

Weston Common

Location

Weston Common is situated approximately 3 miles north of Alton in Hampshire.

Tenure

Forestry Commission owns the freehold for Weston Common.

Landscape

The Forestry Commission managed part of the woodland makes up around half of a larger block of woodland known as Weston Common. Within the surrounding landscape the Weston Common block is larger than the average size of surrounding woodlands but is not on the same scale as Black Wood and Micheldever to the west or Alice Holt Forest to the east. The Forestry Commission manages 67 hectares of Weston Common. The woodlands are surrounded by mixed agriculture and small villages.

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

Current Woodland Structure

Approximately 16% of the woodland area (~11ha) is classified as ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) with around 40% (27ha) classified as plantation on an ancient woodland site (PAWS).

Native and honorary native broadleaves account for approximately 35% of the total area. Beech is by far the dominant native species, making up 27% of the woodland. The most prominent species is *Nothofagus oblique* (southern beech) which accounts for around 28% of the woodland.

The age class of canopy trees ranges from 0 to 80 years old. The age distribution is weighted to two age classes, illustrating historical planting. The majority of the trees (70%) within the woodland are either 31 to 40 years old or 61 to 70 years old.

Biodiversity and Conservation

Areas of ancient woodland and associated features are the main points of nature conservation interest within Weston Common.

Areas of the woodland have been adopted 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.

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

The woodland 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 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

A scheduled monument, lying mostly outwith the boundary of Forestry Commission ownership, impacts on an area in the western part of Weston Common.

This, along with any other features discovered and recorded will be managed in accordance with statutory responsibilities and guidelines.

Soils

The soils are predominantly chalk in the northern part of the woodland, running into clay with flints in the southern part.

Water

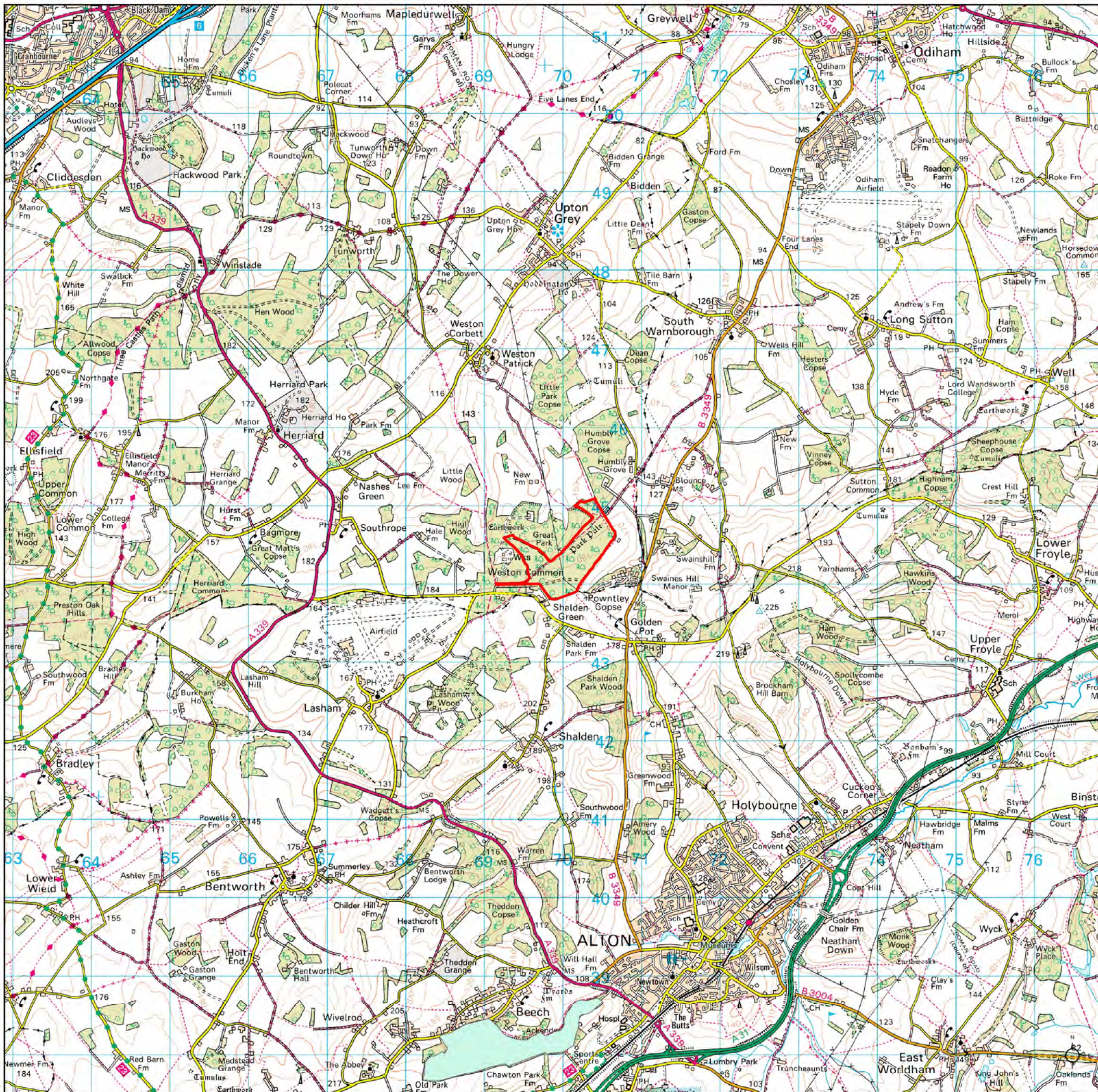
Drains are the only water flows through the woodlands. Opportunities for enhancement of such habitats will be identified during operational planning and acted upon as resources allow.

