

# Creech Woods

## Location

Creech wood totals 181 hectares in area and lies some two miles west of Waterlooville and some four miles north of Portsmouth in south east Hampshire.

## Tenure

Forestry Commission is the freehold owner of the woodlands.

## Landscape

Creech is not significant in the wider landscape although the forest edge can be viewed from a number of minor county roads within the immediate vicinity.

The internal landscape is more important which includes the minor county road that bi-sects the wood. The mature woodland that flanks this road is a particular feature and should be retained subject to public safety being maintained. Elsewhere the effects of the replanting following the 1987 storm has resulted in a disproportionate area of juvenile plantation within the interior of the wood.

## Current Woodland Structure

Creech Woods is not classified as ancient woodland. The woodland is quite mixed, consisting of approximately 60% conifer and 40% broadleaved trees. Conifer species include Norway Spruce, Douglas Fir and Corsican Pine. A small amount of Larch is also present. Oak is the predominant broadleaved species with some Ash, Birch and Beech also present.

The age class of canopy trees ranges from 0 to over 100 years old. A good proportion, around 10% of the woodland, is under 10 years old. This provides good structural diversity across the woodland.

There is also a good proportion of open space, mainly concentrated along the powerline wayleave in the north western end of the woodland but supported by wide edges to the road and ride network.

While not formally noted on the Ancient Woodland Inventory, Creech Woods is a very old piece of woodland. Increased structural diversity will aim to enhance and expand native woodland characteristics such as ground flora.

## Biodiversity and Conservation

The woodland is notified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation due to the presence of pasture woodland and/or wooded commons.

The variety of broadleaved and coniferous woodland, added to open space along the ride and road network and linked to the powerline wayleave gives rise to suitable habitats for invertebrates and in turn woodland birds. Small and medium sized mammals, as well as reptiles have also been recorded.

During management interventions, opportunities for ride widening and habitat enhancement will be taken to increase the ecotone of the woodland and provide connecting habitats for associated species. Decisions about where such enhancement work will take place will be made at the operational stage of management.

## People

Creech Woods are used informally for recreation by many local people for an array of activities including cycling, running and walking.

Recreational activity has increased dramatically in recent years, particularly since the installation of a play park and easy access trails. The woodland also has a visual impact while travelling along the Bunker Hill road which bisects the woodland.

The woodland is dedicated for open access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000).

Open junctions, wide rides and clear paths enhance the experience of a walk around Creech Woods. 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 widening rides.

## Historic Environment

There are no recorded historical features within Creech Woods, although it is known to have played a role in D-Day preparations during World War II. Continued monitoring will take place to ensure that anything relevant found is recorded and fed into operational planning in line with statutory responsibilities and best practice guidelines.

## Soils

The soils are predominantly clays, being relatively poorly drained with periods of waterlogging during the winter months.

## Water

Drains are the only water flows through the woodlands. There are also a number of ponds which provide good reptile habitat.

## Tree Diseases and Pests

The main diseases of concern currently are *Chalara Fraxinea* (Ash Dieback), *Dothistroma* (red band) Needle Blight on Corsican Pine, and *Phytophthora ramorum* on Larch. Although Ash and Larch are minimal if present at all within the woodland, Corsican Pine is a significant species. Dothistroma therefore poses some risk of forced structural change.

There is some American Cherry within the woodland. This will continue to be managed towards eradication. Monitoring will take place to ensure that and any other species which pose a threat to native flora do not become established.





