

Lavenham Forest Plan

2026 — 2036

Forestry England

Forestry England

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FSC www.fsc.org FSC® C123214 The mark of responsible forestry

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

PEFC Promoting Sustainable Forest Management



Who is Forestry England?

For over 100 years, we have been growing, shaping and caring for over 1,500 of our nation's forests for the benefit and enjoyment of all, for this generation and the next.

- We are the biggest landholder in England, managing more than 1,500 woods and forests.
- As well as health benefits, our woodlands make significant contributions to local economies around the country. The 226 million visits we get per year support over 80 private businesses across England
- We are the largest supplier of sustainably produced timber in England, selling around 1.4 million tonnes per year.
- The benefits our forests provide has been estimated at £24.4 billion.



Government Priorities

The 25 year Environment Plan was published in January 2018 to set out the governments approach to maintaining and enhancing the natural environment, within a generation. The plan is broad in scope but covers cleaner air and water, public forests and woodland, marine protected areas, species protection, administrative and governance issues.

The England Trees Action plan 2021-2024 was developed to support the 25 year environment plan for green recovery. It aims to boost tree planting and establishment, improve woodland management and support a thriving green economy across England, delivering more for society, nature, the climate and the economy. There are 80 policy actions the government is taking over this Parliament to help deliver this vision.

Forestry England Priorities

Our task is to realise the potential of each of the forests in our care for sustainable business opportunities, wildlife and nature conservation, and the enjoyment and well-being of local people and visitors. Each of our forests supports the economy through local jobs, sustainable timber production and the provision of recreation and tourism opportunities. Our compass (opposite page) shows how our purpose, objectives and how Growing the Future 2021–2026 work together to achieve this.

At the district level the East England Forest Delivery plan sets our priorities around five key themes:

1. For wildlife
2. For people
3. For climate
4. Our sustainable approach
5. Our people and our values

These strategic planning documents along with local knowledge are used to prepare a design brief, identifying key objectives for each forest plan area. The objectives for this forest plan can be seen on page 6, and are based around themes 1-4 only as the theme relating to our people and our values cannot be addressed within a plan.



What are Forest Plans?

Forest Plans are produced by us, Forestry England, as a means of communicating our management intentions to a range of stakeholders. They aim to fulfil a number of objectives:

- To provide descriptions of the woodlands we manage.
- To explain the process we go through in deciding what is best for the woodlands' long term future.
- To show what we intend the woodlands to look like in the future.
- To outline our management proposals, in detail, for the first ten years so we can seek approval from the statutory regulators.

Our aim is to produce a plan that meets your needs for the woodland; meets the needs of the plants and animals that live there and meets our needs as managers.

This draft plan does not set out the detailed yearly management operations for each small piece of a wood, known as a coupe. It is not possible to say which year a particular operation will take place, but we can say in which five-year period it should happen.

All tree felling in the UK is regulated and a licence is required before trees can be felled; the scale of tree felling across England's public forest estate is such that the Forest Plan is the best mechanism for applying for this licence.

Responsibility for checking that the plan meets all the relevant standards and statutes lies with another part of the Forestry Commission (Forest Services). If all the criteria are met, full approval is given for the management operations in the first ten years (2026 - 2036) and outline approval for the medium-long term vision (2036 onwards). The plan will be reviewed after the first five years (2031) to assess if the objectives are being achieved. Natural England will approve management proposals for the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which lie within our woods. Historic England will approve management proposals for Scheduled Monuments (SM).

Underpinning the management proposals in Forest Plans is a suite of standard practices and guidance described briefly below. Some of these practices are strategic national policy, whilst others are local expressions of national policy to reflect the particular conditions found in East England - the policy level is indicated in brackets.

The UK Forestry Standard* (national)

The UKFS sets out standards for the sustainable management of all forests and woodlands in the UK and describes, in outline, good forest practice.

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard* (national)

The UKWAS certification standard sets out the requirements which woodland owners, managers and forest certification bodies can use to certify their woodland and forests as sustainably managed. It is the document which guides all of our management, and against which Forestry England is certified by outside consultants to ensure our compliance. At this time UKWAS fifth edition has been endorsed by PEFC with FSC approval process still ongoing. Until a joint standard is agreed, Forestry England should meet both the fourth and fifth edition.

European Protected Species (national)

In August 2019 amendments to the European Habitat Directive came into force in England and Wales to protect the habitat of a number of vulnerable species. Those European Protected Species (EPS) most likely to be found in a woodland habitat include all species of bat, hazel dormouse, great crested newt, otter, sand lizard and smooth snake.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (national)

The NERC Act came into force in October 2006 and was designed to help achieve a rich and diverse natural environment and thriving rural communities. The UK Biodiversity Action Plan was used to help draw up a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England as required under section 41 of the NERC act.

Ancient and native woodland in England (national)

Ancient and native woodlands are one of the oldest land uses and most diverse ecosystems. They have often taken hundreds, if not thousands of years to develop, and in the case of ancient woodland are irreplaceable. The managing ancient and native woodland practice guide (2010) promotes greater flexibility, encouraging new innovative approaches to woodland management that enhance biodiversity and heritage. It replaces the 1985 broadleaves policy.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (national)

The SSSI series has developed since 1949 as the suite of sites providing statutory protection for the best examples of the UK's flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features. Sites are selected as being the best regional examples of habitats, such as broadleaf woodland and/or plant and animal communities, and/or important populations of rare species.

These sites are also used to underpin other national and international nature conservation designations.

Information about individual SSSIs can be found on the Natural England website:
https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/

Deadwood (national and local)

Deadwood is important in the forest as a habitat for birds, invertebrates and some primitive plants. Guidance is given on how to provide deadwood in the forest of different sorts and sizes and how this will be distributed.

Natural reserves (national and local)

Natural reserves are areas of the forest where little or no active management takes place thereby creating a very different and special habitat in our otherwise actively managed forests.

Other Designations

The FC landholding in England has a wide range of national designations placed upon it in various locations across the country, such as;

- National Park
- National Landscapes (previously Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty—AONB)
- UK National Site Network including Special Protection Area* (SPA) & Special Area of Conservation* (SAC)
- Scheduled Monuments (SM's)
- County Wildlife Sites*

Along with the standard guidance documents, we have individual plans for our designated sites; these describe work required to maintain and enhance the protected features. We will gradually integrate these into our forest plans where appropriate.

Objectives

The objectives opposite are framed via Forestry England district priorities detailed on page 3:



For wildlife

- **W1** To protect and enhance areas of ancient semi-natural woodland and restore planted ancient woodland (PAWS) to native species.
- **W2** To protect, maintain and enhance designated sites.
- **W3** To protect, maintain and enhance priority habitats.
- **W4** To protect, maintain and enhance priority species.

For people

- **P1** Create a pleasant natural environment for the public to enjoy outdoor recreation, in freehold woodlands only.
- **P2** Maintain and improve cultural and heritage value of the land by protecting sensitive heritage features highlighted through the operational site assessment (OSA)* process.
- **P3** Agree Scheduled Monument (SM) management plan for Conyfield wood, with Historic England (appendix 1).

For climate

- **C1** Maintain the land within our stewardship under Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®)/ Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) by meeting standards detailed in UKWAS fourth and fifth edition.
- **C2** Increase forest resilience to threats posed by climate change, pests, diseases and fire.

Our sustainable approach

- **SA1** Improve economic resilience of our forests by increasing species diversity through restock programmes and mixed silvicultural practices, to protect future timber supplies and biomass.
- **SA2** To generate income from the marketing of timber products whilst ensuring operations take place at a scale and frequency in keeping with the surrounding landscape.

To see how these objectives are incorporated into the site's planning please refer to the Design and Concept maps on pages 8-13.



Forestry England

East England Forest District

Lavenham

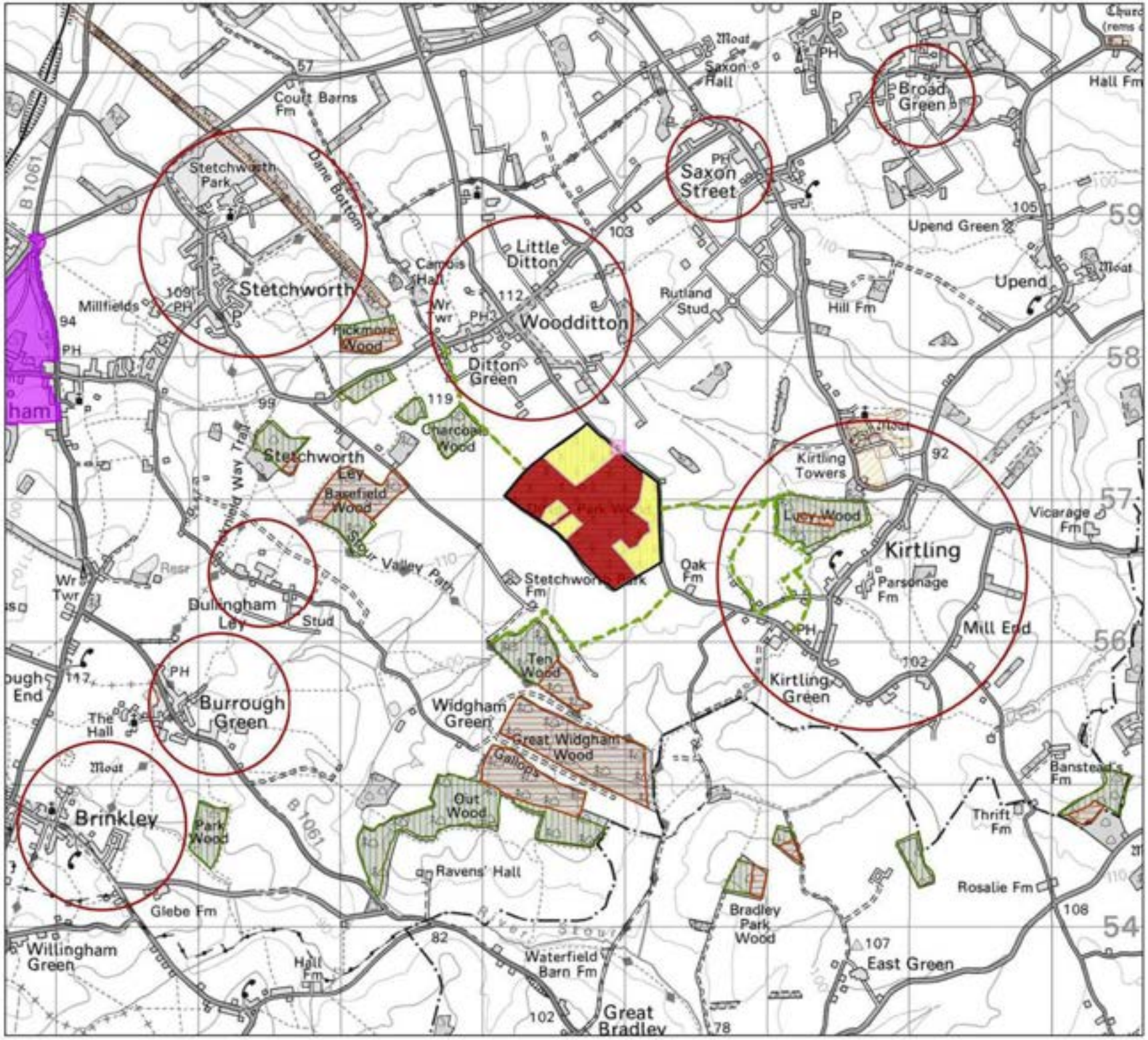
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Plan area and landholding status

Legend

- Freehold woodland Public right of access
- Freehold woodland Permissive access
- Leasehold woodland No public access
- Leasehold woodland Permissive access
- Public Rights of Way

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Design Concept Map

Ditton

Access

- Management area
- Public Rights of Way
- Forest access barrier
- Settlements

Designations

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Registered Parks and Gardens

High conservation value areas

- Ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW)
- Planted ancient woodland (PAWS)
- Forestry England managed Ancient semi natural woodland
- Forestry England managed Planted ancient woodland

Location & Context

Forest Plan area highlighted in orange



Forest Plan Objectives

For Wildlife

- To protect and enhance areas of ANSW and restore PAWS to native species.
- To protect and maintain designated sites.
- To protect and maintain priority habitats.
- To protect and maintain priority species.

For People

- Create a pleasant natural environment for the public to enjoy (freehold woods only).
- Maintain & improve cultural heritage value by protecting sensitive heritage features.
- Agree Scheduled Monument Management Plans for Conyfield wood.

For Climate

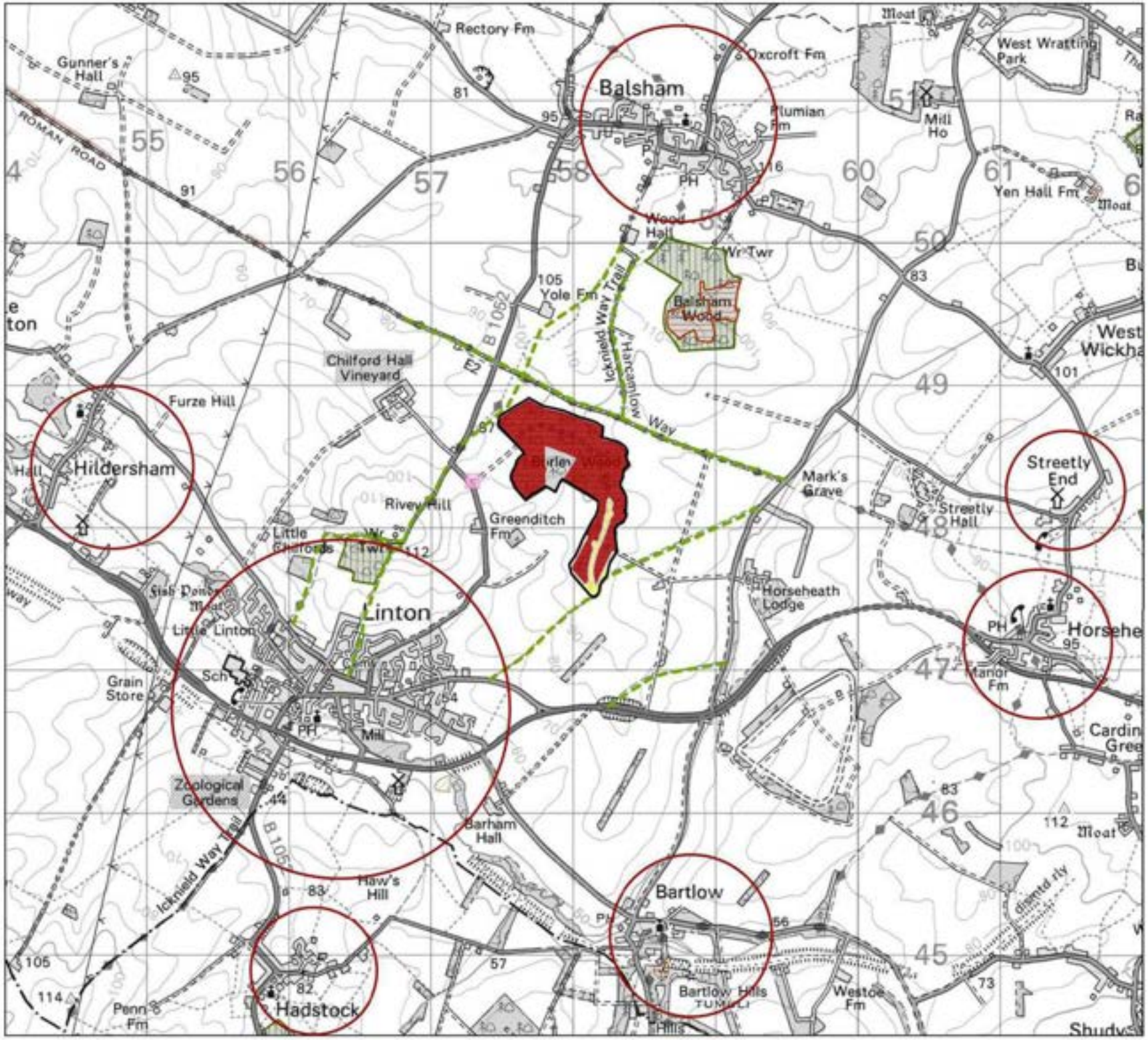
- Maintain the forest under FSC/PEFC certification by meeting the standards in UKWAS (4th & 5th edition).
- Increase forest resilience to threats posed by climate change, pests, diseases and fire.

Our Sustainable Approach

- Improve economic resilience of our forests by increasing species diversity through restock programmes and mixed silvicultural practices to protect future timber supplies and biomass.
- Generate income from timber products whilst keeping operations in scale with the landscape.

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Scale: 1:25,000



Forestry England

East England Forest District

Design Concept Map

Borley

Access

- Management area
- Public Rights of Way
- Forest access barrier
- Settlements

Designations

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest

High conservation value areas

- Ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW)
- Planted ancient woodland (PAWS)
- Forestry England managed Ancient semi natural woodland
- Forestry England managed Planted ancient woodland

Location & Context

Forest Plan area highlighted in orange



Forest Plan Objectives

For Wildlife

- To protect and enhance areas of ANSW and restore PAWS to native species.
- To protect and maintain designated sites.
- To protect and maintain priority habitats.
- To protect and maintain priority species.

For People

- Create a pleasant natural environment for the public to enjoy (freehold woods only).
- Maintain & improve cultural heritage value by protecting sensitive heritage features.
- Agree Scheduled Monument Management Plans for Conyfield wood.

For Climate

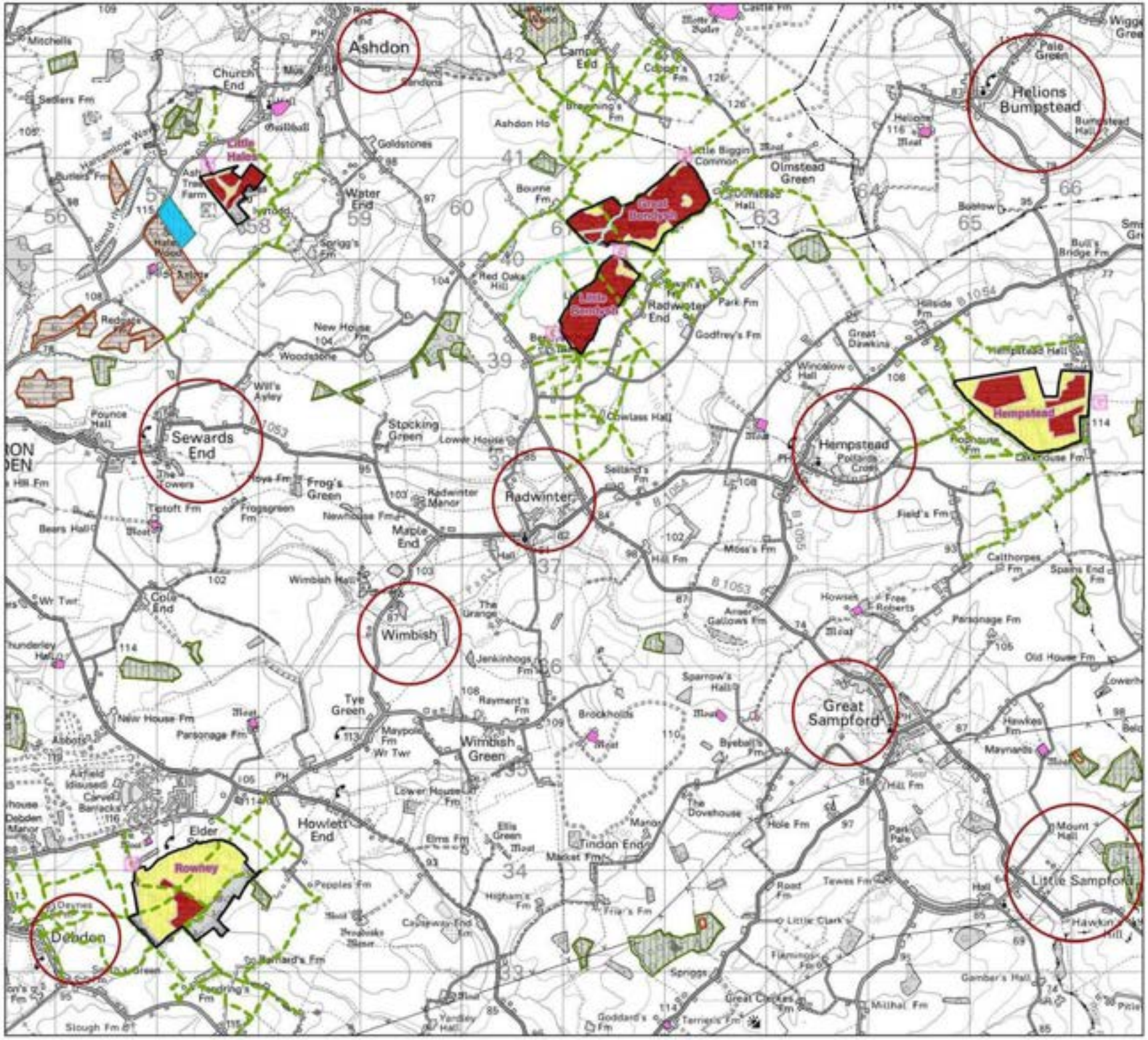
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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Design Concept Map

Little Hales, Bendysh, Hempstead & Rowney

Access

- Management area
- Public Rights of Way
- Forest access barrier
- Settlements

Designations

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserve

High conservation value areas

- Ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW)
- Planted ancient woodland (PAWS)
- Forestry England managed Ancient semi natural woodland
- Forestry England managed Planted ancient woodland
- Water courses

Location & Context

Forest Plan area highlighted in orange



Forest Plan Objectives

For Wildlife

- To protect and enhance areas of ANSW and restore PAWS to native species.
- To protect and maintain designated sites.
- To protect and maintain priority habitats.
- To protect and maintain priority species.

For People

- Create a pleasant natural environment for the public to enjoy (freehold woods only).
- Maintain & improve cultural heritage value by protecting sensitive heritage features.
- Agree Scheduled Monument Management Plans for Coryfield wood.

For Climate

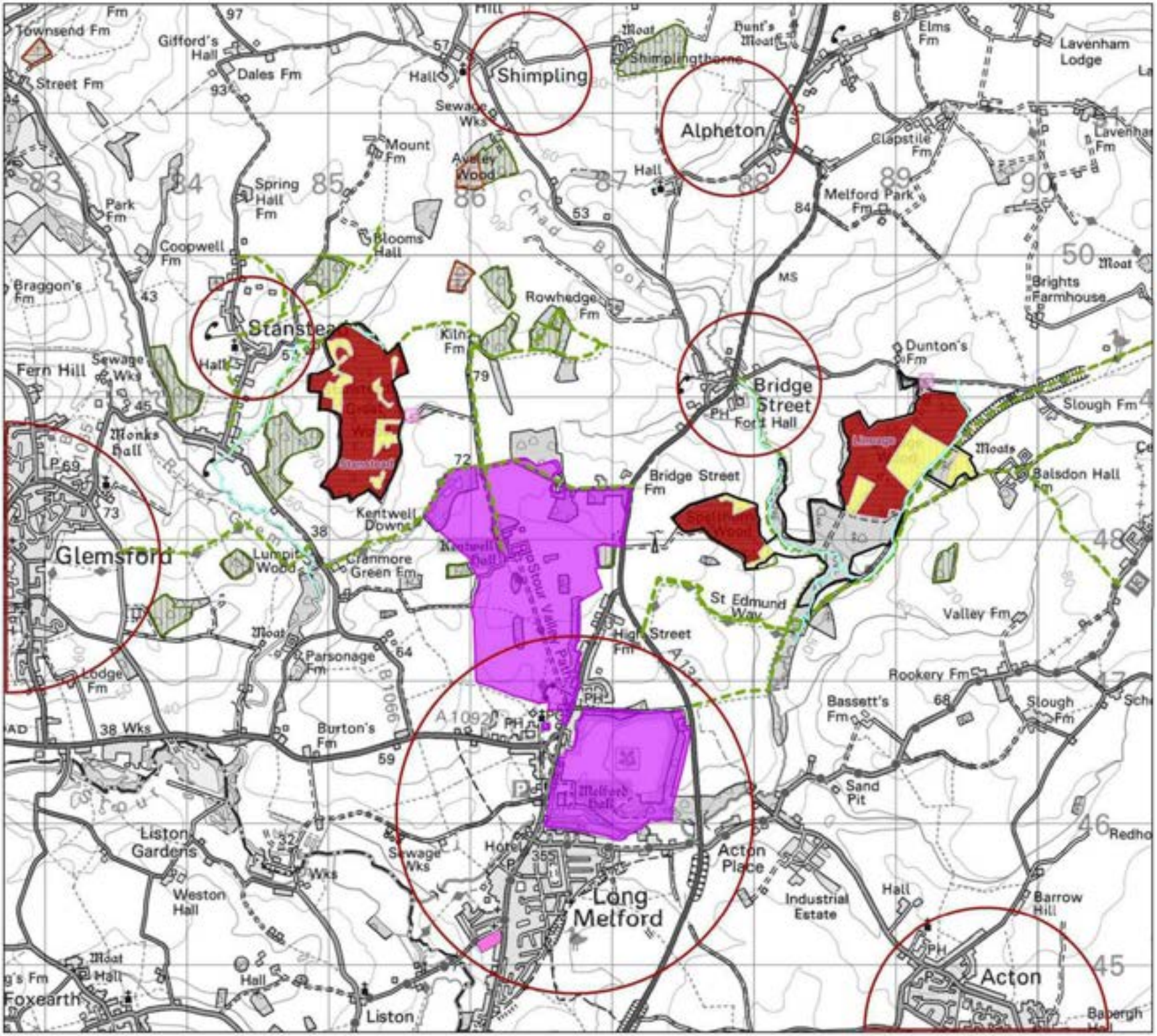
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Scale: 1:35,000



Forestry England

East England Forest District

Design Concept Map

Lineage and Stanstead

Access

- Management area
- Public Rights of Way
- Forest access barrier
- Settlements

Designations

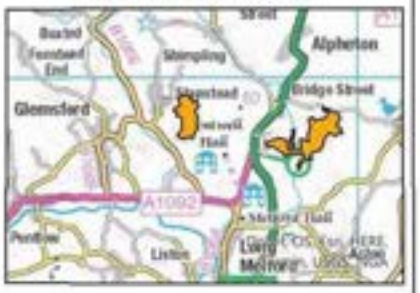
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Registered Parks and Gardens

