



Battlestead Hill

Management Plan 2019-2024

MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONTENTS PAGE

ITEM

Page No.

Introduction

Plan review and updating

Woodland Management Approach

Summary

1.0 Site details

2.0 Site description

2.1 Summary Description

2.2 Extended Description

3.0 Public access information

3.1 Getting there

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 Long term policy

5.0 Key Features

5.1 Secondary Woodland

5.2 Informal Public Access

6.0 Work Programme

Appendix 1: Compartment descriptions

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Glossary

MAPS

Access

Conservation Features

Management

THE WOODLAND TRUST

INTRODUCTION

The Trust's corporate aims and management approach guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 4. These determine basic management policies and methods, which apply to all sites unless specifically stated otherwise. Such policies include free public access; keeping local people informed of major proposed work; the retention of old trees and dead wood; and a desire for management to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

The Trust's management plans are based on the identification of Key Features for the site and setting objectives for their management. A monitoring programme (not included in this plan) ensures that these objectives are met and any necessary management works are carried out.

Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The information presented in this Management plan is held in a database which is continuously being amended and updated on our website. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations. Please either consult The Woodland Trust website www.woodlandtrust.org.uk or contact the Woodland Trust (wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk) to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and a summary of monitoring results can be obtained on request.

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland. Our strategic aims are to:

- Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- Work with others to create more native woodlands and places rich in trees
- Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website www.woodlandtrust.org.uk. Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

In addition to the guidelines below we have specific guidance and policies on issues of woodland management which we review and update from time to time.

We recognise that all woods are different and that the management of our sites should also reflect their local landscape and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives. Guidelines like these provide a necessary overarching framework to guide the management of our sites but such management also requires decisions based on local circumstances and our Site Manager's intimate knowledge of each site.

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland using both natural regeneration and tree planting, but largely the latter, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe.
4. The long term vision for our non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open-ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The heritage and cultural value of sites is taken into account in our management and, in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Woods can offer the potential to generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We will therefore consider the potential to generate income from our estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we allow our woods to be used to support local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. In particular we will develop and maintain a network of long-term monitoring sites across the estate.
- 10 Any activities we undertake will conform to sustainable forest management principles, be appropriate for the site and will be balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

SUMMARY

This public management plan briefly describes the site, specifically mentions information on public access, sets out the long term policy and lists the Key Features which drive management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site - their significance is outlined together with their long (50 year+) and short (5 year) term objectives. The short term objectives are complemented by a detailed Work Programme for the period of this management plan. Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. A short glossary of technical terms is at the end. The Key Features and general woodland condition of this site are subject to a formal monitoring programme which is maintained in a central database. A summary of monitoring results is available on request.

1.0 SITE DETAILS

Site name:	Battlestead Hill
Location:	Tatenhill
Grid reference:	SK208221, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 128
Area:	2.47 hectares (6.10 acres)
Designations:	Conservation Area, National Forest

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Mainly mature woodland with grassland and scrub, Battlestead is sandwiched between two fledgling broadleaf planting schemes, the Bass Millennium Wood and East Hill Wood. The woods are linked by a network of rides and paths.

2.2 Extended Description

Battlestead Hill Wood 2.42 hectares (6 acres) are located on the outskirts of the village of Tatenhill, 3 miles south-west of Burton upon Trent. The village lies in a narrow valley and is dominated by the rounded newly planted slopes of the valley sides. The Bass Millennium Wood is a 28.35 hectare new broadleaf planting scheme to the north-east, and East Hill Wood 18.22 hectare new broadleaf planting scheme to the west of Battlestead Hill Wood both planted in 2000. The adjoining woodlands are National Forest Tender Scheme winners.

The woodland crowns an area of slope to the east of the village and also over looks the valley of the River Trent to the west. It is therefore, a particularly important landscape feature and this is recognised by the local Authority who have included it within the boundaries of the Tatenhill Conservation Area.

The site consists of 1.5 hectares of mature woodland with 0.2 hectare of grassland and 0.72 hectare of scrub. The mature woodland was once dominated by Elm, however, it was devastated by Dutch

Elm Disease and a total of 100 dead and dying elms were felled by the Trust following acquisition in the 1980's. The remaining mature trees include beech, pedunculate oak, ash, sycamore and wild cherry. Local volunteers carried out enrichment planting in 1987; oak, ash and wild cherry were planted under an Amenity Woodland Planting Scheme. The under storey is comprised of elder, hawthorn, blackthorn and holly. The ground flora, which has suffered from heavy grazing by cattle in the past and subsequent felling operations, is dominated by bramble especially towards the top of the slope with nettle, marsh thistle and Yorkshire fog. The area of scrub consists mainly of hawthorn, blackthorn with some gorse and elder. Battlestead Hill Wood is surrounded by an over-grown hedge in which there are a number of mature hedge-row trees, the majority of which are ash.