Forestry Commission

South England Forest District

Crech

Location

Key



Crech Woods

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Forestry Commission

South England Forest District

**Creech**

**Aerial**

Key



Creech Woods

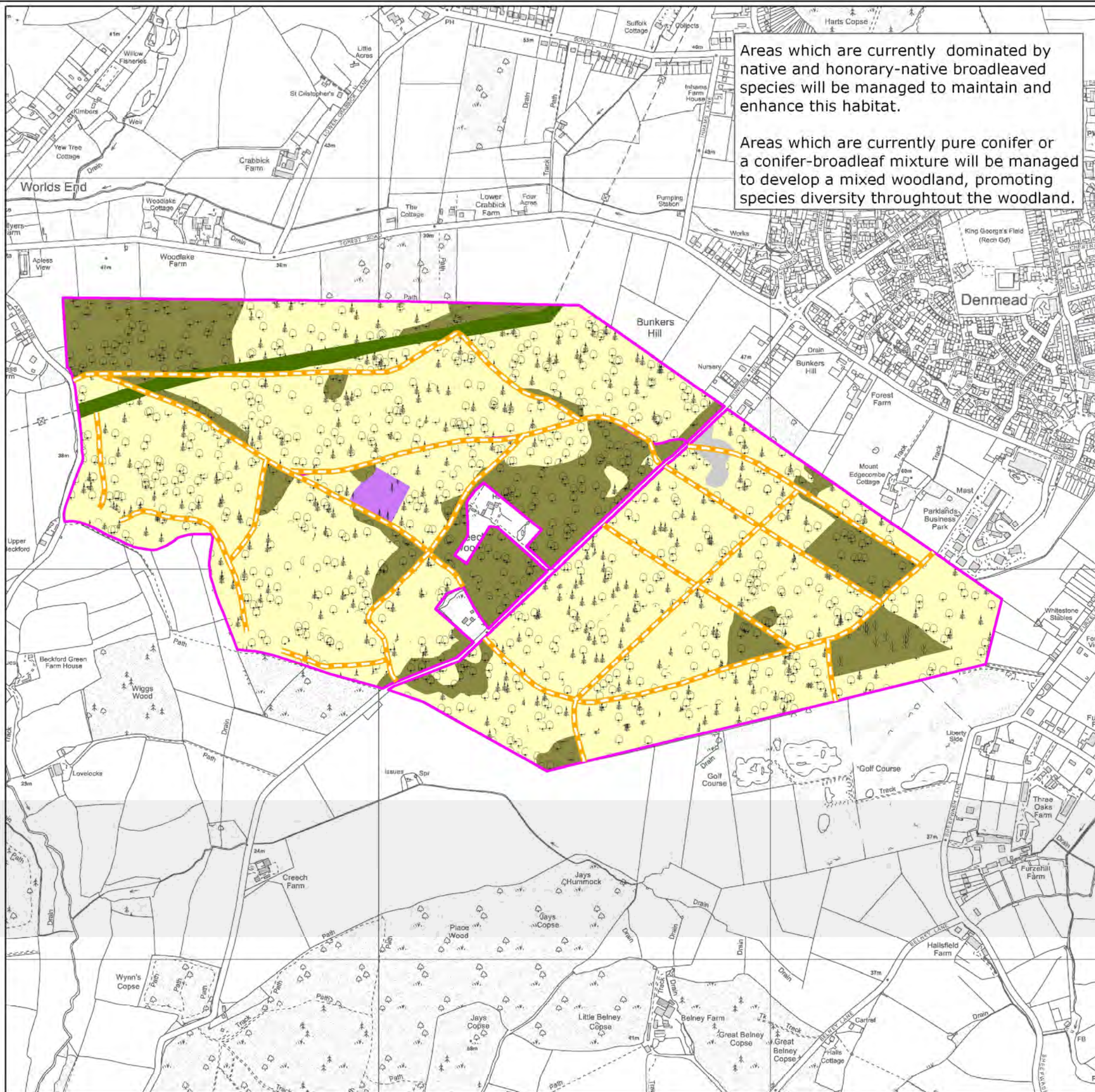
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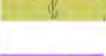


## Creech Woods


### Long Term Vision




South England Forest District

#### KEY

-  Predominantly (>80%) native and honorary-native broadleaved woodland.
-  Mixed Woodland.  
No species type (broadleaf or conifer) represents more than 80% of the canopy.
-  Predominantly (>80%) conifer woodland.
-  Coppice
-  Conifer woodland with heathland developing in open areas.
-  Road/Ride Edges providing habitat connectivity.

