



High Wood

Management Plan 2017-2022

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	High Wood
Location:	North Rauceby
Grid reference:	TF010463, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 130
Area:	12.75 hectares (31.51 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

High Wood is a fantastic pocket of wooded wilderness with a homely atmosphere set atop a hill boasting spectacular views of the surrounding countryside and the Roman town of Ancaster. Ablaze with violets in Spring.

2.2 Extended Description

High Wood is located on the brow of a gently sloping hill near North Rauceby and is a prominent landscape feature, clearly visible from the A17, A153 and the B6403. The wood is fringed with a narrow band of mature (circa 1850) and decaying oak, ash and sycamore. The centre of the wood contains relatively few mature trees, and largely comprises young oak, ash, cherry, and willow planted and naturally regenerated between 1983 and 1996. Much of the wood appears secondary in origin, with evidence of old ridge and furrow ploughing patterns.

Surrounding land use is largely arable farmland, but with (permanent?) pasture to the east, and a large sola farm a few fields away to the north. The southern boundary is a minor road leading into North Rauceby.

Public and management access to the wood are excellent and there is a car park for around 5 cars situated at the south-west corner. The car park is well used with many local people using the permissive paths through the centre and around the edge of the wood, often for dog walking.

Soils are clayey, overlying Oolite (limestone). The site is relatively well drained and is not usually susceptible to waterlogging, other than following periods of pronged rain. There appears to be drainage in a northerly direction along a very shallow slope towards a hollow with an ephemeral pond (off Trust land). Remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation in places mean localised pooling of water in the furrows after heavy rains.

The wood is ablaze with violets in the early spring which are well suited to exploiting the rather bare ground layer beneath the younger trees. In areas where there are mature trees, the floral diversity increases, as does the cause vegetation including bramble, nettle, rosebay willowherb which can be locally dominant and suggest patchy soil enrichment from human activities.

A number of uncommon and interesting invertebrates have been recorded on the site including 19 species of butterfly, a surprising total for a relatively small and isolated wood. The butterflies recorded include purple hairstreak (*Quercusia quercus*) and white admiral (*Lagoda camilla*), classified as a priority species in the Lincolnshire BAP. Lesser stag beetle (*Dorcus parallelipipedus*) has also been recorded on site, associated with soft rotted timber, especially oak and ash. Although no recent (last 5 years) sightings have been reported.

The key features on site are:

- Informal Public access
- Secondary Woodland

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

The wood can be located on the fringe of North Rauceby, public access is direct from the adjoining public road - Chuch Lane leading west from the village of North Rauceby. There is a small car park on site which can accomadate up to 4-5 cars. Point of entry onto the site can be made from the car park through open gaps these being suitable for disabled access. From the car park an attractive circuit of walks can be had through the wood. The paths are flat to gently sloping, unsurfaced and prone to being muddy in wetter periods of the year which may limit access round the site for some users .

For public transportation near to the location of the site please access the traveline web link for further information and timetables www.traveline.org.uk or contact 0871 200 22 33.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The woodland will be managed to promote a diverse age structure and maintain the variety of tree species resulting in a resilient site, capable of coping with disease and the effects of climate change. This will be achieved by periodic thinning to retain diversity of species and encourage natural regeneration. Significant or specimen trees will be favoured where appropriate to become veterans and deadwood will be retained, standing and fallen, where it does not pose unacceptable risk to the public.

The site will be visited regularly and valued by local people, with visitor access provision appropriate to the level of use. Paths will be maintained and inviting, with entrance signage similarly in good condition at all times and in line with current WT branding & guidelines.

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

This site was mostly replanted with mixed broadleaves (see below) and subsequently in filled with sycamore and willow regeneration in the early 1980's following a clear-felling prior to purchase. The NVC classification has been assessed as W10 which is oak bracken bramble woodland. Ground flora is relatively poor being dominated by bramble and honeysuckle although no in depth survey has been done. The wood is fringed with mature (P1850) and decaying oak , ash, and sycamore which are concentrated in a narrow band around the periphery of the site. Although arising from the results of increased exposure following the clear-fell the extent of dieback in the mature oak has now developed into an important dead wood resource over the last twenty years. The centre of the wood contains few mature trees and largely comprises young oak, ash, cherry, sycamore, willow spp., aspen and lime planted or naturally regenerated between 1983 and 1986.

