



Little Doward Woods

Management Plan 2018-2023

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Little Doward Woods, Cadora Woods, Highbury Fields, Quarry Wood, Symonds Yat West
Location:	Wyastone Leys, nr Whitchurch, Redbrook, St. Briavels, Redbrook, Wyastone Leys, Great Doward, nr Whitchurch, Symonds Yat, Ross-On-Wye
Grid reference:	SO538159, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 162 SO536076, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 162 SO535081, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 162 SO545163, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 162 SO556157, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 162
Area:	82.39 hectares (203.59 acres) 111.11 hectares (274.56 acres) 23.34 hectares (57.67 acres) 1.95 hectares (4.82 acres) 5.51 hectares (13.62 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Planted Ancient Woodland Site, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Site of Special Scientific Interest Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Part of the Wye Valley Woods, Little Doward is a large 82-hectare mixed broadleaved and conifer ancient woodland. It has numerous veteran oak and beech trees and forms part of the Wye Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Upper Wye Gorge Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The site also contains a Scheduled Monument Bronze Age hill fort - Little Doward Camp, which crowns the wood and provides spectacular views across the Wye Valley. There are lots of paths to explore and an amazing array of cliffs, caves and stone walls, that were also part of a huge 19th Century estate.

Greater and lesser horseshoe bats roost in its limestone caves, and see if you can spot the nationally rare whitebeam tree growing on the rocky outcrops.

PLEASE NOTE: We are upgrading the car park at Little Doward Wood. During this time the car park will be closed. We aim for the work to be completed and the car park to be open again by the end of March.

Please follow all safety signage while the work is taking place. Thank you for your understanding.

2.2 Extended Description

The Woodland Trust's 'Wye Valley Woods' are made up of five separate sites forming part of the wider wooded landscape of the Wye Valley considered one of the most important areas for woodland conservation in Britain and comparable with the Caledonian pinewoods, the oceanic oakwoods of Western Britain, the New Forest and the mixed coppices of East Anglia. The sites all lie within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and form part of the Forest of Dean and Lower Wye National Character Area (NCA) 105. Within this area, the limestone woodlands are renowned as a refuge of rare species and form part of one of the largest remaining areas of ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland in the country. As a predominantly wooded and riverine environment, the Wye Valley has a greater combination of ancient and natural features than virtually all the other AONBs and National Parks in the UK.

Much of the woodland owned by The Woodland Trust forms part of the Wye Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated for it internationally important, rare and outstanding woodland habitat representative of the western range of Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests, the most extensive examples of Tilio-Acerion forest in the west of its range, and of yew *Taxus baccata* woods in the south-west of its range. A large area of woodland has been designated one of two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) present, notified for their important outstanding woodland habitat. The sites are testament to the long association with human intervention containing 2 scheduled monuments - an Iron Age Hill fort and parts of Offa's Dyke, remnants of the areas important industrial heritage associated with cooper, tin and iron extraction, as well as later developments focusing on the developing tourism industry. There are also four Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) and two long distance trails - The Offa's Dyke Way National Trail and The Wye Valley

Trail.

The Wye Valley Woods management plan is composed of the following areas -

Little Doward (compartments 1- 9) is a 82-hectare mixed broadleaved and conifer woodland which includes areas of ancient semi-natural woodland (cpt 7a) and numerous veteran trees within semi-natural open structured secondary woodland, both of which form part of the Wye Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Upper Wye Gorge Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site also contains a Scheduled Monument Bronze Age hill fort - Little Doward Camp, which crowns the wood and provides spectacular views across the Wye Valley, as well as four Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) composed of limestone cliffs and caves. There are small areas of rare calcareous grassland associated with some of the limestone outcrops on the southern slopes which also support rare sorbus trees. The site's diverse geology and historical management have led to a wide range of woodland and habitat types with associated species, some possibly unique to Little Doward. The Site also contains stretches of the Wye Valley Way, a long distance trail between Chepstow and the source of the River Wye in the Welsh mountains.

Quarry Wood (compartment 10) lying approximately 300m to the east of Little Doward is a 2-hectare semi-natural oak, beech and ash secondary woodland overlooking the hamlet of Little Doward. It occupies relatively steep slopes with flatter ground to the south of a small former quarry.

Symonds Yat West (compartments 11-14) is a 6-hectare predominantly beech, yew, oak and ash ancient semi-natural woodland which also forms part of the Wye Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Upper Wye Gorge Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site is in a prominent position, visible from the heavily visited viewpoint at Symonds Yat rock across the other side of the Wye and forming a wooded backdrop to the village of Symonds Yat West. Past mining activities, primarily related to the extraction of limestone and ironstone dating from the 18th to 19th centuries are evident at the site including circular mine shafts, irregular pits and remains of a limekiln.

Highbury Fields (compartment 15) consists of ten former farm fields over an area of 23 hectares, now supporting unimproved, semi-improved grassland and areas of scrub, transitional woodland habitat, mature hedgerows and woody banks (lining Coxbury Lane), all of which serve to connect Cadora Woods in the west to the adjacent Highbury Wood National Nature Reserve (NNR) in the east.

Cadora Woods (compartments 16-21) is a 111-hectare site, itself incorporating Causeway Grove (cpt 16a) to the north an area of semi-natural broadleaved woodland but classified as a Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS), Cadora (cpts 16b-18), a large area of even-aged mostly Douglas fir conifer plantation also classified as PAWS, and Bigsweir Woods (compartments 19-21) to the south, a mixed oak, beech and lime woodland forming part of the Wye Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the majority of Bigsweir Woods SSSI. Combined, Cadora Woods occupy a 3.75km stretch of the steeply west-facing slopes of the Wye Valley between Bigsweir Bridge and the village of Redbrook, bounded to the west by the A466 and the flood plain of the River Wye. The site is particularly rich in notable old trees, including ancient small-leaved lime pollards, which are thought to be derived from the original 'natural woodland'. Sections of the Schedule Monument Offa's Dyke also fall within the site as does parts of the Offa's Dyke National Trail.

