

## 5. Communities and Places



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### 5.1 Current Provision

These woodlands in the Surrey Hills provide opportunities for the people who live and work in the surrounding area to explore the landscape, appreciate its wildlife and lead an active lifestyle. At present, visitors use the woodland principally for dog-walking, rambling and cycling. All of the woods are dedicated for open access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act of 2000, which allows for quiet enjoyment on foot.

Effingham Forest - There are five bridleways that cross or run against the forest but no public footpaths. A permit scheme for riders is operated for wider access to the woodlands. The Lovelace Bridges trail, a walk of up to 6 miles, provides a route connecting these interesting structures. There is no formal car park, but cars can and do use forest entrances.

Ranmore - Ranmore is mostly accessed from a National Trust car park which is adjacent to the northern entrance to the wood. It is also bisected by the North Downs Way, a long distance footpath, which traverses the wood from east to west along the top of the chalk escarpment. A bridleway connects the car park with the southern edge of the wood, offering attractive views south to Westcott and southeast to Dorking. At the eastern end of the wood there is a small field leased to the Scouts.

Highridge Wood is particularly valued by the resident local community to the north, who make extensive and regular use of the wood on foot, on the public footpaths and numerous informal paths. There is a small car park which has been reduced in size to deter misuse and flytipping. One public bridleway runs from north to south.

Horse riding in Effingham Forest and Ranmore is managed under an existing agreement with TROT (Toll Rides off-road Trust).

### 5.2 Delivering the Brief

There are three objectives stated in the brief that the plan should address.

- The woodlands are close to Dorking and Leatherhead as well as several local villages. The woodlands should provide an attractive backdrop to the lives of local people.

Implementation of this woodland plan will result in a more attractive and functional woodland for visitors. The widening and shaping of rides, gradual conversion to native species whilst retaining feature conifers and the continued attention to habitats and species will produce a visually pleasing and healthy place to visit and enjoy.

- All the woods are well used for recreation, both by local people and more travelled visitors. Ranmore in particular borders National Trust ground and the wood is bisected by the North Downs way. Design should maintain and where possible improve the attractiveness of the woodlands for visitors.

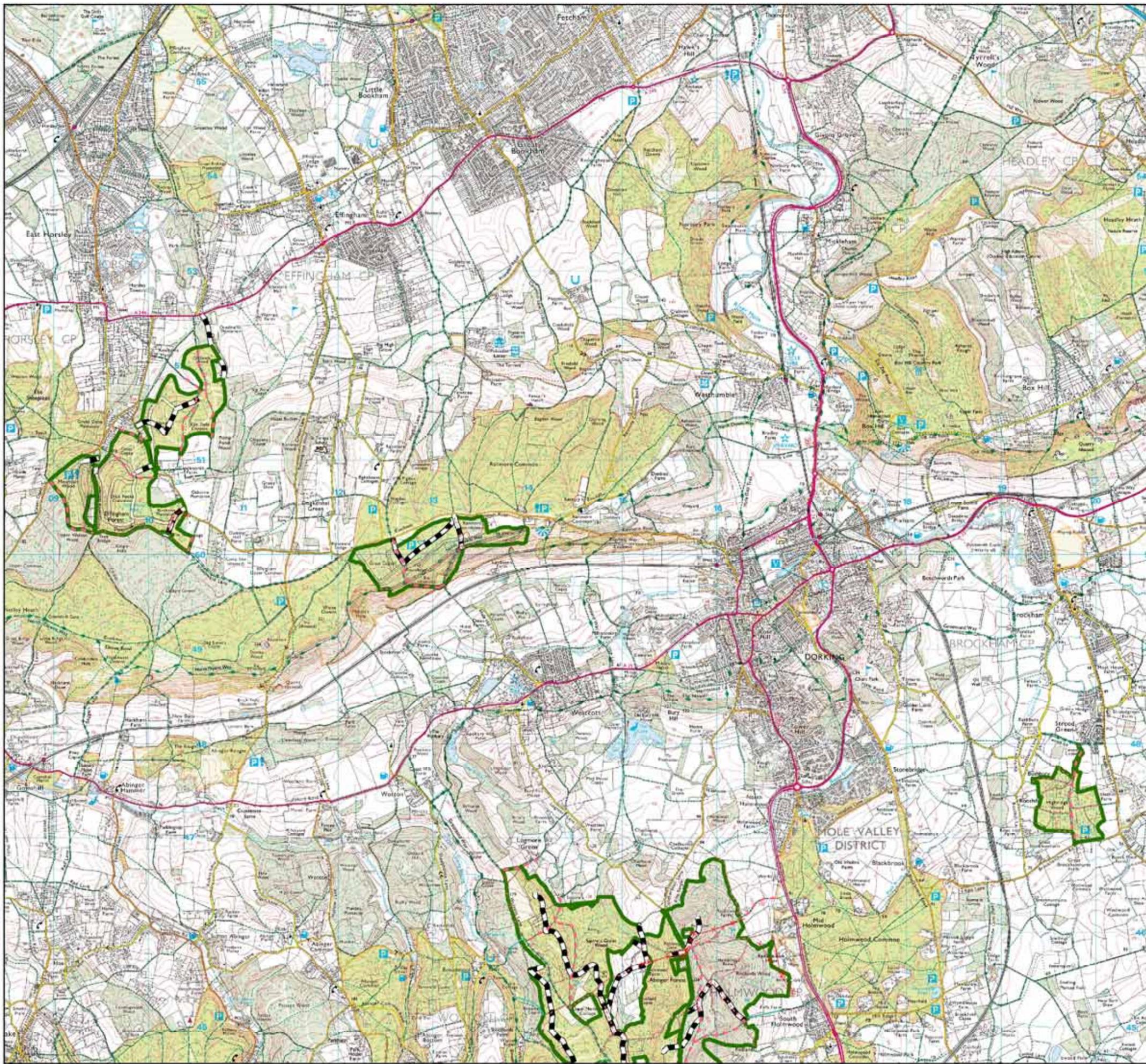
The woodland design pays attention to balance and diversity. Public areas will gradually be opened to provide a sense of security. Other areas, away from the main paths and trails, provide a quiet space for wildlife. In Highridge Wood, the paths are enclosed and the soil conditions make access less pleasant in wet weather. Opening up of the main paths during operations should improve matters. The finer detail of forest operations and management is dealt with during the Operational Site Assessment.

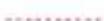
- Highridge Wood is prone to anti-social behaviour, notably fly-tipping and car dumping. Design should consider options to reduce this activity.

The problems have reduced since the car park was restricted and generally the wood is most used by local people on foot. No further changes are planned for this fairly remote car park unless users request it and funds can be found for sustainable improvements.

# South East England Surrey Hills Forest Design Plan

## Recreation and Access



-  BOAT
-  Bridleway
-  Public Path
-  Management Area
-  Forest Road
-  Forest Ride
-  Overhead Powerline

## 5. Communities and Places

### 5.3 Communities and Places Objectives

Forest Design Plan Objectives	Forest Design Plan Outputs At Year 10 (2021)	Monitoring
Communities and Places	The area of woodland with public access has been maintained.	Record of woodland closure under CROW Act (2000/1).
	The woodlands provide good quality accessible natural greenspace and people have been encouraged to use and enjoy the woodland for leisure purposes and healthy living.	Recreation and access web pages on FC website. Facility inspection records. Permission system records. Ordnance Survey Landranger and Explorer maps show Forestry Commission public access land.