Significance

Broadleaved woodland, even recently replanted areas such as this are very scarce in the surrounding predominantly arable landscape and in Lincolnshire as a whole. Lowland mixed deciduous woodland is priority habitat in the Lincolnshire BAP (2011 -2020). High Wood is also important in terms intrinsic of biodiversity value especially as it still contains a significant mature (150 years plus) oak fringe which is actively senescing and becoming increasingly good habitat for invertebrates.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

Relatively small and isolated site (also exposed, so potentially vulnerable to wind-throw)

Opportunities:

Good mixture of species present

Contrast in age classes, allowing for relatively easy manipulation of younger canopy to realise long term intention in a 'short' time period.

Factors Causing Change

Wind damage

Senesce of mature trees on periphery

tree diseases (key threats are seen as chalara/ AOD affecting main canopy trees)

Deer browsing

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To restore the woodland to a diverse aged, self sustaining high forest comprising mostly native broadleaves but accepting sycamore as it arises through natural regeneration.

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

During the plan period, a 20%- 25% selective thin of younger (<40years) matrix trees should be carried out, favouring non-ash species where present, promoting species diversity and releasing natural regeneration to help expand the overall age structure. This should include halo thinning around a significant oak standards (and other specimen trees) in the central compartments encourage their longevity.

Inspection to be undertaken by site manager 1 year after thinning operation to gage success. Order follow up works as necessary.

Levels of natural regeneration to be monitored through 5 yearly condition assessment by site manager. Along with deer pressure and other "factors causing change". Action undertaken as required.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

High Wood is a well used wood. Most visitors drive to the site, park in the car park (6 cars) and walk within the network of permissive routes in the wood. Paths follow the edge of the woodland and form a '+' shape, dividing this square site into 4 almost equal sized quarters.

Significance

Increasing enjoyment of woodland is one of the Trust key outcomes. Encouraging appreciation of ancient woodlands ultimately helps foster responsibility towards these vitally important places, helping in the effort to protect and manage them for the future. Due to the predominantly arable surroundings, woodland recreation is severely limited in the wider area as a whole and High Wood is therefore an important resource for local people.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

The only major constraint is the safety hazard caused by the older trees which fringe the site. Many of these are decaying and the site location makes it susceptible to wind damage. It is essential that tree safety surveys and works are kept up to date, although given the importance of the developing dead wood resource tree safety work should follow a balanced approach: intervening only where absolutely necessary..

Opportunities:

The car park has made a significant difference to the number of people visiting the site and should certainly be maintained in the long term. Otherwise opportunities for increasing visitor numbers are few. There is the possibility that as the central trees mature, and the woodland become more visually attractive, more people will visit.

Factors Causing Change

- Vegetation encroachment of the paths
- Footpath erosion
- Changes in visitor pressure

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To continue to encourage public access to the site for the purposes of quiet, informal recreation. Site should be welcoming, safe and easy to navigate.

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

Paths are to be mown to a minimum width of 2m at least twice during the growing season. Signs should be visible and in good condition at all times.

Vegetation clearance and rides edge coppice to be carried out as needed and identified through biennial inspection by the site manager.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
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APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	8.50	Oak (pedunculate)	1983	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	
<p>The heart of the wood, largely replanted between 1983 and 1986 with some patchy areas of natural regeneration. The tree mix is oak , ash , mixed broadleaves including wild cherry and crab apple and 10% mixed shrubs including hawthorn and blackthorn . In the regenerating areas there is some sycamore scattered through together with some small areas of willow naturally seeded in an intimate mix with the planted species. Although showing minor variations in species composition and past silvicultural treatments this compartment should be regarded as one management unit.</p>							
1b	4.37	Oak (pedunculate)	1850	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	
<p>The woodland fringe is composed largely of oak of rather uniform age (estimated P1850-1880) but could be older. These vary from very healthy trees to poor, diseased trees which are equally important as a source of dead and actively dying wood, where they can be safely retained. In some areas younger ash and sycamore have replaced the oak as the dominant species.</p>							

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.