Combined the sites' outstanding woodland habitat supports a high-range of notable species of flora and fauna including nationally rare whitebeam, rare small and large leaved lime, both Greater and Lesser horseshoe bats, dormice, and a number of Schedule 1 birds and raptors.

Across each site an extensive network of tracks, paths and rides enable open public access that connects with local public rights of way, including the mentioned The Wye Valley Trail long distance trail and The Offa's Dyke national trail as well as the public rights of way network that criss-crosses throughout all areas of the holding.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

By Bus:

Little Doward, Quarry Wood and Symonds Yat West can be reached via the Monmouth to Ross-on-Wye 34 bus service which stops at Crockers Ash (Little Doward and Quarry Wood) and Whitechurch (Symonds Yat West) and runs 2 hourly Mon-Sat. Highbury Fields and Cadora Woods can be reached by the Monmouth to Chepstow 69 bus service which stops at the village of Redbrook and at Bigsweir Bridge. The bus runs 2 hourly Mon-Sat with a reduced service on Sundays between 11.15am and 5.15pm.

By Car:

There is a small Woodland Trust car park at the entrance to Little Doward a short distance to the south of Crockers Ash near to Ganarew Cross and next to the Wyastone Leys Estate entrance. There is a larger Woodland Trust car park for Cadora Woods and Highbury Fields at the southern end of Cadora (Bigsweir) off the minor road leading to Mork from the A466, and a smaller area further to the north towards Redbrook directly off the A466. There is no formal car parking for Quarry Wood or Symonds Yat West.

In addition, there is a Forestry Commission car park just past the Doward Camp Site and close to King Arthur's Cave. Little Doward can be reached from the car park via public and permissive footpaths, which are moderately steep and uneven in places, but level for the most part. Car parking is also available in the village of Redbrook not far away from the northern end of Cadora and Highbury Fields which can be reached via Coxbury Lane a public byway.

By train:

The nearest railway station is at Chepstow, which is about 10 miles (16km) to the south of Cadora Woods. For further information contact Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit traveline.org.uk

Access:

At Little Doward and Cadora, there are a number of well made forestry tracks, relatively even for the most part although moderately steep in places. In addition to these and for the majority of Symonds Yat and Quarry Wood, there is a network of minor narrow pedestrian paths/tracks, often steep in places, muddy and likely unsurfaced. There are particularly steep areas at Symonds Yat, Little Doward and Cadora. During periods of work some tracks may be closed to the public and for some time afterwards may be rutted and muddy or difficult to use due to the presence of un-cleared branches etc. Notably for Symonds Yat and Little Doward it is dangerous to stray off the paths due to the presence of numerous mine shafts and quarries, some of these have been fenced off, but other depressions may be much deeper than they look. Also, some of the sites contain or border steep cliffs which are usually unfenced. Care should also be taken exiting paths from Cadora onto the A466, as there is no path or hard shoulder along this stretch of busy road; these paths are thus likely unsuitable for dog walking. At Highbury fields there is a good access track (Coxbury Land) through the middle of the holding accessible at Redbrook. This affords access into the adjacent open fields owned by WT. Please note grazing sheep may be present so please keep dogs under close control. Offa's Dyke National Trail skirts the eastern boundary of Cadora Woods and enters the wood further south and The Wye Valley Way Long distance trail incorporates a section of the southern boundary of Little Doward following the course of the river Wye.

The nearest public toilets are in Monmouth, close to the old bridge and behind Agincourt Square

3.2 Access / Walks

At Little Doward and Cadora, there are a number of well made forestry tracks, relatively even for the most part although moderately steep in places. In addition to these and for the majority of Symonds Yat and Quarry Wood, there is a network of minor narrow pedestrian paths/tracks, often steep in places, muddy and likely unsurfaced. There are particularly steep areas at Symonds Yat, Little Doward and Cadora. During periods of work some tracks may be closed to the public and for some time afterwards may be rutted and muddy or difficult to use due to the presence of un-cleared branches etc. Notably for Symonds Yat and Little Doward it is dangerous to stray off the paths due to the presence of numerous mine shafts and quarries, some of these have been fenced off, but other depressions may be much deeper than they look. Also, some of the sites contain or border steep cliffs which are usually unfenced. Care should also be taken exiting paths from Cadora onto the A466, as there is no path or hard shoulder along this stretch of busy road; these paths are thus likely unsuitable for dog walking. At Highbury fields there is a good access track (Coxbury Land) through the middle of the holding accessible at Redbrook. This affords access into the adjacent open fields owned by WT. Please note grazing sheep may be present so please keep dogs under close control. Offa's Dyke National Trail skirts the eastern boundary of Cadora Woods and enters the wood further south and The Wye Valley Way Long distance trail incorporates a section of the southern boundary of Little Doward following the course of the river Wye.

The nearest public toilets are in Monmouth, close to the old bridge and behind Agincourt Square

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

In fifty years-

Ancient Woodland Site:

All areas of Plantation on Ancient Woodland (PAWS) will have been restored through a gradual restoration approach to a predominantly broadleaved composition, although mature specimens of conifer will be retained up to 20% of the canopy spread out across the area. The PAWS area at Cadora Woods will be a successful and well known demonstration site promoting the Woodland Trust's gradual restoration process. PAWS and ASNW areas will be managed seamlessly through a Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) approach utilising regular selective thinning interventions to create and maintain an irregular woodland structure with a diverse range of predominantly native broadleaved species supporting the highest levels of biodiversity. All of the SSSI areas will be in favourable condition. Sustainable deer populations will be maintained at levels enabling natural regeneration processes to occur unimpeded by browsing. Open space will be created and maintained through a network of rides and small glades promoting transitional woodland habitat and associated species. Existing and future veteran trees will be protected and actively managed for as part of the adopted silvicultural strategy, using halo and selective thinning as appropriate.

