

Quantock Forest Plan

2016 - 2026

West England Forest District



The mark of
responsible forestry

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



Declaration by FC as an Operator.

All timber arising from the Forest Enterprise estate
represents a negligible risk under EUTR (No 995/210)


Ben Robinson
FCE File Ref: OP10/60
(Old PE42, 43, 44 & 45)

Application for Forest Plan Approval

Forest District:	West England FD
Woodland or property name	St Audries, Great Wood, Wind Down, Goathurst, Kings Cliff
Nearest town, village or locality:	Bridgwater
OS Grid reference:	ST 188366
Local Authority District/Unitary Authority:	West Somerset, Sedgemoor

Plan Area:	943 ha
Conifer Felling:	68.8 ha
Broadleaved Felling:	11.4 ha

1. I apply for Forest Plan approval for the property described above and in the enclosed Forest Plan.
2. I confirm that the scoping, carried out and documented in the Consultation Record attached, incorporated those stakeholders that 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.
3. I confirm that the proposals contained in this plan comply with the UK Forestry Standard.
4. I undertake to obtain any permissions necessary for the implementation of the approved Plan.

Signed 
Forest Management Director

Date 19/11/2015

Signed  James Fry
Area Director

Date of approval 25th February 2016

Date approval ends 25th February 2026



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Introduction

The Quantock Forest Plan area is made up of 5 individual woodland blocks totalling 943 hectares (ha) in the county of Somerset. They stretch from **St Audries** in the north, half a mile from the Bristol Channel to **Goathurst** and **Kings Cliff** in the south which are 3 miles from Bridgwater and the M5 motorway.

St Audries	63 ha
Great Wood	629 ha
Wind Down	126 ha
Goathurst	42 ha
Kings Cliff	82 ha

The majority of the Plan area lies within and make up 8.8% of the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The woodlands are prominent and valuable features within a predominantly lowland heath landscape setting.

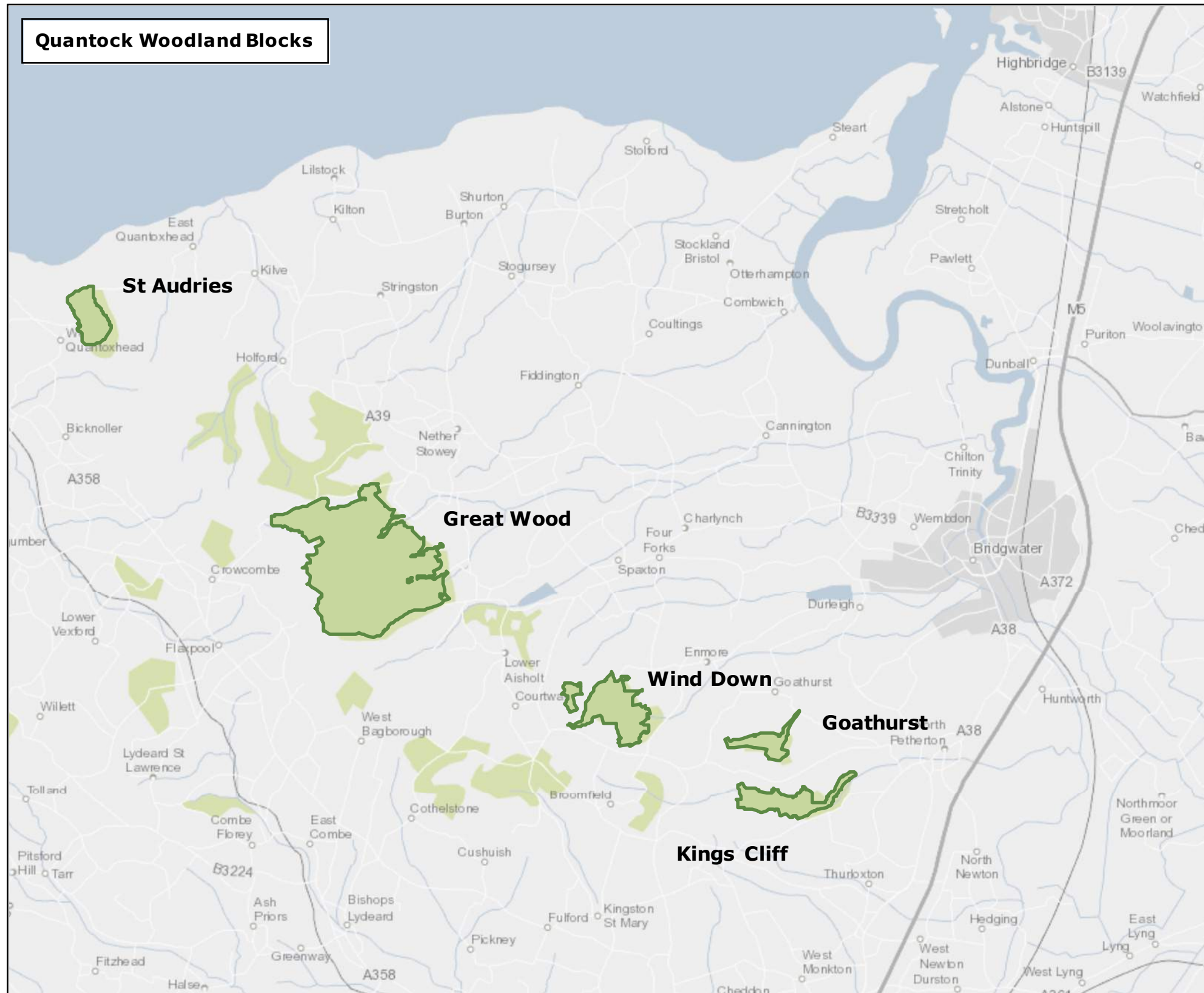
The current major conifer components are quality Douglas fir (357ha) and Sitka spruce (138ha), with beech (67ha) and oak (31ha) making up a significant part of the broadleaf element. 93ha (10%) of the Plan area is made up of open space. A significant proportion (599ha or 63%) of the Plan area is designated as Ancient Woodland Sites (AWS), with 533ha as Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and 66ha as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ANSW).