Tree Diseases and Pests

The main diseases of concern currently are *Chalara Fraxinea* (Ash Dieback) and *Dothistroma* (red band) Needle Blight on Corsican Pine. These species are limited within Weston Common and so pose little threat to the woodland as a whole.

However, with such a reliance on few species there is a risk of forced structural change if a prolific pathogen of Beech or Southern 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.



Weston Common

Location



Key

Weston Common Management Area

Date: 06/05/2014

1:50,000

© Crown copyright and
database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey
[100021242]






Weston Common

Aerial



Key

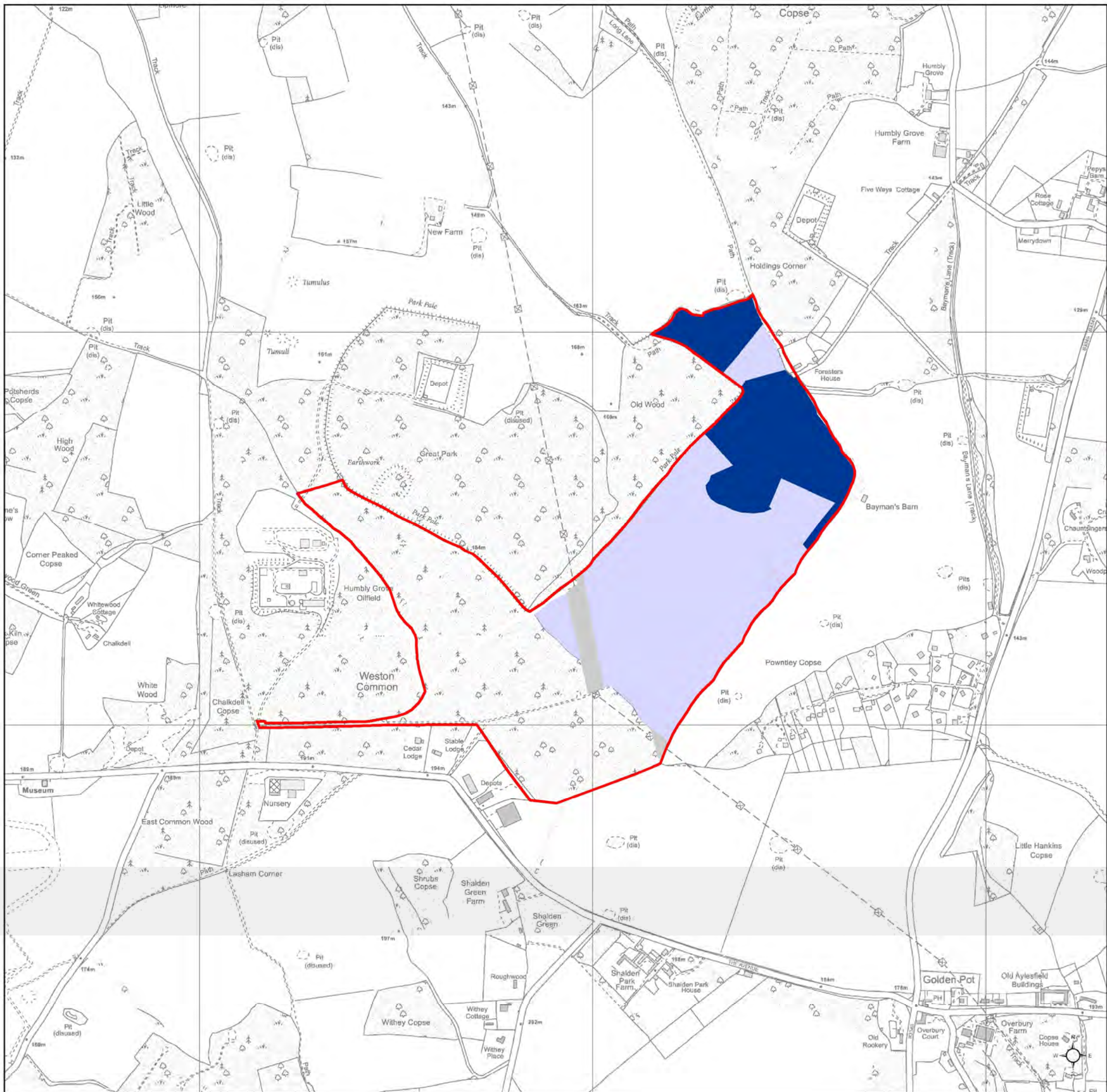
 Weston Common Management Area

Date: 06/05/2014

1:25,000

© Crown copyright and
database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey
[100021242]