Secondary Woodland:

Areas of secondary woodland will be managed seamlessly with areas of ASNW and PAWS across the complex through a Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) approach utilising regular selective thinning interventions to create and maintain an irregular woodland structure with a diverse range of predominantly native broadleaved species supporting the highest levels of biodiversity. All of the SSSI areas will be in favourable condition. Sustainable deer populations will be maintained at levels enabling natural regeneration processes to occur unimpeded by browsing. Open space will be created and maintained through a network of rides and small glades promoting transitional woodland habitat and associated species. Existing (notably at Little Doward) and future veteran trees, rare sorbus trees and patches of limestone grassland associated with rocky limestone outcrops will be protected and actively managed for as part of the adopted silvicultural strategy, using halo, selective thinning/felling and coppicing as well as scrub removal as appropriate.

Historical Features:

All scheduled monuments covered by the Wye Valley Woods management plan will be considered at low risk by Historic England. All works to protect and enhance the related scheduled monuments will have been identified and where appropriate carried out to secure these locally, nationally and internationally important features for future generations. The scheduled monuments will be presented in a way to enable understanding and interpretation of their context within their current and past wider landscape setting. All other non-designated historic features will have been identified, mapped and where possible and practicable protected from further deterioration. The ER in the landscape will be retained as long as practical, but is likely to disappear in the long-term.

Mixed Mosaic Habitat:

The areas of mixed mosaic habitat will be managed to provide a range of mixed and interacting niche habitats enhancing woodland connectivity while safeguarding specialist open habitat flora and fauna. This patchwork of 'ecotones' will form a shifting and dynamic mosaic that changes its boundaries, composition and structure over time as part of the natural succession process, but one continually maintained through a combination of grazing and scrub clearance to represent the full range of habitat type supporting all associated species, notably those that are rare or particularly

distinct to the local area.

Connecting People:

The Welcoming Site Programme will lead to a series of lasting upgrades that will improve the visitor experience and will likely increase the number and range of visitors to this complex of outstanding woodland. An attractive and serviceable network of car parks tracks and paths will further encourage the appreciation of the woodland complex both on the site and in the locality. The complex of sites will be managed to meet the required high standards of the Welcoming Site Programme and will provide a clear welcome, well-maintained car parks, entrances, access furniture, signs and other infrastructure as well as sustainable path and track surfaces across the variable ground conditions. Access will better facilitate use by a wider range of visitors potentially including those with mobility constraints and/or those with young children using off road pushchairs. Paths will also continue to provide more abled-bodied visitors with access to the wider and wilder areas of the wood. Interpretation will bring the sites together and promotes the interests and key features of the complex as a whole and in context with the wider local landscape. An engagement plan will set out a developed programme of engagement activities and events further enhancing people's visit to the site. The site will be a truly valued resource in the local community and well respected.

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 Ancient Woodland Site

Description

Ancient woodland is located across several holdings within the Wye Valley Woods complex. It incorporates the majority of woodland at Symonds Yat (West) (cpt 11 and 14c), a relatively small part of Little Doward on its south-eastern border (cpt 7a), and the southern end of Cadora Woods (cpts 19). All of the ancient woodland above forms part of the Wye Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (either part of 'The Upper Wye Gorge' or Bigsweir SSSI). Both SAC and SSSI designations expand beyond the ASNW at Symonds Yat (to include cpts 12 and 13) and at Little Doward (to include cpt 8). In addition to the area of ancient woodland at Cadora (cpt19), with the exception of a few small areas, almost all of the remaining area at Cadora is a plantation on ancient woodland (PAWS) (cpt 16).

Ancient woodland (ASNW):

Symonds Yat (West) (Cpt11)

Ancient woodland at Symonds Yat (West) is characteristic of lowland beech and yew woodland (W12 NVC type). The central body of the woodland is dominated by an even aged canopy of mature beech over mature coppice interspersed with occasional mature ash and oak. At the edges a younger and more diverse canopy dominated by ash, oak, beech, wild cherry, silver birch and wild-service tree exists. The shrub layer is often sparse (holly, hazel, hawthorn, privet, field maple) but yew is frequent. Much of the ground is bare (especially beneath beech stands) but bluebell, ivy, dog's mercury and bramble are each locally frequent. Other occasional species include lords-and-ladies, clematis and hart's-tongue fern. Deadwood is particularly abundant (mostly small diameter, fallen).

Little Doward (cpt 7)

Here the ancient woodland comprises mixed broadleaves standards (ash, oak, birch) and understory (hazel and field maple) with numerous mature coppice stools (ash, oak, birch, sweet chestnut) on calcareous soils, likely NVC type W8. Ash poles are abundant and locally dominant. The south-eastern corner of the site is a mature high forest stand dominated by beech (W12).

Cadora (cpt 19)

This area forms almost the complete area of the Bigsweir Woods SSSI; it is made up predominantly of NVC type W10 with some areas of W8. Sessile oak is dominant, but with other species present such as small-leaved lime and beech; silver birch and wild cherry are locally frequent. The shrub layer is variable comprising mainly hazel, holly and young beech, sycamore, small-leaved lime and sessile oak. Large areas of field layer are dominated by bramble with extensive areas of bluebell carpets. Other frequent species include bracken, male fern, honeysuckle, ivy, great wood-rush, lady-fern, wood sorrel, broad buckler-fern, hard fern and wood millet.