High conservation value areas

- Ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW)
- Planted ancient woodland (PAWS)
- Forestry England managed Ancient semi natural woodland
- Forestry England managed Planted ancient woodland
- Water courses

Location & Context

Forest Plan area highlighted in orange



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For Climate

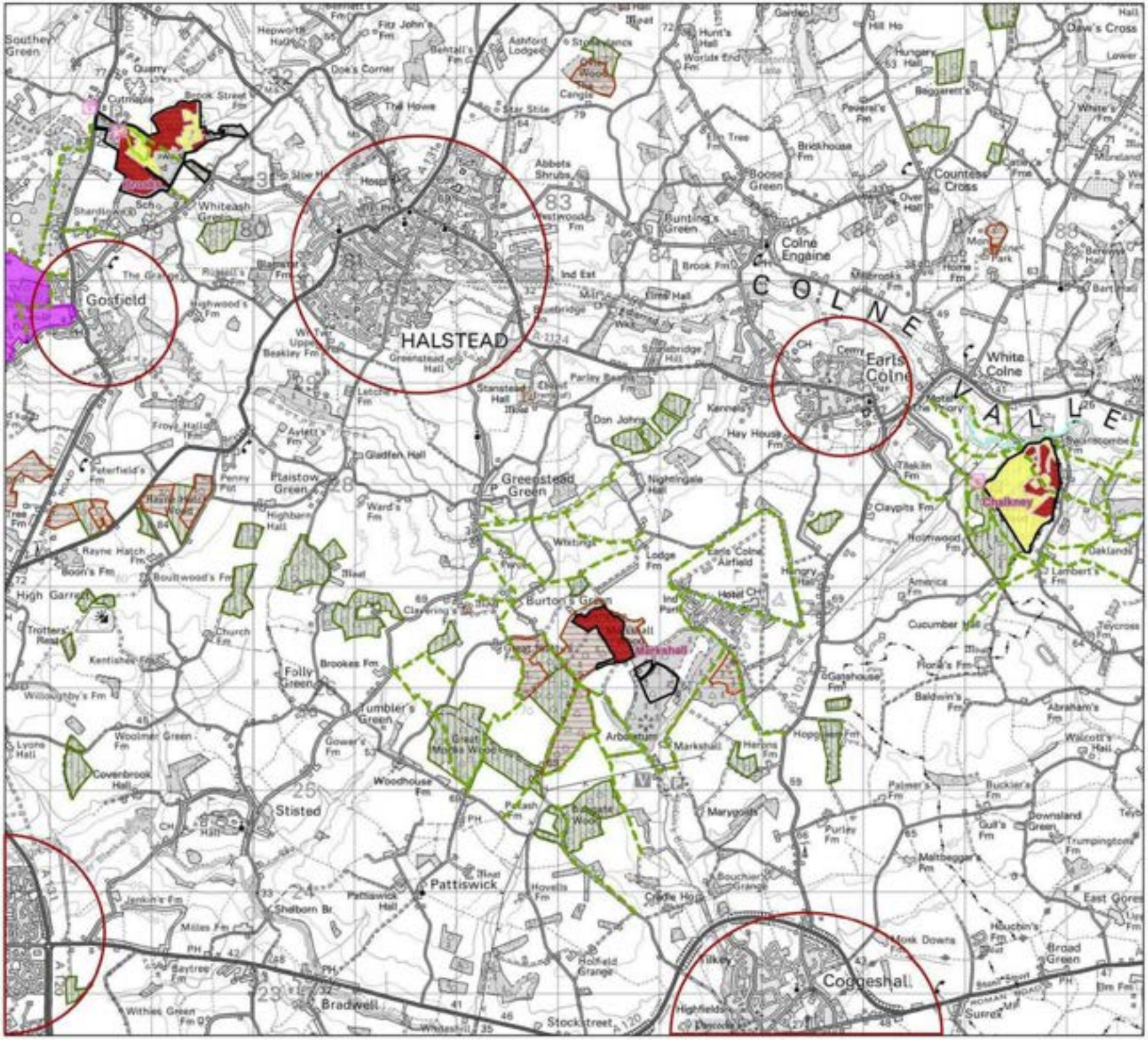
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Scale: 1:25,000



Forestry England

East England Forest District

Design Concept Map

Broaks, Markshall and Chalkney

Access

- Management area
- Public Rights of Way
- Forest access barrier
- Settlements
- Forestry England Car Park

Designations

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Registered Parks and Gardens

High conservation value areas

- Ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW)
- Planted ancient woodland (PAWS)
- Forestry England managed Ancient semi natural woodland
- Forestry England managed Planted ancient woodland
- Water courses

Location & Context

Forest Plan area highlighted in orange



Forest Plan Objectives

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For Climate

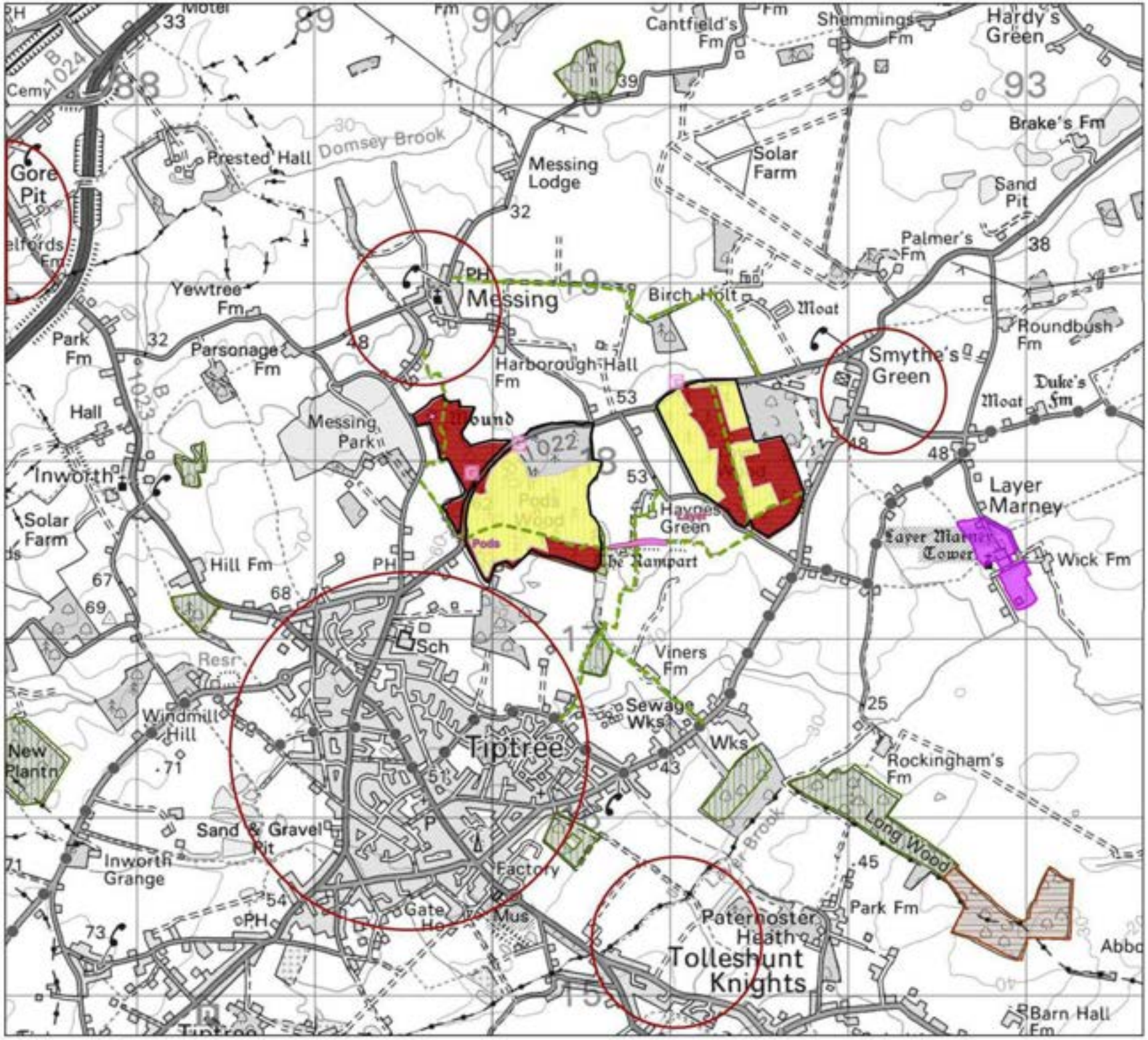
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Scale: 1:35,000



Forestry England

East England Forest District

Design Concept Map

Pods and Layer

Access

- Management area
- Public Rights of Way
- Forest access barrier
- Settlements

Designations

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monuments

High conservation value areas

- Ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW)
- Planted ancient woodland (PAWS)
- Forestry England managed Ancient semi natural woodland
- Forestry England managed Planted ancient woodland

Location & Context

Forest Plan area highlighted in orange



Forest Plan Objectives

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- To protect and maintain priority habitats.
- To protect and maintain priority species.

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Location & History

Lavenham forest, which is managed as part of the Sandlings beat, covers an area of 791 hectares and includes the following woodlands: Ditton, Borley, Little Hales, Great & Little Bendysh, Rowney, Hempstead, Broaks, Markshall, Stanstead, Lineage, Chalkney, Coneyfield, Pods and Layer. They are widely dispersed and range in size from the smallest in Little Hales (17 ha) to the largest in Lineage (105ha). The Lavenham plan area is among one of the warmest and driest parts of the UK with relatively low rainfall averaging 570mm/year.

The plan area extends across 3 county councils including Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Essex and 6 district councils including South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, Babergh, Uttlesford, Braintree and Colchester. The woodlands are surrounded by arable land, small towns and villages and non Forestry England woodland.

Historically, many of the woodlands were ancient woodland defined as areas existing continuously since at least 1600. These woodlands take hundreds if not thousands of years to develop and harbour unique and complex ecosystems of plants, fungi and animals as well as archaeological remains. They are an irreplaceable, rare and fragile habitat. For millennia their natural capital has provided essential ecosystem services including clean air, water, food, timber, mineral and climate regulation, while also offering non-use values such as biodiversity and recreation opportunities. They are a vitally important component of the landscape and every one has it's own unique history.

Many of the woodlands within the Lavenham plan area are plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), meaning the original "natural" woodland was cleared and replaced by a plantation of mostly non - native conifer during the 20th century. Aligning with local nature recovery strategies the plan will seek to restore these areas to semi natural woodlands comprising site native species and retaining remnant features.

Forest plans have been used in Lavenham for over 20 years, with a strong focus on restoring PAWS sites to semi natural woodland through removal of conifer species, a process which has been ongoing here since 1986. This approach links well with local nature recovery strategies which highlight the importance of ancient woodland and encourage the restoration of PAWS sites.

The majority of conifer has now been removed from the majority of woodlands across the plan area but large scale removal has left many areas struggling to naturally regenerate successfully. A key objective of the plan is to restock long standing fallow areas and continue to remove the remaining conifer gradually overtime to promote natural regeneration success, improve species diversity and create a varied age structure.



Site Characteristics & designated sites

Soils

The majority of the Lavenham woodlands are located in the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland National Character Area (NCA) but Borley falls within the East Anglian Chalk NCA, and Pods and Layer within the Northern Thames Basin NCA. They all share a generally flat topography, with underlying bedrock geology of late cretaceous chalk overlain by sand and gravel deposits as well as glacial tills.

Designated Sites

There are two woodlands within the plan area that are designated SSSI including Lineage wood and Chalkney wood.

Lineage wood and Railway Track SSSI was designated in 1971 and totals 81ha of which 71 ha lies within Forestry England managed woodland. The citation references the size of the wood and historical significance of the elm interest along with extensive, herb rich neutral grassland rides and their associated butterfly fauna.

Lineage wood was assessed by Natural England as unfavourable recovering condition in July 2012. This was prior to the development of the definitions of favourable condition. A further condition assessment was carried out in 2020 by the Forestry England ecologist and assistant ecologist to inform future management required to meet objectives that have been incorporated into the forest plan.

The primary objective for Lineage is to achieve and maintain favourable condition of the SSSI features within a realistic timescale. Overall, the objective is to create a complex woodland structure and composition, with natural regeneration and veteran trees well represented in the age structure of a diverse range of site appropriate species, that promotes the biodiversity interest (designated features) and woodland resilience, along with a well-managed ride system and open areas that maintain the flora interest.

Chalkney wood SSSI designated in 1955 totals 74ha, of which 48ha is managed by Forestry England in the north and 26ha by Essex County Council in the south. The notification is predominantly for the natural distribution of Small leaved lime and Hornbeam plus the sites large assemblage of wet flush bryophytes. The broadleaved, lowland mixed woodland of National Vegetation Classification W7, W8 and W10 supports notified species. Chalkney wood SSSI was last assessed by Natural England as favourable condition in March 2022.

There are no other formal designations including protected landscapes within the woodlands or within 500m of any woodlands across the plan area.

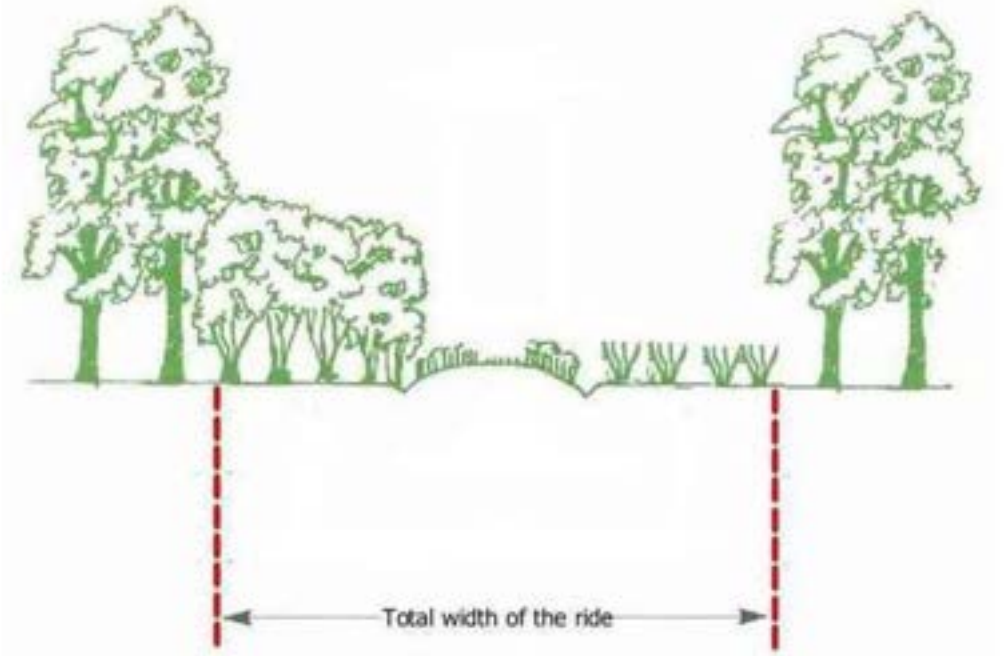
Priority habitats

The UK Forestry Standard requires a minimum of 10% open ground or ground managed for conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as the primary objective, across the Lavenham plan area.

Open space accounts for 13% of the plan area (see pie chart on page 31) which includes both temporary open space created through felling operations and permanent open space including grassland, heathland, ponds and the ride network. Open space has been previously managed through scrub removal, forage harvesting and swiping.

The sensitive management of open habitats within a woodland introduces greater habitat diversity. This encourages a wider range of species many of which make regular use of the edge habitats for feeding due to higher herb layer productivity and larger invertebrate populations. Wider rides are also generally drier and therefore maintain a better surface for all year round access.
The ride network across the Lavenham woods is currently in poor condition with many closing over causing waterlogging, decreased diversity and shading out of important plants. Therefore, significant improvements to the ride network is a key objective of the plan.

Management will aim to create a range of ride widths of approximately 10 - 20m from crown to crown with scalloped edges to break up hard edges and create warmer glades as well as facilitating wildlife management. This programme of work will be subject to funding and maintenance considerations.



Priority habitats within the plan area include Lowland mixed deciduous woodland, Lowland chalk grassland, lowland heathland, wet woodland and Neutral grassland.

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

Broad category but generally includes NVC W8, W10 and W16. W8 and W10 are present throughout the Lavenham woods.

Lowland chalk grassland

This is a key feature of Lineage wood SSSI and is also found in the drier woods on chalk substrate at Borley.

Lowland heathland

H10 is found in small areas in Pods and Layer woods.

Neutral grassland

MG5 is a key habitat of open areas with a clay substrate. Good examples are found at Little Hales and Lineage woods.

Wet woodland

W7 wet woodland is a key feature of Chalkney wood SSSI, associated with wet flushes on the northern slope. There is also an area (Alder Carr) along the Chad Brook in the south of Lineage.

There are a number of existing ponds across Lavenham woods. Those which contain Great crested newts will be haloed by 2 crown widths (~20m) to remove the majority of shading during the spring/summer months.

The species and restock maps also show additional pond creation sites that could be implemented where resource allows and once immediate priorities of ride improvement and tree establishment have been addressed.


Lineage meadows—Lowland calcareous grassland with yellow flags showing the locations and large number of Orchids present.

Priority species

There is a variety of priority species recorded across the Lavenham block including mammals, amphibians, reptiles, lepidoptera, birds, plants and invertebrates.

There are up to 9 species of bat recorded across the Lavenham Woods which include the uncommon species of Barbastelle and Leisler's Bat. They feed along the open rides and in the open woodland matrix and will use areas of standing deadwood to roost and hibernate.

In addition to bats, other terrestrial mammals that inhabit the Lavenham block include Brown Hare, Dormouse, Harvest Mouse and Hedgehog. Dormice are reliant on woodlands with diverse structural and species diversity that is managed through coppicing to provide a well-developed understorey that is rich in hazel, honeysuckle and bramble. Water vole and Otter have both been recorded in the woods although no known Otter holts have been found. In addition to the above listed priority species badgers are also present, evident from the active badger setts recorded within some of the woodlands.

Great Crested Newt have been recorded in many of the Lavenham ponds and they use suitable waterbodies and surrounding terrestrial habitat to breed, forage and hibernate. In addition, Smooth Newt, Common Toad and Common Frog have been recorded and are associated with the ponds present. Reptiles recorded include Common Lizard and Grass Snake which frequent open rides for basking and thermoregulation alongside refugia such as log piles and scrub for resting and hibernating. The waterbodies also provide feeding sites for grass snake.

The priority bird species present across the woodlands include Barn Owl, Crossbill, Firecrest, Hobby, Kingfisher and Red Kite. Others include Brambling, Cuckoo, Grasshopper Warbler, Hawfinch, House Sparrow, Lesser Redpoll, Marsh Tit, Reed Bunting, Skylark, Song Thrush, Spotted Flycatcher, Turtle Dove, Wood Warbler, Yellowhammer. Local priority species include Nightingale, Raven and Woodcock.

The main plant species associated with Lavenham Woods are Bluebell, Fly Orchid and Oxlip which is a locally rare species only found in ancient woodlands on calcareous soils that are seasonally waterlogged. Other local priority species include Corn Mint, Crested Cow-wheat, Greater Butterfly-orchid, Herb-paris, Pale Sedge, Sulphur Clover and Wild Strawberry.

The lepidoptera interest in these woods is primarily associated with deciduous woodland and wet woodland. Butterflies present include the Purple Emperor, which is reliant on abundant sallow species; White Admiral which is associated with mature and shady woodland with plentiful honey-suckle and White-Letter Hairstreak which are particularly dependent on remnant elm suckers within areas of sheltered hedgerows and scrub. Another butterfly present, the Small Heath is associated with fine-leaved grasses in short-turf rides.

There are 28 priority moth species recorded across the woodlands of which most are associated with mature woodland and flower rich or disturbed grassland, found in the rides and open habitats. This includes species such as Centre-Barred Sallow, Latticed Heath and White Ermine. Other species are associated with woodland ecotone and wet habitats for breeding and feeding including the Blood-vein, Cinnabar and Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet.

Another species of note is Roman Snail which is associated with chalk streams with woodland edges and dense grassland.

By applying different management systems across the woodland including the use of lower impact silvicultural systems, clear fell coupes and maintaining open space in grassland, heathland and rides, priority species are well supported here.

All priority species and habitats will be taken into account as part of the OSA* process before work commences to ensure species protection and to identify additional opportunities for enhancement.


Great crested newt


Red Kite


White ermine moth


White letter hairstreak larvae under UV light

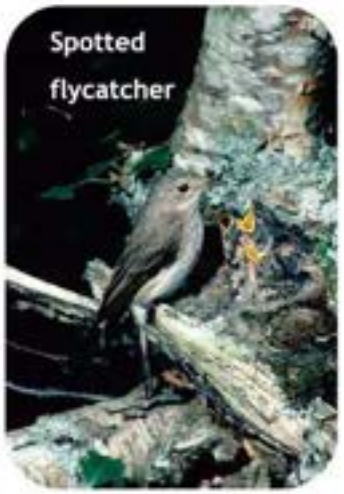

Wild strawberry


Roman snail


Dormouse


Fly orchid


Purple emperor


Spotted flycatcher

Woodland habitat

Ancient woodland

Ancient woodland covers 681ha (86%) of the plan area, comprising 418ha of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and 263ha of Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW). ASNW has supported continuous woodland cover for several centuries, with the canopy developing through natural regeneration rather than planting. These sites are ecologically important because their species composition, structure and tree distribution reflect long-term natural processes. The complex communities that have developed over this timescale are not found in more recent woodlands and, once lost, cannot be replaced.

PAWS also have a long continuity of woodland cover, present since at least 1600. However, the original natural woodland was historically cleared and replaced with plantations, predominantly of non native conifers. The aim of this plan is to restore these areas to semi natural woodland dominated by site-native species while conserving any surviving ancient woodland features.

A total of 62ha of conifer remains within the woodland, primarily Corsican pine and Scots pine, with smaller amounts of Douglas fir, Grand fir, Western red cedar, Coast redwood, Yew, Larch, Cypress and Norway spruce. Most of this conifer occurs in small blocks or in mixtures with broadleaves. Mature conifer stands provide structural and biodiversity benefits, supporting raptors, sheltering regenerating trees and contributing to landscape diversity. While restoring PAWS to semi natural conditions remains the priority, retaining some conifer is important but this will not exceed 20% of the plan area.

Semi natural condition scores indicate strong progress towards restoration, with 572ha now classed as Score 1 (semi-natural), compared with Score 4 areas that represent predominantly conifer plantation. However, in many of these improved areas natural regeneration remains insufficient, and active intervention will be required during this plan period to ensure successful establishment of the future woodland.

Non-ancient woodland

Approximately 110ha of the plan area is classified as non-ancient woodland. These areas are distributed in small parcels across Borley, Little Hales, Rowney, Lineage, Stanstead, Broaks, and Pods Woods.

Where conifer occurs within these woodlands, careful consideration has been given to its continued presence. For most sites, management will focus on the gradual removal of conifer and the phased reintroduction of native broadleaf species.

However, in Broaks Wood, small areas of conifer will be retained. Their continued presence will contribute both visual interest and biological diversity within the non-ancient woodland areas.

Deadwood

Deadwood of different sizes and stages of decay provide opportunities for feeding, breeding and shelter to many species. Fallen and standing deadwood is an important woodland habitat for a range of fungi, invertebrates such as beetles and solitary wasps and hole-nesting birds such as woodpeckers.

The largest amounts of deadwood can be found in areas managed as long term retentions and natural reserves, where ecological processes such as decay and windthrow increase biodiversity value of the area. Operational site assessments are also used to identify further deadwood opportunities.

Natural reserves

Natural reserves are shown on the management maps and located in Broak's and Lineage wood. These are areas of high ecological importance characterised by wet woodland habitats. These are broadleaf woodlands of mostly Alder and shrub species, and in Lineage support the Water vole and Roman snail. They are managed through minimum intervention with no systematic felling.


Ponds—Stanstead


Conifer site—Stanstead


White Elm - Lineage


Coppice woodland—Lineage


Alder carr—Lineage


Beech woodland including deadwood—Stanstead


Beech plantation—Lineage



Access and Recreation

Public access is permitted on foot in Broaks, Chalkney, Rowney, Little Hales, Bendysh and Layer woods (see plan area map on page 7), which are all held under freehold. There are two official Forestry England car parks including one at Broak's wood and one at Chalkney wood. Although Ditton wood is leasehold, public access is tolerated by the lessor. Public rights of way either run through or directly border all woodlands within the plan area, with the exception of Markshall.

The main forest user groups across the plan area include walkers, cyclists, horse riders, school groups, wildlife enthusiasts and fitness groups. Broaks, Chalkney and Rowney are well used and over time this high public presence has caused waterlogging during the winter months. There are no formal recreation facilities.

There are a small number of low key permissions across the plan area including a forest school group in Rowney, Bird monitoring in Rowney, bird and insect monitoring in Ditton and Archery in Layer wood.

There is some anti-social behaviour across the woodlands such as flytipping, fires and other illegal activities. Where possible the plan will look to help reduce anti social behaviour through opening up or impeding vehicle access in areas where frequent incidents occur.

Past studies have indicated people visiting forests prefer to see stands of large mature trees, both broadleaves and conifers. These provide a sense of naturalness, are more aesthetically pleasing and restorative. This is consistent with the plan across these woods to retain some overmature trees and manage them and the rest of the woods predominantly through LISS, thereby contributing to providing a more aesthetic environment.

Community

Considering the high population of surrounding cities and villages it is no surprise the publicly accessible woodlands with good access routes are well used. The city of Colchester which lies closest to Chalkney and Layer wood has a population of 193,700 and Braintree town near to Broaks wood has a population of 155,300.

Little Hales, Bendysh and Rowney lie between Saffron Walden with a population of 17,000 and Haverhill with 27,500.

Farming units border the woodlands within the plan area along with some small private woodlands.

Forest plans are revised every 10 years and plans for the East England Forest District are accessible from the Forest Plans webpage at https://www.forestryengland.uk/forest-planning.