 Compartments

 Sub-Compartments

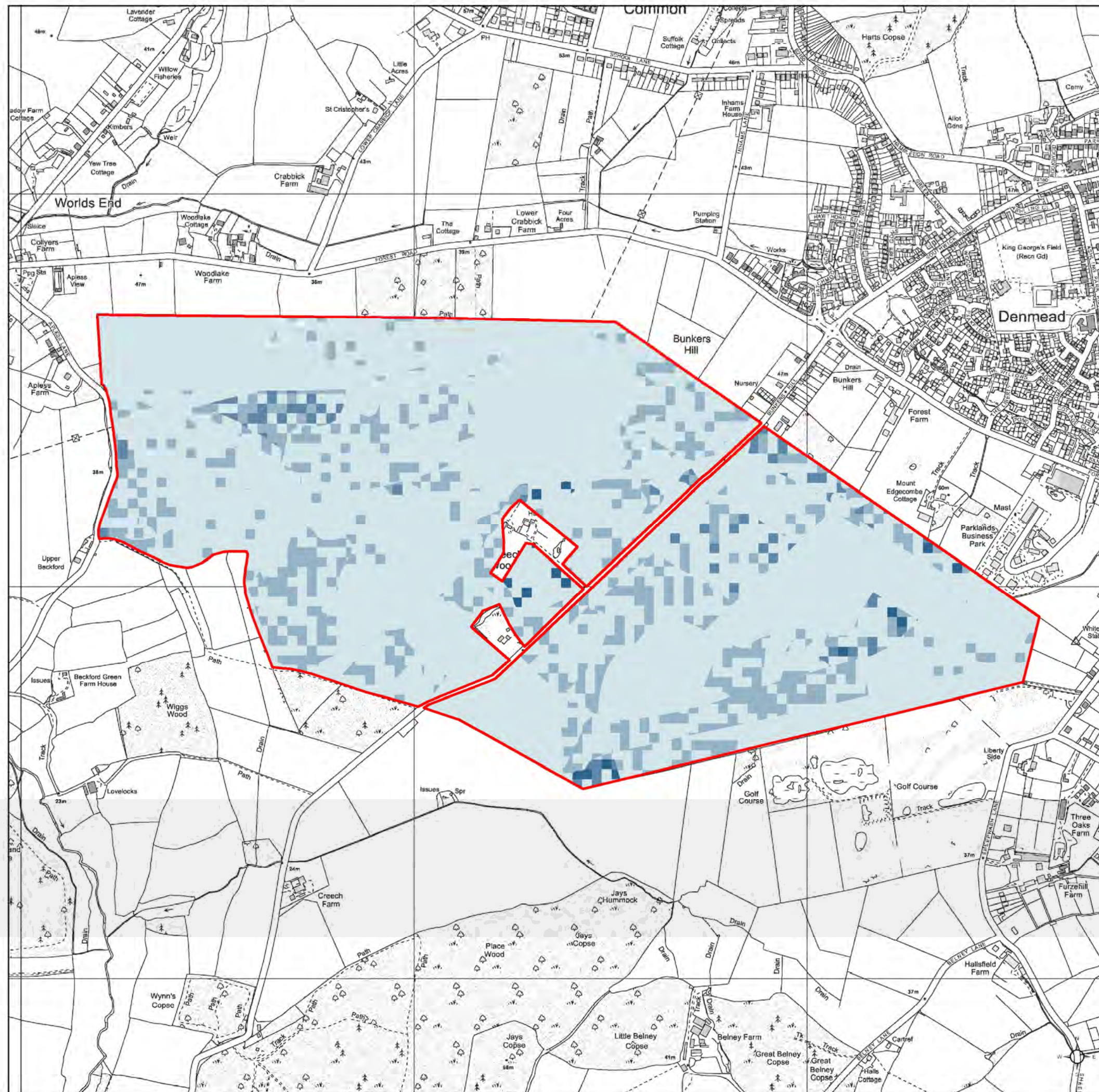
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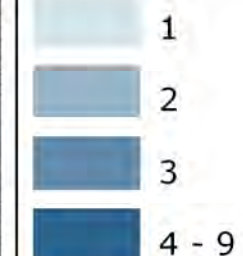
# Creech Woods

## Indicative Species Diversity



### Key

Number of component species within canopy  
(including open space)