Plantation on Ancient Woodland (PAWS)

Cadora (cpt 16)

This is a large contiguous block of predominantly even-aged conifer plantation mostly comprising Douglas fir but with some areas of Japanese larch, Norway spruce and western red cedar. In addition to the conifers, there are also small areas of beech plantation (notably within 16h and 16j) and pockets of well-developed and regenerating broadleaves (ash, sycamore, oak, beech and hazel). Throughout the site, there are a number of important and spectacular mature/veteran broadleaved trees - remnants of the former ancient woodland - scattered throughout the plantation. These consist of mainly large oaks with several mature/veteran yews and a high number of small leaved lime and ash pollards all of which have a very high biodiversity value providing niche habitat for a large number of species. The remaining broadleaved trees usually support 'hotspots' of woodland specialist ground flora. Small areas of broadleaved natural regeneration also occur (particularly on rocky areas, along rides and along internal boundary walls) where small-leaved lime understory is frequent. Where oak is dominant these areas correspond to the W10 NVC community. For the most part deadwood is sparse when compared to the ASNW to the south. Further areas of semi-natural woodland, classified as PAWS are concentrated at Causeway Grove (cpt 16a) and a linear strip along the banks of Coxbury Lane (running in-between cpts 15c-f and 15a,b. and 15g-j). The former generally comprising tall (often formerly coppiced) ash, wild cherry, small-leaved lime (including many notable pollards) and/or sycamore (each locally dominant) with locally frequent beech and scattered silver birch and sessile and pedunculate oaks and with a sometimes dense shrub layer comprising mainly hazel with holly, field maple, hawthorn and wych elm.

Throughout the site, the field layer is relatively species-rich with locally abundant dog's mercury, ferns (particularly hart's-tongue fern and soft-shield fern), bluebell and/or ramsons. Bramble is locally abundant, particularly where the canopy has been opened as part of the PAWS restoration strategy. Small areas dominated by beech with sparse shrub/field layers are likely representative of W14 woodland.

Species of note include dormice (records at Symonds Yat (West) and Cadora, bats (records for Little Doward and Cadora)- notably of Lesser Horseshoe and Greater Horseshoe, breeding schedule 1 birds, woodland flora including rare Tintern spurge at Cadora, rare sorbus enimens at Little Doward, as well as a range of birds (including raven, pied flycatcher, spotted flycatcher, song thrush, bullfinch, all three woodpecker species), butterflies (pearl bordered fritillary, wood white, white admiral) and bryophytes.

Historic management

Previous management of ASNW under the Woodland Trust across these holdings has either been to leave areas as non-intervention or focus on opening up the canopy through light thinning and attempting to re-instigate coppicing regimes. The latter was attempted at Symonds Yat (West) during 1988 (but reportedly failed due to heavy deer browsing and lack of vigour in the beech coppice stools), more recently in 2004 some coppicing and light selective thinning took place at Cadora (Causeway Grove cpt 16a). Thinning work has historically taken place at Cadora (Bigswear - cpt 19) although records are patchy; there is no record of thinning or coppicing for ancient woodland at Little Doward (cpt 7a).

Concerning the area of PAWS at Cadora (cpt 16), several selective thinning interventions have taken place since 2000 with aim to gradually open up the canopy and promote broadleaved natural regeneration as per the Woodland Trust's gradual restoration approach. Much of this has tended to focus on the easier to reach areas notably by the track edges where extraction is not complicated.

The result is prolific growth of young broadleaves along many of the lower track edges, however further up the slopes many of the stands still remain monocultures of Douglas fir. In some areas, notably cpt 16d, due to the difficulty of extraction and likely windthrow risk presented to road user, larger areas have been cleared in strips and restocked directly with broadleaved trees. Restocking has tended to be at a low density and will likely take a long time to form any type of canopy.

Some areas of track have been upgraded to enable lorry access at the bottom of the slopes, although this remains the only stacking and transportation area for the whole site other than potential use of the created track joining Bigsweir wood (cpt 19) and the car park at the southern end.

There are a number of deer enclosures at Cadora (Bigsweir) in cpt 19 presumably to monitor the impact of deer on natural regeneration. For the most part there is significant regeneration in this area. This is notably lacking at Symonds Yat, and Little Doward. For the remainder of Cadora much under canopy is smothered by bramble which is likely to require targetted removal to enable future regeneration.

Ride management has been historically carried out at Cadora (cpt 16 and 19) although only on a limited basis. Control of invasive species namely Buddleia and Himalayan balsam at Cadora has been implemented but to date has not prevent the latter from spreading which is now spreading further up the slopes.

Significance

Ancient woodland within the Wye Valley is of national and international importance due to its SAC and SSSI designations for rare woodland habitat types and associated species and should be considered part of one of the most important areas of woodland habitat in the UK.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

- Instigate holistic management strategy through grouping management plans and focusing on landscape scale change
- Develop across site harvesting strategy to diversify stand structures
- Commission bat surveys across holding to better understand connectivity of habitat notably Natural England's Highbury Wood (NNR) and Forestry Commission's holding at Lord's Wood and beyond as well as identify maternity roosts noting high potential in mine shafts at Symonds Yat.
- Initiate landscape scale deer and boar management working with neighbours to carry out collaborative culls

Constraints

- Access difficult in many areas limiting potential harvesting activities (notably Symonds Yat West, areas of Cadora and Little Doward) in addition to areas of scheduled monuments and historical features
- Windthrow risk at Cadora is significant with adjacent busy road likely to affect silvicultural options
- Deer population currently too high notably at Little Doward limiting silvicultural options

Factors Causing Change

- Deer browsing
- Increase and spread of wild boar and unknown consequences (currently evidence at Cadora and Highbury fields)
- Squirrel damage (more during later phases of restoration conversion)
- Wind throw
- Increase of invasive species notably Himalayan balsam, Buddleia

Long term Objective (50 years+)