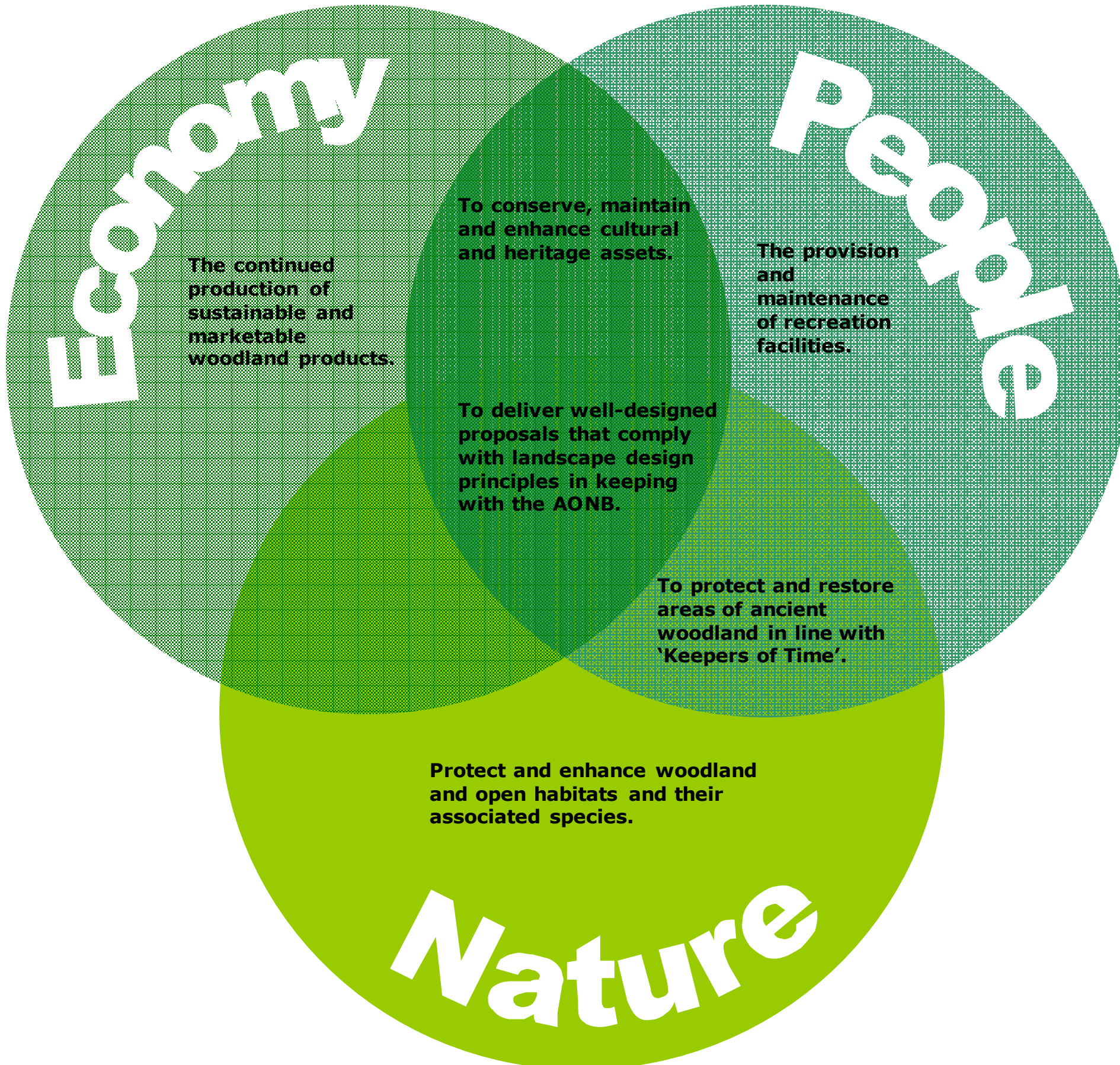
There is high level yet low intensity recreational usage of the woodlands, prominently focused around **Great Wood**. With campsites, picnic facilities and informal but renowned mountain biking the robust nature of the woodland allows it to play host to multiple organised events and individual visitor experiences.

