WOODLAND TRUST

Sisland Carr

Management Plan 2017-2022

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MAPS

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Sisland Carr
Location:	Chedgrave
Grid reference:	TM345991, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 134
Area:	11.66 hectares (28.81 acres)
Designations:	Environmentally Sensitive Area

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Damage wreaked by the storms of 1987 prompted replanting of young native broadleaf species which are becoming well established. The mix of conifers and broadleaf makes for a pleasant walk along easy-to-follow paths.

2.2 Extended Description

Sisland Carr lies to the South east of Norwich near Loddon and Chedgrave, and is situated just within the Broads environmentally sensitive area. The surrounding landscape is predominantly an arable landscape with interspersed wetland and woodland, with Sisland Carr being a significant piece of woodland within this landscape. Few of these fragmented woodlands are of pure broadleaved stands. The wood is bordered to the west by a sewage works, and to the east by the river Chet.

Sisland Carr comprises of 8.1 Ha mixed secondary woodland and 3.64 Ha wet meadow. The woodland has a varied structure, with 3 Ha conifer plantation in the centre of the wood is dominated by Scots pine, with an area of Corsican pine comprising around 1 hectare. The broadleaved component is represented by planted areas following damage in 1987, utilising locally found species and some species that are not locally found within the natural environment such as wild service tree of fontainbleau and whitebeam . Mature specimens of Beech, Oak and Birch are also frequent within the broadleaved compartments. An area of Alder Carr is found on the wetter areas to the northern end of the wood, together with mature poplars. Of interest, there is also a small area of False Acacia trees and an area planted with native black poplars, which add interest to the wood.

The ground flora within the wood is relatively mixed, being dominated by Bracken in much of the site . However there are large areas of dense Bluebells situated within the broadleaf areas, and small isolated pockets of Dogs Mercury and Town hall clock which follow the course of an old now disappeared hedgerow. In darker, more shaded areas, male fern is frequent. This is likely to be due to the base poor sandy soils that cover most of the site, combined with the dense shade cast by the conifers.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

How to get to Sisland Carr
Sissland Carr is situated off church Lane in Sissland Near Chedgrave. The wood has a car park that can accommodate 5 cars

X2: Norwich – Lowestoft, Via Loddon & Beccles.
Closest bus stop to Sissland carr is the Chedgrave White horse pub Stop, from there it is a mile and a half walk to the wood.

link to first buses: www.firstgroup.com

570 Haddiscoe/Thurlton/Loddon/Seething/Alpington to Norwich
Closest bus stop is at Hobart high school in loddon which then is a walk of just over a mile. Via public right of way.

link to first buses: www.angliancoaches.co.uk

There is no train station within 5 miles.

Nearest Toilets are situated at the White Horse pub in Chedgrave and Loddon within the Church plain there are public toilets also.

The topography of the wood is generally flat with some slight undulations. All paths consist of mud tracks, but the site is free draining and stays passable throughout the year. All entrances to the wood are via standard woodland trust Spec Kissing gates.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The management at Sisland Carr will be focused towards development of a robust, multi-structured secondary woodland, and an adjoining open ground habitat that is a mixture of meadow and developing scrub habitat of good conservation value. As relatively small secondary woodland, the objective is to maintain the overall integrity of the woodland, and to promote the conservation benefits it offers, whilst also providing a continued safe public access at a sustainable level.

The desired condition of the woodland in the long term is to stabilise and promote the development of a multi aged diverse woodland reducing the current dominance of the coniferous areas within the woodland. The area of mature secondary and wet woodland will be managed to retain its current structure.

The meadow
The meadows will be managed so as to control noxious weeds where required and possible, whilst allowing natural regeneration of wet woodland to develop along the fringes of the existing mature alder carr.

Public access
The long-term intention is to maintain a sustainable level of use by maintaining the access features appropriately. There is a good path network around the wood and unrestricted public access in the meadow area. The long-term management will not create new paths, but will concentrate on maintaining the high standard of paths present.

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 Informal Public Access

Description

Sisland Carr is open to the visiting public and there is a well-used un-surfaced ride system within the wood. A small car park for up to 6 cars is situated in the South West corner of the wood.

Significance

Sisland Carr provides an area of open access to a number of surrounding villages, in which there is a general lack of open access woodland within the surrounding area.

Opportunities & Constraints

The level of access is constrained by the fact that the wood is relatively isolated, and the majority of visitors would need to use a car to reach the site. A car park is provided, however the site lends itself to a moderate level of use, mainly local people at the current level.

Factors Causing Change

Antisocial behaviour

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Enhance public access so that visitors to the site enjoy the experience.

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

To maintain the site as an area of public open access, with ride system cut to a minimum of 2m to allow unhindered access for the public. Maintain all internal structures in a safe usable condition.