All areas of Plantation on Ancient Woodland (PAWS) will have been restored through a gradual restoration approach to a predominantly broadleaved composition, although mature specimens of conifer will be retained up to 20% of the canopy spread out across the area. The PAWS area at Cadora Woods will be a successful and well known demonstration site promoting the Woodland Trust's Gradual Restoration Process. PAWS and ASNW areas will be managed seamlessly through a Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) approach utilising regular selective thinning interventions to create and maintain an irregular woodland structure with a diverse range of predominantly native broadleaved species supporting the highest levels of biodiversity. All of the SSSI areas will be in favourable condition. Sustainable deer populations will be maintained at levels enabling natural regeneration processes to occur unimpeded by browsing. Open space will be created and maintained through a network of rides and small glades promoting transitional woodland habitat and associated species. Existing veteran trees and future veterans of the future will be protected and actively managed for as part of the adopted silvicultural strategy, using halo and selective thinning as appropriate.

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

As part of holistic silvicultural strategy maintain PAWS restoration programme at Cadora (cpt 16) using gradual approach to move composition towards a predominantly broadleaved composition, selectively thinning stands by removing approximately 20% basal area every 5 years, promoting existing broadleaved trees and remnant feature including veteran trees. For some areas larger scale selection felling may have to take place due to the limitations of windthrow and risk presented to the adjacent A road.

As part of a regular thinning programme, selectively thin/coppice ASNW SSSI/SAC areas removing approximately 20% basal area to open canopy, create more light reaching the ground, diversify stand structure and provide natural regeneration opportunities - subcompartments: Little Doward (7a) , Symonds Yat (West) (11a-c, 12a-c)

Actively protect existing veteran and/or feature trees, veteran trees of the future, and rare sorbus trees by halo thinning around suppressed/threatened trees as part of the above process through selective thinning as well as outside thinning zones in the case of sorbus (Little Doward - cpt.7a, Symonds Yat (West) cpt 11a-c, Cadora cpt 16, 19a-c)

Upgrade track network at Cadora (cpt 16 and 19) to better enable harvesting activities and protect from future undermining by standing water where relevant, and increase levels of maintenance programme including scraping off vegetation where lorry access is required.

Deer and pest management

Maintain deer management across all ANSW and PAWS areas working with the Deer Initiative to co-ordinate activity and seek out opportunity for potential collaboration with neighbours and other landowners

Develop deer management plan and maintain deer impact assessments for specific woodland areas

Clear around existing deer exclosures at Cadora 19a, 19c and maintain to ensure are stock proof
Create/maintain small deer exclosures at Symonds Yat West in cpt 11, Cadora in cpt 16 and Little Doward cpt 7a.

Maintain boar management in Cadora and monitor impact potentially widening management to other areas where required.

Increase management intensity of invasive species Himalayan balsam and buddleia at Cadora (16f, g and j) with a view to eradicate both from the holding within the plan period.

Maintain and expand 2 zone- ride management at Cadora (cpt 16 and 19) to promote transitional woodland edge habitat and permanent open space. Create and maintain a 2 zone ride network in Symonds Yat West cpt 11 and Little Doward cpt 7a.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

Secondary woodland is located across several holdings within the Wye Valley Woods complex. It incorporates most of Little Doward (cpts 1-6a, 6c, 8 and 9), all of Quarry Wood (cpt 10), areas at Symonds Yat West (12, 13 14a and 14b) and small plantations areas at Cadora (15c, 17 and 18). As with ancient woodland much is also designated SAC and SSSI for its important woodland habitat. Notably, this concerns Little Doward (cpts 2 and 8) and Symonds Yat West cpts (12a-c, and 13). The term secondary woodland refers to non-ancient woodland but doesn't necessarily mean an absence of veteran and/or semi natural features. Much of the secondary woodland present here contains very important semi-natural woodland habitat (as demonstrated by their inclusion with the designated areas) but either because it has been previously cleared or was managed in a way resulting in an open woodland structure in the past, these areas have not been included on the Ancient Woodland Inventory.

Little Doward: (cpts 1-6, 8 and 9)

Much of the site is secondary woodland but is also designated a SSSI and or SAC for its woodland habitat (cpts 2 and 8). Within these areas is to be found outstanding woodland habitat and that it isn't ancient should not detract from its value. Of note are what has been referred to as limestone rock woodland (cpt 8 supporting very rare sorbus species but largely dominated by beech and a former deer park which was a grazed common before enclosure in the 19th century. Limestone cliffs and outcrops cut across the southern slopes in two belts. These areas of exposed rock and thin base-rich soils support mainly broken canopied beech woodland (with locally co-dominant sessile oak) and scattered field maple, ash, yew, holly, whitebeams (including *Sorbus eminens* and *S. porrigentiformis*), wych elm, large-leaved lime and wild service-tree. Very locally, fern and/or lichen dominated communities also occur on the limestone outcrops. Four lobed maidenhair spleenworts (Nationally Rare) are present on the cliff above Dennis Grove. There are many large open grown veteran and mature trees which is rare in the area given its history of intensive coppicing for charcoal production. Mixed conifer plantation (Douglas Fir, Larch, Scots Pine) dating from the 1950s dominates the south-western lower slopes much of which is SSSI/SAC. Elsewhere (cpts 1,2,3,4, and most of 6 is made up of mixed broadleaved (beech, sweet chestnut, ash and conifer (Douglas fir, larch, sitka spruce) woodland. Much of the later is on sandstone or conglomerate (in the west) while the higher biodiversity areas are located over limestone further east and south.

Quarry Wood (cpt 10)

Mature beech and pedunculate oak with frequent semi-mature and younger ash and wild cherry. There is a moderately dense shrub layer comprising hazel, holly, field maple and spindle with locally frequent yew. Naturally regenerating ash is present beneath canopy gaps and within the quarry but is declining. The wood most closely resembles NVC type W8.