As individual woodlands sitting within a mixture of lowland heath common and farmland the woodlands offer an exceptionally high biodiversity value. The woodlands support a wide variety of biodiversity, notably nightjar, raptor, badger and bats.

The Plan area contains three Scheduled Monuments two of which are currently recorded on the Historic England 'At Risk' Register. The Halswell Registered Park and Garden (Grade II) is also designated for its cultural significance and also 'At Risk'.

This document will outline the plans and prescriptions for these woodlands for the next 10 years in the context of a wider future vision for the Plan area.





Management Objectives

WEST ENGLAND FOREST DISTRICT

PROTECTING AND EXPANDING ENGLANDS FORESTS AND WOODLANDS AND INCREASING THEIR VALUE TO SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

The objectives of this Plan will, in part, deliver the *West England Forest District Strategic Plan (2013a)* and the national *Strategic Plan for the Public Forest Estate in England (2013b)*.

Sustainable management of the woodland will be to the standards required to maintain FSC and PEFC accreditation and therefore must deliver economic, environmental and social objectives.

The meeting and monitoring of these objectives is outlined on the following page.



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Objective	Meeting Objective	Monitoring
<p>The continued production of sustainable and marketable woodland products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the woodland will remain productive through thinning yield. • Some clearfell timber production, majority from the conifers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five year production forecast and at the Forest Plan (FP) five-year review. This process is audited as part of the FSC forest certification process. • Annual pre-thinning survey. • Production forecast comparison with actual output to assess accuracy of forecast.
<p>To conserve, maintain and enhance cultural and heritage assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage to relevant SM management plans during the planning of operations. • Liaise with Somerset Archaeology Service and /or Historic England prior to commencement of works. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational site planning of harvesting and restocking operations will help monitor the effect of management. • 'At Risk' Scheduled Monuments and Registered Park and Garden moving towards stable condition reviewed at the time of Forest Plan review
<p>The provision and maintenance of recreation facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of facilities points during be monitored and maintained at by the Beat team. • Visitor numbers maintained at Great Wood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beat team will monitor usage and ensure the up keep of the signage. • Visitor counts reviewed at the time of Forest Plan review
<p>To protect and restore areas of ancient woodland in line with 'Keepers of Time'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted felling of conifer crops and suppression of non-native regeneration to aid natural native regeneration and native species replanting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and comparison of SCDB 'naturalness' scores through the Forest Plan review process.
<p>Protect and enhance woodland and open habitats and their associated species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felling together with a delayed restock program will continue to diversify stand and age structure. • Operational site planning should highlight opportunities where conservation benefits can be delivered. • Appropriate reinstatement works will be carried out once operations have been concluded. • Creation of >10% transitory and permanent open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored via Review process, through local records and updated sightings. • Analysis and comparison of SCDB open space 10% through the Forest Plan review process. • Operational site planning of harvesting and restocking operations will help monitor the effect of management
<p>To deliver well-designed proposals that comply with landscape design principles in keeping with the AONB.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of proposals will soften and better integrate the woodland with the surrounding landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed point photography analysis at Forest Plan review stage