Heritage: Cambridgeshire woods historic environment

Ditton Park Wood

Ditton Park Wood is located on the wooded clay plateau at the southern end of Woodditton parish. The western edge of the parish partly follows an early medieval earthwork, the Devil's Ditch, which gives the parish its name, the 'settlement by the ditch'. Ditton Park Wood was part of a more extensive wooded area in the early medieval period, but some clearance appears to have taken place by 1086 (Domesday survey). The wood lay within the Ditton Camoys manor in the late 13th century, partly coppiced and partly an outlying wood pasture park, and covering approximately 220 acres (89 ha). (Wareham & Wright 2002). It is still referred to as a park in the early 16th century (PRO SC 11/92 Ditton Valence Manor, extent, quoted in Wareham & Wright 2002). It was later managed solely as coppice and reduced in size to *c.*180 acres (72.8 ha, the current size of the wood). It was then sold to the Stetchworth estate in the late 16th century (PRO CP 25/2/93/831/1 & 2 Cambridgeshire: Feet of files for 1 Eliz I Hil, quoted in Wareham & Wright 2002) when it may have formed an adjunct to the Stetchworth/Dullingham emparkment of 1577.

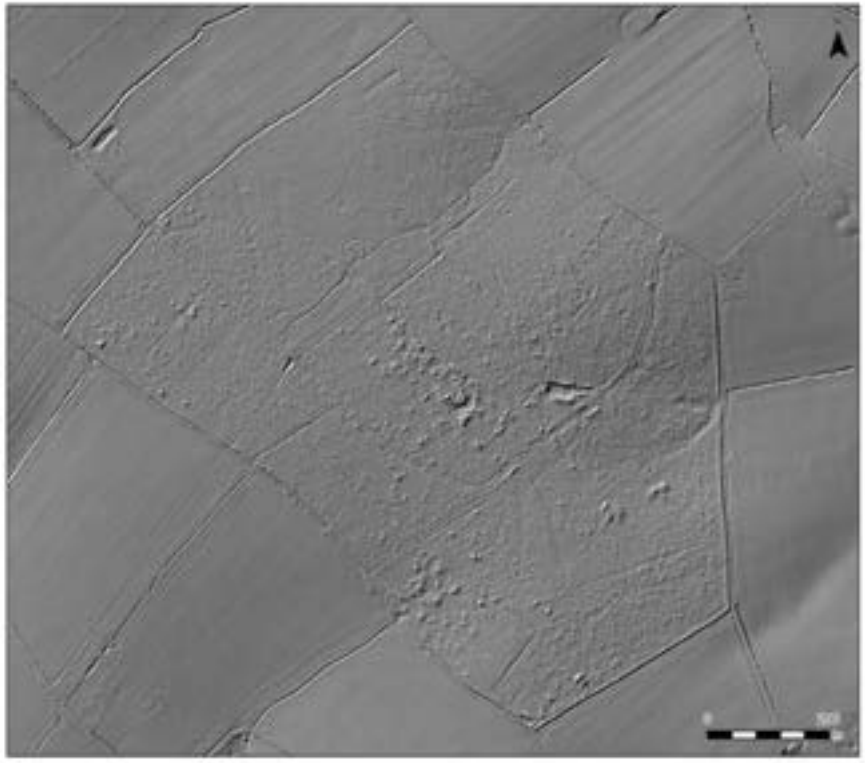


Figure 1 Lidar hillshade imagery of Ditton Park Wood. The perimeter wood bank and possible internal enclosures are visible as earthworks. 1m resolution Composite DTM © Environment Agency 2025.

Possible re-emparkment occurred at a later date, suggested by the fact that the area was still referred to as Ditton Park (rather than Park Wood) in 1709 (T Way in Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) 12261).

A wood bank is visible as an earthwork on lidar imagery around the perimeter of Ditton Park Wood, formed partly of single and partly of double banks (see figure 1). It may have its origin in the earlier period of the park's use but have been modified at a later date, possibly with the reduction in size and sale of the wood in the 16th century (Environment Agency 1m Composite DTM 2025).

Two areas of linear banks, forming possible enclosures or boundaries (CHER MCB31721 and MCB31722), are present in the northern third and south-western corner of the wood. In both cases they are on a different alignment to roads and rides within the wood visible on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1885) and may be earlier in date. A small, ditched, oval enclosure, approximately 38m in width, located in the centre of the northern third of the wood may also be an earlier feature. It appears to have an association with a drain or stream which runs through that section of the wood on the same alignment as the northern boundary (CHER MCB31720). The enclosure is of uncertain date and function but may also predate the later use of the woodland.

Heritage: Cambridgeshire woods ... *continued*

Borley Wood

Borley Wood sits on a ridge of ground (up to 107m above sea level) in the north-east of the parish of Linton, previously in the territory associated with the settlement of Barham. In 1279 Barham manor held 130 acres (52.6 ha) of woodland, which was later divided into Borley wood to the west and Shortwood to the south-east. In 1786 Borley Wood is recorded as covering c. 95 acres (38.5 ha) and Shortwood containing 37 acres (15 ha).

Archaeological evidence from Borley dates from the later prehistoric periods. A Bronze Age spearhead was found within the wood in 1977 (CHER 06116) and the site of possible Roman burial mound has been reported at the north-eastern edge of the wood, although the location of this site is uncertain (CHER 06173). While no further evidence from prehistoric and Roman origin is known from within the wood, cropmarks of settlements which may date to these periods have been recorded from aerial photographs in its immediate vicinity. An enclosure of substantial size with internal enclosures or sub-divisions to the west and a smaller settlement comprising enclosures, two ring ditches and linear features to the north-west. The route of a Roman road, Worsted Street or Via Devana (CHER MCB9602) runs parallel to the northern boundary of the wood. The road is also known as RR 24 (Margary) and runs between Godmanchester (Durovigutum) and Colchester (Camulodunum). The buried remains of a settlement of possible later prehistoric or Roman date are located to the west of the wood (CHER MCB31723).

The shape of the wood is largely unchanged from its depiction on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1:10560, 1886, see figure 2). A group of buildings can be seen at the southern end of the wood at Shorts Corner (CHER MCB23276) but these structures have since been demolished.

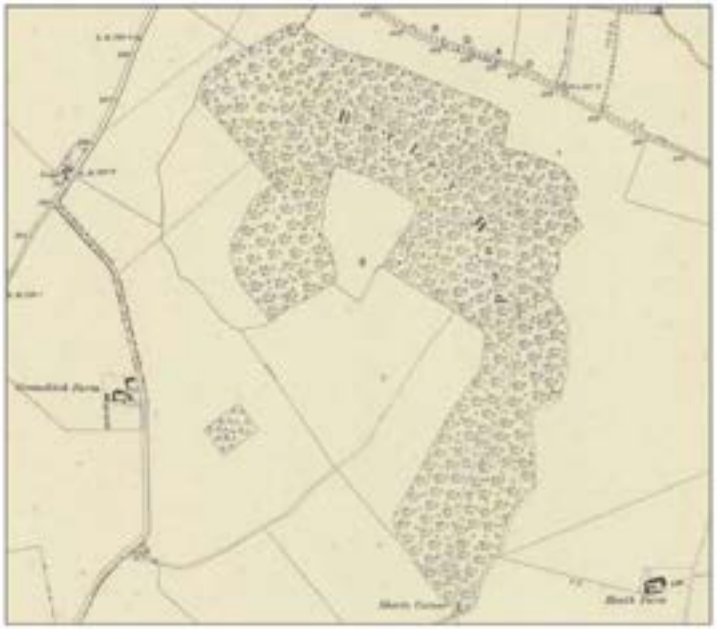


Figure 2 Borley Wood as shown on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1886). Buildings are shown at Shorts Corner at the southern end of the wood.

Heritage: Essex woods historic environment

Little Hales

The current extent of the woodland is smaller than that shown on Chapman and André's map of 1777, but greater than that recorded at the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1:10560, surveyed 1877), with tree coverage now increased to the north and south (see figures 3 and 4). No heritage features have been recorded within the wood, but the central ride, as shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1:10560, 1880), appears to be part of an avenue leading to Ashdon, and possibly to Ashdon Hall to the north, a 19th century brick house with a 17th century timber-framed core (Grade II listed building NHLE 1322454). Finds of Roman and Medieval dates have been found in the vicinity of the wood Ashdon parish as a whole is suggested as being one of the candidates for the battlefield of Assandun (the other is Ashingdon, south Essex), the scene of the Danish King Cnut's 1016 victory over Edmund Ironside (Essex HER 7312).



Figure 3 Hales Wood on the Map of the County of Essex, 1777, John Chapman & Peter André (produced by Tim Fransen 2018)



Figure 4 Little Hales Wood on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1880), accessed via National Library of Scotland, maps.nls.uk.

Heritage: Essex woods ... *continued*

Great and Little Bendysh Woods

The woods are located in the neighbouring parish to Ashdon, Radwinter. The eastern boundary of Great Bendysh Woods abuts the county boundary between Essex and Cambridgeshire, and its western boundary follows the line of the parish boundary between Ashdon and Radwinter. The name Bendysh is derived from 'bean field' or 'tilled field'. The estate of Bendysh Hall, to the south of Little Bendysh Wood, previously owned land in both Radwinter and Ashdon parishes (Green 2007: 8), and the woods may have formed part of their holdings. Great and Little Bendysh are shown as one wood on Chapman and André's 1777 map of Essex (see figure 5 below) but are shown in their current form by the time of the Ordnance Survey first edition map (1:10560, surveyed 1877). Double wood banks of possible post medieval date define the edge of Great Bendysh Wood. A bank also runs along the eastern side of wood which defines part of the county boundary between Essex and Cambridgeshire, a land division originating in the Anglo-Saxon period (Hey (ed) 1996: 114).

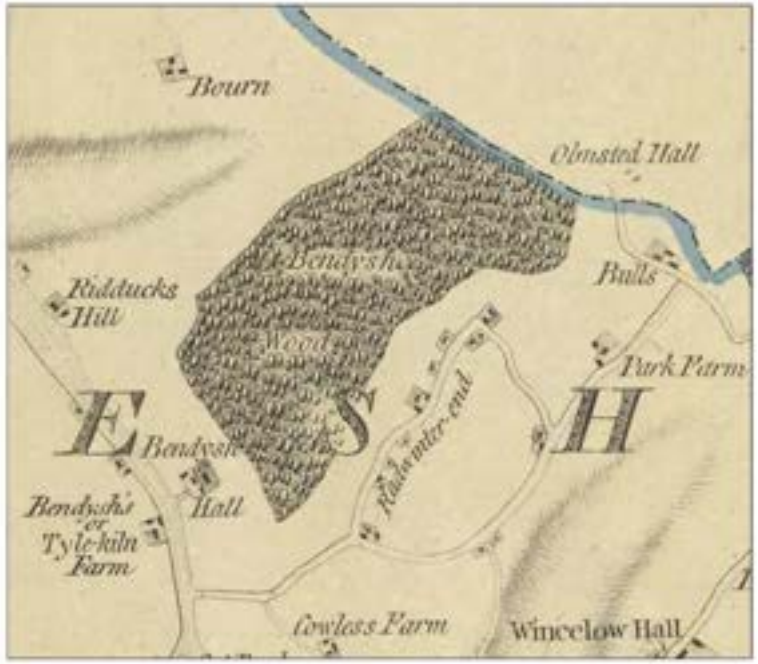


Figure 5 Bendysh Wood on the Map of the County of Essex, 1777, John Chapman & Peter André (produced by Tim Fransen 2018)

Bendysh Hall is a moated manorial site, and its earliest phases are medieval in date (Essex HER 1423). Moated sites are frequently found in low-lying land and were particularly popular in the early part of the Medieval period. Lidar (Environment Agency 1m composite DTM, 2025) shows evidence of modern herringbone drainage across Little Bendysh Wood and in the southern half of Great Bendysh Wood, but an earlier drain and possible boundary bank extends from a stream in the north-western corner of the latter wood.

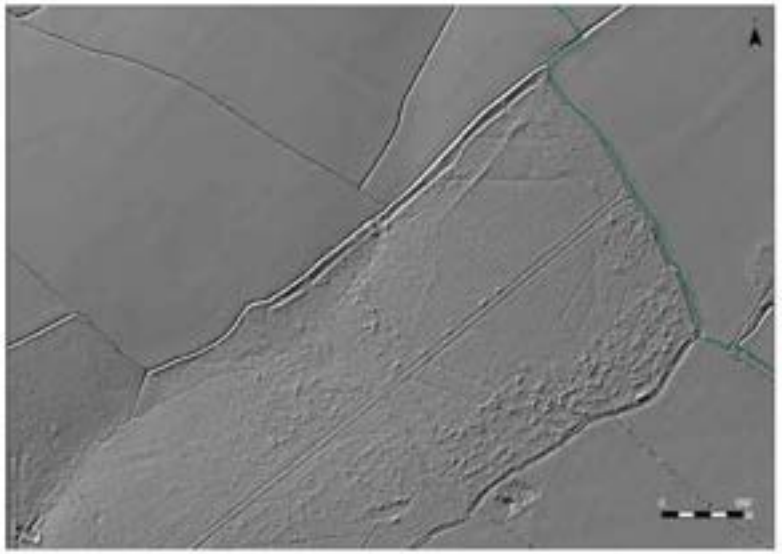


Figure 6 Double bank on northern edge of Great Bendysh Wood and wood/county boundary bank on the eastern edge. County boundary shown in green. © Lidar 1m composite DTM, Environment Agency 2025.

Heritage: Essex woods ... *continued*

Hempstead Wood

The manor of Hempstead is mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 and described as having "woodland for 200 pigs" (Williams and Martin (eds) 1992, 1000). The current extent of Hempstead Wood is approximately the same as that shown on Chapman and André's 1777 map of Essex (see figure 7) and probably has its origins in the earlier medieval period. The medieval moated site of Hempstead Hall lies immediately to the north of the wood, with a later 16th century house built to north of the moat.

Evidence of repeated phases of drainage can be seen on lidar imagery (Environment Agency 1m composite DTM 2025), its appearance suggesting that it is of relatively recent date. Four small square ditched enclosures are visible on the eastern boundary, possibly providing a dry platform for stacking material gathered from the wood. These features are of uncertain date but are similar in appearance to post medieval stack stands, usually formed of a platform surrounded by a ditch, and used in wetland areas for the temporary storage of crops (Truscoe 2006, 28).

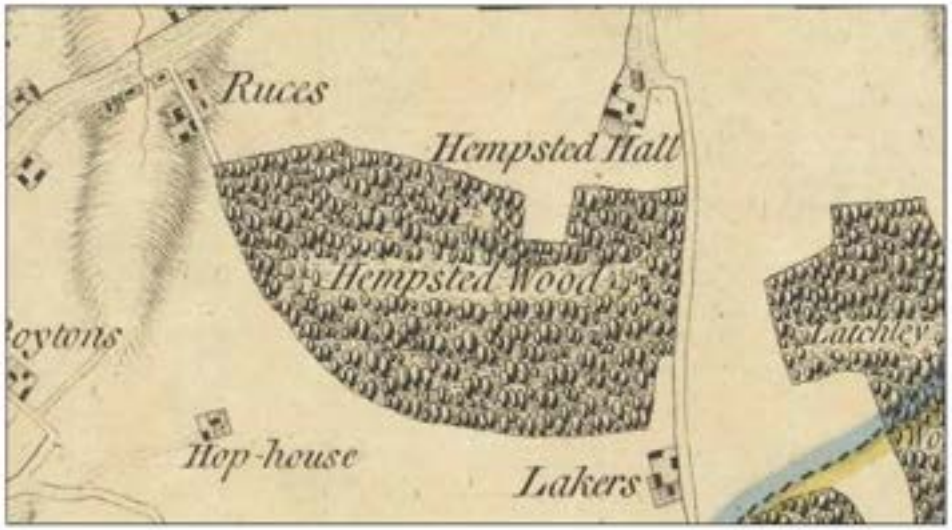


Figure 7 Hempsted Wood on the Map of the County of Essex, 1777, John Chapman & Peter André (produced by Tim Fransen 2018)

Rowney Wood

Rowney Wood is predominantly within the parish of Debden, referred to as *Depeduna* in the Domesday survey (meaning 'deep valley') and to the south of the disused Second World War Debden Airfield (now Carver Barracks). The wood is more sub-rectangular in shape on the Chapman and André map of 1777 than on the later 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1:10560, surveyed 1877 (see figures 8 and 9). The extent of Rowney Wood shown on the 1777 survey abuts the parish boundary on its northern, eastern and southern sides suggesting the early establishment of the wood. A boundary bank is visible around the northern edge of the wood which also marks the parish boundary.

Two additional strips of woodland are shown to the south-east of the main wood by the time of the 1877 survey, situated to the north-east and south-west of an area of heath. This additional woodland area is located within the parish of Wimbish. The current southern extent of the wood is shown as a mixture of heathland and linear strips of tree planting on the 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map (1:10560, surveyed 1919), but as fully covered by trees by the time of the 1950 edition (surveyed 1946). Earlier field boundaries and possible areas of settlement of medieval to post medieval date have been recorded to the south and east of the wood, suggesting that a greater area of land was previously cultivated rather than forested around the wood.

The earlier woodland has a system of radiating paths which are shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map. These paths are not shown on the Chapman and André map of 1777, although this may be a mapping convention and the date that the paths were laid out is uncertain.



Figure 8 Rowney Wood on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1880), accessed via National Library of Scotland, maps.nls.uk.

Heritage: Essex woods ... *continued*



Figure 9 Rowney Wood on the Map of the County of Essex, 1777, John Chapman & Peter André (produced by Tim Fransen 2018)

RAF Debden was established to the north of the wood in 1935. The airfield was expanded during the Second World War, and an outlying area of Blister Hangars can be seen on contemporary aerial photographs immediately to the north of Rowney Wood. A possible military site is also visible within the eastern edge of the wood on USAAF photographs of 1944. The site consists of a group of structures in a circular clearing. These structures do not appear on historic or modern maps, or later aerial photography, so may have been a wartime installation.

Broak's Wood

Evidence of settlement in the area of Broak's Wood is suggested from the later prehistoric periods through the find of a Neolithic or Bronze Age worked flint flake, but more evidence has been found from later periods. While no finds of Roman material have been made within the woodland area the suggested line of the Roman Road between Chelmsford (Essex) to Ixworth (Suffolk) runs to the east of the wood and finds of pottery and tile have been made adjacent to it to the north-east of Broak's Wood. Several finds of medieval pottery, some dated to the 13th century, have been found across the wood suggesting settlement or use of the area during this period.

An area of woodland is shown on Chapman and André's map of 1777 to the east of west of Hedingham Road covering the modern extent of Shardlowe's Wood and southern half of Broaks Wood. Dispersed farms are located in the area immediately around the woodland, with two large houses surrounded by parkland to the north-east, Dynes Hall, and to the south-west, Gosfield Hall. The 1st edition OS map (1:10560, surveyed 1876) shows both woods in their current form, with the 19th century estate of George Courtauld, Cut Hedge (now Gosfield School), adjacent to the southern border of Shardlowes Wood. Agricultural fields border the woods to the west between Boaley's Farm in the north and Shardlowe's Farm in the south. The modern extent of Broak's Wood now covers one of these fields and other removed field boundaries have been identified as cropmarks to the south.



Figure 10 Broaks Wood on the Map of the County of Essex, 1777, John Chapman & Peter André (produced by Tim Fransen 2018)



Figure 11 Broaks Wood on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, surveyed 1876), accessed via National Library of Scotland, maps.nls.uk.

Heritage: Essex woods ... *continued*

Markshall

Markshall Wood lies in the centre of the Marks Hall Ancient Landscape, designated as such by Essex County Council (19/51992) due to the presence of a significant assemblage of visible features, both man-made and semi-natural of pre 1600 origin (Essex HER MEX1040046). The southern half of the wood also falls within the Marks Hall Estate. A deer park was recorded in the northern part of the estate on Norden's map of c1594. A 17th century house (demolished 1950) stood within a designed landscape in Markshall Park to the south. The landscape included an 18th century walled garden, a tree avenue and three rectangular ponds.

The house was requisitioned during the Second World War when Earls Colne airfield was created on estate land to the north. Ancillary sites were built within the estate land and at least four can be seen within Markshall Wood on contemporary aerial photography (eg US/7PH/GP/LOC186 5016 29-FEB-1944). It is possible that buried remains of these installations survive. Many of the huts associated with the airfield were used by Braintree District Council to house displaced persons after the war. The estate was left in trust to the nation by Thomas Phillips Price and the deer park was leased to the Forestry Commission in 1956. Refurbishment of the remaining areas of the estate and the creation of an arboretum occurred from 1971 following the formation of the Thomas Phillips Price Trust (Essex Gardens Trust, essexgardenstrust.org.uk/inventories).



Figure 12 Markshall Wood on the Map of the County of Essex, 1777, John Chapman & Peter André (produced by Tim Fransen 2018)

Chalkney

Few features are known that predate Chalkney Wood, limited to finds of a flint flake and flint blade (dated to between the Neolithic and possibly the Iron Age), and a hollow way which runs through its centre aligned north-west - south-east. Rackham has interpreted this earthwork as being part of the Roman road from Colchester to Cambridge (Rackham 1973), although it may be pre-Roman in date.

The hollow way peters out to the east of the wood but then its alignment is taken up by a straight parish boundary coinciding with a lane and the edge of Wolfney Wood (Essex HER MEX28009).

This area of ancient woodland has been referred to as Chalkney Wood since the 15th century and has covered its present area since at least the 17th century. The Domesday survey refers to there being wood for 400 swine in the manor of Earls Colne. Aubrey de Vere endowed Colne priority with over 140 acres of land in the early 12th century, an area added to by his successors. Part of this endowment was the gift of five woods, including Chalkney wood on the eastern edge of the parish (Cooper (ed) 2001: 94-98). The wood is shown on the Earls Colne and Colne Priory Manor Maps of 1598 (Wynne-Williams Associates 2022: 12-13). It is also shown with approximately the same dimensions as currently on Chapman and André's map of 1777.

It was one of the great manorial woods of the De Veres, Earls of Oxford, who kept wild boar in it until the time of Henry VIII, according to a survey of 1598. The wood has a sinuous and irregular boundary with substantial bank, external ditch, surviving to around 1m in height in some areas, and massive elm coppice stools (Essex HER MEX28011). The perimeter bank, and a north-south aligned, segmented, bank running through the centre of the northern half of the wood, are both visible on lidar imagery. The north-south aligned bank may be the remains of a former internal division. A group of pits, possibly extractive pits, can also be seen on lidar imagery across the central area of the wood (Environment Agency lidar 2025). This area of the wood is located on the clay, silt and sand of the London Clay Formation (British Geological Survey (geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk). The names of two farms shown on Chapman and André's map of 1777 and the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1881), Claypits Farm and Tilekiln Farm, support the interpretation that these were clay extraction pits.

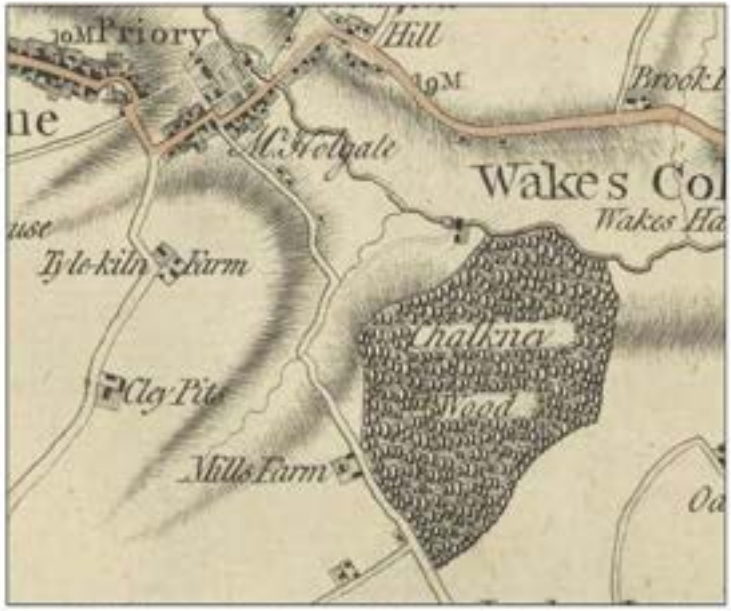


Figure 13 Chalkney Wood on the Map of the County of Essex, 1777, John Chapman & Peter André (produced by Tim Fransen 2018)

Heritage: Essex woods ... *continued*

Pods and Layer Wood

The earliest feature known within the woods is a bowl barrow, or burial mound, of possible Early Bronze Age date. Prehistoric, worked flints were found in the vicinity of the barrow, but no other evidence for occupation during the later prehistoric periods has been identified within the woods. A prehistoric earthwork of unknown function, The Rampart, is located immediately to the east of Pods Wood, to the south of Haynes Green. It is formed of a double bank with a water-filled ditch in its centre (Hicks 2018: 2).

A ditched feature continues into Pods Wood to the west on the same alignment as The Rampart, but has been interpreted as a post medieval tunnel. The ditched feature is not shown on the 1st edition OS map, but a trackway is marked as continuing into that location (see figure 14). The extent of Conyfield, Pods and Layer Woods as shown on the 1st edition OS map is largely similar to that shown on Chapman and André's map of 1777 (see figure 15).



Figure 14 The Rampart and adjacent trackway in Pods Wood on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1880), accessed via National Library of Scotland, maps.nls.uk.



Figure 15 Pods and Layer Woods on the Map of the County of Essex, 1777, John Chapman & Peter André (produced by Tim Fransen 2018)

During the Second World War, Birch Airfield was located to the north of both woods, and two ancillary sites associated with it were located in the north-eastern corner of Pods Wood (Dispersed Site No 8) and the north-western corner of Layer Wood (Dispersed Site No 11). Concrete hut bases can still be found across both sites, and section of Pods Wood and the area was still mapped as open ground up until the OS map of 1958 (1:10560).

Heritage: Suffolk Woods historic environment

Stanstead

Stanstead Great Wood has its origins as an ancient woodland, as defined by the Nature Conservancy's Council's *Inventory of Ancient Woodland* (Suffolk HER STS 014), but the settlement of Stanstead and its associated woodland are also mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086.



Figure 16 Stanstead Wood on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1884), accessed via National Library of Scotland, maps.nls.uk.