Symonds Yat West (cpt 12-14)

Areas of secondary woodland designated as SSSI and SAC are 12a, 12b, 12c is SAC only, 13a and 13b. For the most part these areas are very similar to the ASNW areas and most closely resemble NVC type W12 other than 13a/b which contains significant areas of quarries and cliffs likely to support rare grassland and sorbus as Little Doward.

Cadora (cpt 15c, 17 and 18).

At Cadora, cpt 15c is a young plantation of mixed broadleaved trees planted in the early 2000s. Cpts

17 and 18 are predominantly larch plantations that have developed semi natural vegetation.

History of management

Much of south and west side of Little Doward had formed an open woodland structure with scattered veteran trees being grazed as common land and later following enclosure, as a Victorian ornamental deer park. However since WWII this area has developed a natural high-forest structure supplemented through with partial coniferisation during the 1950s which included planting the previously open hillfort, as well as the Coronation Grove, a celebration of Queen Elizabeth's coronation in the shape of an 'ER' visible in the landscape. In 1991 the site transferred to the Woodland Trust and objectives were to remove the plantation from the hillfort area and to introduce grazing. Elsewhere the secondary woodland seems to have been considered a lower priority and has largely been non-intervention, although there have been attempts to create a 2-zone ride either side of the main track in cpts 1, 2, and 8. Additional work to ensure sufficient light availability for rare sorbus trees and pockets of limestone grassland over the associated rocky outcrops, have been carried out by halo thinning and small scale scrub removal.

At Symonds Yat, while much of the woodland would have been managed as beech coppice at some stage in the past, secondary woodland areas have remained largely non-intervention.

At Cadora, the areas of larch have likely been low on the list of priorities as the area is technically PAWS and due to a boundary wall between the main track and the small areas of plantation have been left unmanaged. The young area of plantation has been un-thinned since planting.

Significance

Areas of secondary within the Wye Valley is of national and international importance due to its SAC and SSSI designations for rare woodland habitat types and associated species and should be considered part of one of the most important areas of woodland habitat in the UK. Secondary woodland, particularly that un-designated has an additional role to support wider habitat connectivity between areas of ancient woodland and area of high conservation value. Notably this includes converting areas of coniferous monoculture to a predominantly broadleaved habitat that better supports the associated habitats and species of the SSSI and SAC designated areas.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

- Instigate holistic management strategy through grouping management plans and focusing on landscape scale change
- Develop across site harvesting strategy to diversify stand structures
- Commission bat surveys across holding to better understand connectivity of habitat notably Natural England's Highbury Wood (NNR) and Forestry Commission's holding at Lord's Wood and beyond as well as identify maternity roosts noting high potential in mine shafts at Symonds Yat.
- Initiate landscape scale deer and boar management working with neighbours to carry out collaborative culls

Constraints

- Access difficult in many areas limiting potential harvesting activities (notably Symonds Yat West, areas of Cadora and Little Doward) in addition to areas of scheduled monuments and historical features
- Windthrow risk at Cadora is significant with adjacent busy road likely to affect silvicultural options
- Deer population currently too high notably at Little Doward limiting silvicultural options
- Retaining the planted ER in the landscape limits long-term silvicultural strategy

Factors Causing Change

- Deer browsing
- Increase and spread of wild boar and unknown consequences (currently evidence at Cadora and Highbury fields)
- Squirrel damage (more during later phases of restoration conversion)
- Wind throw
- Increase of invasive species notably Himalayan balsam, Buddleia

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Areas of secondary woodland will be managed seamlessly with areas of ASNW and PAWS through a Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) approach utilising regular selective thinning interventions to create and maintain an irregular woodland structure with a diverse range of predominantly native broadleaved species supporting the highest levels of biodiversity. All of the SSSI areas will be in favourable condition. Sustainable deer populations will be maintained at levels enabling natural regeneration processes to occur unimpeded by browsing. Open space will be created and maintained through a network of rides and small glades promoting transitional woodland habitat and associated species. Existing (notably at Little Doward) and future veterans, rare sorbus trees and patches of limestone grassland associated with rocky limestone outcrops will be protected and actively managed for as part of the adopted silvicultural strategy, using halo, selective thinning/felling and coppicing as well as scrub removal as appropriate.

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

Selectively thin/fell/coppice SSSI/SAC areas removing approximately 20% basal area to open canopy, create more light reaching the ground, diversify stand structure and provide natural regeneration opportunities, targeting predominantly conifer species for removal but including broadleaved species notably thinning dense areas of younger beech and/or sweet chestnut: Little Doward (2a-d, 8f, 8g)

Selectively thin/fell non-designated conifer dominated/monoculture areas, removing approximately 20% basal area to open canopy, create more light reaching the ground, promoting gradual

conversion to broadleaved composition to support habitat connectivity of SSSI/SAC and/or ASNW/PAWS areas: Little Doward cpt 9c,9e,9f, 9g, 5a, 6a, 6c, Cadora cpt 17 and 18

Selectively thin non-designated predominantly broadleaved areas, removing approximately 20% basal area to open canopy, create more light reaching the ground, diversify stand structure and provide natural regeneration opportunities to support habitat connectivity of SSSI/SAC and/or ASNW/PAWS areas: Little Doward cpt (1a, 1b, 3a,3b, 4a, 9a, 9b, 9d, Quarry wood (cpt 10a), Symonds Yat 12a, 12b, 13b.

Actively protect existing veteran and/or feature trees, veteran trees of the future, rare sorbus trees by halo thinning around suppressed/threatened trees as part of the above process through selective thinning/felling/coppicing as well as outside thinning zones in the case of sorbus (Little Doward - all, Symonds Yat 12a, 12b,13b)

Carry out scrub management to promote and maintain areas of rare limestone grassland associated with rocky outcrops (Little Doward cpt 8; Symonds Yat cpt 13).

