

# Whiteley Pastures

## Location

Whiteley Pastures totals some 200 hectares in area lying immediately north of the town of Whiteley in southern Hampshire.

## Tenure

The Forestry Commission owns the freehold of the areas it manages within Whiteley Pastures.

## Landscape

Whiteley Pastures provides a natural backdrop to the surrounding developments including the Whiteley Shopping Village, Solent business Park and residential areas.

In terms of size, the woodland block (which includes the neighbouring woodland known as Botley Woods, currently managed by Hampshire County Council) is significant within the local landscape, with only West Walk, 4 kilometres to the north east of comparable scale.

## Current Woodland Structure

Approximately 43% of the woodland area (~87ha) is classified as ancient semi-natural woodland and around 21% of the woodland area (~42ha) is classified as plantation on an ancient woodland site. The woodland is dominated by native and honourary native broadleaves, which account for around 70% of the area. Oak is the most abundant species, covering around 35% of the area.

There is a good proportion of historic coppice habitat within the woodland. It is planned to continue a rotational coppice with standards system which was reinitiated in 2009 within these areas.

Norway Spruce and Lodgepole Pine make up the majority of the conifer component of the woodland which accounts for around 30% of the woodland.

The age class of canopy trees ranges from 0 to over 100 years old. However, over 60% of the area falls within the 51–60 years old age class. This highlights the need for increased species diversity.

There is also a good proportion of open space, around 6% of the area in addition to the wide edges to the road and ride network.

## Biodiversity and Conservation

Most of the woodland is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The citation from 1986 describes the reasons for designation as the importance of the rich insect population, particularly moths and butterflies, dependent on woodland clearings and herb-rich ride sides. The remnant semi-natural deciduous woodland also benefits these populations.

A SSSI Management Plan is in place which provides further detail about how we plan to implement the direction set within this Forest Plan. This will always be referred to when planning operational work within the woodland.

Areas of Ancient Woodland and associated features are key points of conservation interest within the woodland. Their considered restoration will enhance the important habitats and will look to improve the condition of the SSSI.

There are a number of areas which are characteristic of wet woodland. These areas are important within the wider landscape by providing 'stepping stones' to other similar habitats in the locality.

The variety of broadleaved and coniferous woodland, added to open space along the ride and road network through the woodland gives rise to suitable habitats for invertebrates and in turn woodland birds. Small and medium mammals including bats have been recorded in recent years as well as important reptiles.

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 invertebrates and other associated species such as woodland birds, particularly nightingale.

Decisions about where such enhancement work will take place will be made at the operational stage of management.

## People

Whiteley Pastures is dedicated for open access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), allowing open public access.

Despite being so close to a highly populous urban area, the woodland is not heavily used by members of the public. However, potential future increases in development around the woodland will likely create a proportionate increase in recreational activities if they go ahead. Such an increase must be managed carefully to ensure the habitats within the woodland are protected.

Open junctions, wide rides and clear paths enhance the experience of a walk around Whiteley Pastures. During management interventions opportunities to enhance the visual impact of rides and individual trees will also be taken by selecting trees for retention based on character.

## Historic Environment

There is evidence of a historical drove or road running through the woodland. Continued monitoring will take place to ensure that any additional relevant finds are recorded and fed into operational planning in line with statutory responsibilities and best practice guidelines.

## Soils

Whiteley Pastures lies in the Hampshire basin on a low plateau above the river Itchen. The underlying geology is of sand and gleys at higher elevations, part of the Bracklesham beds, with Bagshot sands at lower elevations in the southern part of the wood.

### Water

There are a number of streams flowing through Whiteley Pastures. All of which eventually flow into the either the River Itchen or the River Meon.

There are also numerous ponds that have been created in recent years.

Management practices within the woodland can have an impact on downstream temperatures and water quality.

### Tree Diseases and Pests

The main diseases of concern in the local area at the present time are *Chalara Fraxinea* (Ash Dieback), *Dothistroma* (red band) Needle Blight on Corsican Pine, and *Phytophthora ramorum* on Larch. These species are limited within Whiteley Pastures, so the risk they pose is minimal.