The wood is defined by perimeter banks which may be medieval in date, and two banks identified on lidar imagery in the south-western corner may be sub-divisions of the same period. An area of woodland is shown in the same location as Stansted Great Wood on Hodskinson and Faden's map of 1783 (see figure 17), and the wood is similar in appearance to the modern day on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1:10560, 1884, see figure 16).

Evidence of earlier activity has also been found within the woodland area. Fragments of Roman building materials and pottery were recorded in the north face of a large ditch or water course, including tegula roof tiles, flue and floor tiles. The assemblage is assumed to have been associated with the site of a villa complex, nearby to the north. Later activity is shown by two possible former quarry pits in the north-eastern area of the wood.



Figure 17 Stanstead Wood and Lineage Wood (not named, west of Barston Hall) and Spelthorn (Spilton) Wood as shown on Hodskinson & Faden's map of the county of Suffolk, 1 inch: 1 mile, 1783.

Heritage: Suffolk woods ... *continued*

Lineage

The Lineage forestry block includes five other areas of woodland which lie to the south and east of the historic extent of Lineage Wood: Paradise Wood, Spelthorn Wood, Queech Plantation, Crabtree Wood (including Little Bear's Hill and Great Bear's Hill) and Alder Carr. Lineage Wood, Spelthorn Wood and Paradise Wood are defined as ancient woodlands (Nature Conservancy Council 1992).

Lineage Wood is mentioned in 1386 as `Lenynge', a wood of about 90 acres belonging to the Abbot of Bury St Edmunds. The name appears as `Lynnydge Wood' on Israel Amyce's Map of Melford Estate *c.*1580 (Suffolk HER LMD 094) and is shown as Linnage Wood on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1884). The extent of the ancient woodland is defined by a wood bank, which survives as an earthwork on a section of the northern boundary and around the majority of the southern boundary.

The area of Crabtree Wood and Little Bear's Hill are named as `Ladyden Hylls' on the 1580 map and do not appear to be in woodland on Hodskinson & Faden's map of 1783 (see figure 17). Spelthorne Wood was referred to in 1386 as `Le Speltne' a wood about 80 acres belonging to the Abbot of Bury St Edmunds (Suffolk HER LMD 093). It appears as `Spelton Wood' on Amyce's map of *c.*1580. Spelthorn Wood is shown as Spilton Wood on Hodskinson & Faden's map of 1783 (see figure 17).

The earliest suggested activity within the woodland block is the possible route of the Roman road between the North Gate of Colchester Roman town to Great Horkesley, which passes through Crabtree Wood (Suffolk HER SUF 102). No upstanding remains are evident on lidar imagery within the woodland (Environment Agency 2025).

A short length of possible hollow way, which may be medieval in origin, has been recorded in the south-western corner of Lineage Wood, adjacent to the perimeter wood bank. This feature was reportedly re-used as an anti-tank defence in 2nd World War (Suffolk HER LMD 094). A post medieval water meadow survives as a series of earthwork banks and ditches within Queech Plantation, adjacent to the Chad Brook (Environment Agency 2025). Other evidence of activity within the medieval and post medieval periods is represented by a rectangular enclosure in the south-eastern corner of Lineage Wood. This enclosure is shown containing a barn on a map of Long Melford by Isaac Johnson (1820) and described as `Linnage Barn Pightle, pasture, 1a 2r 8p' on the Long Melford Tithe Map and Apportionment of 1839 (SRO(B), T145/1,2). A rectangular outline shown on Amyce's map of 1580 suggests that the enclosure was in existence by that time.

During the Second World War a stop-line, comprising pill boxes, anti-tank ditches and other defences, was constructed between Sudbury and Mildenhall. Several pill boxes are still present across the woodland block: two on the western and eastern boundaries of Lineage wood (Suffolk HER LMD 105 and LMD 106), one on the western edge of Crabtree Wood (Suffolk HER LMD 107). A section of anti-tank ditch also survives as an earthwork on north-eastern edge of Lineage Wood before continuing to the north-east along the line of a, now dismantled, railway line. This section of the Bury St Edmunds to Long Melford railway line ran along the eastern boundaries of Crabtree and Lineage Woods. The line was opened in 1865, closed to passengers in 1961 and, finally, closed to freight in 1965.



Figure 18 Lineage (Linnage) Wood on the 1st edition OS map (1:10560, 1884), accessed via National Library of Scotland, maps.nls.uk.

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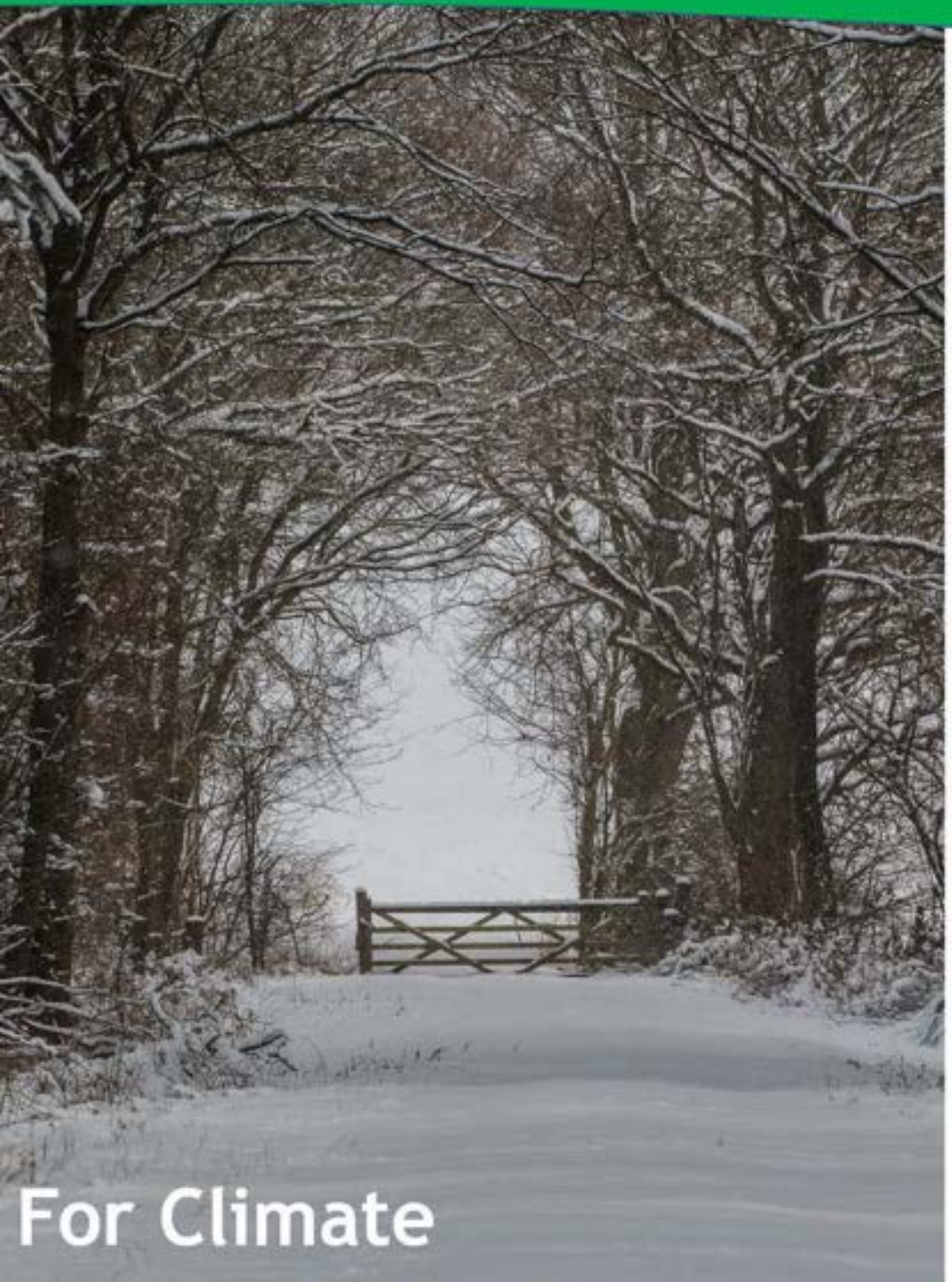
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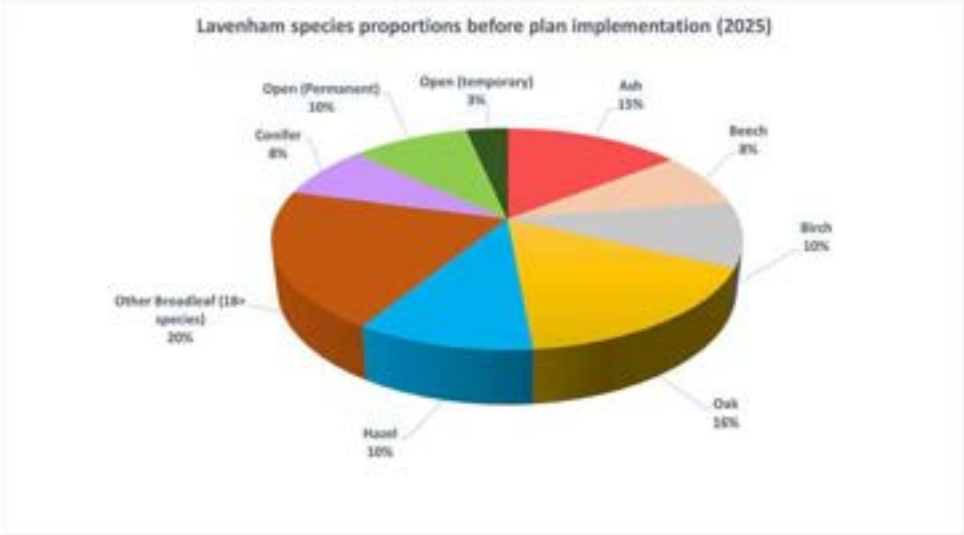
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Tree Species

The pie chart below shows the current species proportions across the plan area. Since the implementation of the previous forest plan there has been significant change with a reduction of approximately 22% of conifer species, increase of 14% in broadleaf species and 8% increase in open space.



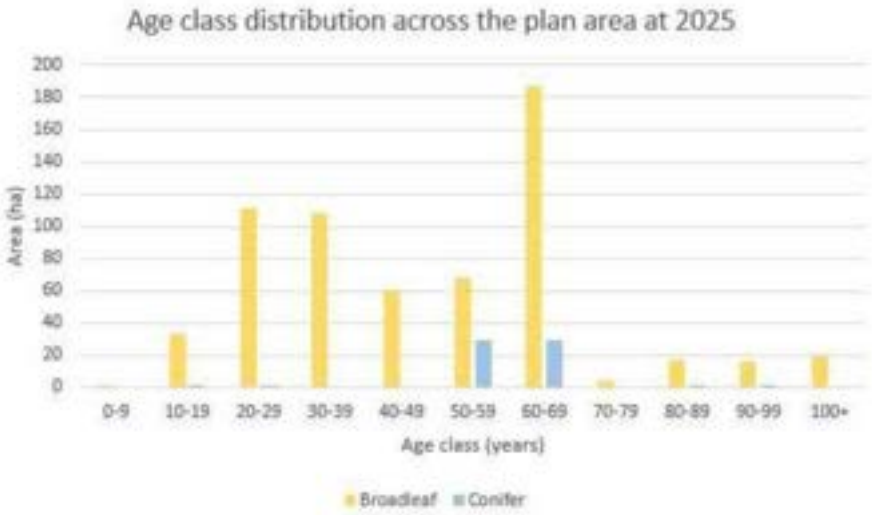
The main broadleaf species include Ash, Oak, Hazel, Birch and Beech with a further 18+ minor species present across the woodlands. The main conifer species is Corsican pine, with slightly smaller proportions of Scots pine and Douglas fir also present, along with a further 7 minor conifer species.

The change in species proportions shows good progress has been made in removing conifer as the first step to revert the woodlands back to predominantly native broadleaf species. Conifer removal was a major objective of the previous plan but its quick removal has led to limited regeneration within some woodlands. In wetter woodlands felled coupes have been dominated by pendular sedge and in drier woodlands bracken and bramble. Where regeneration has occurred it has been subject to mammal damage and unsuccessful in establishing. Ride structuring and maintenance is a key priority for the plan area, required to provide important access for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and managing wildlife to improve establishment of regeneration on these sites.

Fencing and tree tubes for protection of restock will be discussed and agreed with the wildlife management team and used where required.

Open space including both permanent and temporary (e.g. recently felled areas) accounts for 13% of the plan area.

Structural diversity



The Lavenham woodlands were replanted between 1954 and 1970 with non site native species including Norway spruce, Scot's pine, Corsican pine, Douglas fir and Beech. The majority of conifer has been removed but some still remains which can be seen on the bar chart above aged between 50-69 years old. Some older conifer trees remain in the 80-99 age class including Yew, Douglas fir and some Larch. A very small amount of natural regeneration is present in age class 10-29 years.

The age class of broadleaf is not evenly spread with a large amount being planted between 1953-1962. The plan area has a good variety of species but diversification of age structure, encouraging natural regeneration and where required supplementary planting will be a key objective for the plan. Wildlife management will be a significant factor in this to ensure success.

Forest resilience

Climate change is bringing hotter, drier summers, more intense storms, and an increasing risk of wildfire. At the same time, pests and diseases such as ash dieback and Phytophthora continue to spread, while high populations of deer and grey squirrels place additional strain on young trees. These factors combine to threaten the health and future of our woodlands.

Ancient woodlands are a critical resource for resilience because they are already biodiverse. Building resilient woodlands through species and age diversity is key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the woodland within a changing climate. Delivering a forest more resilient to the threats from pests and diseases is key to both economic and ecological sustainability of the forest.

The forest plan aims to increase forest resilience across the Lavenham woods by focusing on restoring diverse, broadleaved habitats and maintaining ecological conditions that allow the forest to adapt to long term environmental change.

The previous plan period saw the majority of conifer removed over a short space of time and just 8% remains today (see pie chart on pg 31). However, this approach led to bracken and weed domination reducing the establishment of native broadleaf regeneration. Over the next plan period sensitive restoration will be prioritised to improve the ecological condition and structure across the Lavenham woods. This will be done using a variety of silvicultural systems including careful thinning, selective felling, clear felling (heavily seeding conifer, diseased or dying areas only) and coppicing shown in the management maps from page 38-59.

Gradually replacing non native trees with native species, controlling invasives and restoring natural light levels and processes will rebuild complex ecosystems, preserve historic features and allow adaption to future threats posed by climate change, pests and diseases.

Restocking will rely heavily on natural regeneration of site native species, through active deer management, which strengthens genetic diversity and produces trees well adapted to local conditions, improving the forest's long term health and stability. Species will likely include those detailed on the species and restock maps for each woodland on pages 39-60.
Supplementary planting will be used if regeneration is unsuccessful or where increasing species diversity is a key priority. Greater diversity helps buffer the woodland against pests, diseases, and climate stresses by ensuring no single species dominates the canopy or understory.

To improve forest sustainability tree species and tree protection is considered as part of the restock programme taking into account soil type, diversification, climate resilient species, disease and pests. As a result of changing priorities restock species are decided closer to the time of felling and it may be necessary to fence the replanted or regenerating areas to prevent browsing by mammals.

Monitoring of tree species composition and health through mid term reviews and full plan revisions will help inform future management plans in preparing for an uncertain future and unprecedented rates of change in climate.





Our Sustainable Approach

Financial sustainability

Ancient woodlands rely on financial sustainability that is deeply tied to their ecological integrity, as healthy ecosystems reduce long term management costs and improve resilience. Maintaining diverse tree species, varied age structures, and rich ground flora strengthens woodland stability, reducing the need for expensive interventions against pests, diseases, or climate driven stresses.

Sustainable forest management practices such as careful planning, monitoring, and supporting natural regeneration help preserve soil health, biodiversity, and ecosystem services, though they require steady funding to implement effectively.

The woodlands across the plan area are generally managed on a 10 year operational cycle. However, this does not preclude work taking place more than once within the 10 year plan period. Operations may be undertaken on a "little and often" basis in order to minimise overall impacts and protect the soil avoiding damage to fungi, invertebrates and flora.

In some woodlands (Little Hales, Great & Little Bendysh and Lineage South area) there is currently no suitable forest road infrastructure to support operations. This will need to be addressed, potentially through funding streams, to enable the management specified in the management plans. All other woodlands have existing road infrastructure in either good condition or requiring repair prior to operations taking place.

Clear felling operations over the next 5 -10 years will include widening rides, targeting removal of heavily seeding conifer and dying ash and small scale coppicing. Whilst ride widening itself is not expected to produce substantial income, combining these works with larger clearfell and thinning operations should improve overall financial viability and attractiveness.
Thinning interventions will include gradual removal of non invasive conifer and gradual thinning of existing broadleaf areas. These gentle interventions will increase light to the floor allowing native plants to thrive, avoiding bramble or bracken taking over and encouraging natural regeneration helping to reduce planting and establishment costs.

The production forecast indicates operations will increase thinning and felling volumes from the previous plan, over the next 10 year period. This is likely due to a combination of smaller, more frequent interventions and the inclusion of felling coupes that were deferred under the previous plan following a change in policy in 2015, where large scale clear fells stopped in favour of a more sensitive approach.

Forestry England



Proposed management plans

The proposed management below builds upon the objectives listed on page 6 and details how progress will be measured:

For Wildlife Objectives

W1 *To protect, maintain and enhance areas of ancient semi-natural woodland and restore planted ancient woodland (PAWS) to native species.*

There has been good progress made towards reversion of PAWS woodlands to semi natural woodlands since the last forest plan was produced in 2009. This can be easily seen using the semi natural layers on foresterweb to compare scores from 2013 to 2025 and has been predominantly through the removal of conifer which was the primary objective of the plan.

There is now only 8% conifer left across the Lavenham woods (see pie chart on page 31) with the largest proportion of that being present in Stanstead and Markshall woods. However, there has been difficulty in establishing natural tree regeneration across all woodlands due to mammal damage and vegetation encroachment. This plan aims to rectify this through widening rides and improving their structure to create important edge habitat for a variety of species present, and improve wildlife management encouraging successful establishment of natural regeneration.

Areas of conifer known to freely regenerate have been identified on the management maps for clear fell and thinning operations will be carried out to favour native broadleaf species. Overtime these operations will help to further reduce conifer and increase native broadleaf within the woodland. Supplementary planting will also be used where natural regeneration continues to be unsuccessful to increase tree cover and diversify species where appropriate.

W2 *To protect, maintain and enhance designated sites.*

Forestry England manages two of the three units within Lineage, both currently assessed as *unfavourable-recovering* condition. Opening the canopy to diversify woodland structure, encourage natural regeneration and release the understorey will support habitat improvement. Naturally regenerating Western red cedar will be monitored and removed where necessary to reduce conifer influence and prevent shading.

Ash dieback (Chalara) is now endemic within the W8 woodland community. Following the loss of Elm, Ash would typically be expected to dominate on the gleyed soils present. In the absence of Ash, however, a shift towards a more Oak dominated W10 community is anticipated. Supplementary planting will help this transition, replacing Beech and declining Ash with species better suited to the site.

The plan also identifies Lineage meadow areas where MG5 grassland and locally distinctive flora will be maintained and enhanced. A small stand of Lineage Elm has been mapped to trial coppicing to support its conservation.

Restoration of the ride network is essential to support wildlife management and maintain woodland structure. The plan includes proposals to widen rides as shown on the management map (page 53-54). In addition, new road infrastructure through the centre of the woodland will provide improved access for future operations.

Forestry England manages one of the two units within Chalkney Forest, which is currently in *favourable* condition. However, the woodland would benefit from crown thinning to reduce canopy cover to below 30% where dense growth is suppressing coppice regrowth. This intervention will also help improve ground flora, which is currently restricted in places to small canopy gaps.

Further management may include creating small coppice coupes of less than 1 ha within each compartment to increase structural diversity. Enhancing ride width and structure will also support biodiversity across the site.

Specific SSSI and conservation plans are agreed between the Ecologist and beat teams and provide more detail on the management of SSSI sites.

W3 *To protect, maintain and enhance priority habitats.*

The revised plan will increase the amount of permanent open space by 4%, as shown in the pie chart on page 37. This will bring total open space to 14%, exceeding the UKFS minimum requirement of 10%. The additional open space will support more effective forest management, enhance biodiversity, and strengthen priority habitats along with the species that depend on them.

The increase in open space results primarily from haloing existing ponds and widening rides, both of which are essential for establishing ecological corridors that improve habitat connectivity and support the distribution of priority species. Rides will be widened to an appropriate width (approximately 10-20m) for biodiversity and wildlife management to create a network of weaving corridors throughout the forest.

W4 *To protect, maintain and enhance priority species.*

There are a variety of priority species recorded across the Lavenham woods including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, lepidoptera, birds, invertebrates and plants. Priority species will be maintained through the planned programme of management identified for their supporting habitats. Opportunities will be identified at the operational level and incorporated into work programmes via the operational site assessment (OSA) process.

The proposed management below builds upon the objectives listed on page 6

For People Objectives

P1 *Create a pleasant natural environment for the public to enjoy outdoor recreation, in freehold woodlands only.*

It is difficult to assess how pleasant a woodland environment is as this is subjective. However, managing the woodland through a variety of silvicultural systems including clear fell, LISS and retaining patches of overmature trees such as those present in natural reserve coupes, should create a pleasing environment for forest users and passers by. Ride widening, creating scallops and improving ride structure will also create more visual interest within the woodlands.

P2 *Maintain and improve cultural and heritage value of the land by protecting sensitive heritage features highlighted through the operational site assessment (OSA)* process.*

Site specific heritage features are considered as part of an OSA process before work commences. Appropriate buffer zones and working arrangements will be specified to workers.

P3 *Agree Scheduled Monument (SM) management plan for Conyfield Wood, with Historic England (appendix 1).*

Appendix 1 shows the Scheduled Monument management plan for Conyfield wood. This has been agreed with Historic England.

For Climate Objectives

C1 *Maintain the land within our stewardship under Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) / Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) by meeting standards detailed in UKWAS fourth and fifth edition.*

UKWAS audits are carried out nationally in Forestry England woodlands on an annual basis to retain certified status. An approved forest plan is a key part of the evidence given to the auditors to prove that the forest is managed sustainably.

C2 *Increase forest resilience to threats posed by climate change, pests, diseases and fire.*

Management of the Lavenham Woods is designed to increase long term forest resilience in line with the principles of the UK Forestry Standard and the UK Woodland Assurance Standard. The plan adopts a diversified and adaptive approach to ensure the woodlands can withstand the increasing pressures associated with climate change, pests, diseases, and wildfire.

Species and Structural Diversity
The woodland will be managed to increase species diversity, reduce reliance on vulnerable single species stands, and encourage a broader range of age classes and structural types. Restocking will use a mix of native and appropriate honorary broadleaf species, predominantly through natural regeneration supported by supplementary planting where necessary. Cluster planting will be used in open areas where natural regeneration has not established successfully. This approach contributes to a resilient forest structure capable of adapting to changing environmental conditions.

Silvicultural Systems and Stand Management
A programme of thinning on a minimum 10 year cycle will improve stand stability, promote healthy growth, and reduce vulnerability to biotic and abiotic stresses. A combination of selective felling, clear felling, coppice restoration, and continuous cover practices will be applied according to site conditions. Mature conifer stands identified as economically viable will be removed through phased or clear fell operations to support the transition towards a predominantly broadleaf structure and maintain a sustainable flow of timber.

Pests, Diseases and Biosecurity
Management interventions will minimise the risk and impact of pests and diseases by reducing stand stress, maintaining species diversity, and removing declining or infected trees where appropriate. Particular attention will be given to ash dieback and spruce susceptible to bark beetle attack. Operations will incorporate appropriate biosecurity measures to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms.

Climate Change Adaptation
Species selection and stand design will reflect the need to adapt to projected changes in climate, including warmer, drier summers and more extreme weather events. This includes choosing species suited to future climatic conditions, maintaining soil health, protecting watercourses, and encouraging regeneration methods that minimise soil disturbance and safeguard ecological function.

Fire Risk Management
To address increasing fire risk, the plan maintains and enhances the ride network, creating functional firebreaks and ensuring access for management and emergency response. Vegetation along rides will be managed to reduce fuel loads, and conifer blocks will be broken up through phased removal to lower flammability across the woodland.

The proposed management below builds upon the objectives listed on page 6

Our sustainable approach objectives

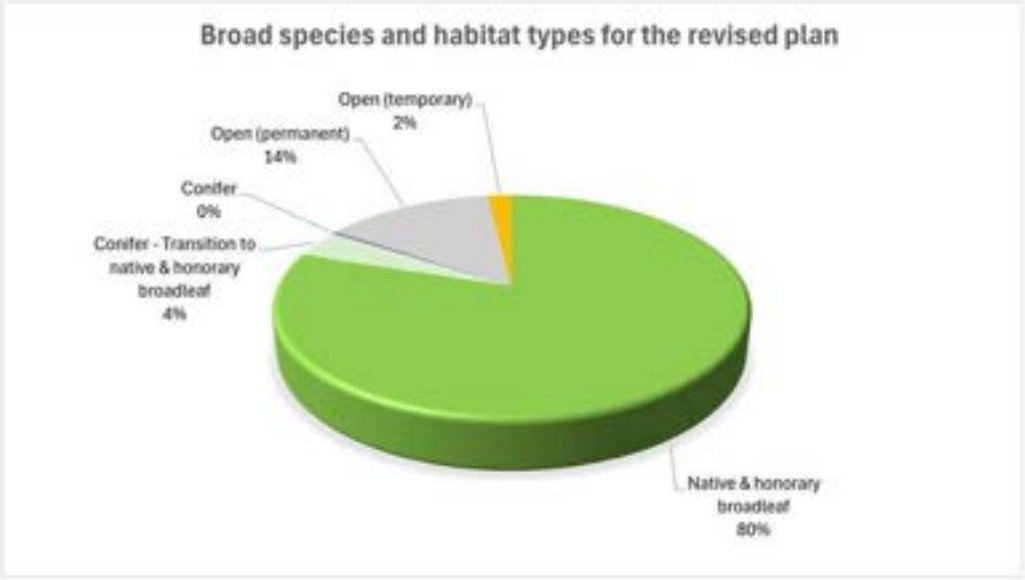
SA1 Improve economic resilience of our forests by increasing species diversity through restock programmes and mixed silvicultural practices, to protect future timber supplies and biomass.

