmland and woodland interspersed with smaller towns and villages such as Sherbourne St. John and Bramley.

### Current Woodland Structure

Approximately 13% of the woodland area (~16ha) is classified as ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) with around 27% classified as plantation on an ancient woodland site (~33ha). There is significant conifer component throughout the woodland including Scots Pine and Corsican Pine with Lawson's Cypress and a small amount of young Larch also present. Broadleaved species present include Oak, Ash and Alder.

The age class of canopy trees ranges from 20 years to 65 years old with some younger areas less than 20 years old (relatively new restocking).

There is also a good proportion of open space, mainly concentrated within the main block, but supported by wide edges to the road and ride network.

### Biodiversity and Conservation

Areas of ancient woodland, are the main points of nature conservation interest within Basing Wood.

The woodland contains 21 areas that have been adopted as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) by Hampshire County Council for several criteria.

#### Woodland

1A Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands (eight sites);

1B Other woodland where there is a significant element of ancient semi-natural woodland surviving (20 sites).

#### Neutral/acid/calcareous/grassland

2B Semi-improved grasslands which retain a significant element of unimproved grassland (4 sites);

#### Species

6A Sites which supports one or more notable species (2 sites).



There are no statutory conservation designations on this site.

During management interventions, opportunities for ride widening, glade enhancement and the improvement of other existing habitats will be taken. Such improvements will aim to increase the ecotone of the woodland and provide connecting habitats and food sources for invertebrates and other associated species such as woodland birds.

Some ponds, created in recent years have the potential for supporting important reptile and amphibian species. Where opportunities arise these will be enhanced to increase the quality of the habitat.

### People

Basing Wood is used formally and informally for recreation by many local people for an array of activities from cycling, running and walking to free-running and the use of the wood by local school, nursery and scout groups for educational outings and natural play.

In recent years, extensive consultation with local users, supported by investment from Forestry Commission and Heritage Lottery funding have led to natural play areas being installed as well as one of the UK's first purpose built freerunning equipment. Waymarked trails and a play trail add a further dimension to the more formal, interactive recreation facilities on offer within the woodland.

The woodland is not dedicated for open access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), but the Forestry Commission allows open access for reasonable activities in line with its Byelaws.

Open junctions, wide rides and clear paths enhance the experience of a walk around Basing Wood. During management interventions opportunities to enhance the visual impact of rides and individual trees will be taken by selecting trees for retention based on character as well as ride widening.

### Historic Environment

There are no scheduled or un-scheduled monuments recorded within Basing Wood.

### Soils

The soils of Basing Wood are characterised as Gleys. Gley soils are characterised by permanent or seasonal waterlogging and are among the most common forest soils. (Kennedy, 2002)

### Water

There are no water courses through Basing Wood, but in recent years some ponds have been created. Opportunities may arise to enhance the quality of these for associated species, and these will be considered at that time.

### Climate Change

Climate change presents one of the greatest long-term challenges facing the world today.

Conventional forest management systems have developed in a climate that has undergone fluctuations but remained relatively stable since the end of the last ice age (around 10 000 years ago). However, the average global temperature is now rising, there

is evidence that rainfall patterns are changing. There is also likely to be an increase in the incidence of extreme weather and the frequency and severity of summer drought. This is likely to represent the greatest threat to woodlands from climate change in the UK over the coming decades. UK forest management needs to respond to these threats in two principal ways: through mitigation, including ensuring management is sustainable and adaptation, including species diversification.

### Tree Diseases and Pests

Throughout southern England, established and newly recognised tree pests and diseases have been causing significant concern in recent years. Of particular concern at the present time in the locale of Basing Wood is the spread of *Chalara Fraxinea* (Ash Dieback), *Dothistroma* (red band) Needle Blight on Corsican Pine, and *Phytophthora ramorum* on Larch. The extensive Ash presence places the woodland at fairly high risk of some species and structural change if Ash Dieback does take hold. Guidance and action plans regarding plant health are constantly evolving to adapt to plant health threats. The sudden emergence of a disease can result in the need to clear fell a coupe earlier than planned or alter restocking plans. We will continue to monitor for diseases as required and take any action required. Any changes to the Forest Design Plan will be notified or agreed with Forest Services in accordance with relevant guidance.

Mammal browsing is also a threat to the sustainability of the woodland by having the potential to limit regeneration. Deer will be managed in accordance with the South England Forest District Deer Management Strategy.

There are no records of invasive non-native plant species within Basing Wood, but with a large urban population nearby, continued monitoring will take place to ensure that those species which pose a threat to native flora do not become established.

### Timber Production

Over the last 5 years, through the natural growth of the trees, Basing Wood has produced an increase in standing timber volume of approximately 850m<sup>3</sup> per year<sup>1</sup> or an approximate total of 4250m<sup>3</sup>. During this time, timber harvesting has removed approximately 1278m<sup>3</sup>. This is around 30% of the total growth increment over the past 5 years.

Within Basing Wood, sustainable timber harvesting helps to deliver the objectives of this Forest Plan by: creating space within the woodland for young trees to flourish, thus encouraging genetic diversity and longevity of the woodland; generating dynamic transitional habitats which are vital for local wildlife; creating dynamic internal landscapes which increase the interest and experience for local users; delivering a sustainable timber resource to local timber markets and supporting employment across a number of sectors.