However, there is quite a heavy reliance on oak. With one species accounting for around 35% of the woodland cover, should a prolific oak pathogen arise, it could pose a significant risk to the structure of the woodland. This highlights the need for increased species diversity within the woodland.

Within the wet woodland areas, Alder is a key species. These areas will be monitored for *Phytophthora alni* to ensure appropriate action is taken should this threat arise.

There are no records of invasive non-native plant species within Whiteley Pastures, but continued monitoring will take place to ensure that those species which pose a threat to native flora do not become established.





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South England Forest District

## Whitely Pastures

### Location

Key



Whitely Pastures

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South England Forest District

# Whitely Pastures

## Aerial

Key

 Whitely Pastures

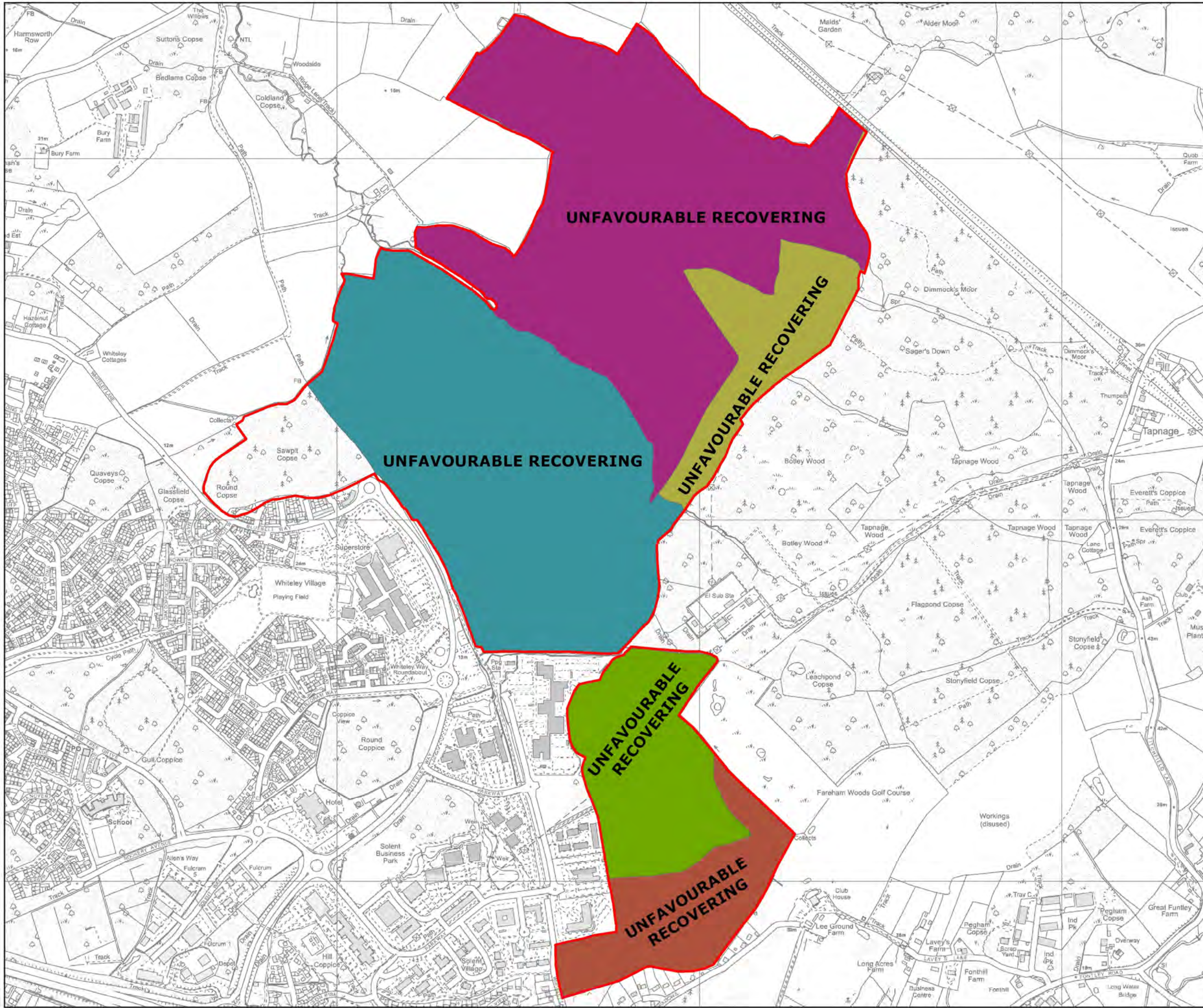
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## Whiteley Pastures