The plan aims to sensitively restore and enhance the ecological condition and structural diversity of the Lavenham woods. This will be achieved through the use of a variety of silvicultural systems—including clear felling, group and single tree selection felling, irregular shelterwood, thinning, and coppicing—as shown on the management maps on pages 38-60.

Clear fell coupes have been designated in areas of conifer that are known to regenerate freely, such as Western red cedar, Grand fir, and Douglas fir, as well as in stands at high risk of disease, including spruce susceptible to *Ips typographus*. Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*), also known as Chalara, is widespread across the Lavenham woodlands. The plan therefore seeks to remove dead and declining ash and gradually transition these areas to alternative native broadleaf species to secure the long term resilience of the forests.

Before any intervention, each site will be carefully assessed. A proportion of trees will be retained to support restocking, whether through natural regeneration or supplementary planting.

The pie chart shows projected habitat proportions by the end of the plan period. Restock will be carried out predominantly through natural regeneration and supplementary planting will be used to improve establishment success rates or to introduce new species.



Increasing the diversity of restock species will strengthen the forest's resilience to climate change and reduce vulnerability to pests and diseases. The restock and species maps from pages 39-60 illustrate the proportions of areas transitioning from conifer to native or honorary broadleaf, areas designated as native and honorary broadleaf, and those allocated as open space for each woodland block.

Open sites that were previously felled and have since struggled to regenerate naturally have been identified for cluster planting. This approach will help introduce a broader range of species and ensure successful establishment.

The potential species to be used for restocking, whether through natural regeneration or supplementary planting, are detailed on the species and restock maps on pages 39-60.

Ride widening is a key priority within the plan, providing essential access for woodland management, supporting wildlife, and improving conditions for natural regeneration. Permanent open space will increase by 4% over the plan period, contributing to structural diversity and habitat enhancement.

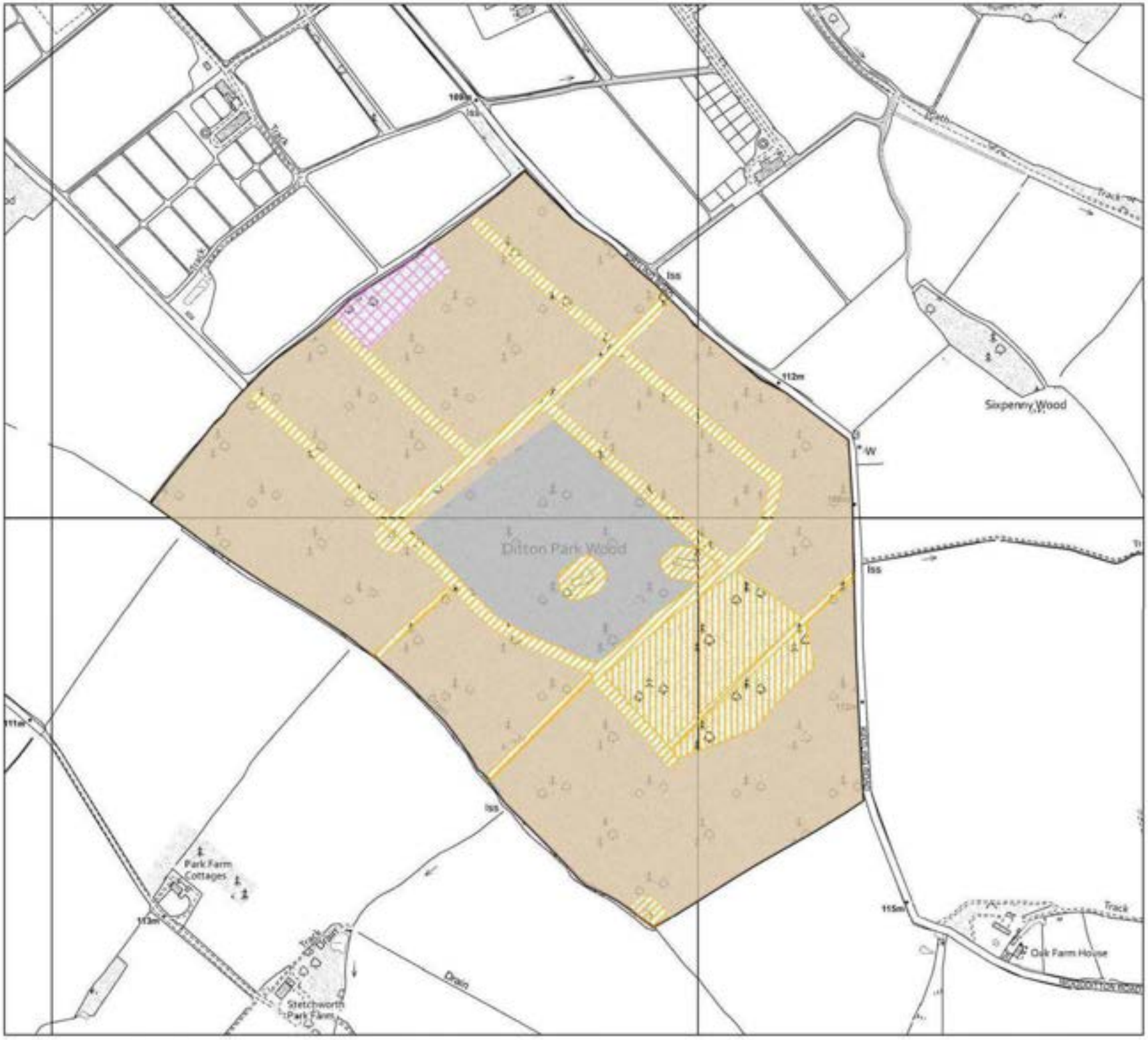
SA2 To generate income from the marketing of timber products whilst ensuring operations take place at a scale and frequency in keeping with the surrounding landscape.

A rolling programme of thinning on a minimum 10 year cycle will support improved health, stability, and growth across the Lavenham woods. Combining these thinning operations with ride widening and carefully located clear fell coupes will help create a more structurally diverse and visually attractive woodland.

Planting within open areas will ensure that a future crop becomes established, contributing to long term woodland resilience and productivity. The conifer stands identified for removal are economically mature and ready to be felled. Their extraction will generate income both from the clear fell areas and from those managed through gradual removal, while also supporting the transition of the woodland towards a greater proportion of broadleaf species.

The production forecast indicates an increase in volume for the revised plan period (2026-2036) compared with the previous plan (2009-2019). This rise is likely linked to the change in PAWS policy in 2015, which removed clear fell coupes from PAWS restoration in favour of more gradual and sensitive methods. As a result, conifer stands remained in place with limited intervention and can now be utilised to support the transition to native broadleaf species. Increased projected volume is also influenced by updated survey data and revised coupe boundaries that better reflect the current crop structure.

The production forecast has been reviewed and agreed with the Operations Manager.



Forestry England

East England Forest District

Ditton Wood

Scale: 1:5,500

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

- Clear fell 2027-2031
- Clear fell with retention 2027-2031, Remove Ash, approx 50% of the area

Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

- LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection
- LISS Broadleaf - Coppice with standards

Open/other

- Open space

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Ditton Wood

Scale: 1:5,500

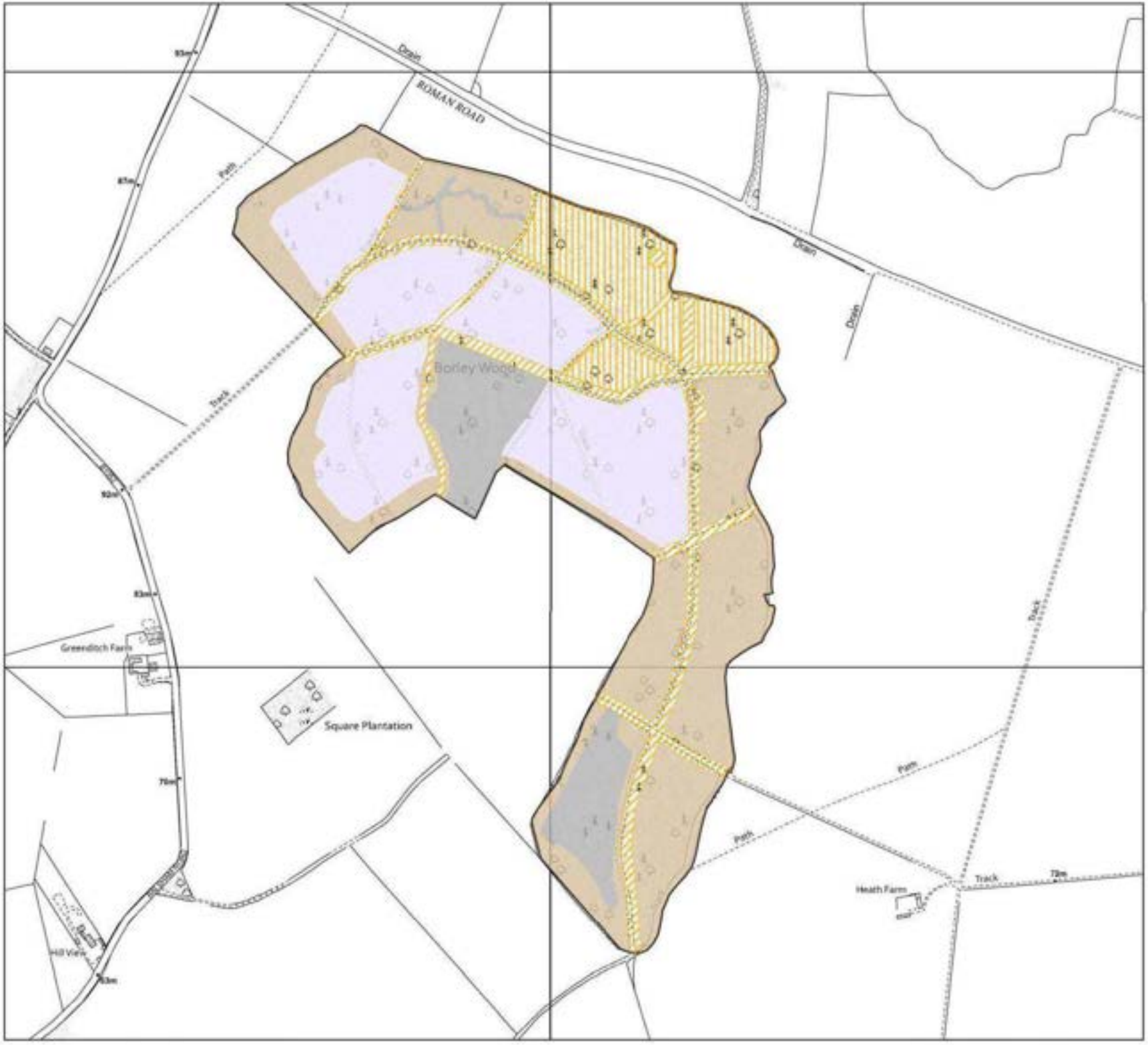
Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Temporary open space - Cluster plant Oak, Alder, Wild Cherry & Aspen
- Ponds
- Oak standards with Hazel coppice
- Native and Honorary Species predominantly Oak, Hornbeam, Birch & Beech.

  Hornbeam would require planting.

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Borley Wood

Scale: 1:6,000

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

- Clear fell 2027-2031
- Clear fell 2027-2031 with 20-30% retention

Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

- LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection
- LISS Conifer - Irregular Shelterwood

Open/other

- Open space

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Borley Wood

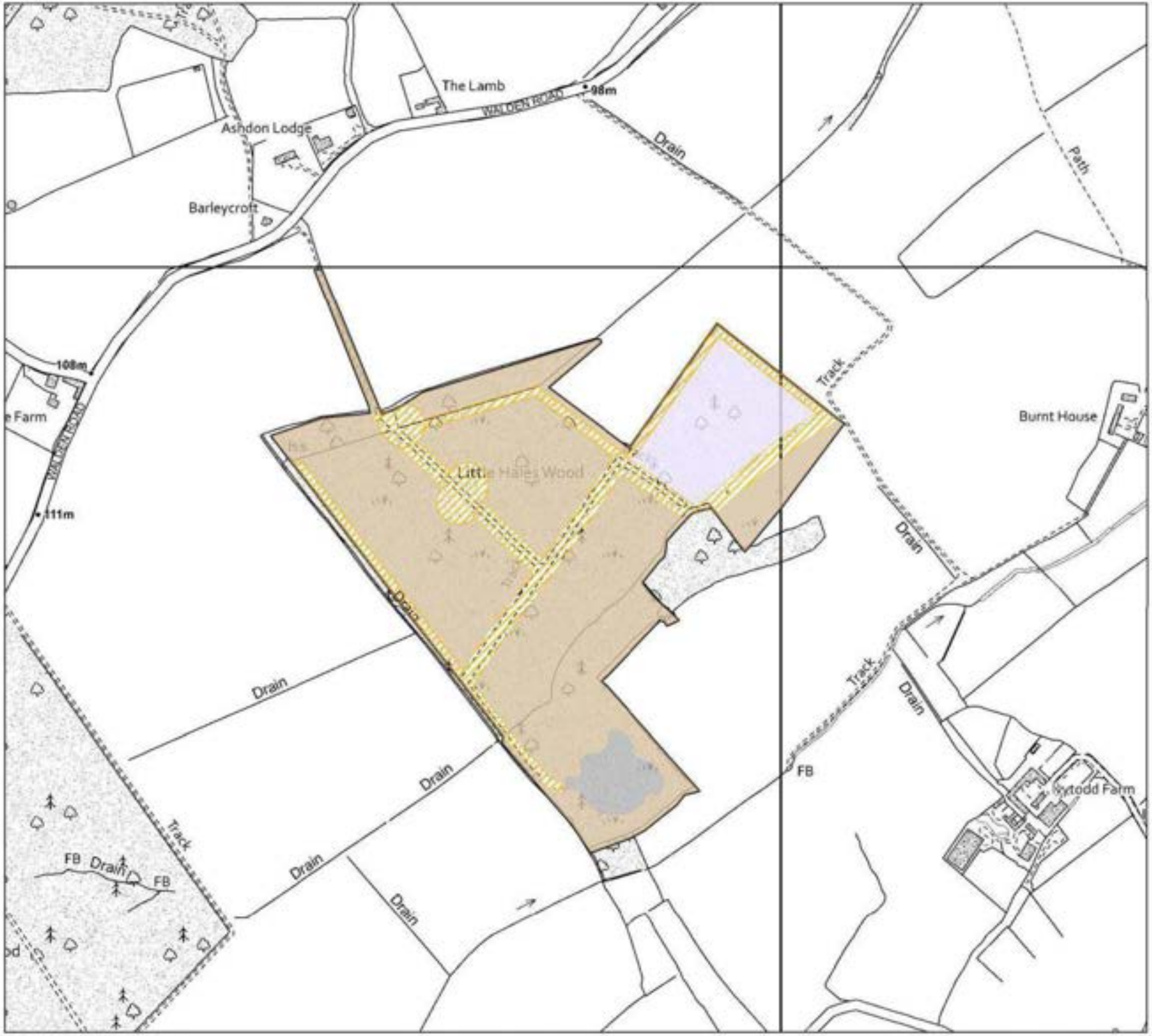
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Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Temporary open space - cluster plant Hornbeam, Oak, Norway maple, Small-leaved lime, Wild cherry & Wild service tree
- Ponds
- Native and Honorary species Beech, Elm, Field maple, Hazel, Oak & Sycamore
- Native and Honorary species as detailed above. However, conifer is predominant here and will be gradually removed to encourage natural broadleaf regeneration. This process will extend beyond the plan period.

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Little Hales

Scale: 1:4,000

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

Clear fell 2027-2031

Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection

LISS Conifer - Irregular shelterwood

Open/other

Open Space

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Little Hales Wood

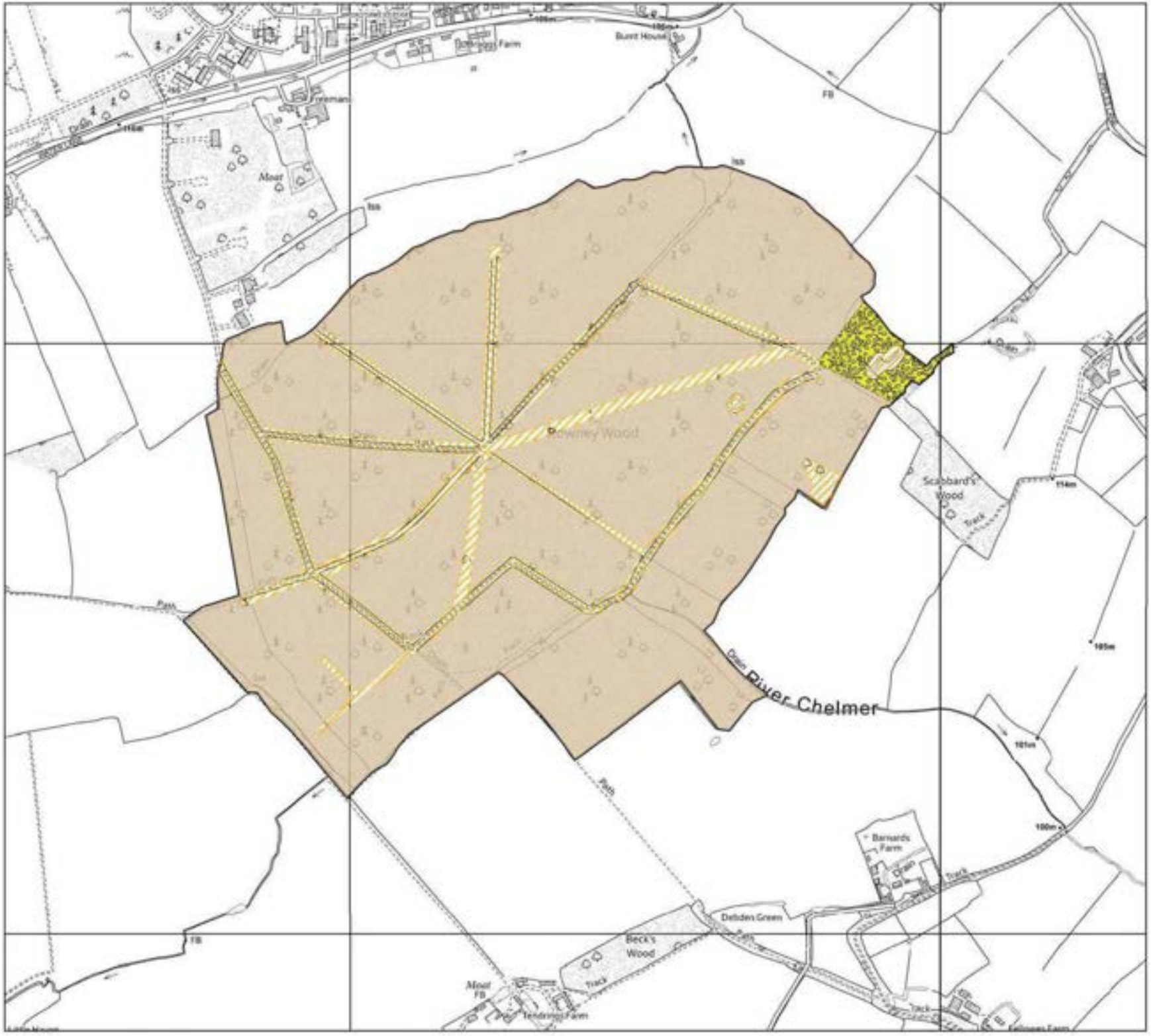
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Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Ponds
- Native and Honorary Species including Oak, Field Maple and Hazel.
- Native and Honorary Species as detailed above. However, conifer is predominant here and will be gradually removed to encourage natural broadleaf regeneration. This process will extend beyond the plan period.

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Rowney Wood

Scale: 1:6,000

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

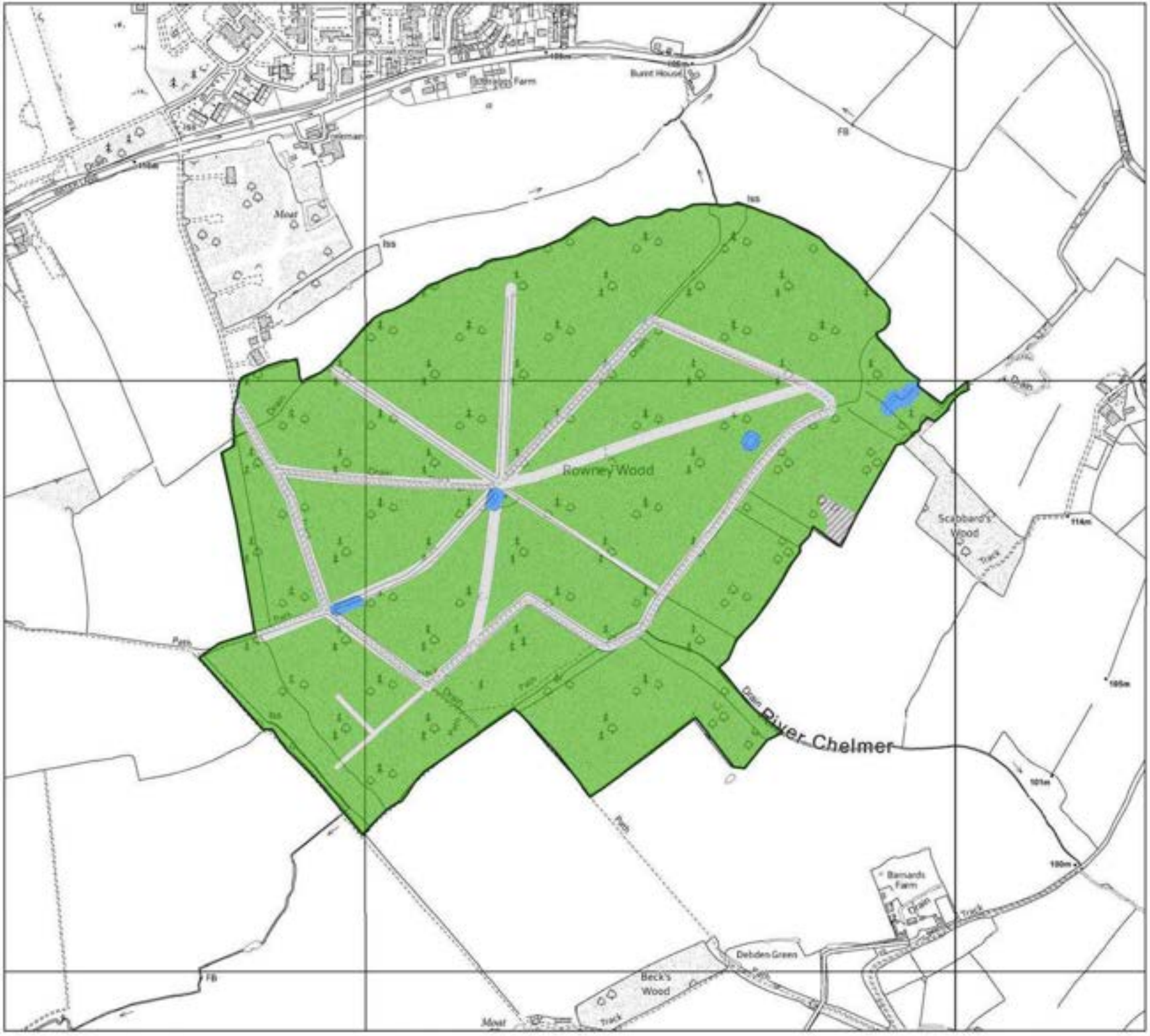
Clear fell 2027-2031

Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection

Minimum intervention

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Ordnance Survey [100021242]



Forestry England

East England Forest District

Rowney Wood

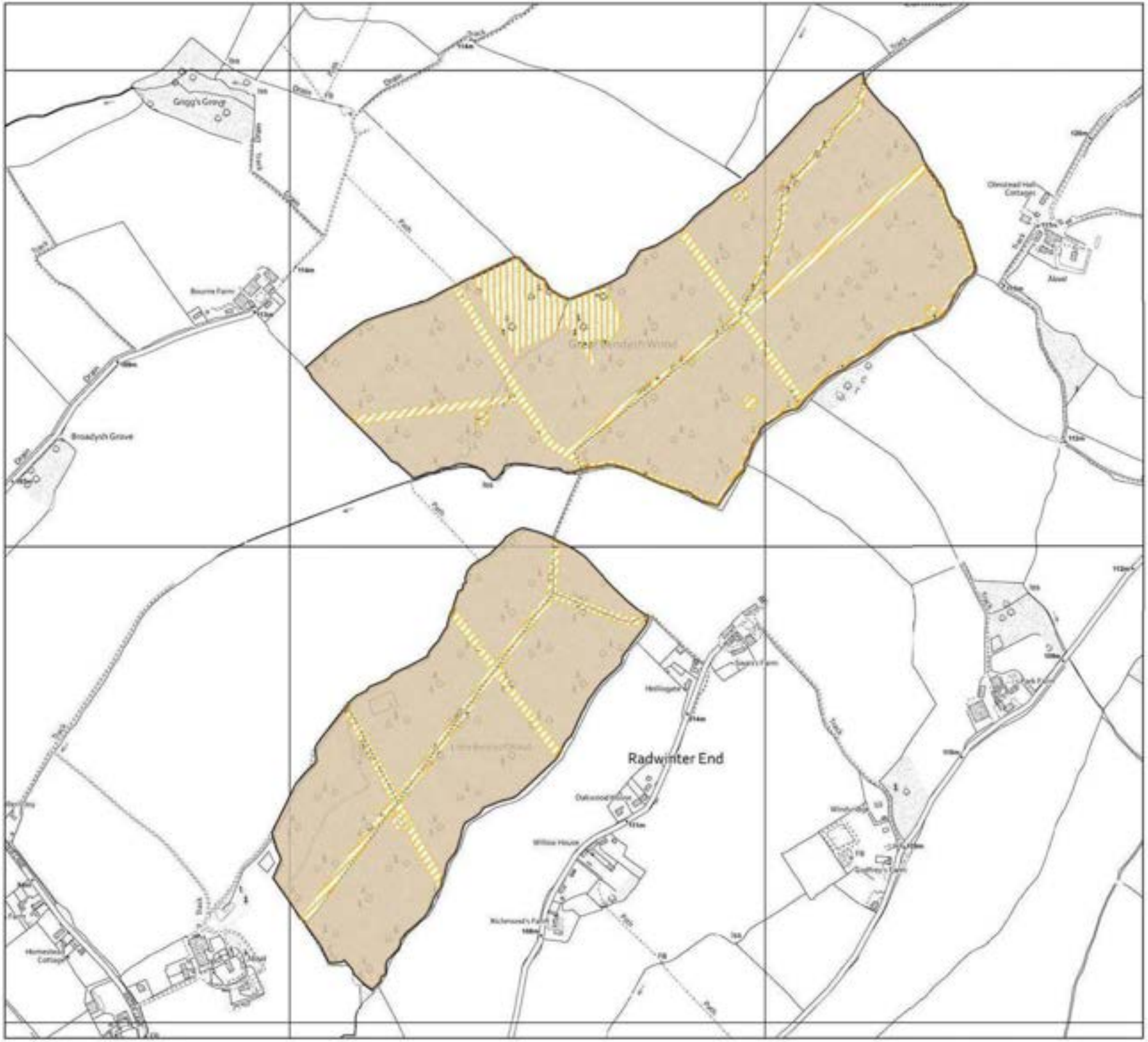
Scale: 1:6,000

Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Temporary open space - natural regeneration of native and honorary species
- Ponds
- Native and Honorary species including Birch, Hazel, Hornbeam and Oak