1. Source: FC Sub-compartment database,

2. Source: FC Sales Recording Package.





Forestry Commission

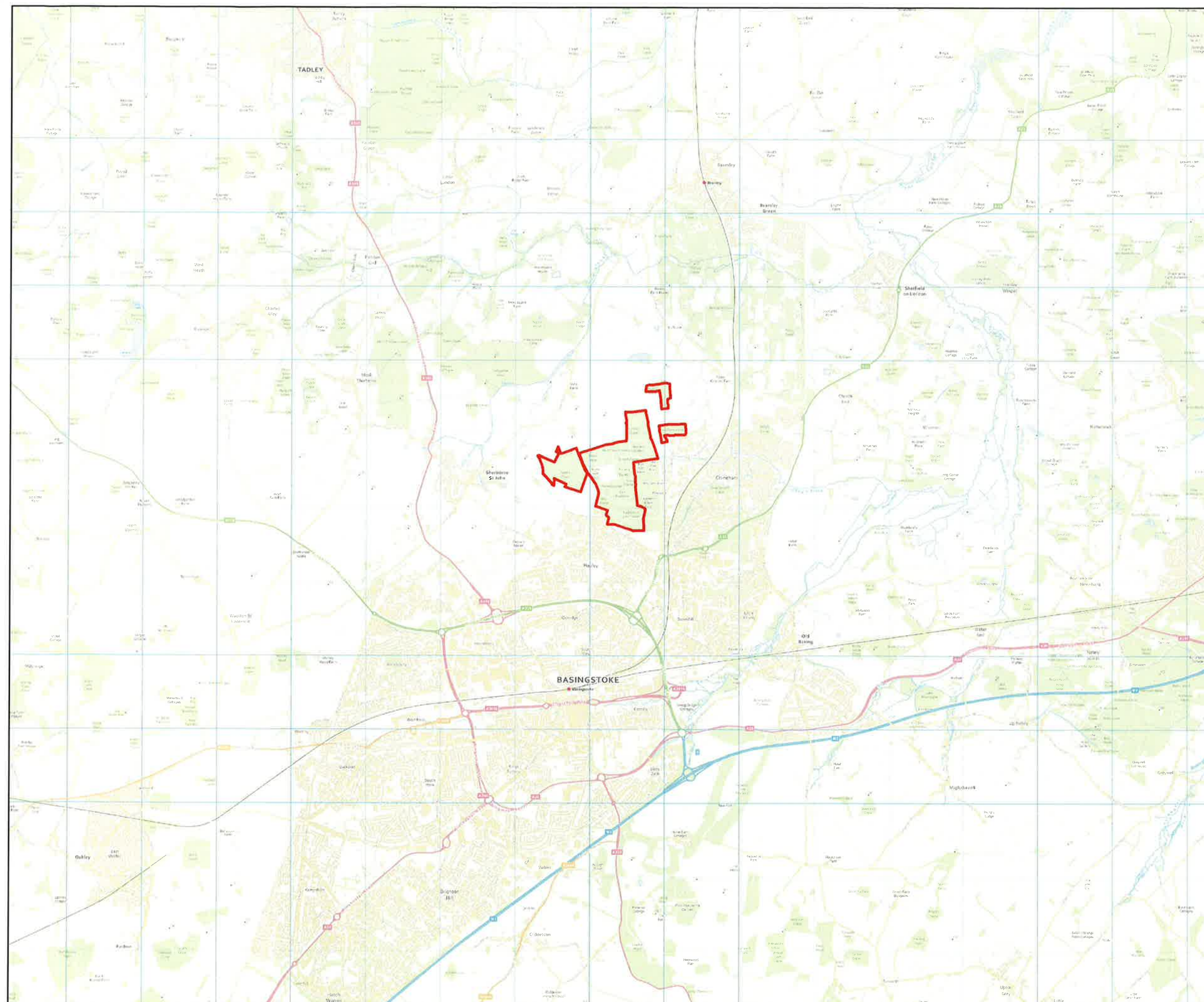
South England Forest District

## Basing Wood

### Location

### KEY

 Basing Wood



25/11/2013

1:50,000



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South England Forest District

Basing Wood

Aerial

### KEY

 Basing Wood

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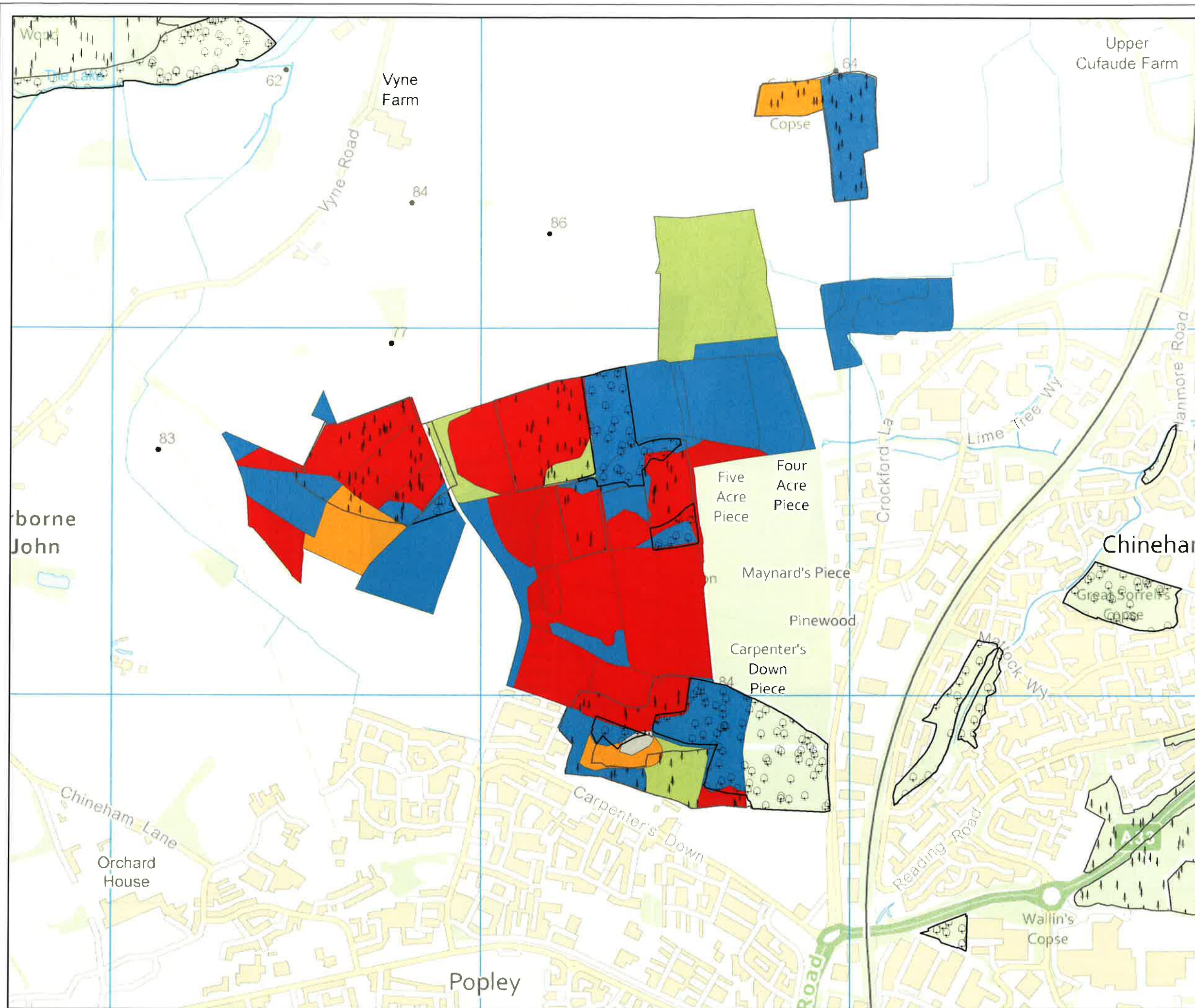
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**South England Forest District**