Weston Common

Ancient Woodland Semi-Natural Scoring



Key

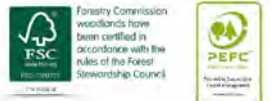
Ancient Woodland Areas

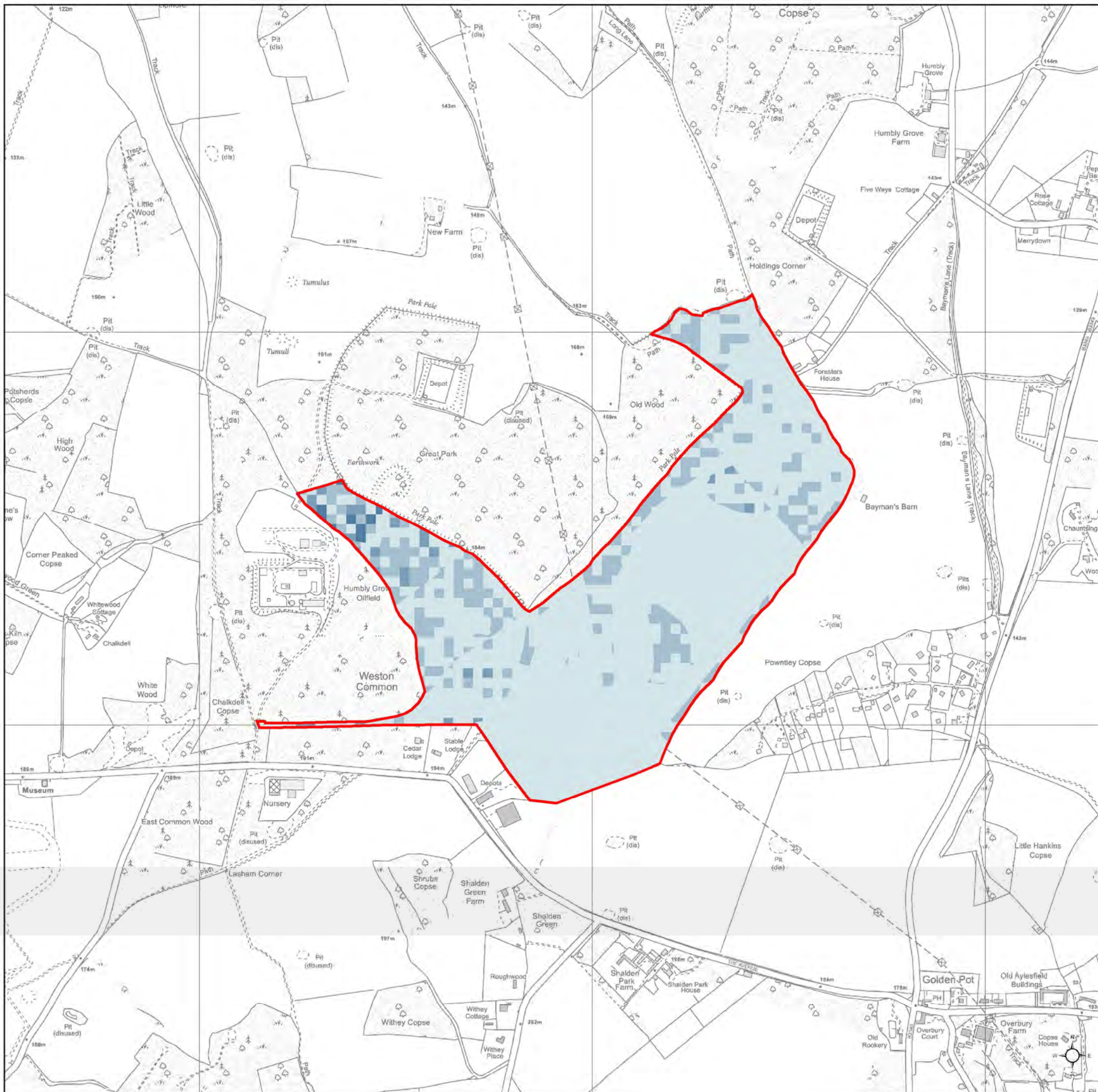
- 1 - Over 80% native
- 2 - Between 50% and 80% native
- 3 - Between 20% and 50% native
- 4 - Less than 20% native
- Currently open or un-established woodland
- Weston Common Management Area

Date: 06/05/2014

1:10,000

© Crown copyright and
database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey
[100021242]





Weston Common

Indicative Species Diversity



Key

Number of component species within canopy (including open space)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 - 9

Weston Common Management Area

Date: 06/05/2014

1:10,000

© Crown copyright and database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey [100021242]