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Great & Little Bendysh Wood

Scale: 1:7,500

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

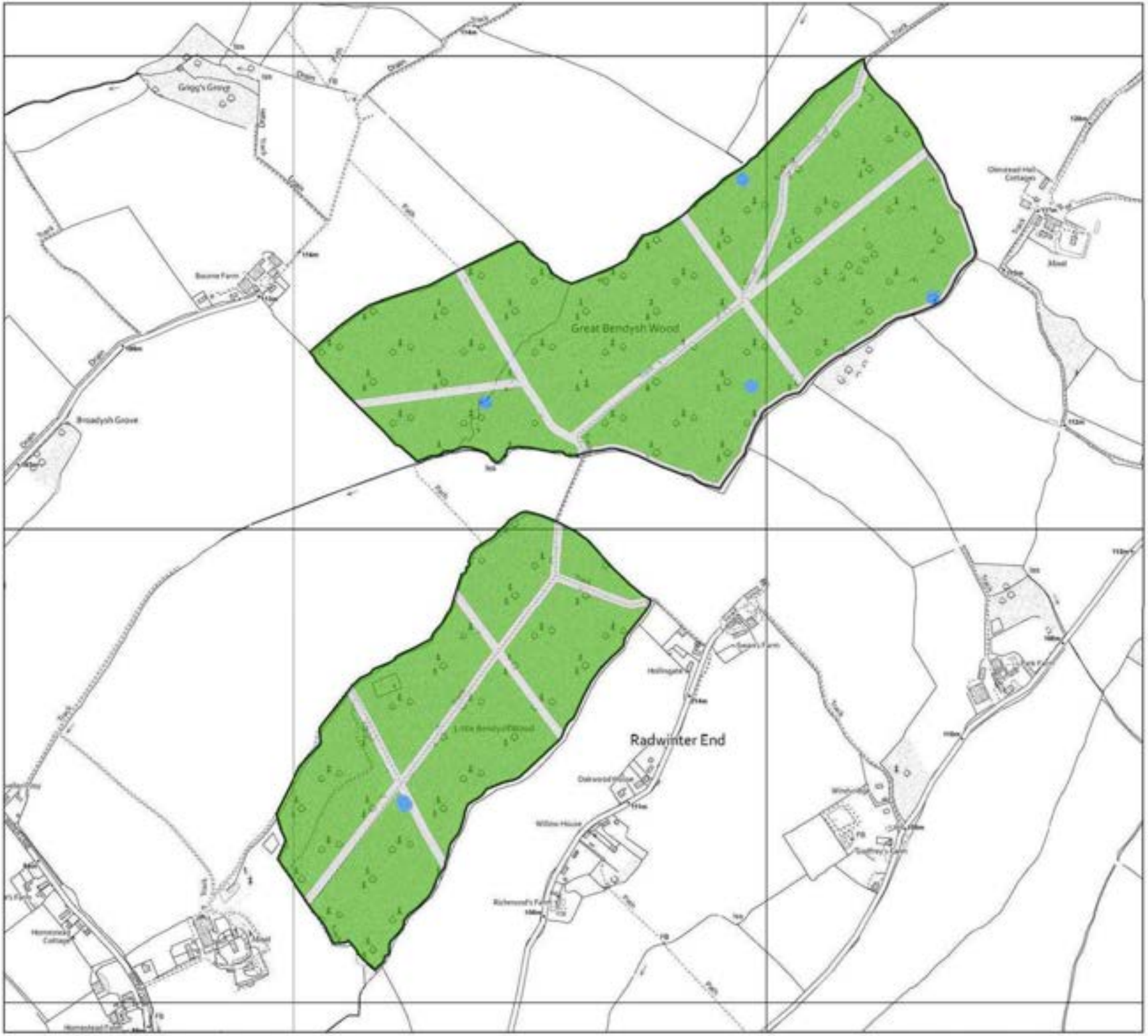
Clear fell 2027-2031

Clear fell 2027-2031 to remove conifer, retaining 30 -50% tree cover of existing broadleaf species

Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Great & Little Bendysh Woods

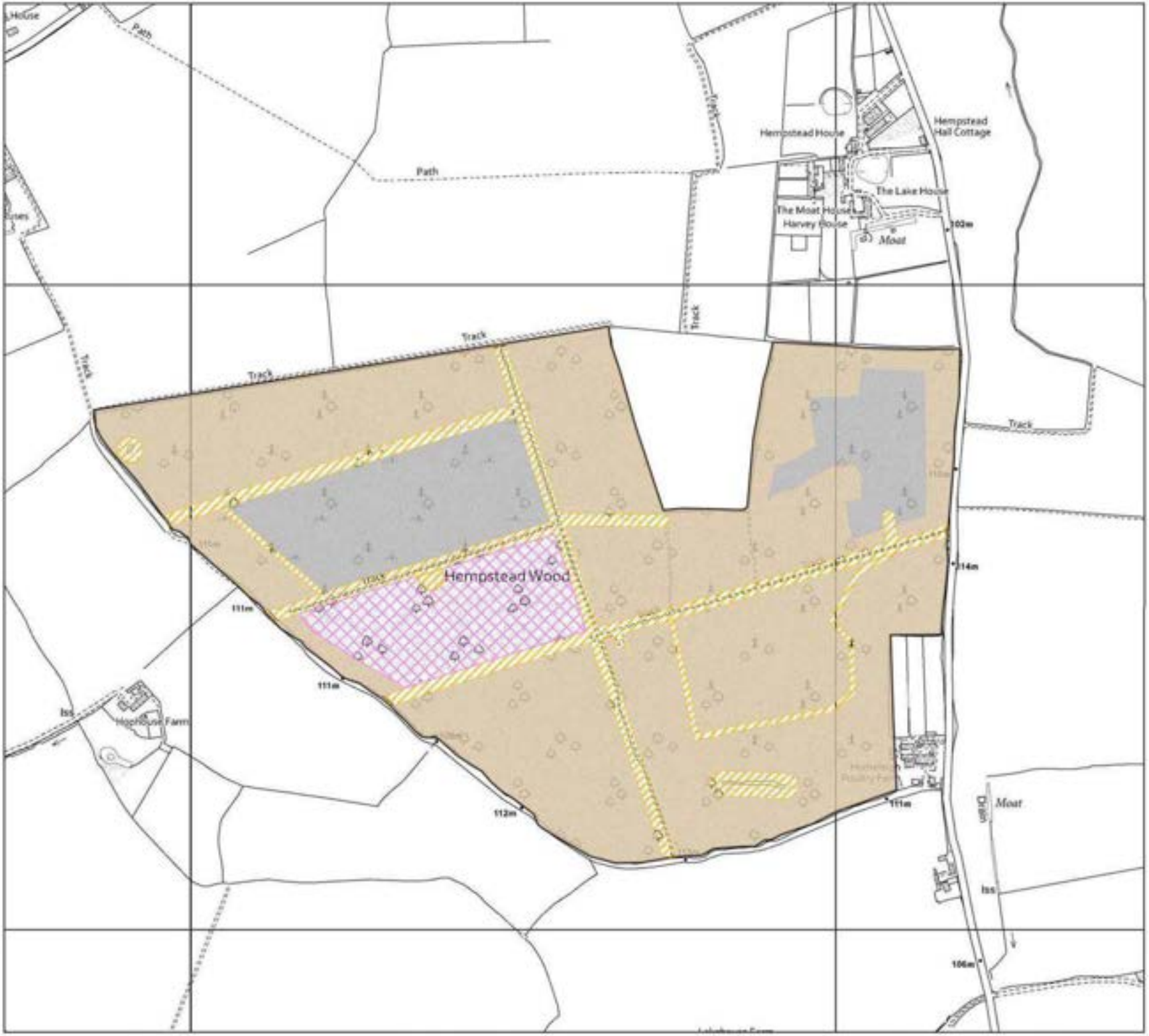
Scale: 1:7,500

Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Ponds
- Native and Honorary species predominantly Hornbeam, Oak and Small leaved lime. Other species may include Alder, Beech, Birch, Field Maple and Hazel

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Hempstead Forest

Scale: 1:5,500

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

- Clear fell 2027-2031

Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

- LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection
- LISS Broadleaf - Coppice

Open/other

- Open space

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Hempstead Wood

Scale: 1:5,500

Species/restock map

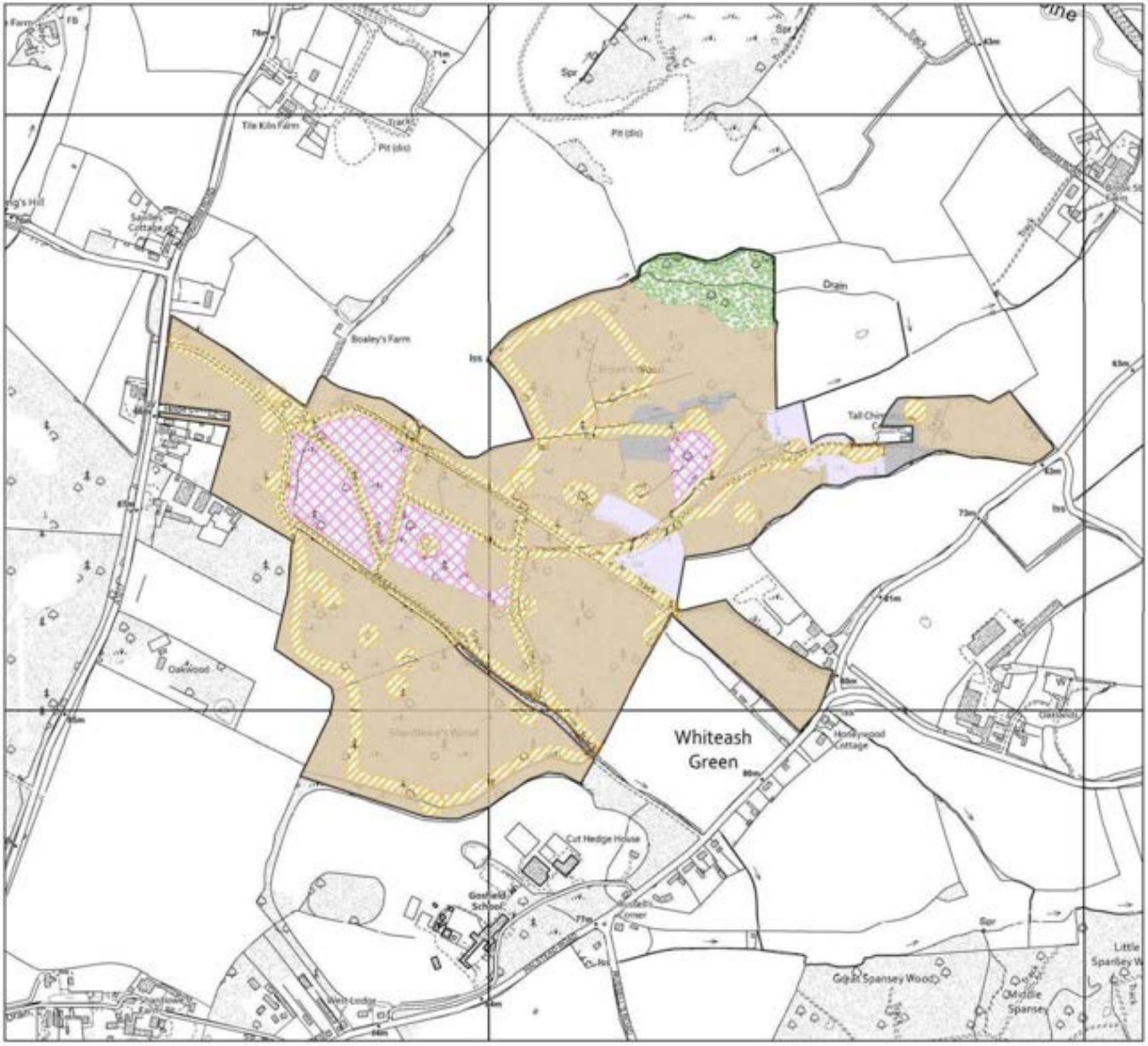
Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Temporary open space:

  West side - Cluster plant with Oak and encourage natural regeneration of Hornbeam, Hazel and Field maple

  East side - Cluster plant with Alder and encourage natural regeneration of Goat willow and Aspen
- Ponds
- HBM standards with mixed broadleaf coppice of Hazel and Field maple
- Native and Honorary species including Oak, Hornbeam and Aspen

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Broak's Wood

Scale: 1:6,000

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

- Clear fell 2027-2031

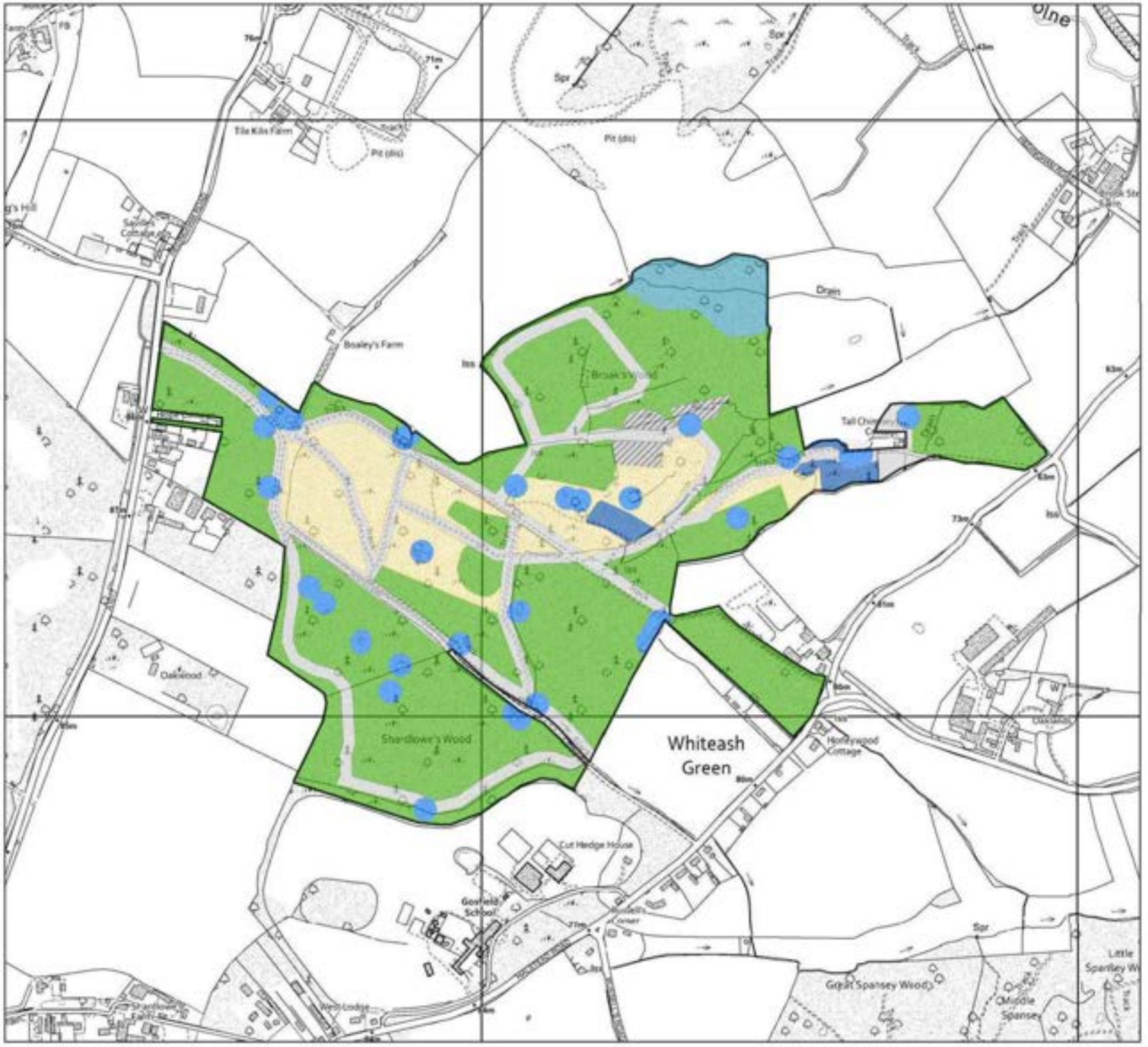
Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

- LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection
- LISS Conifer - Irregular shelterwood
- LISS Broadleaf - Coppice
- Natural Reserve

Open/other

- Open space

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Broak's Wood

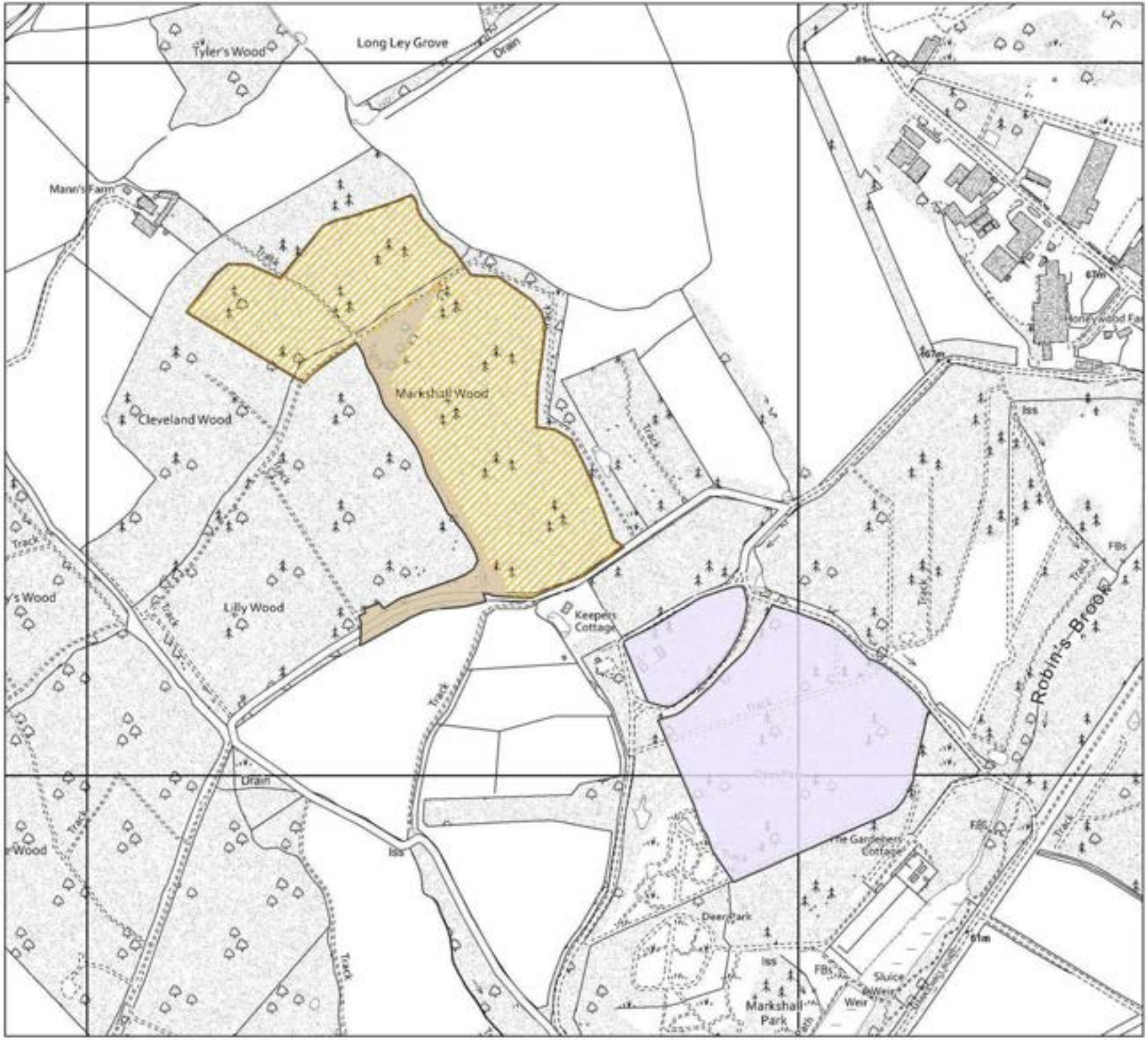
Scale: 1:6,000

Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Temporary open space - leave to continue natural regeneration of broadleaf species including Birch, Goat willow and Sweet chestnut
- Ponds
- Native and Honorary species including Alder, Beech, Birch, Common lime, Field maple, Hazel, Hornbeam, Oak, Sweet chestnut, Sycamore, Wild cherry and Wild service tree
- Native and Honorary species of mixed broadleaf coppice including Birch, Hazel and Goat willow
- Wet Woodland including Alder and Poplar
- Evergreen conifer including Corsican pine, Scots pine and Coast redwood.

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Markshall Wood

Scale: 1:5,000

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

Clear fell 2027-2031

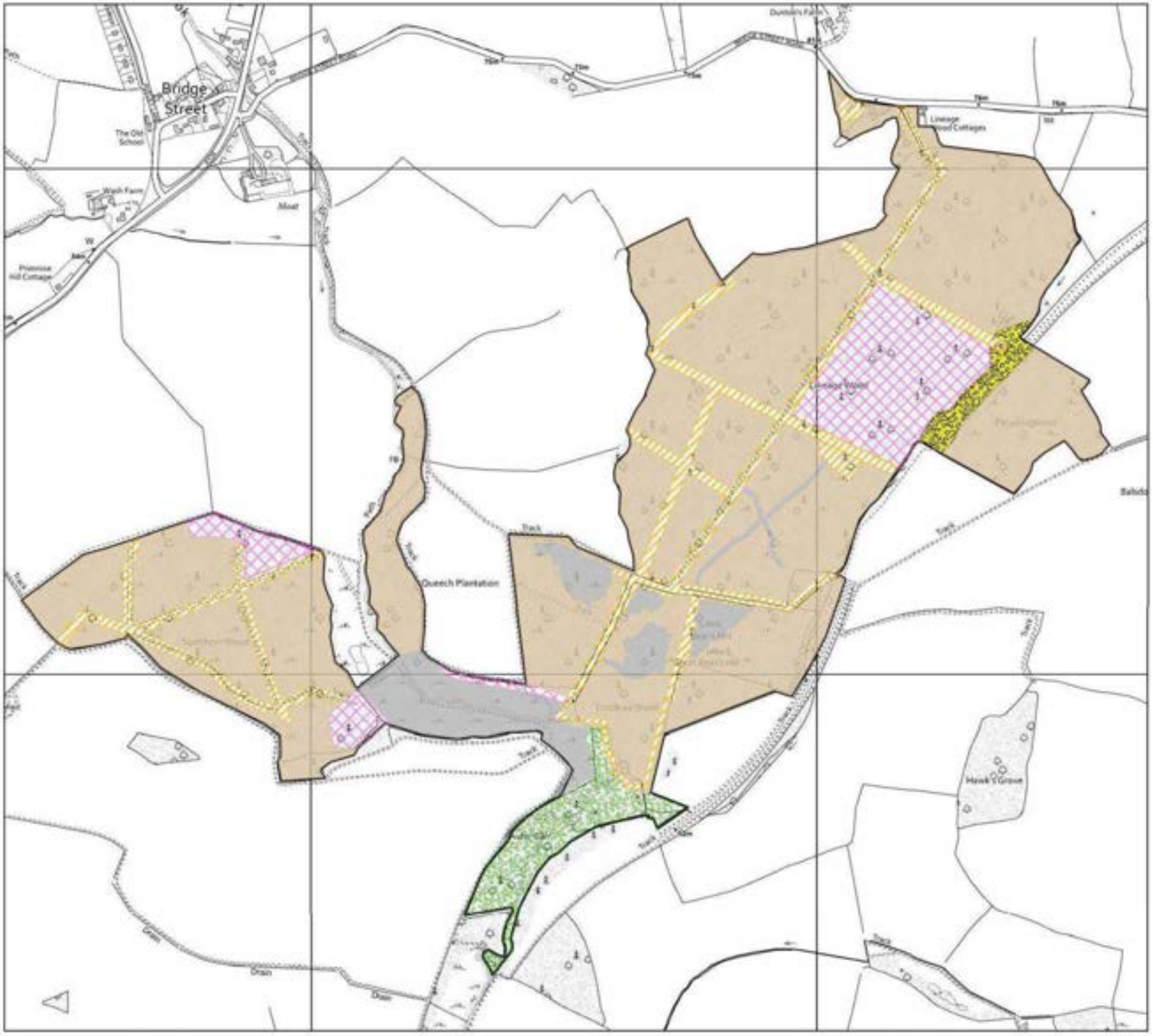
Lower impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection

LISS Conifer - Irregular shelterwood

Timber reserve - Following conifer removal land will be surrendered to Markshall Estate.