A public footpath bisects the wood along the main ride, which was promoted by the East Staffordshire Countryside Management Project and is well used by the local community. A circular footpath has also been created in the south-eastern portion of the site; this is very steep in places and makes for difficult walking conditions, especially in the wet. Local, Burton Conservation Volunteers created a series of steps along parts of the circular route and up to the view point.

Battlestead Hill Wood is also of sufficient archaeological interest for a desk study to be undertaken by a volunteer researcher in 2005. The work was commissioned because of the series of banks and ditches which traverse the western boundary from the flood plain, over the shoulder of the hill and thence to Tatenhill. It was conjectured that these may have resulted from the strategic status of the Hill and the local mythology which suggested that the Hill was the site of an ancient battle, hence Battlestead Hill. However the researcher could find no reference to there being a battle on the site.

It appears that the earthworks are likely to have originated from the following series of events.

A track way was established from the Roman Road (Ryknild Street), which follows the Trent Valley, to Tatenhill and thence into the uplands of the Forest of Needwood. When wheeled transport became the norm a less-steep access road to Tatenhill was established to the west and the track over Battlestead was used only by those on foot, on horseback or with packhorses.

In the 16th century the line of the track became the western boundary of Sinai Park, a hunting estate owned by the Paget family, the Lords of Angelsey. This boundary was reinforced by the ditch and banks of the park pale and attempts were made to block-off the trackway by the landlord. Disputes between the common people and the gentry continued for centuries. Riots occurred in the 1770s during the enclosure awards and also as recently as 1906 when the landlord tried to block the path using barbed wire. The disputes ceased in 1918 when the Paget family were forced to sell Sinai Park and the estate was fragmented.

These impressive earthworks provide a distinct "sense of place" to the site and attempts have been made to clear away scrub so that they can more readily be seen by visitors to the site.

The underlying geology of the site is sandstone. In order to protect the water which percolates freely through the soil, and which may be used in brewing operations, Bass Holding Ltd have covenanted the Woodland Trust not to use pesticides on the site without prior permission. They have also reserved the right to (i) take water from beneath the wood by means of pumps or pipes should they wish to do so, and (ii) extract minerals through underground workings.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Public access is available on foot throughout the woodland. The Bass millennium car park has been closed because of vandalism and fly-tipping consequently visitors tend to park their cars at the junction of Tatenhill Road and the access road to Lawns Farm (SK213217). However the approach to the wood from the south is very steep.

Alternatively it is possible to park on the Main Street at Tatenhill (SK206224) and approach the wood from the north along the public right of way. Although less steep than the approach from the south the route does involve crossing a number of stiles so it is not suitable for those with wheelchairs or pushchairs. Within the site itself almost all the paths involve steep sections, some with steps.

There is a Main Line Railway Station at Burton on Trent and a Service 403 bus will take you to Tatenhill, Mai Street in 20 minutes. Refer to Traveline.org.uk for further details.

There are excellent pubs serving food by the canal bridge south of the wood and within Tatenhill village itself.

The nearest public toilets are at the Railway Station in Burton on Trent

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Battlestead Hill is a secondary woodland in a quiet rural location. The woodlands elevated aspect means that its greatest value is to the visual landscape. The woodland will receive minimum management intervention.

The Woodland Trust will maintain public access through the annual Estate Maintenance Contract. Paths will be cut and all entrances inspected and maintained.

Periodic inspections of the woodland will take place to ensure its continued health and development.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

The Key Features of the site are identified and described below. They encapsulate what is important about the site. The short and long-term objectives are stated and any management necessary to maintain and improve the Key Feature.

5.1 Secondary Woodland

Description

Battlestead Hill is a secondary woodland in a quiet rural location. The area of mature woodland consists of scattered mature beech, oak, ash, cherry and larch, this interesting block of woodland originally contained around 100 elms which were the predominant species, however they were selectively felled in the late 1980's due to Dutch Elm Disease. The Steep western and southern slopes of Battlestead Hill still have a continuous canopy which is comprised of mature oak, beech and sycamore. Following the felling operation the area was enriched with approximately 650 trees, predominantly oak, ash and wild cherry as the main tree species with a large proportion (one third) of minor tree/woody understorey species including hazel, field maple, rowan, guelder rose, crab apple and holly.