Weston Common

Indicative Age Diversity



Key

Gaps illustrate indicative or actual open space

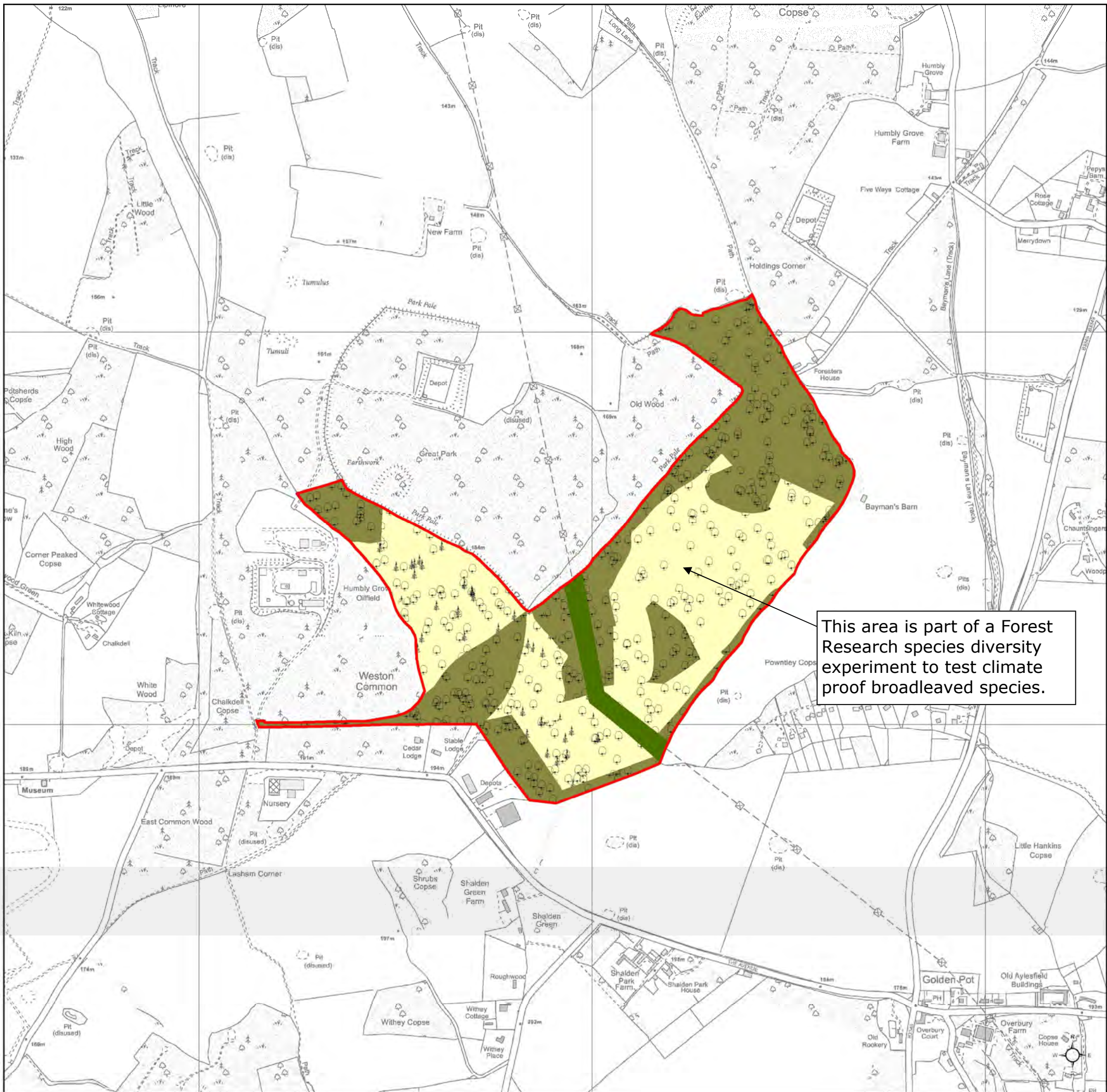
- Over 100 years old
- 81 - 100 years old
- 61 - 80 years old
- 41 - 60 years old
- 21 - 40 years old
- 1 - 20 years old
- Weston Common Management Area

Date: 06/05/2014

1:10,000

© Crown copyright and database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey [100021242]










Weston Common

Long Term Vision



Key

-  Predominantly (>80%) native and honourary-native broadleaved woodland
-  Mixed Woodland. No species type (broadleaf or conifer) represents more than 80% of the canopy
-  Non-native broadleaved woodland.
-  Open Space
-  Hampshire Downs Management Area