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Lineage Wood

Scale: 1:7,000

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

- Clear fell 2027-2031

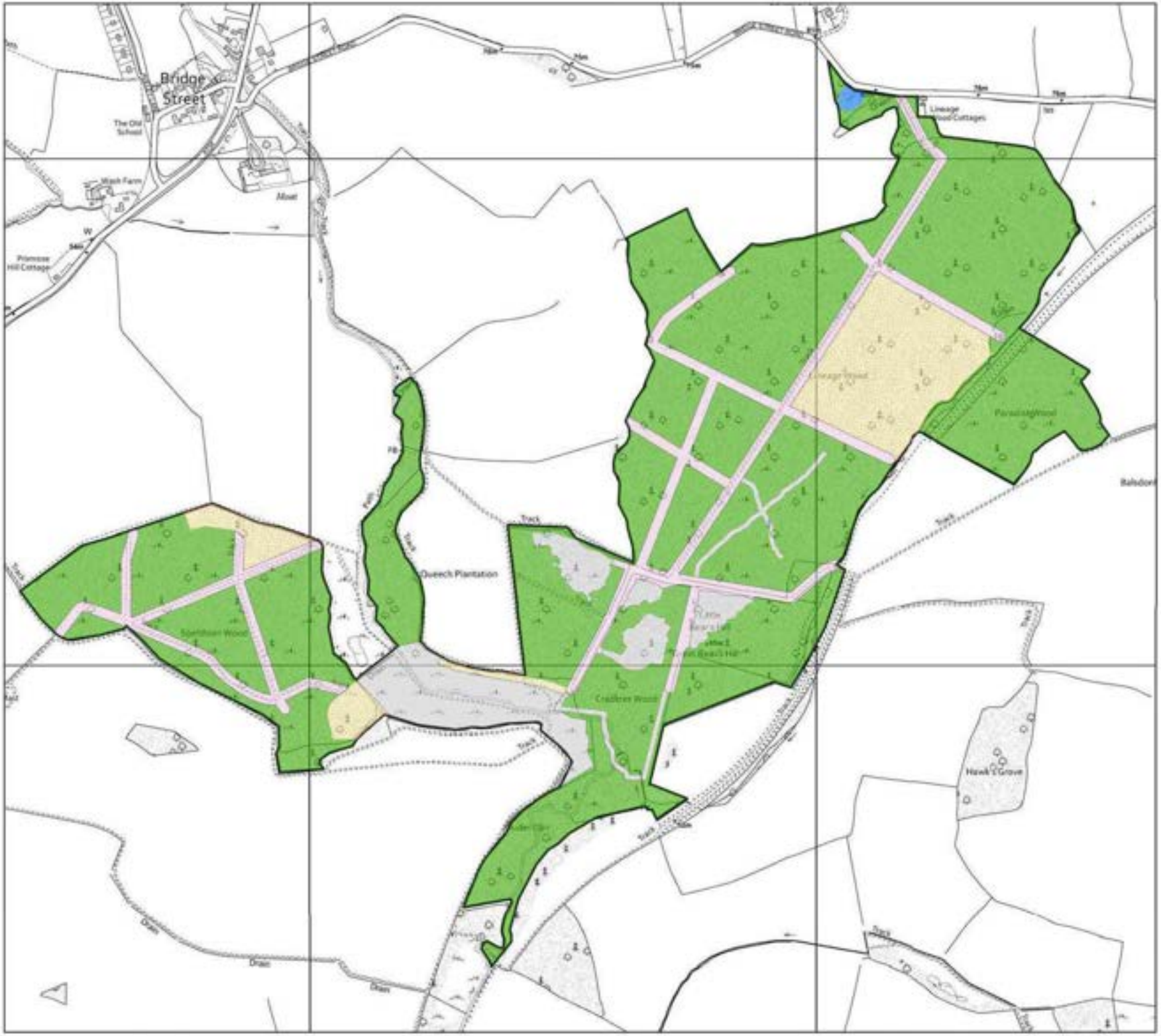
Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

- LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection
- LISS Broadleaf - Coppice
- Minimum Intervention
- Natural Reserve

Open/other

- Open Space

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Lineage Wood

Scale: 1:7,000

Species/restock map

Legend

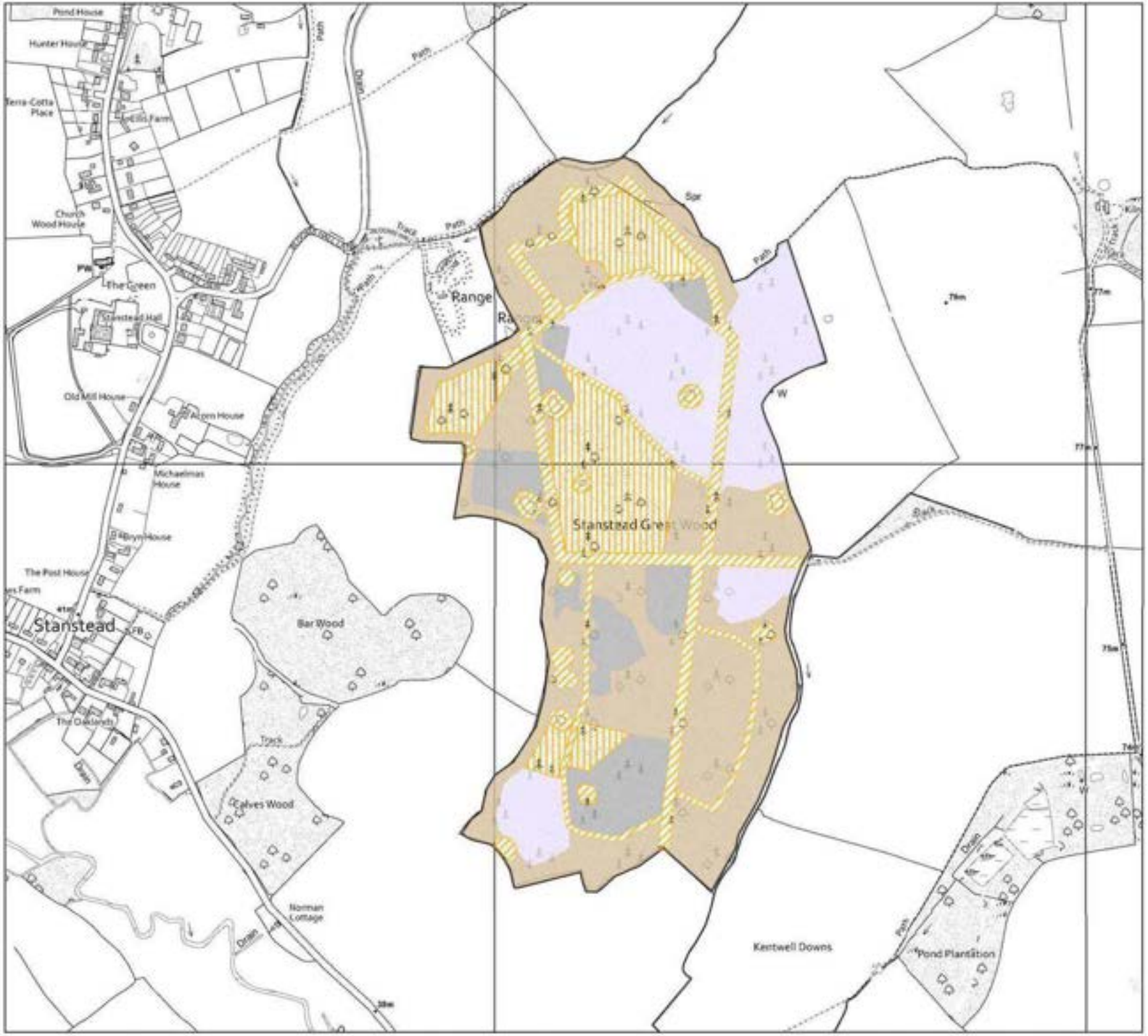
- Permanent open space
- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Pond
- Native and Honorary species

  North area - Oak standards with mixed broadleaf coppice including Birch, Hazel and Field maple

  Central area - Lineage Elm coppice to preserve species

  South area - Two Hazel coppice coupes
- Native and Honorary species including Beech, Birch, Elm, Field maple, Hazel, Hornbeam, Oak, Small leaved lime, Wild cherry, White Elm and Wild service tree.

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Stanstead Wood

Scale: 1:6,000

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

- Clear fell 2027-2031
- Clear fell 2027-2031 with 25-30% retention

Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

- LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection
- LISS Conifer - Irregular shelterwood

Open/other

- Open space

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Stanstead Wood

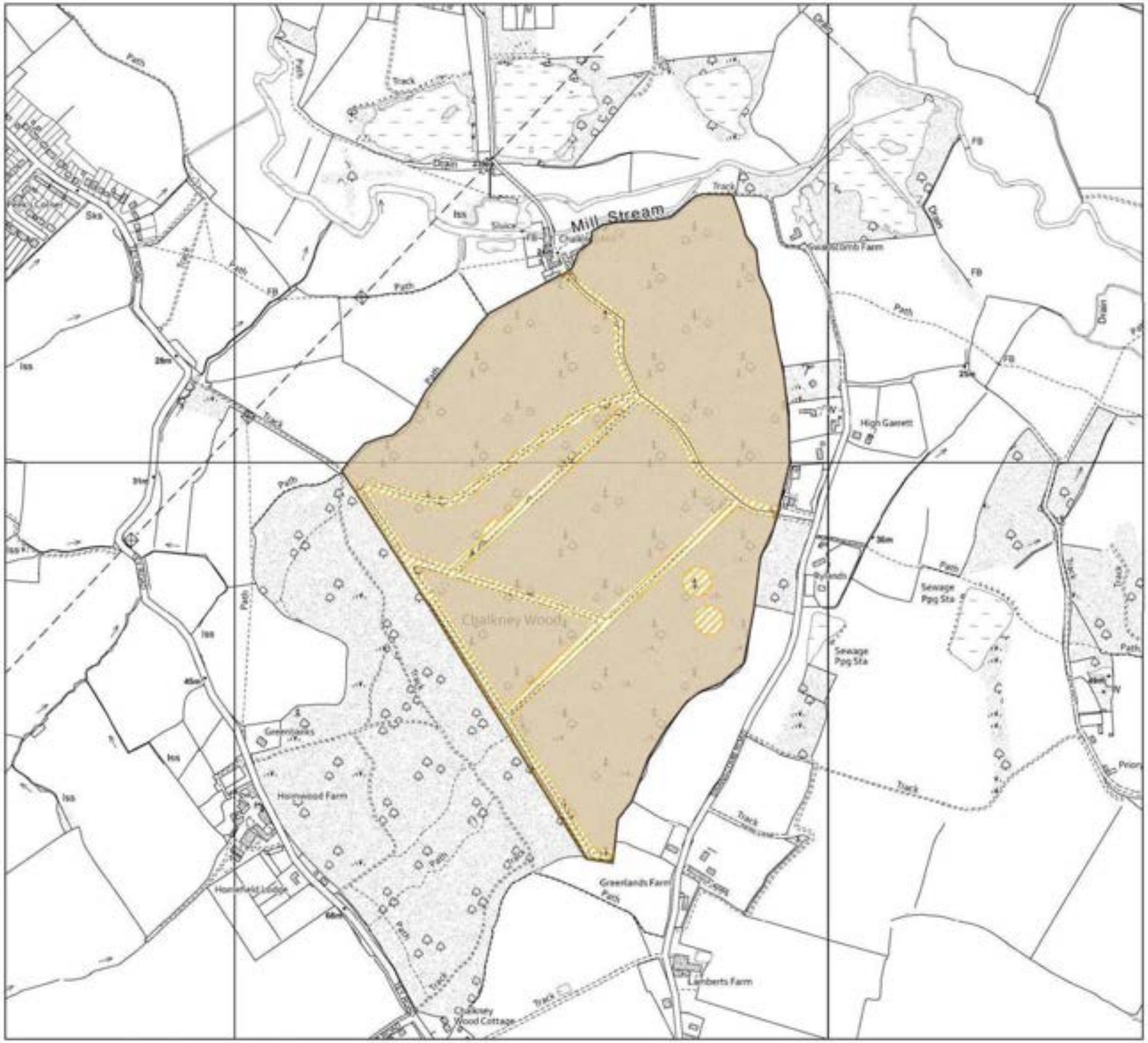
Scale: 1:6,000

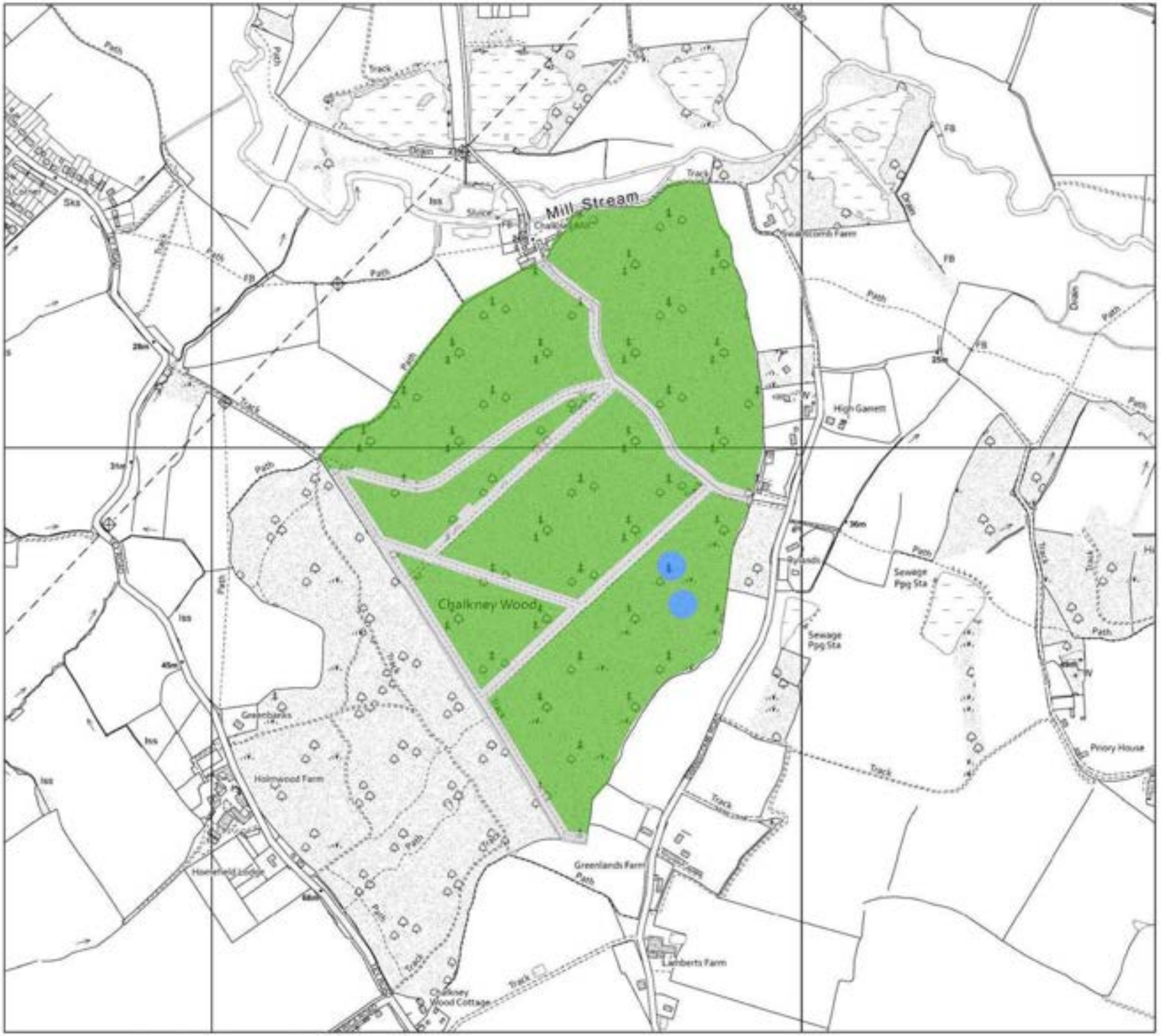
Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Ponds
- Temporary open space - Cluster plant Field maple, Hazel, Oak and Wild cherry.
- Native and Honorary Species including Hazel, Field maple, Oak and Wild cherry.
- Native and Honorary Species as detailed above. However, conifer is predominant here and will be gradually removed to encourage natural broadleaf regeneration. This process will extend beyond the plan period.

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Mill Stream
Chalkney Wood
Path
Track
Drain
Sluice
Sluice
FB
Chalkney Mill
Mill House
Hawkstone Farm
High Garrett
Sewage Pgg Sta
Sewage Pgg Sta
Greenstakes
Hornwood Farm
Hornfield Lodge
Greenlands Farm
Lamberts Farm
Chalkney Wood Cottage
Priory
Ponds
Ponds
Ponds



Forestry England

East England Forest District

Chalkney Wood

Scale: 1:6,000

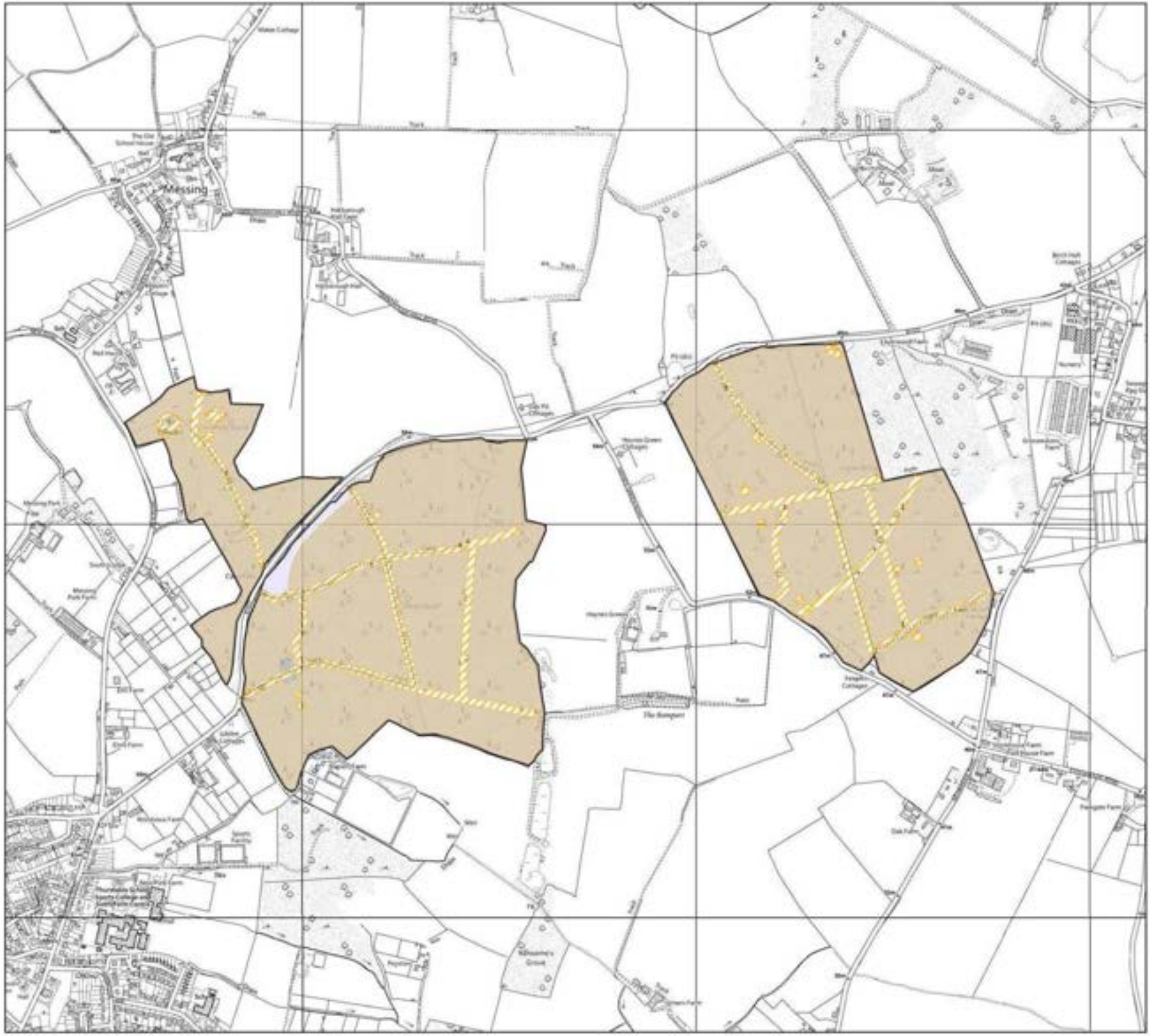
Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Ponds
- Native and Honorary species including overstorey of Alder (wet areas), Birch, Hornbeam, Oak and Small leaved lime.

  Understorey to include Hazel and Sweet chestnut. Field maple may be introduced.

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Pods and Layer Woods

Scale: 1:9,000

Management map

Legend

Clear fell

Clear fell 2027-2031

Lower Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)

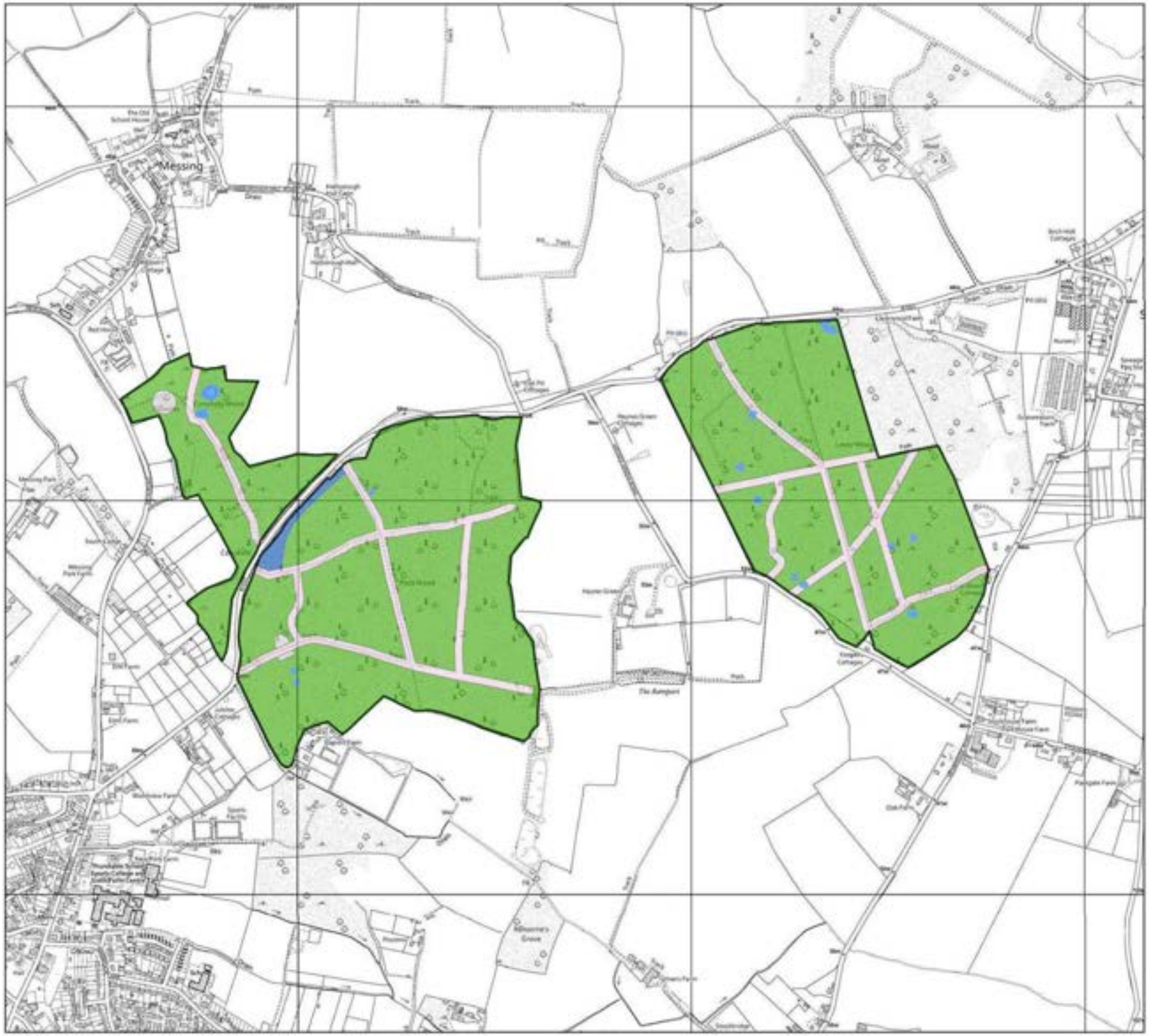
LISS Broadleaf - Group and single tree selection

LISS Conifer - Irregular shelterwood

Open/other

Open space

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Forestry England

East England Forest District

Pods and Layer Woods

Scale: 1:9,000

Species/restock map

Legend

- Permanent open space
- Permanent open space, resource permitting
- Ponds
- Native and Honorary species including Birch, Hornbeam and Oak
- Evergreen conifer - Yew

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Monitoring

FEE National 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."

District delivery plan priorities	Forest Plan Objective	Monitoring
For Wildlife	W1: To protect and enhance areas of ancient semi natural woodland and restore planted woodland (PAWS) to native species.	The mid term review (2031) will assess the progress of the plan towards reversion to semi natural woodlands using the sub compartment database and semi natural score layer on foresterweb.
	W2: To protect, maintain and enhance designated sites.	The mid term review (2031) will assess the progress of the Lavenham conservation plan agreed between the ecologist and beat forester. This has been incorporated into the forest plan so assessing whether the forest plan has been implemented as specified will also cover monitoring for these 3 objectives.
	W3: To protect, maintain and enhance priority habitats.	
	W4: To protect, maintain and enhance priority species.	
For People	P1: Create a pleasant natural environment for the public to enjoy outdoor recreation, in freehold woodlands only.	As this is subjective it is difficult to monitor. However, feedback made to the beat team or stakeholders will be used to monitor success of this objective. Recreation facilities including car parks are maintained through regular inspections by Forestry England staff. The permissions system allows for management and monitoring of the small number of low key permissions across the Lavenham woods.
	P2: Maintain and improve cultural and heritage value of the land by protecting sensitive heritage features highlighted through the operational site assessment (OSA)* process.	Heritage will be monitored through the OSA process.
	P3: Agree Scheduled Monument (SM) management plan for Conyfield wood, with Historic England (appendix 1).	See agreed SM plan for Conyfield wood in appendix 1.