The scrub area was formally grassland and is comprised of hawthorn, blackthorn and gorse.

Significance

Battlestead Hill Wood is a prominent feature of local topography; the woodland is now part of a network of woods in the Burton upon Trent area that makes up nearly 50 hectares, in an area where woodland cover is not very high.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities: Although not particularly large in size it forms part of a network of similar woods on the steeper part of the Trent valley in the vicinity of Burton. The under-planting which took place in order to replace the elms will provide the next generation of canopy trees. Constraints: A major constraint that has to be taken into account when planning any silvicultural operation, is the difficult vehicular access both to and within the wood.

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To be maintained as an area of limited intervention. Retaining all large old trees and resulting dead wood. Wind blown trees will be left in situ and allowed to decompose naturally. This will provide potentially rich habitat for lichen, fungi, invertebrates and other woodland fauna including suitable habitat for bat roosts.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

The woodland will receive minimal management intervention. The glade close to the Tatenhill entrance will be monitored as a key feature observation once every 5 years with scrub removed as necessary to maintain the open area and view.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

Public access on foot is available throughout the whole site. A network of rides and paths are located throughout the woodland and are connected to neighbouring Bass Millennium Wood and East Hill Wood. A public footpath runs through the wood from the village of Tatenhill in a north-westerly to south-easterly direction. The paths are steep in places and inclined to being muddy during the winter months.

Significance

Battlestead Hill Wood is a prominent feature of local topography. The woodland is now part of a network of woods, both established and newly created as part of the national Forest tender scheme, in the Burton upon Trent area that makes up nearly 50 hectares.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities: The footpaths through the woodland create the opportunity for members of the public to experience and enjoy one of a whole network of woods in the area south-west of Burton upon Trent. The circular footpath within the wood was constructed to increase accessibility through the creation of a further set of steps on the steepest slopes.

Constraints: The steep slopes, where stepped access has not been provided, are inclined to be muddy during winter months.

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the network of paths and entrances.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

Paths and entrances maintained to facilitate continued public usage, inspections to determine condition taking place once every 2 years. Cutting of vegetation will take place where necessary to remove any access obstructions. The annual Estates Management Contract includes entrance maintenance and a cut back of vegetation with a combined litter pick in June.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
------	--------------	-------------	--------

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	2.42	Mixed broadleaves	1900	Min-intervention	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Conservation Area, National Forest

Compartment 1a is secondary woodland consisting of 1.5 hectares of mature woodland with .2 hectare of grassland situated in the north western corner of the woodland and .72 hectare of scrub on the upper slope.

Mature trees include scattered beech (P1860 est.), pedunculate oak (P1860 est.), ash (1900 est.), sycamore (1900 est.), larch (1940 est.) and wild cherry (P1987). These species are also represented on the site in various other age classes.

The understorey is comprised of elder, hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, guelder rose, crab apple and holly, which varies from occasional to frequent throughout the area comprised of mature woodland.

Ground flora, is dominated by bramble especially towards the top of the slope with nettle, marsh thistle and yorkshire fog. Cowslips are present in the small area of open grassland.

The area of scrub consists mainly of hawthorn, blackthorn with some crab apple, gorse and elder.

Battlestead Hill Wood is surrounded by an over grown hedge in which there are a number of mature hedge row trees, the majority of which are ash.

A public footpath bisects the wood along the main ride and is well used by the local community. A circular footpath has also been created in the south-eastern portion of the site; this is very steep in places and makes for difficult walking conditions, especially in the wet.

The most striking aspect of this wood are the numerous parallel earthworks along the western margin. These ditches and embankments were thought to be defensive in origin but, after historical research turn out to have been constructed as part of the park pale of Sinai Park which was sold off and dismantled in 1918.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2021	1a	Thin	7.00	36	250

GLOSSARY

Ancient Woodland

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

Ancient Woodland Site

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

Beating Up

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

Broadleaf

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

Canopy

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

Conifer

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

Continuous Cover forestry

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

Coppice

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

Exotic (non-native) Species

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

Field Layer

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

Group Fell

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

Long Term Retention

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

Minimum Intervention

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

Origin & Provenance

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

Re-Stocking

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

Sub-Compartment

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

Thinning

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

Weeding

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established. Either by hand cutting or with carefully selected weed killers such as glyphosate.

Windblow/Windthrow

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.