

Woodlands of the Hampshire Downs

Forest Plan

South England Forest District

Woodlands Included Within This Forest Plan

Ampfield Wood

Black Wood

Bushey Leaze

Chawton Park

Micheldever Wood

West Wood

Weston Common

Windmills Copse

Date of Commencement of Plan: **10 November 2014**

Approval Period: **10 November 2014 to 9 November 2024
(10 Years)**

Summary of Activity within Approval Period:

Forestry Activity	Area (ha)				
	Broad-leaved High Forest	Conifer high forest	Broadleaf natural regeneration or replanting	Mixed natural regeneration or replanting	Open
Regeneration Felling in period 2014–2024	6.4		6.4		
Areas managed under a shelterwood system	1695.6				
Management of permanent open space*	29.3				
Natural Reserve	26.6				
Other (car parks etc)	16.1				
TOTAL AREA	1774				

*not including transitional open space created during shelterwood thinnings and regeneration fellings or road and rideside enhancement.

FOREST ENTERPRISE Application for Forest Plan Approvals

Forest District: **South England Forest District**

FC Geographic Block No: **76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81**

Forest Plan Name: **Hampshire Downs**

FE Plan Reference Number: **304/04/13-14**

Nearest town or village: **Winchester, Hampshire**

OS Grid Reference: **SU 531 370**

Local Authority: **Basingstoke and Deane DC, East Hampshire DC, Test Valley DC, Winchester DC**

I apply for Forest Plan approval for the property described above and in the enclosed Forest Plan.

I undertake to obtain any permissions necessary for the implementation of the approved Plan.

Signed:

Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor, South England FD

Date:

Approved:

Forest Services Area Director

Date:

Forest Planning

Forest Plans define the long term vision for a woodland or a collection of woodlands, usually looking 50 to 100 years ahead. It sets objectives and illustrates how management will move towards achieving this vision over the initial 10 to 30 years.

This plan represents a review of the Forest Design Plans for the woodlands listed opposite. The revised Plans, each a constituent part of the Hampshire Downs Forest Plan has been prepared following a review of the original plans undertaken by Forestry Commission staff, and in consultation with stakeholders and the public. It has incorporated developments in policy and local initiatives that have occurred in the intervening years.

Previous Forest Design Plan	Date of Last Review/Approval
Ampfield Wood	2000
Black Wood (previously incorporated into Micheldever FDP)	2007
Bushey Leaze	1999
Chawton Park	1998
Micheldever Wood	2007
West Wood	2008
Weston Common	2007
Windmills Copse (previously incorporated into Ampfield and Windmills FDP)	2000

Consultation and Approval Process

At key points throughout the Forest Planning process, we will seek the views of external stakeholders, including; local communities and organisations involved with nature conservation, public recreation and the timber industry. Through this consultation process we can ensure that an appropriate balance of objectives is achieved.

Approval of the Forest Plan is granted by the regulatory arm of the Forestry Commission, known as Forest Services. This regulatory approval is usually valid for 10 years and grants a 10 year felling license.

The approved Forest Plan will be reviewed at year 5 to ensure proposals are still relevant, suitable and in line with current policy and guidance. This will also be an opportunity to evaluate the success of management over the 5 year period and engage any amendments to the Forest Plan that may be required.

Objectives and Context

Each section contains site specific details regarding objectives, location, tenure, landscape and historical context, current woodland structure, biodiversity and conservation, people, historic environment, soils, water and timber production.

This contextual information supports our decision making, both through the production of the Forest Plan and when planning operational interventions designed to implement the proposals on the ground.

Forest Plan Maps

Maps are presented for each woodland within this Forest Plan. Where appropriate the maps are annotated to describe issues on the site and include the following (other maps may be included where appropriate):

Location

Aerial

Ancient Woodland and Native Species Scoring

Illustrates the Ancient Woodland status of the woodland and the percentage of native species within various parts of the woodland.

Indicative Species Diversity

Gives an indicative illustration of the number of different species within sub-compartments (including open space)

Indicative Age Diversity

Gives an indicative illustration of the age range within sub-compartments (including open space)

Long Term Vision

Illustrates the long-term structure of the woodlands and other habitats consistent with the Forest Plan objectives. While there is no fixed time scales for the habitat transformations depicted, an indicative term of 10 to 100 years depending on the habitat objectives is assumed.