**SSSI Condition  
Assessed 03/2014**

### Key

Botley Woods and  
Everitts Coppice SSSI Unit

- Unit 1
- Unit 2
- Unit 3
- Unit 4
- Unit 5

Whiteley Pastures  
Management Area

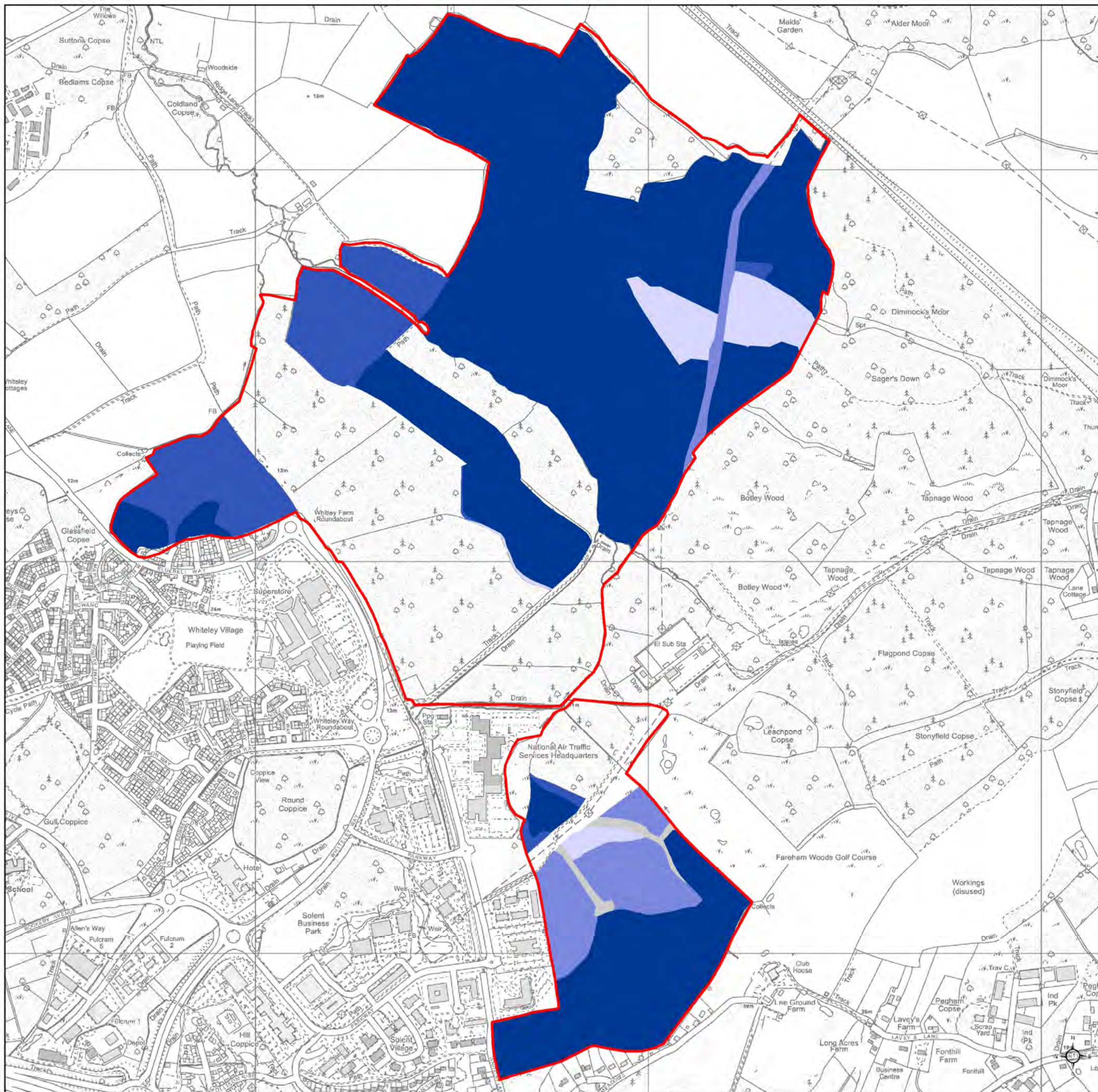
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# Whiteley Pastures