District Strategic Objective	Forest Plan Objective	Monitoring
For Climate	C1: Maintain the land within our stewardship under Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) /Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) by meeting standards detailed in UKWAS fourth and fifth edition.	UKWAS audits and certification.
	C2: Increase forest resilience to threats posed by climate change, pests, diseases and fire.	Sub compartment updates can be used to show movement towards a more diverse range of species overtime. Maintaining and increasing open ride networks and managing areas as LISS will increase resilience to fire risk.
Our Sustainable approach	SA1: Improve economic resilience of our forests by increasing species diversity through restock programmes and mixed silvicultural practices, to protect future timber supplies and biomass.	The sub-compartment* database is updated after restocking to show the newly planted species and their proportions. As part of this updating process the restocking information is compared with the restock and species plan to confirm compliance. The restocking area can vary slightly from the plan as physical features come to light only after felling. Most of these minor changes are within the tolerances agreed between Forestry England and Forest Services - see tolerance table on page 65. A felled coupe is usually restocked two years later, when all the ground preparation and weed control has been completed. The majority of the plan area will be restocked through natural regeneration of broadleaf species so timeframes for establishment may vary. To monitor timber sustainability, a stocking assessment is carried out to measure establishment success after five years. If nothing has established after 10 years supplementary planting will be implemented. The sub-compartment* database will be used to monitor species diversity and assessed as part of the full forest plan revision. To monitor compliance with the felling plan, after a coupe is felled the shape is captured on the ground using a GPS* receiver and the data is uploaded into GIS*. The resulting point data is then compared to the original coupe shape to confirm that the felling coupe has been accurately laid out on the ground.
	SA2: To generate income from the marketing of timber products whilst ensuring operations take place at a scale and frequency in keeping with the surrounding landscape.	The forest is generally thinned on a minimum 10 year cycle helping to maintain a timber supply. However, interventions may occur more frequently for less time to reduce impacts on these smaller woodlands. As the age structure of the woodland increases a more even flow of timber will be produced from thinning cycles. Clear fell coupes will generate larger, one off income streams over the duration of the plan. A production forecast has been run for the revised plan and agreed with the Operations manager.

UKWAS Compliance table [1]

	Forest Plan Area (Ha)	Forest Plan %	Forest District Area (Ha)	Forest District %
Total area	791	100	34,639	100
Total wooded area	681	86	31,443	91
Natural reserve	7	0.8	621	1.8
Long-term retentions and low impact silvicultural systems	611	77	14,728	43
Area of conservation value (>15%) including designations: PAWS, ASNW, NR, SSSI, SAC, SPA & Conservation zones	708	89	28,619	83

[1] Figures taken from Forester web UKWAS report 6th March 2026.

Application for Forest Plan

Forest Enterprise – Property

Forest District:	East England
Woodland or property name:	Lavenham
Nearest town, village or locality:	Cambridgeshire, Essex and Suffolk
OS Grid reference:	TL 7912 3134
Local Authority district/unitary Authority:	South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, Babergh, Uttlesford, Braintree and Colchester District Councils.

Areas for approval (See attached local authority breakdown sheet)

	Conifer	Broadleaf
Clear felling	19	101
Clear felling with retention	8	11
Regeneration Felling	29	270
Regeneration Felling (creation of coppice)	0	22
Open space (for future management of the ride network, heritage features e.g. SM, conservation areas e.g. Lineage meadows and ponds)	13	100

1. I apply for Forest Plan approval*/~~amendment approval~~* for the property described above and in the enclosed Forest Plan.
2. ~~I apply for an opinion under the terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England & Wales) Regulations 1999 for afforestation*/deforestation*/roads*/quarries* as detailed in my application.~~
3. I confirm that the pre consultation, carried out and documented in the Consultation Record attached, incorporated those stakeholders which the FC agreed must be included. Where it has not been possible to resolve specific issues associated with the plan to the satisfaction of consultees, this is highlighted in the Consultation Record.
4. I confirm that the proposals contained in this plan comply with the UK Forestry Standard.
5. I undertake to obtain any permissions necessary for the implementation of the approved Plan.

Signed .....
Forest Management Director

East England FD

Date.....

Signed .....
Area Director

East & East Midlands Area

Date of approval.....

Date approval ends.....
*delete as appropriate

I seek approval for clearfell and clear fell with retention for 139ha of the Public Forest Estate (this is the area in orange and blue stripe fell periods—i.e. 2027-2036). It may be necessary to remove the full clear felling with retention areas due to windblow or to remove the upper canopy to release the understorey over the plan period. Therefore, the full area has been included in the area approval totals. Restock will predominantly be through natural regeneration of site native species. Supplementary planting will be carried out where necessary to improve establishment success and increase species diversity.

In addition to the above felling, 299ha will be managed using lower impact silvicultural systems (LISS) including regeneration and selective felling. This will be done through the removal of single and small groups of trees, removing no more than 40% of the stems within any single management unit/compartment over the approved plan period. This operation is aimed at encouraging initial seeding, provision of sufficient light to boost growth of understorey, allowing adequate space for the development of crowns and stem form for quality timber and to accelerate individual tree growth. Restock will be through natural regeneration, with supplementary planting carried out if required. Regeneration felling in conifer areas are shown on the management maps as Irregular shelterwood which allows up to 50% of canopy removal in any operation.

Regeneration felling (creation of coppice) refers to areas which have not been coppiced whilst also including those which have not been coppiced in some time. These are located in Ditton, Lineage, Hempstead and Broaks as shown on the management maps but small areas of Coppice (<1ha) may also be created in Chalkney. The intention is that regrowth will occur but if this fails, supplementary planting will be carried out.

Date of commencement of the plan:

Expiry Date: 26/10/2036

Mid-Term Review Date:

	Adjustment to felling coupe boundaries	Swapping of felling coupes	Adjustment to felling operation	Timing of Restocking (including natural regen)	Species choice	Clearance of standing trees associated with wind-blown areas	Tree health
Formal approval by area team required.	> 25% of the coupe area	Where changes to the felling sequence is likely to result in a significant breach [1] of the UKFS adjacency rules	Thinning to selective felling or clear felling	Where this is > 4 planting seasons from the date of felling.	From mixed, predominantly broadleaves to evergreen conifer.	**Sensitive[2] areas:** all clearances of ≥1ha or clearances of ≥10% of the stand if area of stand is under 10ha. **Non-sensitive areas:** all clearances of ≥5ha or clearances of ≥25% of the stand if area of stand is under 20ha.	Where no SPHN issued and felling required.
Written approval only required from area team.	Between 10-25% of the coupe area	Where changes to the felling sequence is likely to result in a minor breach [3] of the UKFS adjacency rules		Where this is at least 2 but no more than 4 planting seasons from the date of felling.	Deciduous conifers to evergreen. Change from other conifers to Corsican Pine		Thinning > 50% but < 65%
Formal approval by area team not required.	≤ 10% of the coupe area	Where changes to the felling sequence does not result in a breach of the UKFS adjacency rules.	Clear felling to selective felling or thinning	Where this is <2 planting seasons from the date of felling. For natural regeneration this is <3-4 years.	Any other changes.	Only if formal approval is not required.	Where SPHN is issued or thinning up to 50%

[1] Greater than 20% of the coupe boundary

[2] Approval letter retained for compliance inspection purposes

[3] 20% or less of the coupe boundary

[4] District team must retain all relevant documentation for compliance inspections

Glossary

Acute Oak Decline

Acute oak decline is a complex syndrome in which several damaging agents interact and cause a serious decline in tree condition, and can kill oak trees within four to six years of the onset of symptoms. The agents can be abiotic or biotic; the latter often include insects and fungi which are not capable of invading healthy trees but which can be very destructive to stressed oaks. Symptoms include characteristic weeping cankers/lesions in the bark.

Ancient Woodland

Areas of semi-natural native woodland that have had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600. They are particularly rich in biodiversity and this is often notable in their characteristic ground flora.

Ash Dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus)

Ash dieback (also known as Chalara ash dieback) is a highly destructive fungus killing native ash trees across the UK. Young and coppiced trees will die quickly once infected, more mature ash may survive for a number of years once infected. Causes the timber to lose strength, become brittle and trees to start dropping limbs.

Aspect

The direction a slope faces. This can have a strong influence on the microclimate, ground vegetation, soils and hydrology.

Canopy

The mass of foliage and branches formed collectively by the crowns of trees. The shade it casts has a strong influence on the plants, trees and shrubs beneath it.

Carr Woodland

A wet woodland area, usually dominated by willow, birch and alder species.

Chronic Oak Decline

Chronic oak decline is a complex disorder of oak trees which several damaging agents interact either simultaneously or sequentially to bring about a serious, long term decline in tree health and condition. It differs from acute oak decline (above), which causes a much faster, and usually fatal, decline in tree health.

Clearfelling

Cutting down of an area of woodland (if it is within a larger area of woodland, it is typically a felling greater than 0.25 ha). A scatter or small clumps of trees may be left standing within the felled area.

Climax Species

Tree species that will eventually dominate the forest canopy, maximising their exposure to sunlight and out-competing other species.

Coppice

Coppicing is silvicultural system based on regeneration by regrowth from cut stumps (coppice stools). The same stool is used through several cycles of cutting and regrowth. Coppice can also refer to an area of woodland in which the trees or shrubs are periodically cut back to ground level to stimulate growth and provide wood products. 'Coppice with standards' refers to coppice with a scatter of trees grown on a long rotation to produce larger-sized timber and to regenerate new seedlings to replace worn out stools.

Coupes

Areas of forest that have been or will be managed together.

Dothistroma Needle Blight (DNB)

DNB is a fungal disease affecting mainly pine species. The fungus affects the needles of the infected tree, which are eventually shed. This can continue year on year and gradually weaken the tree, significantly reducing timber yields. It can also eventually lead to mortality.

Ecological Site Classification (ESC)

ESC is an online tool developed by Forest Research to help a forester choose tree species that are suited to a specific site. It models how well each species is likely to grow using information on climate and soil properties. It can also be used to forecast how climate change may impact suitability.

Ecosystem Services

Ecosystem services are the goods and services that people depend on that arise from ecosystems. They are usually categorised into Provisioning (eg: timber, water, food production), Regulating (eg: regulation of climate and diseases), Cultural (eg: recreational opportunities, aesthetic value) and Supporting services that underpin these (eg: crop pollination).

Ecosystem

An ecosystem is an interconnected network formed of all the living things in a given area (plants, animals and organisms) and their interactions with each other and their non-living environments (eg: weather, earth, sun, soil & climate).

Forest Plan (FP)

A FP is primarily a landscape-scale felling and restocking plan. It provides a holistic, long-term approach to planning and forest design, detailing felling operations over a 10 year period for the purposes of licencing felling and outlining proposals over the next 50 years. FPs are reviewed every 5 years and redrawn and approved every 10 years.

Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®)

An internationally recognised body made up of non-government organisations promoting sustainable forest management to the forest industry and consumers.

Forestry England

Forestry England is the executive agency of the Forestry Commission that is responsible for managing the Nation's Forests in England.

Forests and Water Guidelines

One of seven sets of guidelines that support the United Kingdom Forestry Standard (UKFS). The UKFS and guidelines outline the context for forestry in the UK; set out the UK Government's approach to sustainable forest management; define standards and requirements; and provide a basis for regulation and monitoring, including national and international reporting.

Group Selection

A method of managing irregular stands in which regeneration is achieved by felling trees in small groups. Group selection involves felling groups of trees (generally <0.25 ha per group)

Historic Environment

The physical remains of every period of human development starting from 450,000 years ago and including earthworks, buried remains, structures and buildings.

Ips typographus (larger eight-toothed European spruce bark beetle)

Although the beetle prefers stressed or weakened trees, under the right environmental conditions its numbers can increase enough to result in attacks on healthy trees. If left uncontrolled, the beetle could cause significant damage to the United Kingdom's spruce-based forestry and timber industries.

Landscape Character

England is renowned for its rich, diverse and beautiful landscapes which have their own distinct local characters. These have been shaped over many thousands of years by natural influences such as soil and landform and by generations of human activity.

Long Term Retention

Individual, stable stands and clumps of trees retained for environmental benefit significantly beyond their normal economic age or size.

Low Impact Silviculture Systems (LISS)

Silvicultural systems including group selection, shelterwood or under-planting, small coupe felling, coppice or coppice with standards, minimum intervention and single tree selection systems. LISS are generally compatible with windfirm conifer woodlands and most broadleaved woodlands.

Minimum Intervention

Management with no systematic felling or planting of trees. Operations normally accepted are fencing, control of non-native plant species and vertebrate pests, maintenance of paths and rides and safety work

National Character Area (NCA)

Broad divisions of landscape form the basic units of cohesive countryside character, on which strategies for both ecological and landscape issues can be based. There are 159 Character Areas, each of which is distinctive with a unique 'sense of place'.

National Nature Reserve (NNR)

NNRs were established to protect some of our most important habitats, species and geology, and to provide 'outdoor laboratories' for research. Most NNRs offer opportunities to the public to experience wildlife first hand and learn more about nature conservation.

Native

Native tree species colonised Britain without human assistance at the end of the last ice age, before the English Channel cut Britain off from mainland Europe.

Natural Regeneration

The growth of new trees from seed found in the soil or cast from adjacent trees. Regeneration only occurs where suitable seed sources and conditions are present.

Natural Reserve

Natural Reserves are areas which are predominantly wooded, usually mature and intended to reach biological maturity. They are permanently identified and in locations which are of particularly high wild-life interest or potential. They are managed by minimum intervention unless alternative interventions have higher conservation or biodiversity value.

Naturalised

Naturalised trees have colonised Britain since the land divide with mainland Europe and are growing and reproducing successfully within their natural climatic range without human intervention.

Near Native / Honorary Native

In a changing climate many tree species native to continental Europe will spread north. These species are classified as 'honorary/near-native': a species previously considered to be non-native, but whose climate envelope will expand over England as a result of climate change

Nest Planting

Trees planted in small groups which are distributed across the restock site with remaining unplanted areas left to naturally regenerate. A useful way to introduce new species or provenances to a site.

Notifiable Disease

Some tree pests and diseases are notifiable, which means that, in England, they must be reported to the Forestry Commission or Animal & Plant Health Agency. Notifiable tree pests and diseases are typically those with the potential to cause greatest damage to our trees, woods and forests.

Open Grown Trees

Trees that have been given space to develop a large crown and natural shape. In comparison trees planted closely in a plantation managed for timber or biomass tend to have a more uniform shape.

Open Space

Areas within a forest without trees, such as glades, stream sides, grass or heathland, water bodies, rocky areas, roads and rides.

Operational Plans

Detailed site plans prepared in advance of all major forest operations providing guidance to Forestry England staff and contractors. They identify site constraints, opportunities and areas requiring special treatment or protection.

Phytophthora ramorum

P.ramorum is a very destructive pathogen affecting over 150 plant species, particularly larch trees. Some broadleaved plants (such as sweet chestnut and rhododendron) can also host P.ramorum.

Phytophthora pluvialis

P.pluvialis was first recorded in the UK in 2021 and affects a range of species including Douglas fir and western hemlock.

Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS)

Ancient Woodland areas where semi-natural woodland has been cleared and replaced by plantation, often including non-native species. PAWS sites can include both broadleaved and conifer woods and often retain remnant ancient woodland features like species-rich ground flora or undisturbed soils. Also known as Ancient Replanted Woodland.

Pollarding

A form of pruning where the upper branches of a tree are removed, promoting a dense head of foliage and branches. Cutting is usually around 2.4 metres above ground - the height that wild animals or domesticated stock could reach. Traditionally, trees were pollarded for fodder or for wood. Fodder pollards are generally pruned every two to six years, wood pollards at longer intervals, usually of eight to 15 years, to produce upright poles for eg: fence rails and posts.

Production Forecast

The projected volume of biomass that the forest will produce each year. Calculations are based on species, age, net area and yield class.

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

Access routes open to the public through legal designation. These include footpaths, by-ways and bridleways.

Respacing

Thinning of dense natural regeneration at a young age (generally when trees are 2-5m tall) to produce a more consistent crop, focus available resources on the remaining trees and promote good development.

Restocking

The establishment of trees where felling has taken place. Restocking may be achieved through natural regeneration, but it is more usually associated with replanting.

Ride

Forestry term for unsurfaced roads, paths and tracks within a woodland which provide access for management and other activities.

Scheduled Monument

A scheduled monument is a site that is legally protected because of its historical importance.

Secondary Woodland

Woodland that has been established on land formerly used for another purpose (eg: as pasture, arable fields, quarries, etc.). Unlike ancient woodland it has not been continuously wooded in the past.

Seed Trees

Trees with good shape and growth rates chosen to produce seed for restocking. Seed trees need to be of an age and size where they produce fertile seeds in large quantities.

Selective Felling (Regeneration Felling)

Where individual trees of varying sizes are selected and removed from a stand. The whole stand is worked and the aim is to maintain full stocking of all tree sizes and ages, from seedlings to mature trees, in any one area.

Semi-natural woodland

Those woodlands which are comprised mainly of locally native trees and shrubs, and have some structural characteristics of natural woodland.

Shade tolerant species

Trees that have adapted to lower light levels and will regenerate and establish freely under the shade of the surrounding tree canopy, as opposed to light demanding species which require full sun/high light levels to establish and grow.

Shelterwood

The shelterwood system involves the felling of a proportion of the mature trees within an area whilst leaving some trees as a seed source and shelter for natural regeneration. The seed trees are subsequently removed. Note that the term 'seed tree system' is often used to describe 'shelterwoods' with densities of <50 retained mature trees per hectare.

The spatial arrangement of the retained trees can be uniform, in groups, or in strips, so giving rise to the name of different shelterwood systems. The removal of the seed trees can involve several felling operations

Silvicultural Systems

Silviculture is the process of tending, harvesting and regenerating a forest. Different patterns of felling and regeneration form distinct 'silvicultural systems'. Different systems may be suitable for different management objectives (eg: conservation in an ancient woodland vs timber production in a conifer plantation).

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A SSSI is a formal conservation designation. Usually, it describes an area that is of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora it contains - or even important geological or physiographical features that may lie in its boundaries.

Small Coupe Felling

A small-scale clearfelling system. The system is imprecisely defined but coupes are typically up to 2 ha in extent, with the larger coupes elongated in shape so the edge effect is still high.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

SACs are protected areas in the UK designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) in England and Wales. These areas form an internationally important network of high-quality conservation sites that make a significant contribution to conserving Annex I and Annex II habitats and species.

Special Protection Area (SPA)

SPAs are protected areas selected to protect one or more rare, threatened or vulnerable bird species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive, or specific regularly occurring migratory species. They form an internationally important network of high-quality conservation sites that make a significant contribution to conserving important habitats and species.

Strategic Plan

Forestry England's guide to the management of woodland across an extensive landscape, such as District or nationally which then informs vision and objectives of the Forest Plan at a more local scale.

Strip Felling

Strip felling involves removal of some trees in rows, leaving strips of mature trees in place rather than clearfelling a crop in one operation. This creates space between remaining trees suitable for planting new trees (especially species that require sheltered growing conditions) and maintains woodland cover while new trees are established. The width of strips may vary and multiple strips are removed from one stand at a time.

Sub-compartments

Areas of forest that form a homogeneous crop in terms of age, species composition and condition. They may be split across several locations and their boundaries may change as the forest develops after felling and restocking.

The nation's forests

The woodlands managed by Forestry England. These include both freehold and leasehold land. (Previously referred to as the Public Forest Estate.)

Thinning

The removal of a proportion of trees in a forest after canopy closure, usually to promote growth and greater value in the remaining trees.

Trees of Special Interest (TSI)

Trees that are of interest biologically, aesthetically or culturally because of their age, or trees that are in the ancient stage of their life, or trees that are old relative to others of the same species. Also referred to as Veteran or Ancient trees.

UK Forestry Standard (UKFS)

Outlines the Government's criteria and standards for the sustainable management of forests in the UK.

UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

A voluntary scheme for the independent assessment of sustainable forest management in the UK. The Scheme has been developed by a partnership of forestry and environmental organisations in response to growing consumer demand for timber products from sustainably managed forests.

Understorey Woodland Species

Minor tree species that live under top canopy trees or are 'pioneer' species that arrive in clearings before climax species become established. Once the overstorey is established understorey species are more common on woodland edges and clearings where light levels are higher.

Wood Pasture

Areas of historical, cultural and ecological interest, where grazing may be/have been used in combination with a proportion of open tree canopy cover

Yield Class

Yield class is a measure of the growth rate of a tree crop on a given site. It describes the maximum average volume increase that a particular crop can achieve on 1 ha of land each year. For example, a crop capable of a maximum annual growth of 14 m3 per hectare has a yield class of 14. Yield Class varies depending on factors including the species, how it is managed and local site conditions.



Appendices:

1: Scheduled Monument Plan for Conyfield Wood, Bowl Barrow

2: Image citations and Stakeholder consultation record

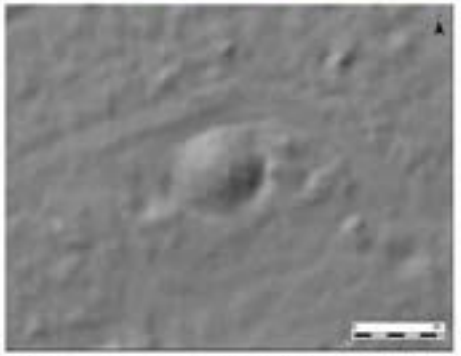
Forestry England Monument Management Plan East District	Date of Visit: 06/08/2022
List Entry: 1009447	Scheduled Monument Name: Bowl barrow in Conyfield Wood, 570m NNE of Messing Park Farm
Local Numbers: Essex HER 8057	OS Grid Reference: TL 89659 18250
Beat: Lavenham	Forest District Compartment Number: 1465
Plan Period: 2022-2027	Other Statutory Designations: N/A



Site Descriptions and Importance:

The monument includes a bowl barrow situated in Conyfield Wood, on the floodplain of the River Blackwater. The hemispherical earth mound measures 21m in diameter and c.1.7m in height. Also identifiable at ground level is a 3m wide ditch surrounding the mound from which material was quarried during the construction of the monument. This has become partly infilled over the years but survives to a depth of c.0.3m on all but the north side, where it has been cut through by a modern drain which runs alongside a footpath. Despite some disturbance by digging, animal burrowing and scrub growth, the bowl barrow in Conyfield Wood survives comparatively well and contains archaeological remains and environmental evidence relating to the monument and the landscape in which it was constructed.

Bowl barrows, the most numerous form of round barrow, are funerary monuments dating from the Late Neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age, with most examples belonging to the period 2400-1500 BC. They were constructed as earthen or rubble mounds, sometimes ditched, which covered single or multiple burials. They occur either in isolation or grouped as cemeteries and often acted as a focus for burials in later periods. Often superficially similar, although differing widely in size, they exhibit regional variations in form and a diversity of burial practices. There are over 10,000 surviving bowl barrows recorded nationally (many more have already been destroyed), occurring across most of lowland Britain. Often occupying prominent locations, they are a major historic element in the modern landscape and their considerable variation of form and longevity as a monument type provide important information on the diversity of beliefs and social organisations amongst early prehistoric communities. They are particularly representative of their period and a substantial proportion of surviving examples are considered worthy of protection.



Lidar image of the bowl barrow in Conyfield Wood. © 2020 Environment Agency 1m DTM.



Barrow in Conyfield Wood. Photo: K Truscoe (04/08/2022)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2"><u>Condition</u>
The barrow is overgrown with bracken, brambles and willow herb. Several trees are adjacent to the barrow: an Oak on it's western side, a sycamore to the east and an oak on the northern side. The oak tree to the west is leaning, so it is possible that the root plate has lifted up.</td><td colspan="2"><u>Decline and Vulnerability</u>
The leaning oak tree may fall, removing material from the mound, and the surface of the barrow may be damaged by the vegetation growth. There is potential for erosion from the path which runs around the barrows eastern and northern sides, but this appears to be a low risk at present.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"><u>Management Objectives:</u>
• Restoration and maintenance of the surface of the monument.
• Establishment of a 20m cleared area around the barrow.</td><td><u>Work Proposed in the Plan Period:</u>
• Removal of the trees immediately encroaching on the barrow, beginning with the leaning oak tree.
• Clearance of vegetation on the mound
• Removal of trees around the barrow to create a cleared area of around 20m. Coneyfield Wood is a well-used woodland, so this should be done gradually and sensitively, accompanied by explanatory signage. NB: tree removal will require a felling licence and will only be carried out following approval of the Lavenham forest plan.</td><td><u>Achieved</u></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"><u>Proposed Works which Require Scheduled Monument Consent:</u></td><td colspan="2"><u>Arrangements for Monitoring:</u>
Annually by Historic Environment Advisor and every three years with a representative of Historic England.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4"><u>Opportunities:</u>
• Production of signage to accompany tree felling around the barrow will provide an opportunity to inform forest users about the monument.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4"><u>Record of management and/or observations during Plan Period</u>
• Site visit 04/08/2022 (Krysia Truscoe, Steve Whall, Emma Rawlinson): The barrow is overgrown with bracken and other vegetation and trees are encroaching on it's northern, western and eastern sides. A leaning oak tree on it's western side presents an immediate threat to the monument. The use of the footpath which runs around the northern and eastern sides doesn't appear to be causing erosion to the mound, but this would need to be monitored once the monument is cleared of vegetation.</td></tr>
</table>

Image Citations

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Stakeholder consultation

Statutory: South Cambridgeshire District Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Babergh District Council, Uttlesford District Council, Braintree District Council, Colchester City Council, Parish Councils, Historic England, Natural England, Environment Agency.

Non-statutory: Friends groups, Neighbours, Forest residents, Sporting tenants, General public, Conservation interest groups, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Butterfly conservation, Woodland Trust, Suffolk County Archaeologists, County Councils—Local Nature Recovery strategy (Cambridgeshire, Essex and Suffolk)



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