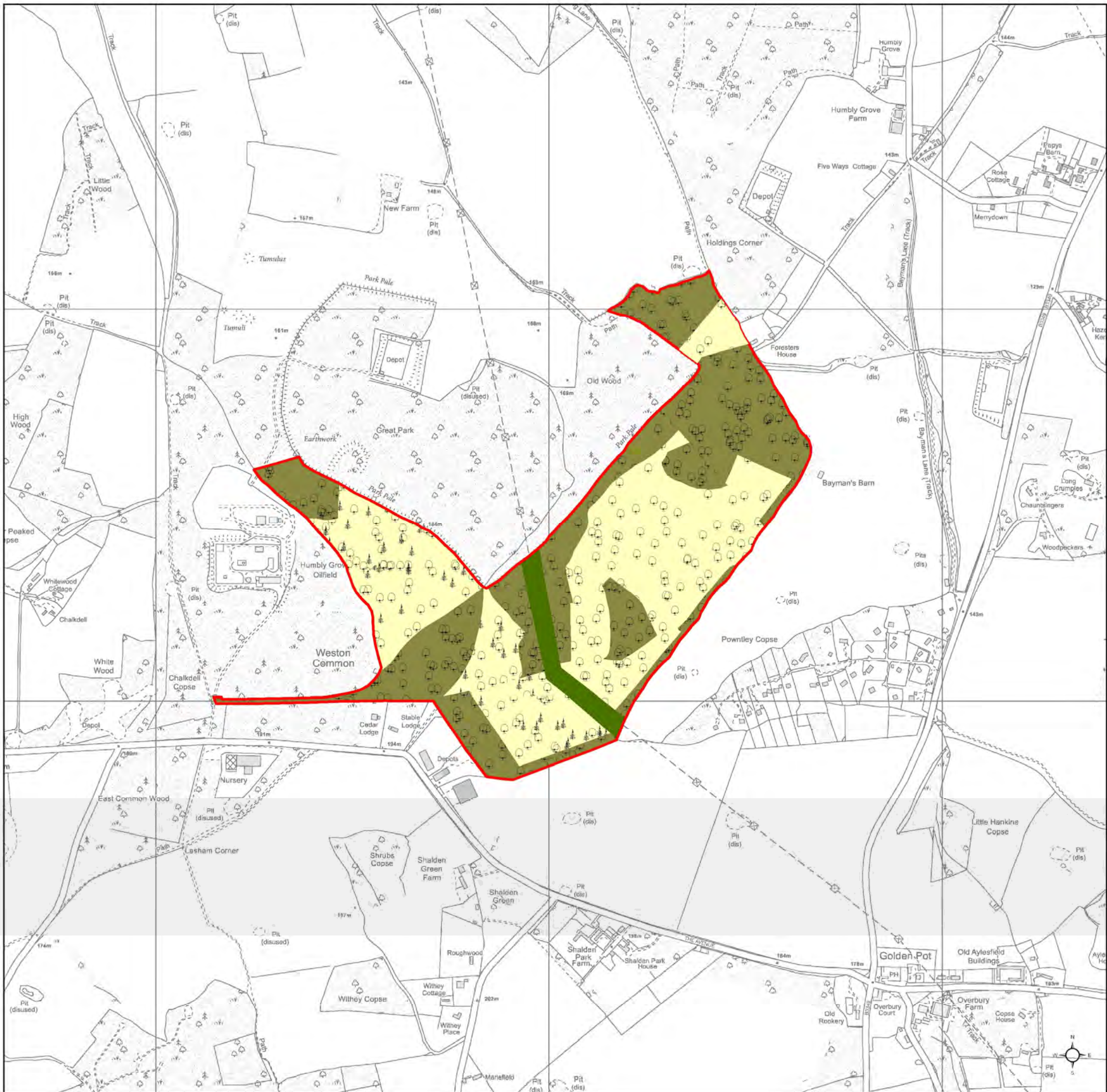
This area is part of a Forest Research species diversity experiment to test climate proof broadleaved species.

Date: 08/05/2014

1:10,000

© Crown copyright and database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey
[100021242]










Weston Common



Forestry Commission
South England Forest District

Current Structure (as of winter 2015-16)

Key

-  Predominantly (>80%) native and honourary-native broadleaved woodland
-  Mixed Woodland. No species type (broadleaf or conifer) represents more than 80% of the canopy
-  Non-native broadleaved woodland.
-  Open Space
-  Hampshire Downs Management Area

Date: 08/05/2014

1:10,000

© Crown copyright and database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey
[100021242]