## Ancient Woodland Semi-Natural Scoring



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### Key

#### Ancient Woodland Areas

- 1 - Over 80% native
- 2 - Between 50% and 80% native
- 3 - Between 20% and 50% native
- 4 - Less than 20% native
- Currently open or un-established woodland

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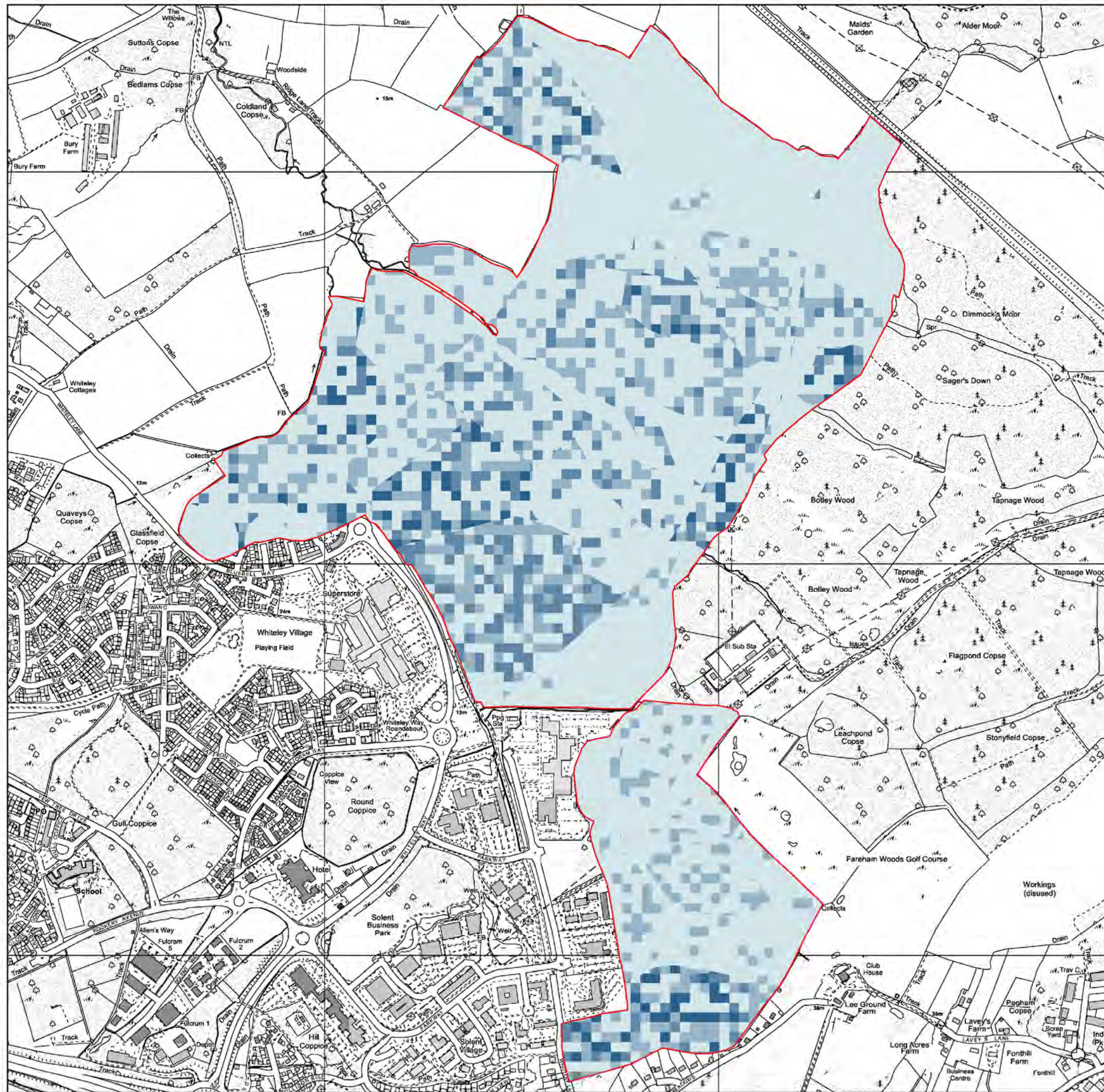
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woodlands have  
been certified in  
accordance with the  
rules of the Forest  
Stewardship Council