Work programme: cut paths to a minimum of 2 metres width – May and July

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

The wood is clearly of secondary nature, however Sisland Carr is very diverse in the stand types present. These include mixed conifer plantation, Newly planted broadleaves between present day and 1990's, mature beech and oak, and wet alder Carr with mature poplars.

Significance

The site has been surveyed by a number of naturalists in the past, and is important for locally rare moths and it is likely that the site also supports other species which are of notable importance. The site has also been recorded as a site for noctule bats.

Opportunities & Constraints

There is an opportunity to maintain 8.1 Ha mixed broadleaved woodland, and the varied character of the wood.

Factors Causing Change

Deer, Rabbit browsing

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain multi-structured mature secondary woodland, promoting natural regeneration, and creation of deadwood habitat throughout the wood.

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

To promote natural broadleaf regeneration and stand structure diversity within the existing conifer and young broadleaf plantation areas of the woodland. The conifer and young broadleaf plantation was thinned in 2016 and will not require further thinning within the planned period. Monitor deer and rabbit browsing to assess whether control measures are required by erecting 2 20x20 metre fenced plots to gauge the level of impact on the site's regeneration by rabbit and deer browsing.

Maintain diverse age structure and deadwood habitat within the small area of mature secondary woodland and wet woodland. These areas will be left to undertake a Natural process where intervention will be left to a minimum, apart from any health and safety issues that could arise pose a threat to public safety.

May 2018 – Erect 2 20x20 metre fenced plots within the coniferous area to assess the impact of deer and rabbits on the development of natural regeneration and ground flora.

5.3 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat

Description

Extending to 3.6 Ha, the meadow runs alongside the river Chet within the broads ESA. The meadow is bordered by other wet meadows and marsh along the entire eastern boundary, and by the woodland to the west.

Significance

Rural Norfolk is a landscape which is intensively farmed with large field patterns of arable crops. The meadow at Sisland Carr is wet, and as part of a larger expanse of grassland also managed through grazing and smaller field patterns, is an important conservation feature.

Opportunities & Constraints

There is currently no interest in grazing the area as a means to maintain the current rich habitat structure of the meadow.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive Herbaceous weeds.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Having a patchwork of wet meadow, areas of open rough grass habitat and clumps of developing wet woodland along the fringes of the mature woodland providing scrub habitat.

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

The Meadow will be maintained as an area of low impact activity where only the dryer areas of the meadow will be cut to control noxious farm weeds, whilst the rest of the meadow will be left as a patchwork of rough grass/sedge. The verges of the meadow adjacent to the mature woodland will continue to be allowed to naturally regenerate into alder dominated woodland.

Work Programme: Cut accessible areas of meadow to reduce creeping thistle – June/July

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	3.00	Scots pine	1955	High forest	Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Informal Public Access	Environmentally Sensitive Area
Compartment 1a comprises of predominantly Scots pine and Corsican pine planted in 1955. Under-storey varies greatly with small areas of natural broadleaf regeneration and under-planting present, but rest of under-storey currently consists of patchy elder. Ground conditions are generally dry throughout the year, and given the sandy acidic soils, the ground flora is sparse, consisting predominantly of Bracken and Bramble, together with areas of male fern.							
1b	1.90	Beech	1925	High forest		Informal Public Access	
Compartment 1b has the appearance of a beech avenue, having a good distribution of large mature beech, estimated to have been planted in or around 1925. Scattered Oak of a similar age also present. The eastern end of the compartment is predominantly SP with birch and occasional Oak, There is little regeneration of either species and areas have been under-planted throughout the 1990's. The ground flora is particularly sparse with occasional patches of Male fern, brambles and Bracken.							
1c	1.50	Alder species	1900	Min-intervention	Management factors (eg grazing etc), Mostly wet ground/exposed site	Informal Public Access	Environmentally Sensitive Area
Area of Wet woodland characterised by mature White Poplars, Common alder and silver birch, many of which are multi-stemmed. The under-storey consists of sparse hazel and Alder. This area is wet throughout the year and the soils, being richer support large areas of nettles. A small patch of Native Black poplars have been planted at the eastern end							
1d	1.50	Mixed broadleaves	1989	High forest		Informal Public Access	

This compartment to the southern end of the site suffered considerable wind blow damage in 1987 and was replanted using a variety of broadleaved species which are growing well. Ground flora mainly consists of dense areas of Bluebell, and patchy Bramble.
The Compartment also contains a small patch of False Acacia trees, which is marked on the OS maps. The main Public and Management entrances enter compartment 1d.

2a	3.64	NULL		Non-wood habitat	Management factors (eg grazing etc)	Informal Public Access	

Compartment 2a is a lowland wet meadow to the south east and adjacent to the wood. It is considered of good quality as an example of a wet meadow.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2018	1a	Thin	3.50	120	420

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.