Creech Woods

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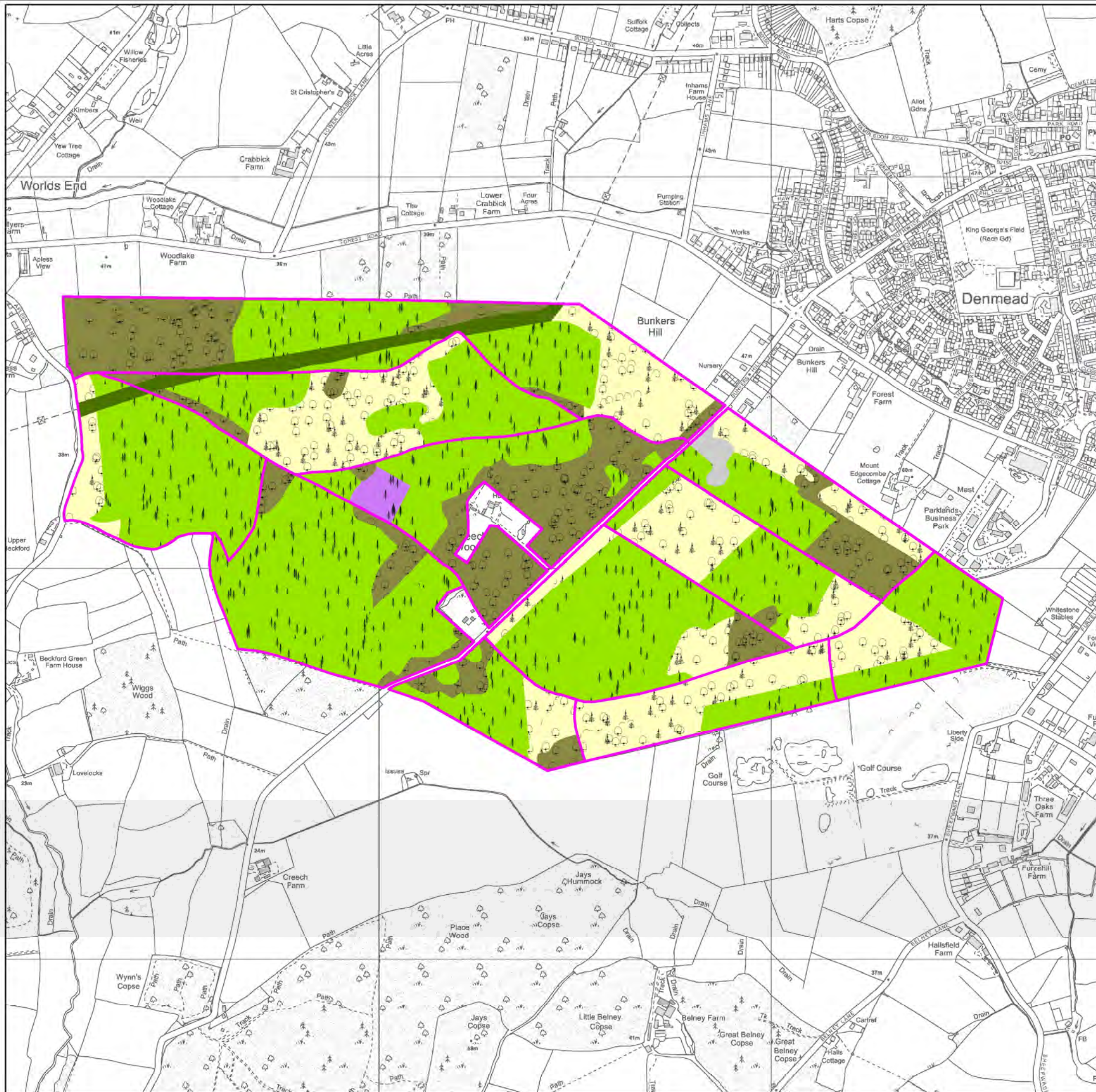
Forestry Commission  
woodlands have  
been certified in  
accordance with the  
rules of the Forest  
Stewardship Council











# Creech Woods Indicative Current Structure



## KEY

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- Compartments
- Sub-Compartments