# Whiteley Pastures

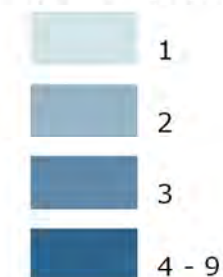
## Indicative Species Diversity



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### Key

Number of component species within canopy  
(including open space)



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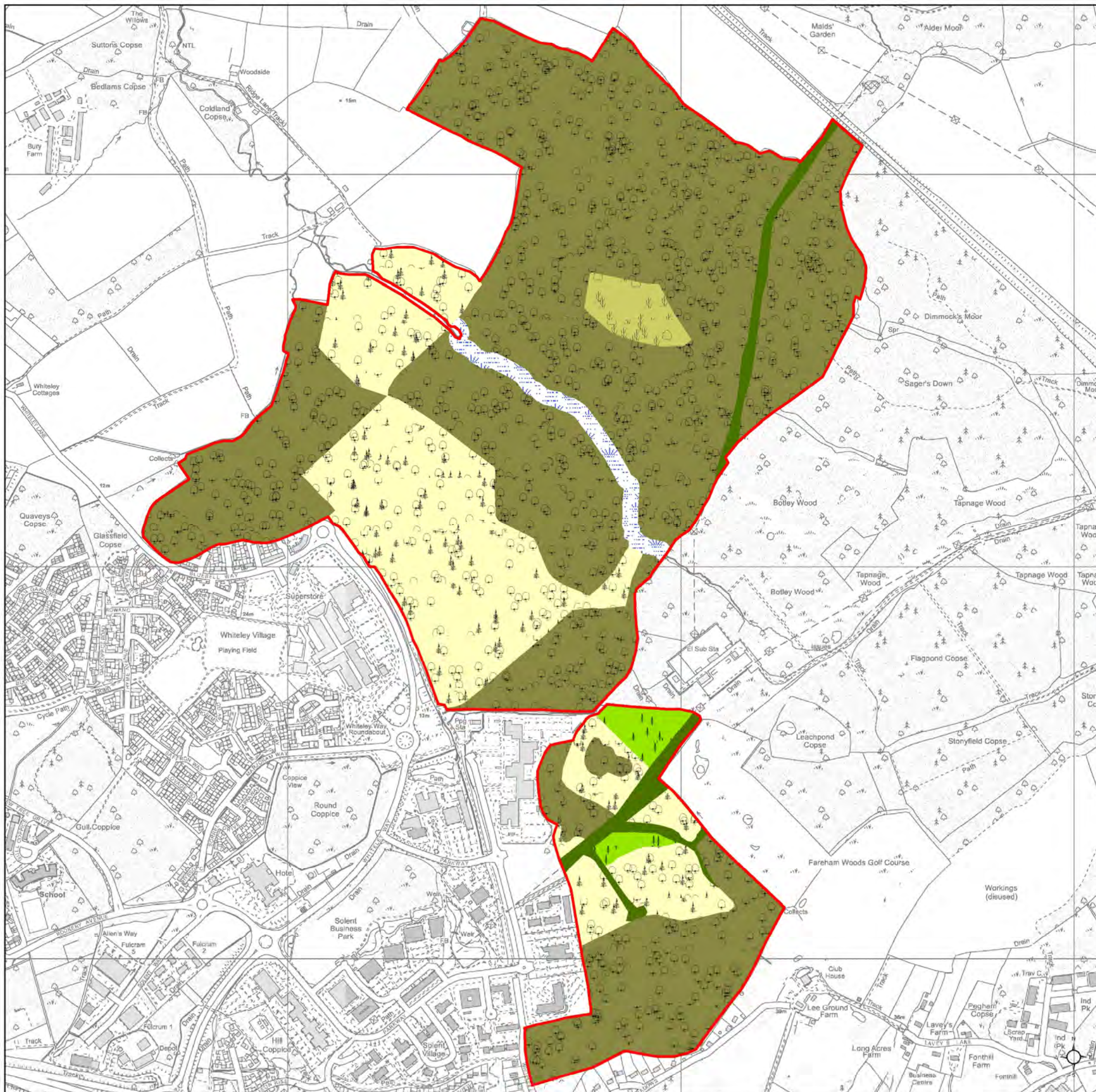
