Current Structure

An overview of the current makeup of the woodland

Habitat Restoration and Felling

Shows the timing and shape of individual felling areas (coupes). These will either be replanted or restored to important non-woodland habitats. It also identifies areas not to be clear felled, but managed using less impactful management systems where natural regeneration or open habitat management techniques.

Predicted Timeline for Intended Future Habitats

Illustrates the possible timeframe for habitats within the Long Term Vision to become established.

At these map scales it is difficult to show detail of small-scale unplanted areas or retentions. A detailed restocking plan will be produced as part of an operational site assessment for the woodland nearer to the time of implementation.

Statistics

The plan is supported by charts showing how management proposals contained within the Forest Plan may affect the habitat and age structure of each woodland over time.

Production Forecast

The 20 year Production Forecasts illustrate the timber volume which would theoretically be extracted from the woodlands over the period of this design plan and beyond based on these proposals.

Climate Change

Climate change presents one of the greatest long-term challenges facing the world today. Conventional forest management systems have developed in a climate that has undergone fluctuations but remained relatively stable since the end of the last ice age (around 10 000 years ago). However, the average global temperature is now rising, there is evidence that rainfall patterns are changing. There is also likely to be an increase in the incidence of extreme weather and the frequency and severity of summer drought. This is likely to represent the greatest threat to woodlands from climate change in the UK over the coming decades. UK forest management needs to respond to these threats in two principal ways: through mitigation, including ensuring management is sustainable and adaptation, including species diversification.

Tree Diseases and Pests

Throughout southern England, established and newly recognised tree pests and diseases have been causing significant concern in recent years. Of particular concern at the present is the spread of *Chalara Fraxinea* (Ash Dieback), *Dothistroma* (red band) Needle Blight on Corsican Pine, and *Phytophthora ramorum* on Larch. Where affected species are extensive, woodlands are at a fairly high risk unplanned and undesirable structural change. Guidance and action plans regarding plant health are constantly evolving to adapt to plant health threats. The sudden emergence of a disease can result in the need to clear fell a coupe earlier than planned or alter restocking plans. We will continue to monitor for diseases as required and take any action required. Any changes to the Forest Design Plan will be notified or agreed with Forest Services in accordance with relevant guidance.

Mammal browsing is also a threat to the sustainability of the woodland by having the potential to limit regeneration. Deer will be managed in accordance with the South England Forest District Deer Management Strategy.

Continued monitoring will take place to ensure that those native and non-native invasive

plant species which pose a threat to native flora do not become established.

Timber Production

Over the last 5 years, through the natural growth of the trees, The woodlands included within this plan have produced a total increase in standing timber volume of approximately 15000m³ per year¹ or an approximate total of 75,000m³. During this time, timber harvesting has removed approximately 46,500m³. This is around 62% of the total growth increment over the past 5 years.