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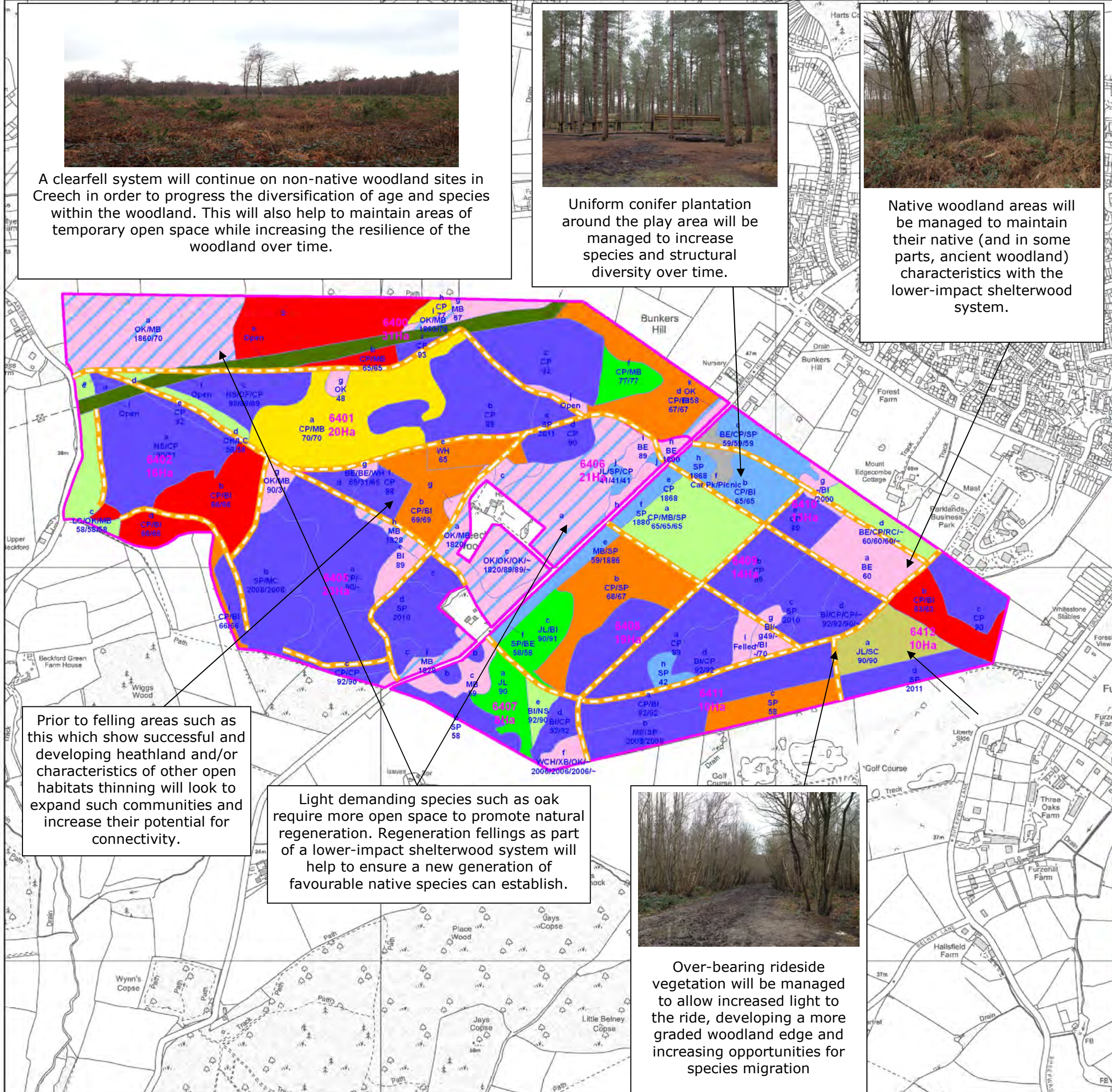
A clearfell system will continue on non-native woodland sites in Creech in order to progress the diversification of age and species within the woodland. This will also help to maintain areas of temporary open space while increasing the resilience of the woodland over time.



Uniform conifer plantation around the play area will be managed to increase species and structural diversity over time.



Native woodland areas will be managed to maintain their native (and in some parts, ancient woodland) characteristics with the lower-impact shelterwood system.



Prior to felling areas such as this which show successful and developing heathland and/or characteristics of other open habitats thinning will look to expand such communities and increase their potential for connectivity.

Light demanding species such as oak require more open space to promote natural regeneration. Regeneration fellings as part of a lower-impact shelterwood system will help to ensure a new generation of favourable native species can establish.



