

# Black Wood

## Location

Black Wood is situated approximately 5 miles south west of Basingstoke and 8 miles north east of Winchester between the A303 and the A33.

## Tenure

Forestry Commission owns the freehold for Black Wood and the surrounding Waltham Trinleys, Rownest Wood and Embley Wood.

## Landscape

Black Wood is significant in terms of woodland cover within the local landscape. Black Wood is 275 hectares in size with the other woodlands being an average of 26 hectares. The woodlands are surrounded by mixed agriculture, small villages and the larger conurbation of Basingstoke to the north east.

In accordance with the European Landscape Convention, these aspects have informed this Forest Plan.

## Current Woodland Structure

Approximately 6% of the woodland area (~21ha) is classified as ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) with around 50% (180ha) classified as plantation on an ancient woodland site (PAWS). Native broadleaves account for over 85% of the total area. Beech is by far the dominant species, making up 82% of the woodland. 14 different species of broadleaves and conifers account for the remaining 18%.

The age class of canopy trees ranges from 0 to over 100 years old. The age distribution is very biased to older classes, with over 90% of the woodland area covered by trees of over 50 years old.

There is also a proportion of open space provided within woodland.

## Biodiversity and Conservation

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

Areas of the woodland have been designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) by Hampshire County Council due to the ancient woodland status.

There are no statutory conservation designations on this site.

Recently, records of conservation interest within the woodlands include butterflies and small mammals. Monitoring will be ongoing, particularly at the operational stage.

During management interventions, opportunities for ride widening and 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.

## People

Black Wood is the site of a Forest Holidays cabin site. Planning approval for this

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development required the preparation of and adherence to a management plan for the woodland. The Black Wood Management Plan was produced in 2010 by The Landscape Partnership on behalf of Forest Holidays. The proposals within this Forest Plan compliment the spirit of the management plan but do not encroach upon its necessity in any way.

The wider reaches of Black Wood are used informally for recreation by many local people for an array of activities including cycling, running and walking.

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

Embley Wood is within the boundary of Stratton Park which is a Registered Park and Garden.

There is also a number of unscheduled features within Black Wood, Waltham Trinleys and Embley Wood.

These features will be fully included during the operational management of the woodland in line with statutory responsibilities and best practice guidelines.

## Soils

The soils of Black Wood are characterised as Calcarious. Calcarious soils are generally gleys (characterised by permanent or seasonal waterlogging ) with a pH greater than 7.

Embley Wood, Rownest Wood and Waltham Trinleys are all characterised as Brown Earths. Brown Earths are free draining with good aeration with organic matter well incorporated into the mineral soil. (Kennedy, 2002)

## Water

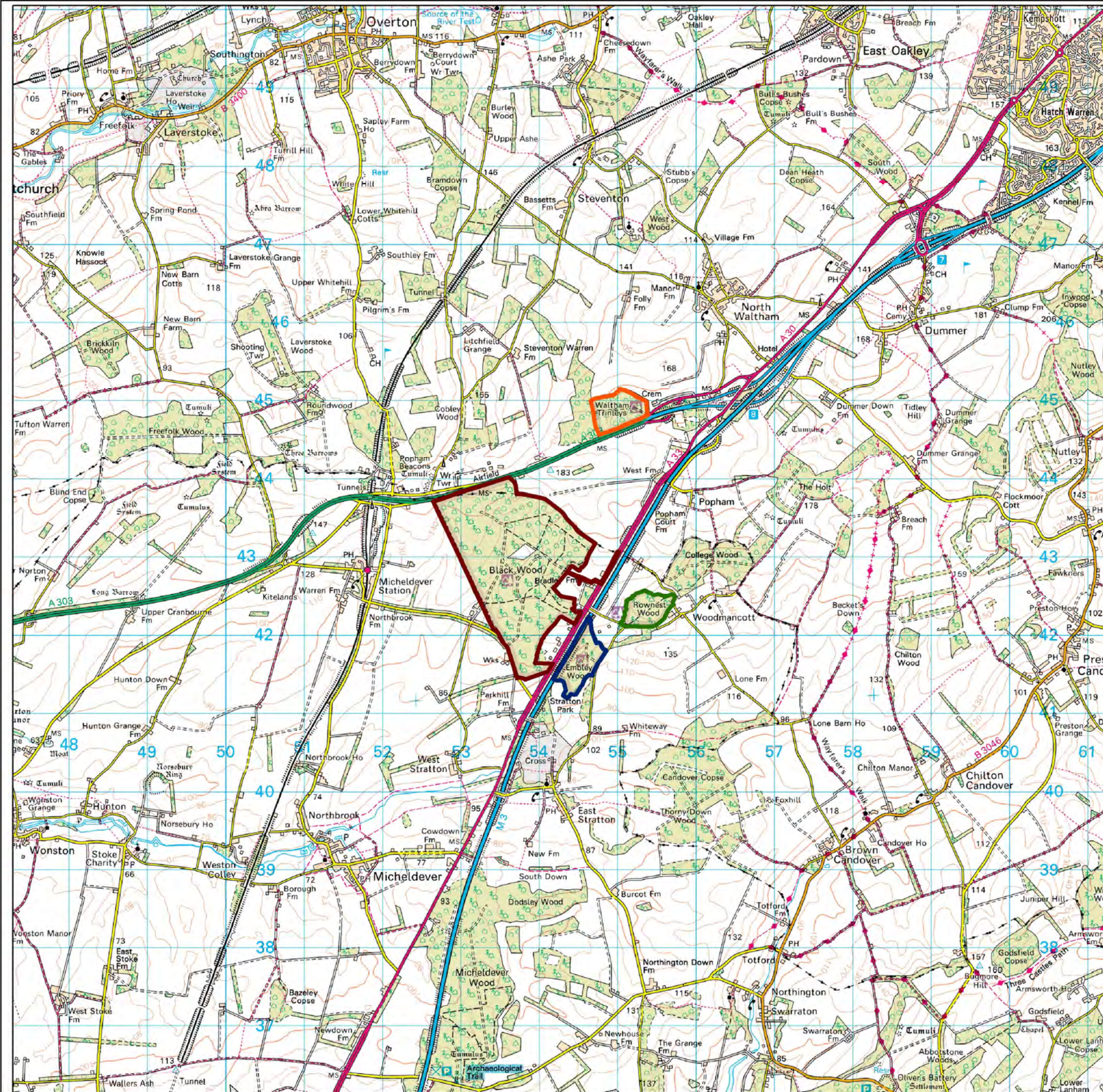
Drains are the only water flows through the woodlands. Opportunities for enhancement of such habitats will be identified during operational planning and acted upon as resources allow.

## 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. These species are limited within Black Wood and so pose little threat to the woodland as a whole; however, with such a reliance on one species there is a risk of forced structural change if a prolific pathogen of Beech arises, highlighting the need for increased species diversity.

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





# Black Wood Block

## Location



### KEY

-  Black Wood Boundary
-  Embley Wood Boundary
-  Rownest Wood Boundary
-  Waltham Trinley's

1:50,000

Date: 24/07/2014

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**Black Wood**  
**Aerial**



Key

 Black Wood Management Area

Date: 22/04/2014

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