## Basing Wood

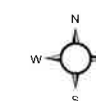
### Ancient Woodland (NE) & Semi-Natural Scoring

#### KEY

-  Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)
-  Planted Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS)
-  1 - Over 80% native
-  2 - Between 50% and 80% native
-  3 - Between 20% and 50% native
-  4 - Less than 20% native
-  No Score

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Pine in these areas is a mix of mature and adolescent aged trees. Conversion to native will be a long-term process



Clearfelling pine in this area will progress conversion to native habitat, as thinning will likely be costly due to location and structure.



With a good proportion of native broadleaved trees already present here, conversion to mixed woodland should be fairly short term.



Natural Play area will continue to be managed as it is now.



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## Basing Wood

### Long-Term Vision (~100 Years)

#### KEY



Predominantly native and honourary-native broadleaf woodland



Mixed Woodland  
- includes native and non-native tree species, both broadleaved and coniferous



Community Woodland



Open Space  
- Recreational

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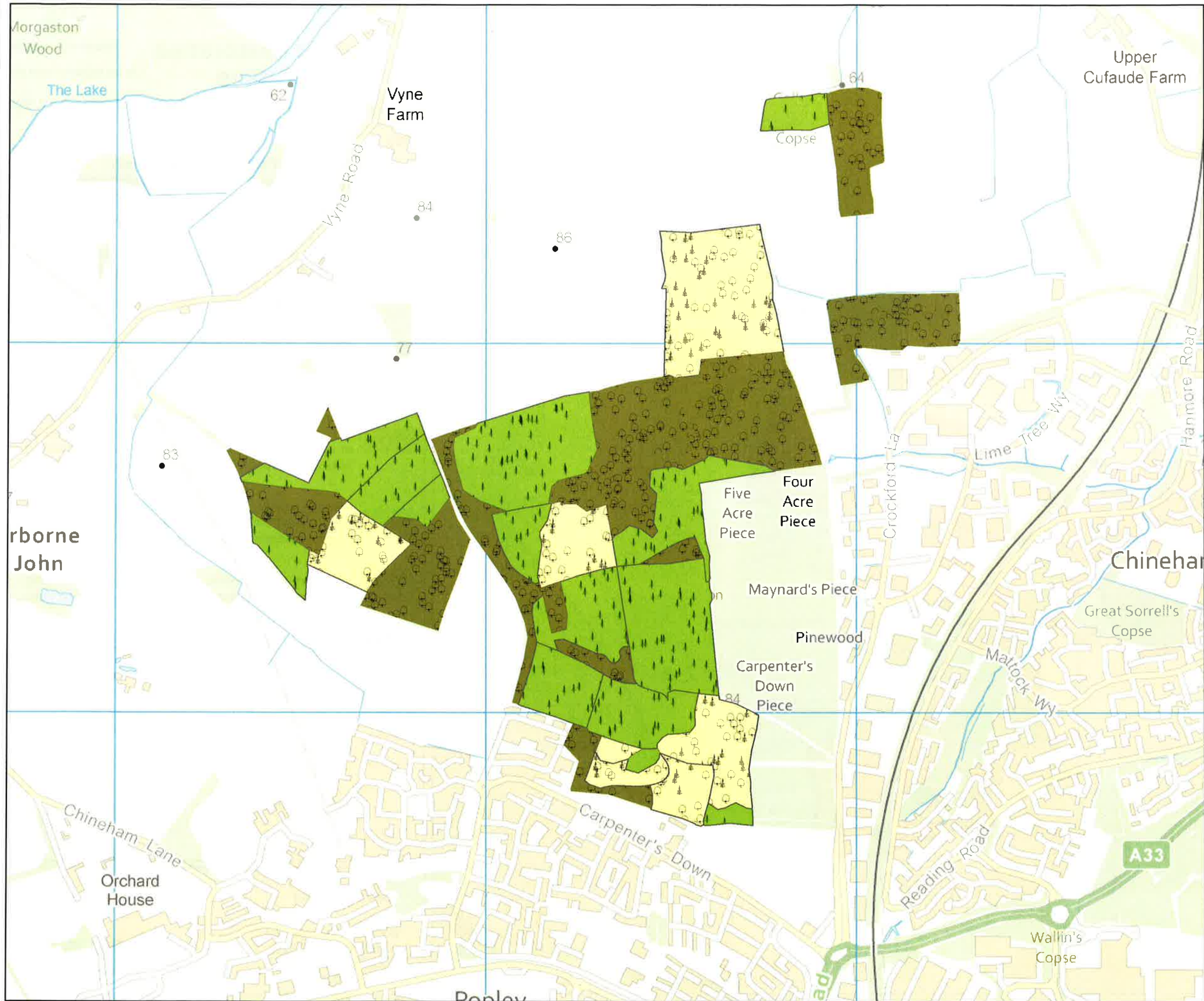
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## Basing Wood

### Current Structure

#### KEY



Predominantly native and honourary-native broadleaf woodland



Mixed Woodland  
- includes native and non-native tree species, both broadleaved and coniferous



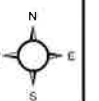
Predominantly non-native coniferous woodland



Open Space  
- Recreational

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## Habitat Restoration & Felling



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Broadleaved Woodland Management.

Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system, favouring best native tree and focussing on the production of quality timber.

Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system.  
Favour best native tree, focussing on the production of quality timber and the gradual reduction of non-native species to 20% of the canopy or less.

Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system.  
Favour best tree, focussing on the production of quality timber and species diversity.

Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system.  
Favour best native tree, focussing on the development of amenity woodland and the gradual reduction of non-native species to 20% of the canopy or less.

Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system. Favour best tree, focussing on the development of amenity woodland and species diversity.

Minimum intervention. Intervene only if a specific biodiversity opportunity arises or to mitigate risk.

Manage as open habitat for recreational use.

Clearfell 2012 - 2016

## Compartments

### Sub-compartments

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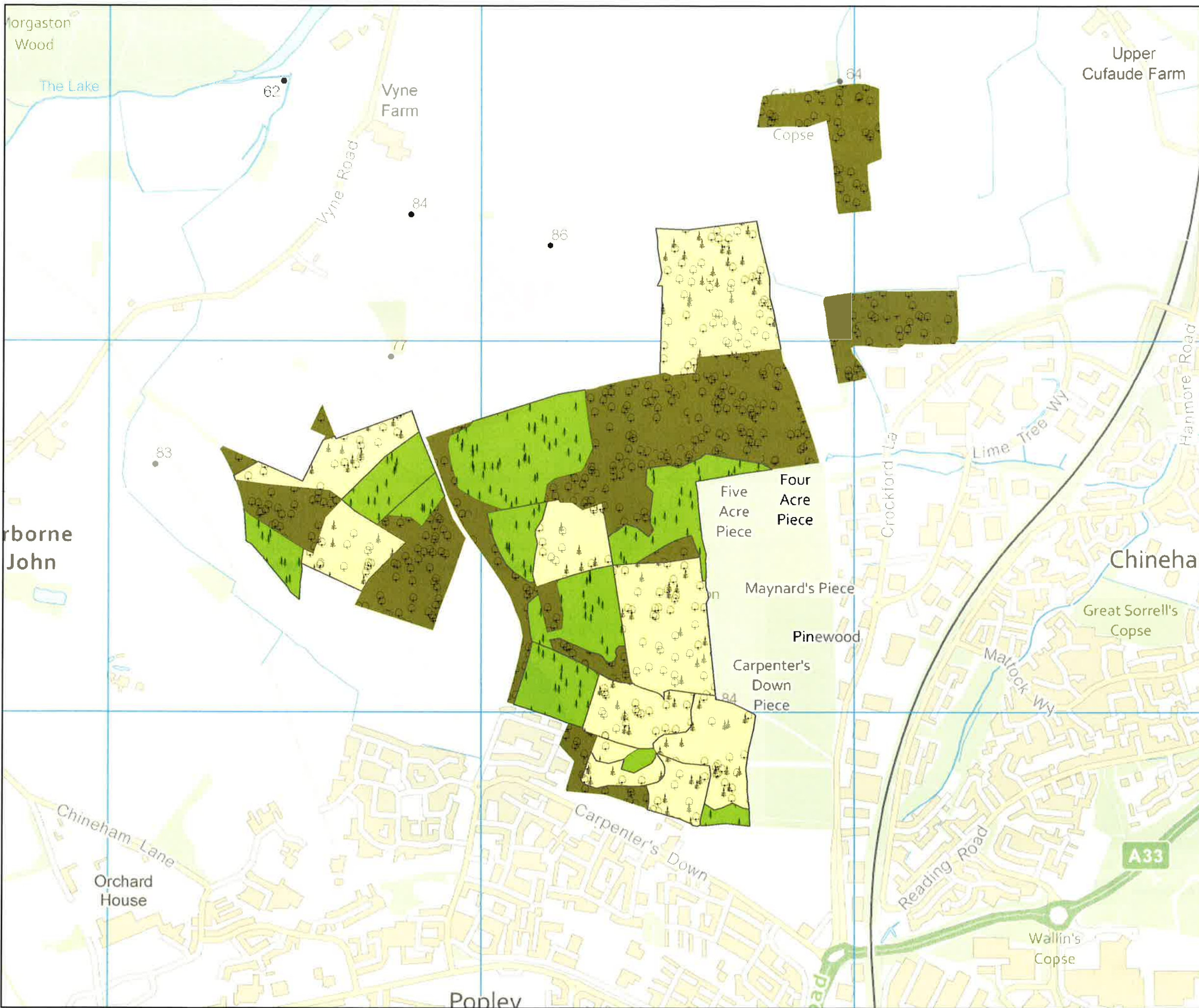
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**Forestry Commission**

**South England Forest District**

## Basing Wood

### Intended Structure at Year 10

#### KEY



Predominantly native  
and honourary-native  
broadleaf woodland



Mixed Woodland  
- includes native and  
non-native tree species,  
both broadleaved and  
coniferous



Predominantly  
non-native coniferous  
woodland



Open Space  
- Recreational

26/11/2013

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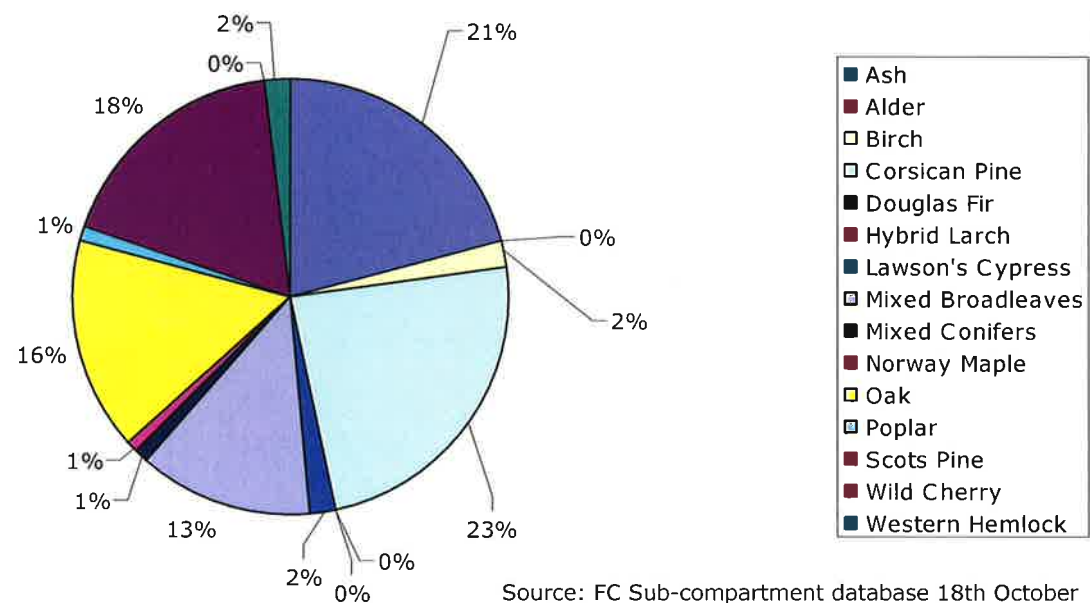