Over-bearing rideside vegetation will be managed to allow increased light to the ride, developing a more graded woodland edge and increasing opportunities for species migration

# Creech Woods Habitat Restoration & Felling



## KEY

- Native Broadleaved Woodland Management. Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system, favouring best native tree and focussing on the production of quality timber.
- Maturing (>90 years old) Oak Woodland Management. Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system, favouring best native tree and focussing on the production of quality timber. In addition, implement regeneration fellings in accordance with the table below.
- Mixed Woodland Management. Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system. Favour best tree, focussing on the production of quality timber and species diversity.
- Long Term Retention. Manage under a single tree selection system. Retain best tree for amenity and landscape value through thinning.
- Road/Ride Edge Management. Enhance the woodland edge, developing a scalloped and graded structure in accordance with best practice guidelines.
- Car Park

## Felling Periods

- |              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| 2014 - 2016  | 2017 - 2021      |
| 2022 - 2026  | 2027 - 2031      |
| 2032 - 2036  | 2037 - 2041      |
| Beyond 2042  |                  |
| Compartments | Sub-Compartments |

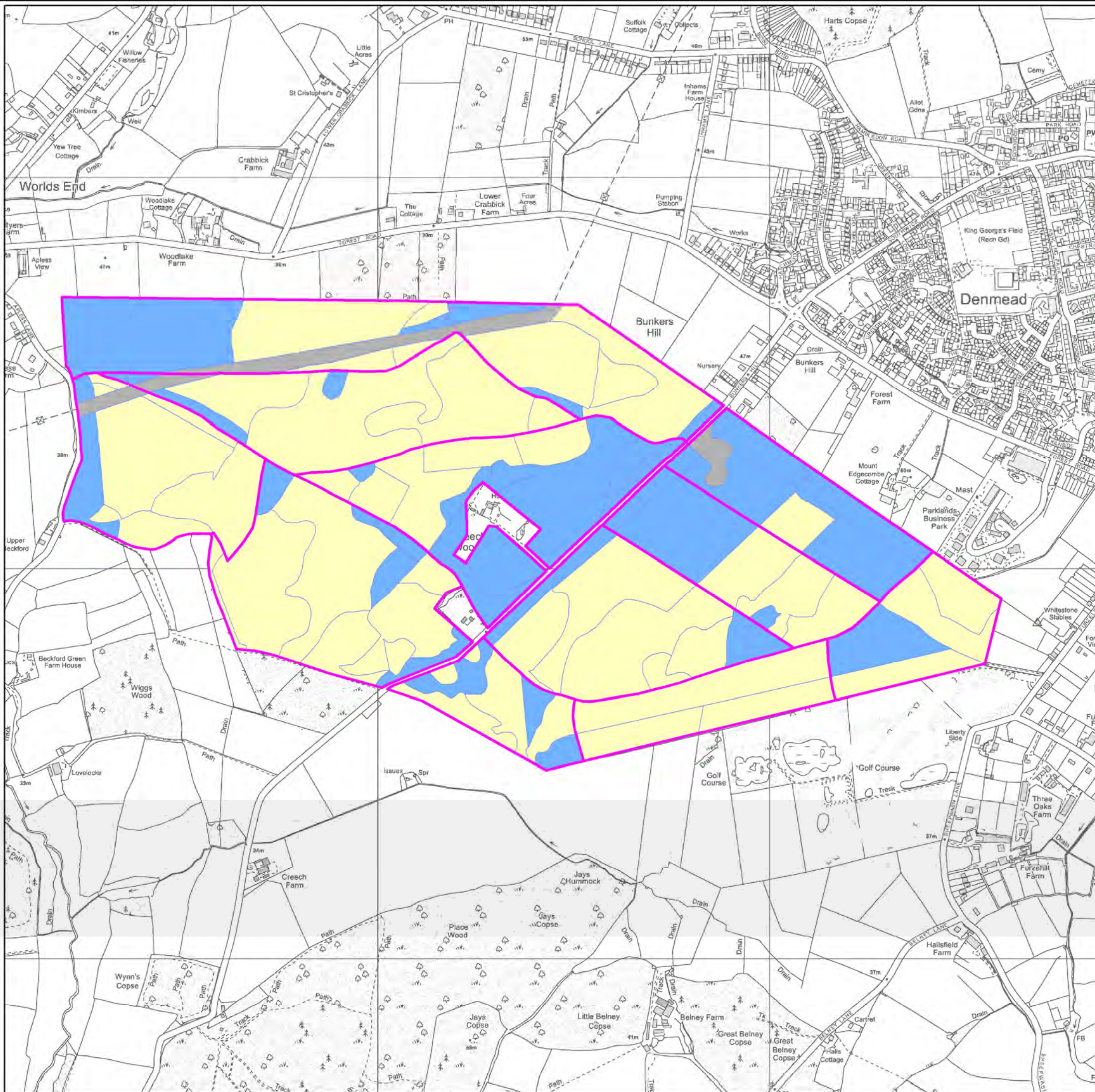
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# Creech Woods Regeneration Plan