Weston Common Habitat Restoration & Felling



KEY

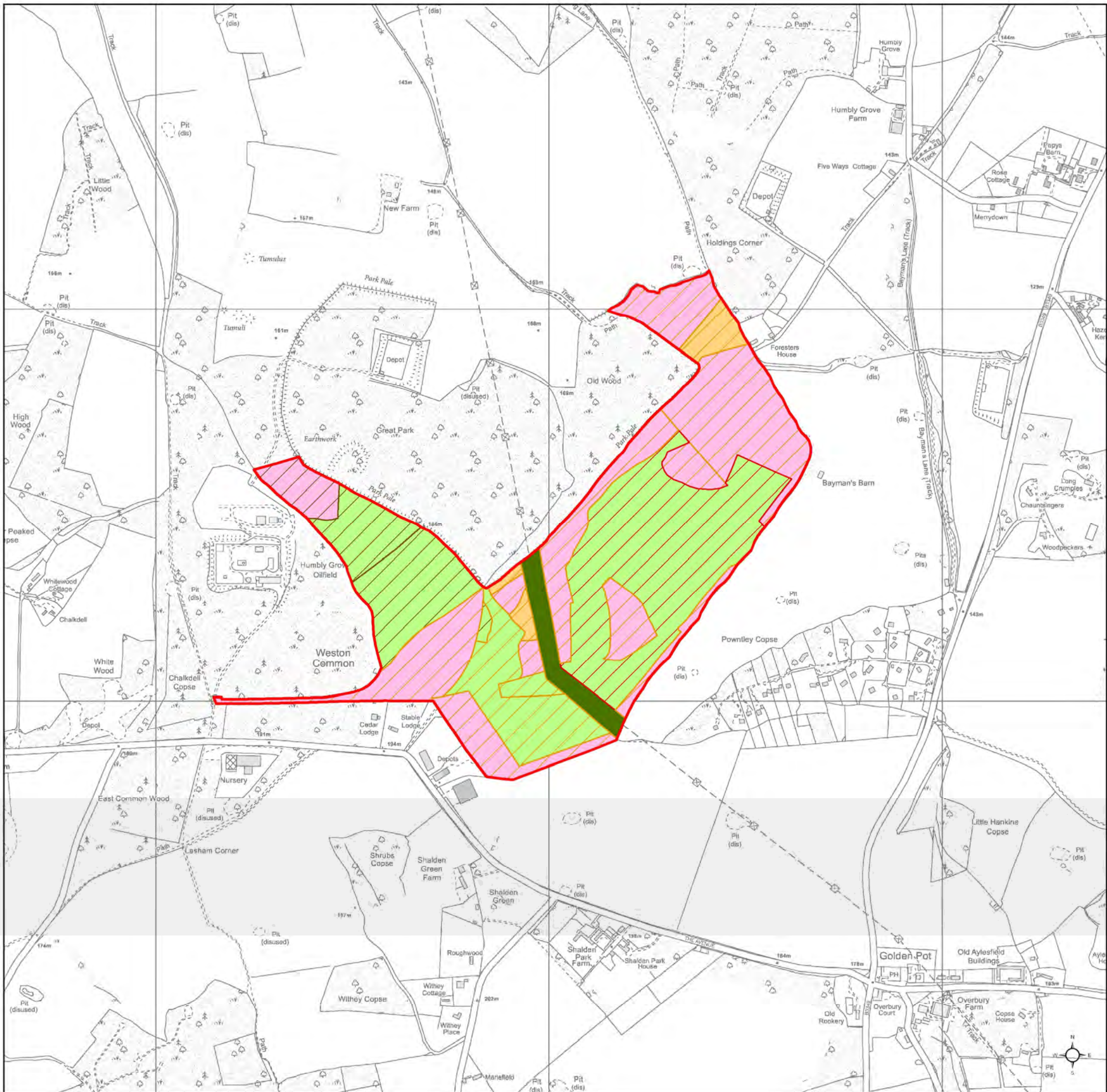
-  Native Broadleaved Woodland Management.
Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system, favouring best native tree and focussing on the production of quality timber.
-  Native Woodland Restoration.
Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system. Favour best native tree, focussing on the production of quality timber and the gradual reduction of non-native species to 20% of the canopy or less.
-  Mixed Woodland Management.
Manage under an appropriate shelterwood system. Favour best tree, focussing on the production of quality timber and species diversity.
-  Open
-  Road/Ride Edge Management.
Enhance the woodland edge, developing a scalloped and graded structure in accordance with best practice guidelines.
-  Compartments
-  Sub-Compartments

1:10,000

Date: 24/07/2014

© Crown copyright
and database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey [100021242]





Weston Common

Predicted Timeline for Intended Future Habitats




Key

Establish next generation of desired habitat by:

 2100

 2150

 2200

 Hampshire Downs Management Area

Date: 08/05/2014

1:10,000

© Crown copyright and database right [2014]
Ordnance Survey
[100021242]