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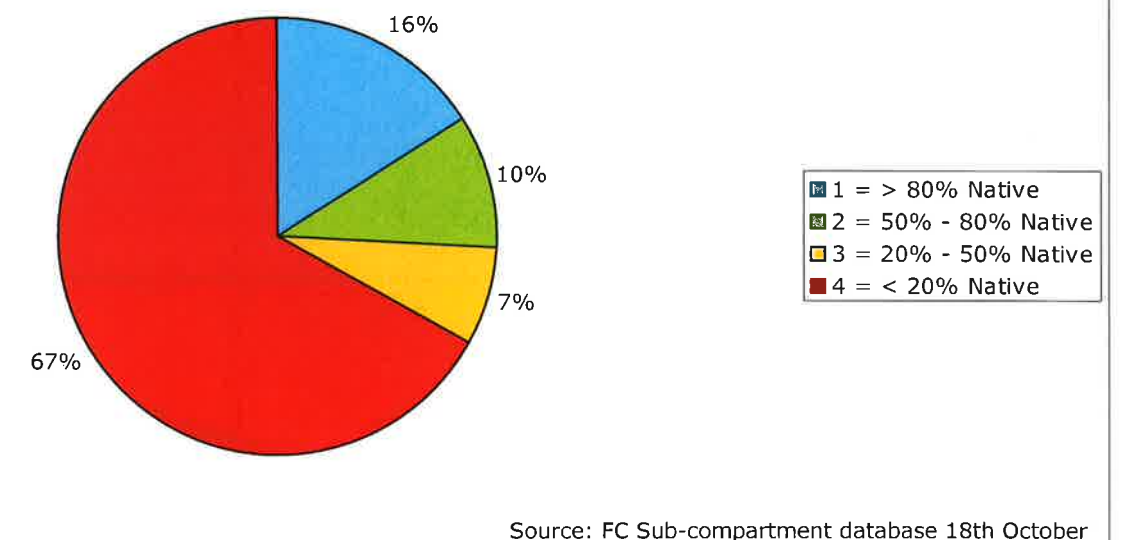