Forestry Commission  
England  
South England Forest District

## KEY

- Natural Regeneration
- Planted
- Car Park or Other Open Space
- Compartments
- Sub-Compartments

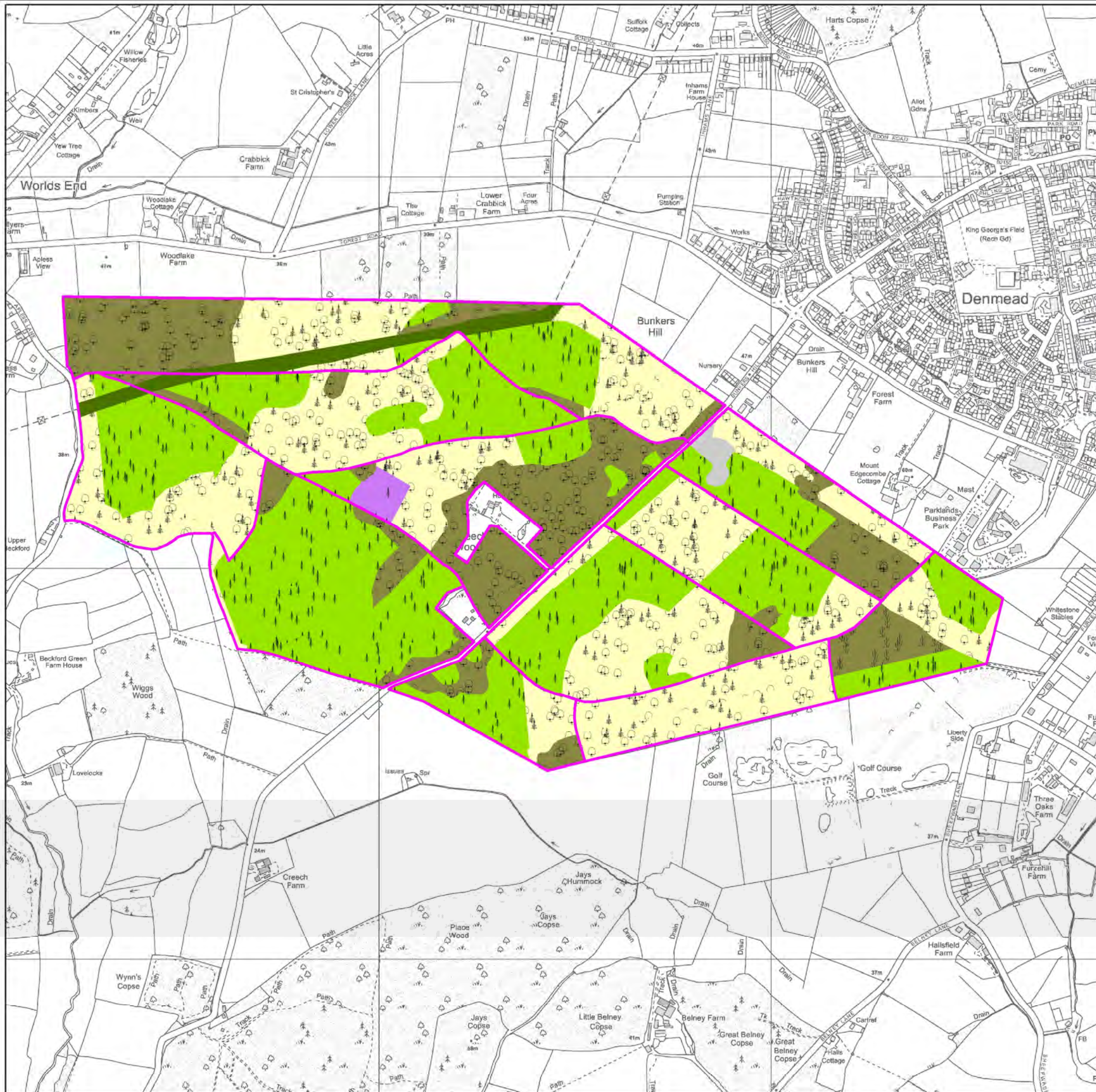
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# Creech Woods Indicative Structure at Year 10



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