Remove redundant fencing where appropriate to facilitate access and aesthetics of the site (Little Doward cpt 8)

Upgrade track network (Little Doward (cpt 2c) to better enable harvesting activities and protect from future undermining by standing water where relevant, and increase levels of maintenance programme including scraping off vegetation where lorry access is required.

Deer and Pest management

Maintain deer management across all secondary woodland areas as with AWS site key feature working with the Deer Initiative to co-ordinate activity

Develop deer management plan and maintain deer impact assessments for specific woods

Develop potential collaborative approach with adjacent landowners/neighbours

Create temporary deer enclosure at Little Doward cpt 8f, 8g, 9e, 9f, 9g) to exclude deer and ensure natural regeneration, repairing existing fence and maintaining as required

Maintain option to manage boar if become present on secondary woodland areas

Increase management intensity of invasive species Himalayan balsam and buddleia at Little Doward (8e) with a view to eradicate both from the holding within the plan period.

Maintain and expand 2 zone- ride management at Little Doward (cpt 1, 2, and 9) to promote transitional woodland edge habitat and permanent open space

As per Natural England's instructions ensure livestock are excluded from SSSI/SAC areas at Little Doward (cpt 2, 7 and 8) to ensure natural regeneration processes and meet requirement of favourable condition for SSSI. Remove livestock holding pen in cpt 8g from the SSSI area.

5.3 Historic Features

Description

The Wye Valley Woods contain a long history of human interaction much of which is still evident today.

Little Doward Camp - Scheduled Monument (sub-cpt 6b) dominates the hill top at Little Doward (cpts 1-9) centre. The hill fort is thought to date from the Iron Age (c. 3rd century BC) and consists of an oval enclosure bounded by double embankments and a ditch (single embankment to the south) and with a rectangular annex to the south-east surrounded on all sides by mainly natural cliffs. Within the hill fort there are other archaeological features including a midden, three possible bronze age burial mounds and a number of possible pillow mounds. A conifer plantation planted within the boundary of the hill fort in the 1950s/60s was cleared in 2008 by the Woodland Trust and the area is currently a grassland/scrub mosaic mixed with mature broadleaved trees. Grazing was introduced in 2009 to prohibit the growth of scrub.

Parts of Offa's Dyke, the longest linear earthwork in Britain, pass through the south-eastern parts of Cadora (sub-cpts 16h, 17, 18 and 20. Approximately 220km, in length Offa's Dyke runs from Treuddyn, near Mold, to Sedbury on the Severn estuary. It was constructed towards the end of the eighth century AD by the Mercian king Offa, and is believed to have formed a long-lived territorial, and possibly defensive, boundary between the Saxon kingdom of Mercia and the Welsh kingdoms. In this area, Offa's Dyke generally consists of a bank up to 3.5m high with an intermittent ditch to the west and quarry ditches to the east. In places Offa's Dyke was strengthened by additional earthworks, namely a berm between the bank and ditch, and a counterscarp bank on the western lip of the ditch. There are four separate sections found within the woods; all are scheduled monuments (reference: section 340m SE of Coxbury Farm - 1020482, Section 240m Southwest of Feray Leaze - 102083, Section 470m west of Wyegate barn - 1020484, Section 600m north of Gumberland barn - 1020526). Outside of WT ownership the monument continues north onto land owned by Natural England (Highbury Wood NNR) and south on the other side of the Bigsweir road, believed to be a possible original break in the structure. Previous management has focused on ensuring the integrity of the structure is not further damaged through increased tree and scrub growth.

Across all sites included within the plan, the area's industrial heritage is evident to see. Past mining activities, primarily related to the extraction of limestone and ironstone dating from the 18th to 19th centuries (though the origins may be somewhat earlier), are evident across all sites. Notably at Symonds Yat there are a large number of shallow scoops up to 3m in depth, a series of 3 circular mine shafts, irregular pits which may be the result of collapse into underground workings. Limekilns are present at Little Doward and Symonds Yat. Remains of quarry working workings are evident across all sites notably at Quarry wood and Symonds Yat which contain very steep sheer cliffs; smaller scale quarrying for cider millstones are also evident at Cadora. In addition a liberal distribution of charcoal hearths have been mapped across Cadora as well those appearing less frequently at Little Doward. These would have been created through ongoing coppicing and charcoal production to power the local furnaces.

Non-industrial archaeological features present across the sites include woodland banks, walls and boundary stones marking former enclosure and ownership boundaries. At Little Doward there are the remains of an early-Victorian walled deer park which was accompanied by other landscaping works to create an ornamental park in the 'picturesque' style.

More latterly in the 1950s during partial coniferisation at Little Doward, Coronation Copse was created; a landscape feature visible from the SW of the site and notably the busy A40, made up of planting larch trees in the form of 'ER' to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

Significance

Offa's Dyke and Little Doward Camp are nationally important schedule monuments. The industrial heritage found here is of local, national and potentially international importance given the role the area played in the early stages of the industrial revolution, and at one time being one of the largest areas of production for cooper and tin in the world. The former ornamental and deer park developed in Victorian times is of local historical significance and a good reference of the area's importance in developing tourism in the 18th and 19th century. Other features such as charcoal hearths or woodland banks might be of low significance on their own but as part of a large complex of historical features there are critical in helping us to interpretation human interaction with woodland and landscapes over the centuries.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

- As part of the developing welcoming site programme there may be an opportunity to develop better on site interpretation of historical features.
- Through consultation with Historic England, the planning process will identify works to further protect and enhance importance monuments of local, national and international significance.