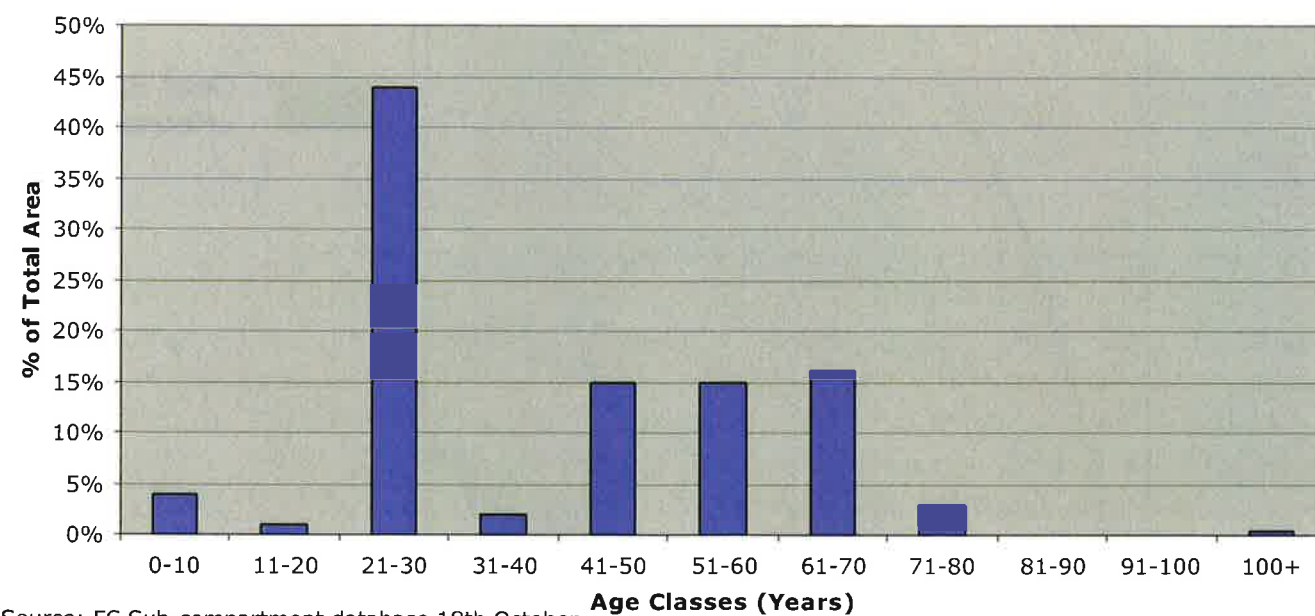
**Species Diversity - 2013**



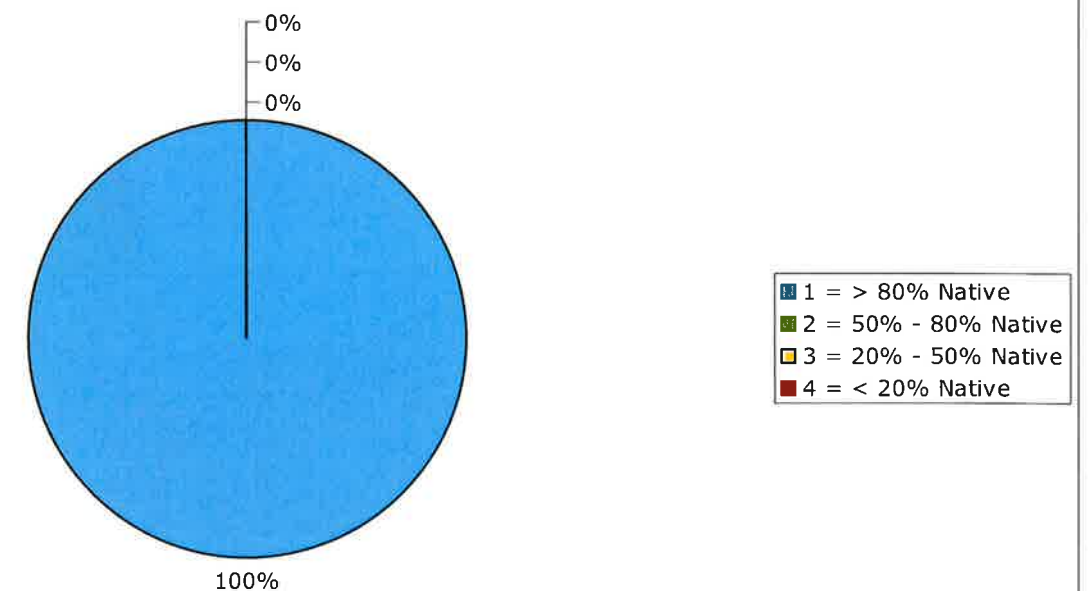
**Semi-Natural Scoring within PAWS Areas**