## Whiteley Pastures

### Indicative Current Structure



#### Key

-  Predominantly (>80%) native and honorary-native broadleaved woodland
-  Native broadleaved rotational coppice with standards
-  Mixed Woodland.  
No species type (broadleaf or conifer)  
represents more than 80% of the canopy
-  Predominantly (>80%) conifer woodland
-  Wet woodland and riverine habitat
-  Open Space
-  Whiteley Pastures Management Area

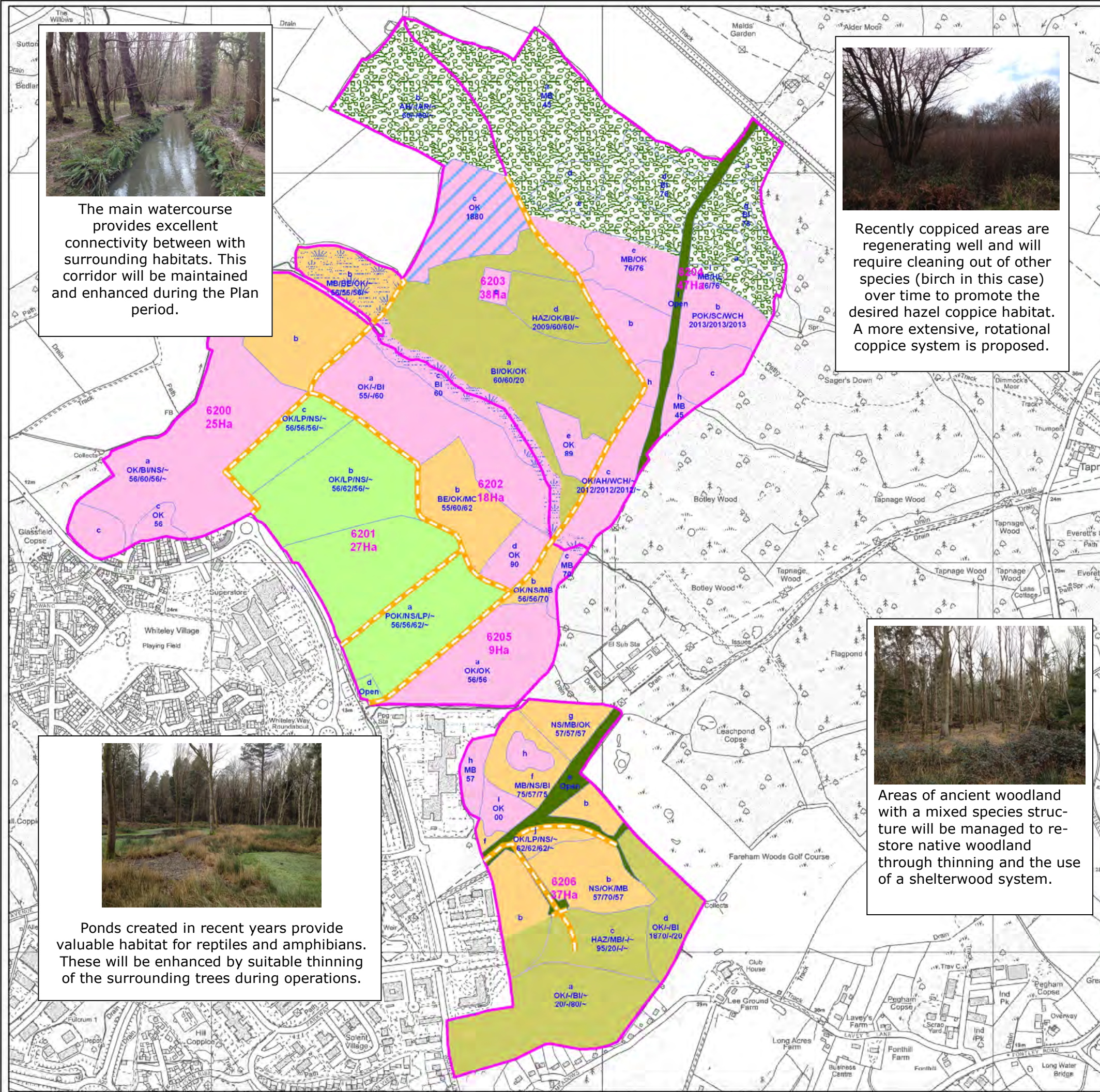
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The main watercourse provides excellent connectivity between with surrounding habitats. This corridor will be maintained and enhanced during the Plan period.



Recently coppiced areas are regenerating well and will require cleaning out of other species (birch in this case) over time to promote the desired hazel coppice habitat. A more extensive, rotational coppice system is proposed.



Ponds created in recent years provide valuable habitat for reptiles and amphibians. These will be enhanced by suitable thinning of the surrounding trees during operations.



Areas of ancient woodland with a mixed species structure will be managed to restore native woodland through thinning and the use of a shelterwood system.

# Whiteley Pastures Habitat Restoration & Felling



## KEY

- Native Broadleaved Woodland Management. Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system, favouring a diversity of native species, age class and character.
- Maturing (>90 years old) Oak Woodland Management. Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system, favouring best native tree and focussing on the development of age and species diversity. Implement 1 regeneration felling to a maximum size of 2 hectares to encourage natural regeneration of oak.
- Native Woodland Restoration. Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system. Favour a diversity of native species, age class and character with the gradual reduction of non-native species to 5% of the canopy or less.
- Mixed Woodland Management. Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system. Favour best tree, focussing on the production of quality timber and species diversity.
- Coppice with Standards. Thin the canopy to reduce cover to a maximum of 20%. Coppice understorey in an appropriate rotation to benefit biodiversity while taking market opportunities to utilise products.
- Wet Woodland/Riverine Habitat Management. Individual tree selection to encourage native riverine habitat development.
- Wet Woodland/Riverine Habitat Restoration. Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system. Favour best native tree, focussing on the removal of non-native species and the development of wet woodland and riverine habitat characteristics.
- Natural Reserve
- Open
- Road/Ride Edge Management. Enhance the woodland edge, developing a scalloped and graded structure in accordance with best practice guidelines.
- Compartments
- Sub-Compartments

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