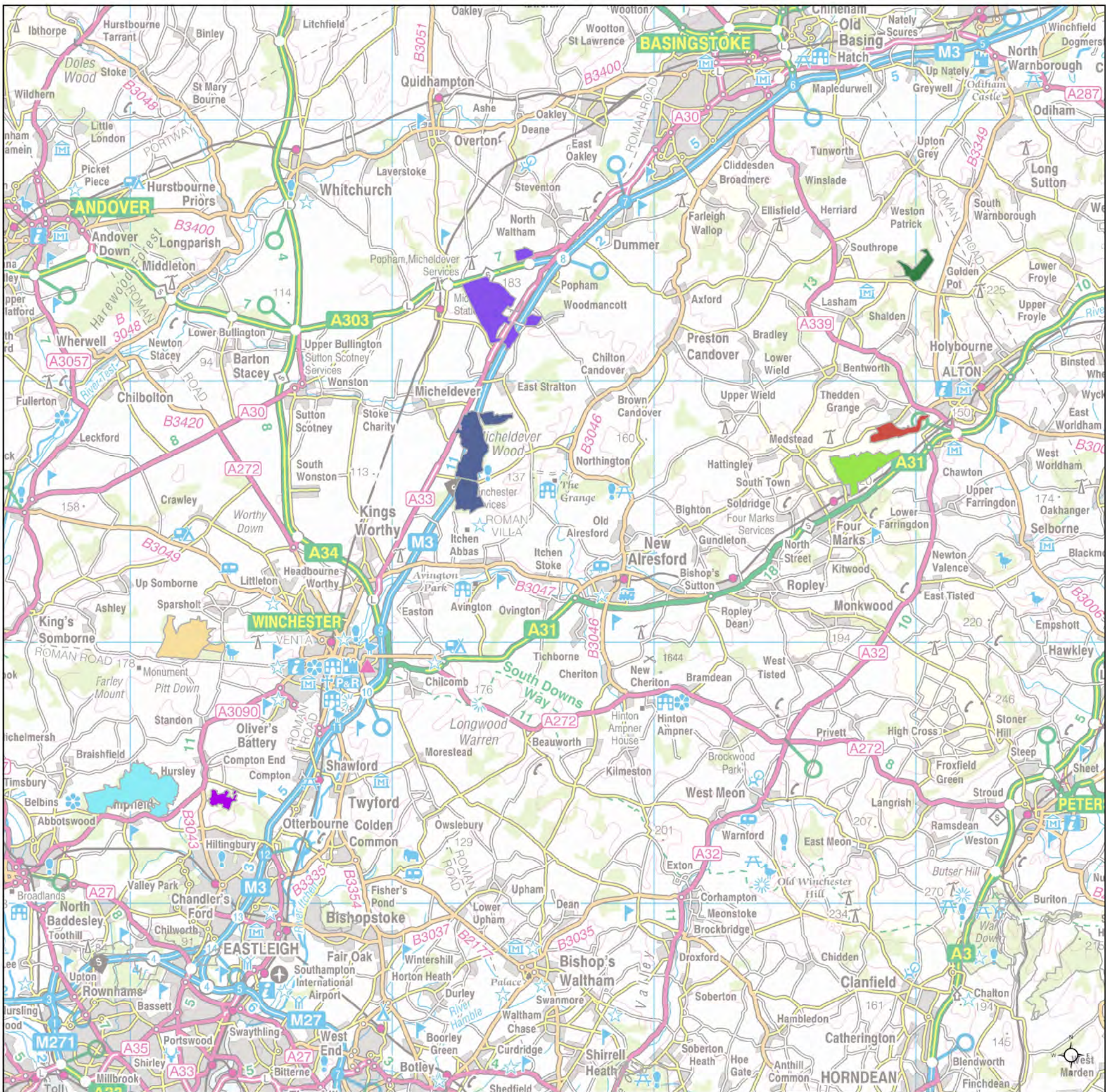
Within these woodland, sustainable timber harvesting helps to deliver the objectives of this Forest Plan by: creating space within the woodland for young trees to flourish, thus encouraging genetic diversity and longevity of the woodland; generating dynamic transitional habitats which are vital for local wildlife; creating dynamic internal landscapes which increase the interest and experience for local users; delivering a sustainable timber resource to local timber markets and supporting employment across a number of sectors.

Regeneration

Unless otherwise stated, the preferred method of regeneration will be through the adoption of natural regeneration. It may be necessary to enrich such restocking with some planting.

Objectives for the Hampshire Downs

- **Maintain and increase the native composition of ancient semi-natural woodland.**
- **Restore planted ancient woodland sites to native and honorary native woodland.**
- **Maintain sustainable access and the provision for recreation within the woodlands, taking opportunities to enhance the experience where appropriate.**
- **Take opportunities to improve the nature conservation value of other existing habitats.**
- **Maintain the diversity of age structure and appropriate species mix within the woodland.**
- **Provide a regular supply of quality timber to support local employment and local timber processing industries.**



Hampshire Downs Forest Plan

Location



Forestry Commission

South England Forest District

Key

- Ampfield Wood
- Black Wood Block
- Bushey Leaze
- Chawton Park
- Micheldever Forest
- West Wood
- Weston Common
- Windmills Copse

Date: 23/04/2014

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