**Age Range - 2013**

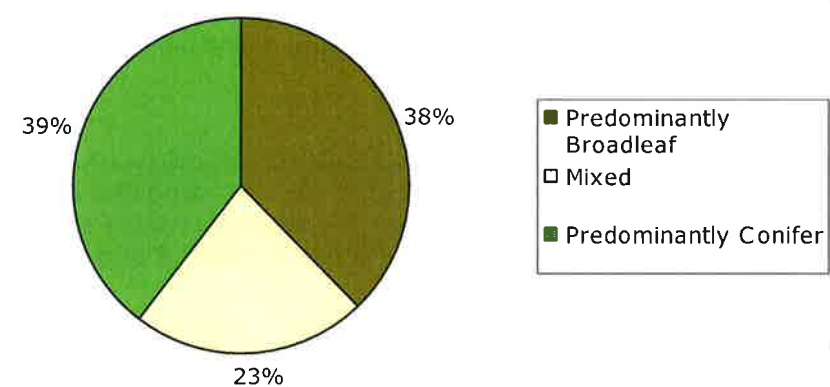


**Semi-Natural Scoring Within ASNW Areas**



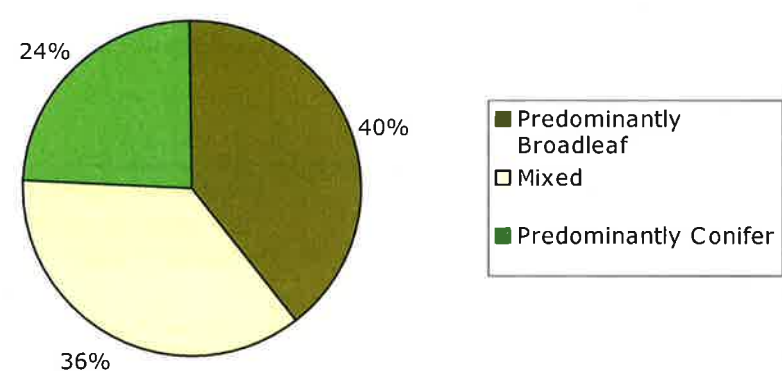


**Current Structure - 2013**

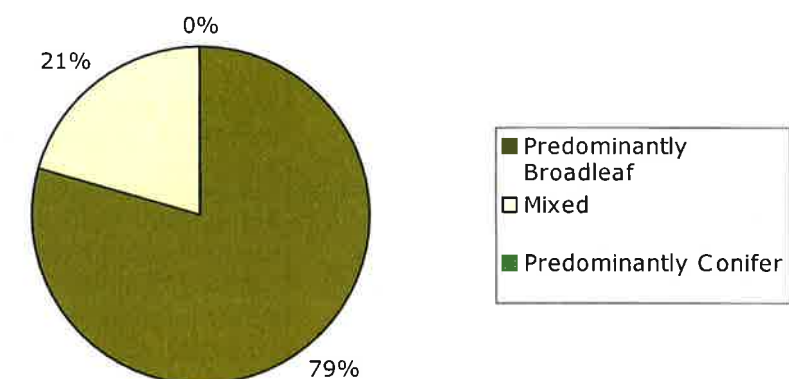


Source: FC Sub-compartment database 18th October

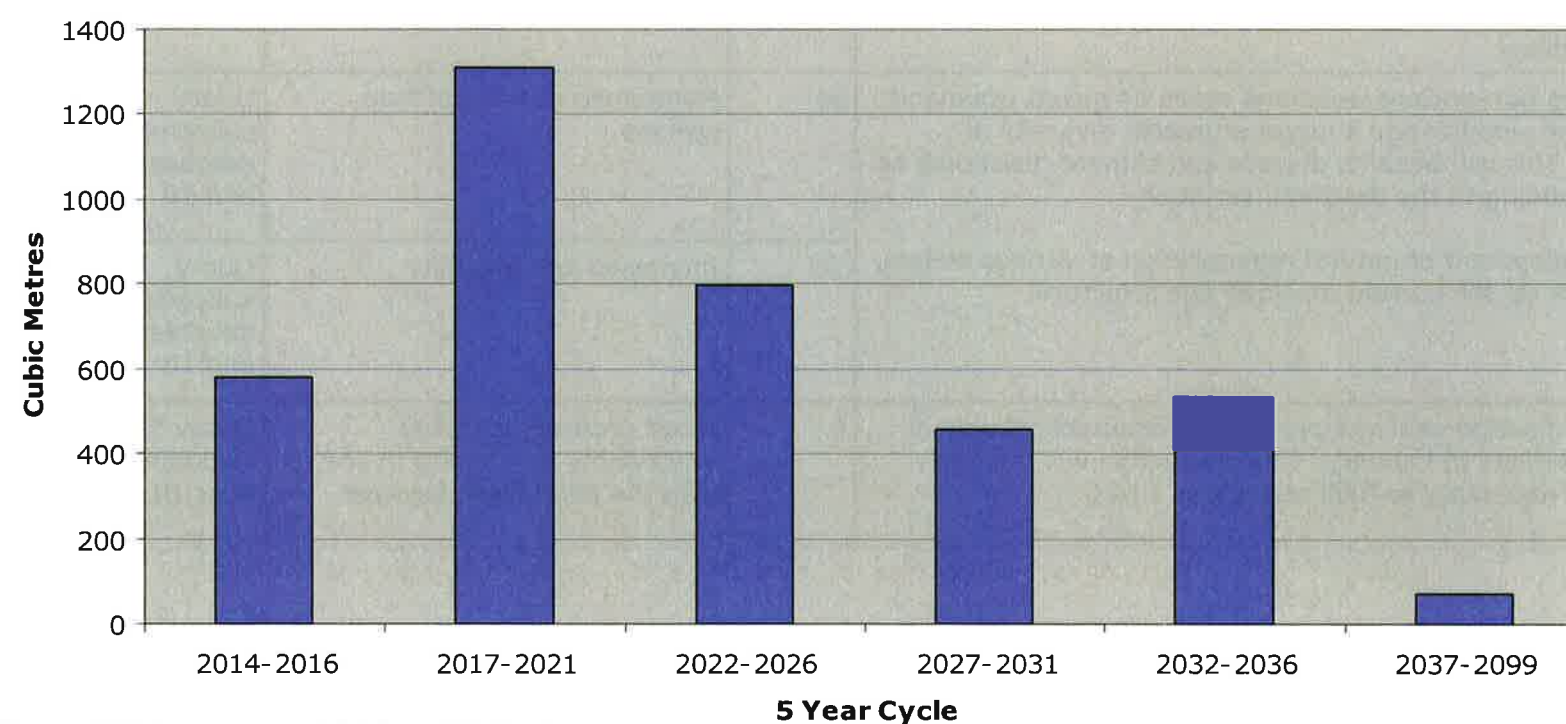
**Target Structure at Year 10**



**Long Term Target Structure**



**Strategic Production Forecast: Average Production Volume per 5 Year Cycle**



Source: FC Sub-compartment database 18th October



Objective	Proposed Actions to Meet Objective	Ref.	Output by year 10	Monitoring	Indicators of Success
Maintain and enhance native species and semi-natural features within ancient woodland.	Favouring native broadleaves during management and the use of shelterwood systems will enhance ASNW.  Invasive and non-native species will be monitored and managed accordingly to ensure the quality of ASNW is not degraded.	1	Maintained percentage of native tree species within ancient woodland sites	Semi-natural scoring via subcompartment database at years 5 and 10	Ancient semi-natural woodland areas will show a more native semi-natural score at years 5 and 10
Initiate restoration of planted ancient woodland sites to native and honorary native woodland.	Managing PAWS areas under a shelterwood system, favouring the retention of native broadleaves will increase nativity of these areas as well as increase opportunities for natural expansion of associated ground flora.	2	Increased percentage of native tree species within ancient woodland sites	Semi-natural scoring via subcompartment database at years 5 and 10	Planted on ancient woodland areas will show an increasingly native semi-natural score at years 5 and 10
Take opportunities to increase the nature conservation value of other existing habitats.	Appropriate grassland management.  Ponds and surrounding associated habitat managed to maintain the quality of habitat for reptiles.  Management will offer opportunities for identification and mapping of conservation and heritage features which will benefit future planning and operations.	3	Quality of grassland and pond habitat is maintained.	Species data to be monitored.	SINC sites remain SINC sites, thus representing continued good management.
Maintain sustainable access and the provision for recreation within the woodland, taking opportunities to enhance the experience where appropriate.	Management will offer opportunities for public engagement in forest management as well as varying the internal structure of the woodland.  Regular management also provides some financial assistance to the maintenance of tracks and roads within the woodland.	4	Record of recreational improvement opportunities that have arisen with analysis of decision making process leading to their adoption, delay or rejection.	Records	A strategic approach to decision making can be seen over time.
Maintain and, where possible, increase the species and age diversity of the woodland.	Managing non-ancient woodland areas as mixed woodland allows the woodland to support a greater diversity of species. This will benefits disease and climate resistance as well as adding to the aesthetic variation.  The development of natural regeneration at various stages, will break up the current lopsided age structure.	5a	Maintained number of tree species	Query subcompartment database at years 5 and 10	At least the same number of different tree species present at year 10
		5b	Increased age diversity	Query subcompartment database at years 5 and 10	Improved age diversity at year 10
Provide a regular supply of quality timber to support local employment and local timber processing industries.	Regular management will provide a sustainable supply of wood products to industry. This production will drive the changes necessary to fulfil objectives 1 to 5.	6	Wood products supplied sustainably to industry in line with the production forecast	Query Sales Recording Package at year 5 and year 10	Wood products supplied to industry in line with production forecast while fulfilling other objectives as well



Reference	Comments Year 5	Success?	Comments Year 10	Success?
1				
2				
3				
4				
5a				
5b				
6				



## Ancient Woodland Site

the site appears to have been woodland for several centuries (and thus probably for millennia), and is certainly unlikely to have been converted to farmland in the last couple of centuries.

## Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland

The trees and other plant species within an ancient woodland site appear to have arisen naturally rather than having been planted and are predominantly (>80%) native to the site and surrounding area.

## Clearfell

Woodland management system where tree cover is removed when the growing canopy reaches its point of maximum mean annual increment, i.e. the trees' rate of growth then starts to decline. The management area is then prepared for either replanting or allowed to regenerate naturally using the seed source already present in the soil.

## Community Woodland

Woodland management will predominantly aim to enhance the environment for recreation including clearing of paths, thinning to promote development of character trees and species diversity with a presumption towards a predominantly broadleaf woodland in the long-term.

## Minimum Intervention

Management will occur if it is deemed necessary on the grounds of either health and safety, in order to protect the woodland from invasive and/or non-native species or if a particular habitat improvement opportunity arises. Otherwise, these areas will generally receive no formal interventions.

## Mixed Woodland

Woodland consisting of a fairly even mixture of broadleaf and conifer species.

## National Vegetation Classification

A UK wide classification system used to attribute standardised descriptions to plant communities.

## Native (and honorary-native)

The trees making up the woodland are part of England's natural (or naturalised) flora. Determined by whether the trees colonised Britain without assistance from humans since the last ice age (or in the case of 'honorary natives' were brought here by people but have naturalised in historic times); and whether they would naturally be found in this part of England.

## Natural Regeneration

The process of allowing a cleared area of woodland to regenerate naturally through the germination and development of seeds found within the soil on site. These areas may still require some protection from overbearing plant species and mammal browsing. Some enrichment planting may also be necessary or desirable in areas where natural regeneration is showing limited success or in order to diversify the species range of the woodland.

## Plantation on an Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS)

The trees within an ancient woodland site appear to have been planted. These species may or may not be native to the site and surrounding area.

## Shelterwood System

Woodland management system whereby the forest canopy is maintained at one or more levels without clear felling, generally being no single interruption of tree cover of more than 0.25 hectares with a maximum of 2 interruptions of this size per hectare. Opportunities to enhance existing areas of natural regeneration will be taken along with increasing woodland edge habitat by scalloping ride and road edges for the benefit of biodiversity.

## Yield Class

The maximum average rate of volume increment which a particular stand can achieve per hectare.



This Forest Plan has been influenced by various key policy statements and guidance documents as listed below.

### **Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement – January 2013**

This document sets the direction of travel for forestry policy within England and is the reference point around which main aims and objectives of forestry and woodland management are designed.

The Statement sets out the following key objectives, in priority order:

**Protecting** the nation's trees, woodlands and forests from increasing threats such as pests, diseases and climate change.

**Improving** their resilience to these threats and their contribution to economic growth, peoples' lives and nature.

**Expanding** them to increase further their economic, social and environmental value.

### **Strategic Plan for the Public Forest Estate in England**

This Plan sets out the direction and goals for the Public Forest in England and indicates the actions we will be taking to achieve these between now and 2020. Our ambitions are long term and we will use a normal cycle of review over 5 years to embed these in local Forest Plans and ways of operating.

#### **Our Mission for the Estate**

To work with others to keep the Public Forest Estate as a special place for wildlife, people to enjoy and businesses to thrive - and achieve this by adopting a strategy that integrates all the three drivers of sustainable land management; economy, people and nature.

#### **Our Vision and Overall Goal**

*"To secure and grow the economic, social and natural capital value of the Public Forest Estate for the people of England"*

### **South England Forest District Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Management Plan is a Forest Enterprise District level document that informs local Forestry Commission staff about the management direction of the Public Forest Estate and the associated policies. The Forest Plans are a key mechanism for delivering policies on the ground.

### **Open Habitat Policy, 2010**

This is Government policy on how to decide when to convert woodland to open habitat in England.

### **Keepers of Time**

This Policy Statement celebrates the importance of our native and ancient woodlands and sets out a basis on which to achieve the following vision.

*"Ancient woodlands, veteran trees and other native woodlands are adequately protected, sustainably managed in a wider landscape context, and are providing a wide range of social, environmental and economic benefits to society."*

### **United Kingdom Forestry Standard**

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) is the reference standard for sustainable forest management in the UK. The UKFS, supported by its series of Guidelines, outlines the context for forestry in the UK, sets out the approach of the UK governments to sustainable forest management, defines standards and requirements, and provides a basis for regulation and monitoring.

### **UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)**

An independent certification standard for verifying sustainable woodland management in the United Kingdom.

### **Managing ancient and native woodland in England: Practice Guide**

This Practice Guide has been produced to help practitioners translate what measures and practical action can be taken to protect and enhance our ancient and native woodlands and guides implementation of the approaches to management and restoration trialled in woods around the country.

### **Managing deadwood in forests and woodland (2012)**

### **Choosing stand management methods for restoring planted ancient woodland sites (2013)**

### **European Landscape Convention**

The European Landscape Convention - also known as the Florence Convention, - promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues.

### **Living Landscapes: Basingstoke and Deane Natural Environment Strategy 2010**

### **Basingstoke & Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy 2013–2029**

### **The Identification of Soils for Forest Management**

Forestry Commission Field Guide produced by Fiona Kennedy in 2002.



### **Disclaimer**

To comply with General Data Protection Regulations, pages 22 - 29 have been removed from this document.



Forestry Commission (Forest Services and Forest Enterprise) should agree baseline tolerance thresholds for operations in each District beyond which exchange of letter/map or formal amendment is required. Unless otherwise specified or agreed by the Forestry Commission, amendment will be by formal revision of the plan.

	<b>Adjustment to felling coupe boundaries (1)</b>	<b>Timing of Re-stocking</b>	<b>Changes to species</b>	<b>Windthrow clearance (2)</b>	<b>Changes to road lines (3)</b>
<b>FC Approval normally not required</b>	0.5 ha or 5% of coupe - whichever is less	Up to 2 planting seasons after felling	Change within species group e.g. evergreen conifers; broadleaves	Up to 0.5ha	
<b>Approval by exchange of letters and map</b>	0.5ha to 2ha or 10% of coupe - whichever is less			0.5ha to 2ha - if mainly wind-blown trees > 2ha to 5ha in areas of low sensitivity	Additional felling of trees not agreed in plan Departures of >60m in either direction from centre line of road
<b>Approval by formal plan amendment</b>	> 2ha or 10% of coupe	Over 2 planting seasons after felling	Change from specified native species Change between species groups	> 5ha	As above, depending on sensitivity

## Notes on Tolerance Table

1. There are circumstances in which changes - of less than 0.5 ha for example - could have a dramatic visual effect. The above model does require a sensible approach to be taken by Forest Enterprise in notifying Forestry Commission when such cases arise. Local staff need to be sensitive to issues which may influence the situation (bearing in mind that small adjustments to felling coupes will not appear on the Public Register).
2. It is important that Forest Enterprise keep the FC informed about windblow clearance, which can be problematic in cases of public complaint, and in FC compliance monitoring. In some cases a modification of the proposals for the remaining area of the Plan may need to be submitted and approved. Clearance of blow should not require approval but will be needed for related standing trees.
3. It is recognised that roading proposals as marked on Road Plans are necessarily somewhat indicative, in that actual roading operations require to take account of features not always apparent at the time of roadline planning. Accordingly some leeway is acceptable to account for this.