Constraints:

- Statutory Monument Consent is required for any works in the scheduled areas.
- Any harvesting works in proximity must be carried out sensitively within or adjacent to the scheduled areas and/or historical features - forestry vehicles must not damage archaeology and so access management is critical.
- Significant health and safety hazards presented by past industrial historical features, namely mine shafts, deep pits and quarries. This also prohibits aspects of woodland management by creating difficult and uneven terrain.

Little Doward Camp:

- cattle grazing is having detrimental effect through poaching and potentially damaging schedule monument
- sheep grazing is unpopular with dog walker
- permanent fencing is undesirable within scheduled monument
- scrub growth on ramparts is undesirable but in practice difficult to manage and maintain
- areas of scheduled monument overlap with SSSI designation for woodland habitat

Offa's Dyke:

- Prohibits further path/track development within scheduled areas
- Requires shading canopying to ensure scrub development is prevented

Factors Causing Change

- Scrub/tree growth on scheduled monuments leading to potential damage to archaeology
- burrowing animals damaging archaeology
- wind blow affecting mature trees on scheduled monuments
- erosion of paths within scheduled monument areas notably those on hill fort ramparts and part of Offa's Dyke
- deterioration as well as tree growth on historic boundary features, enclosure walls and banks leading to long term damage and potentially collapse.
- possible collapse/subsidence of mine shafts

Long term Objective (50 years+)

All scheduled monuments covered by the Wye Valley Woods management plan will be considered at low risk by Historic England. All works to protect and enhance the related scheduled monuments will have been identified and where appropriate carried out to secure these locally, nationally and internationally important features for future generations. The scheduled monuments will be presented in a way to enable understanding and interpretation of their context within the current and past wider landscape setting. All other non-designated historic features will have been identified, mapped and where possible and practicable protected from further deterioration. The ER in the landscape will be retained as long as practical, but is likely to disappear in the long-term.

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

-Any future interpretation strategy developed as part of the Welcoming Site Programme will highlight the significance of the scheduled monuments and where possible other historical features (notably the sites' industrial heritage) within their proper landscape context

-Current mapping of all historical features will be checked to ensure it is up to date and highlighted within future constraints mapping to include : charcoal hearths, mine shafts, quarry pits, external/internal boundary walls, carriage routes, follies etc

-Manage all safety hazards through current site risk assessment procedure ensuring all related elements, notably of industrial past are recorded and monitored and mitigation measures implemented where appropriate.

Little Doward Camp (cpt 6b)

-Cattle grazing of the scheduled monument area will be replaced with either sheep grazing or cutting (depending on practicality of using sheep and finding a local grazier) to prevent any further damage to the archaeology caused by poaching

-Remove all scrub/trees from ramparts other than mature specimens and areas of dense canopy woodland as agreed with Historic advisor to better interpret the structure of the hillfort and protect the archaeology from further damage by roots and potentially burrowing animals

-Introduce 3-year rotational patch work cutting of scrub within inner rampart area (to promote transitional habitat but to avoid further root development and potentially burrowing animals)

-Maintain existing areas of scrub/broadleaved trees as agreed with HE

-Carry out survey of non-scheduled historic features notably all internal and external boundary walls to assess condition and where appropriate remove developing tree growth (mature/veteran trees to be retained where possible) developing a programme for ongoing management.

Offa's Dyke (cpts 16h, 17,18,20)

-Ensure canopy over monument is maintained to prevent further scrub growth

-Remove developing scrub/tree growth where present

-Retain mature tree specimens with agreement with Historic England

5.4 Mixed Habitat Mosaic

Description

While the majority of the management plan area should be considered as high-forest woodland, there are two areas within the holding that make up an important mixed mosaic of habitats:

Little Doward (cpt 6b and 6d)

Much of this area was previously dominated by a conifer plantation (Norway Spruce) dating back to the 1950s. Prior to this the area was likely to be relatively open, probably grazed, woodland common. The plantation was cleared in 2008 by the WT to protect the underlying scheduled monument (see historical features KF). The resultant habitat is a patchwork of mature broadleaved woodland (much of 6d and the edges of 6b notably in the north), bramble/thorn scrub, bracken and grassland. Much of the grassland is currently rather rank and species-poor. Bracken, common nettle and woodland species (eg: dog's mercury) are frequently present and sometimes abundant. However, where rabbit and/or human trampling and/or thin soils have maintained a shorter sward it is more species-rich. The sward is generally dominated by false wood-brome, common bent, sheep's fescue and red fescue with sedges (spring and glaucous), stemless thistle, lady's bedstraw, bird's-foot-trefoil, lesser hawkbit, purging flax, mouse-eared hawkweed, burnet saxifrage, salad burnet, hairy violet, wild thyme, and milkwort. Notable species recorded include limestone bedstraw. On the periphery of the hillfort, associated with the lower lying limestone rock woodland, are a number of notable vascular plant, bryophyte and lichen species associated with the limestone outcrops. Notable vascular plants include the whitebeam *Sorbus eminens* and *S. porrigentiformis*, fingered sedge and *Hutchinsia*, all national scarce. Since the main plantation was felled, much of the area has been managed through light cattle grazing as part of the schedule monument management, often supplemented by annual cutting to prevent mature scrub growth. More direct scrub removal and cutting of trees to promote sorbus and other target species has also occurred.

Highbury fields (Cpts 15a-m)

Previously ten farm fields, this area on the upper slopes of the eastern bank of the Wye Valley covers a mixture of open grassland (15a,b,d, and i-l), transitional scrub woodland habitat (15c-h), a small broadleaved plantation (15e) and an orchard (15m) between the two areas of closed canopy woodland to the east (Cadora Woods) and to the west (Highbury Woods National Nature Reserve (NNR)). The area occupies gently to steeply west-facing slopes on generally well drained (locally poorly drained) neutral to slightly calcareous soils overlying sandstone. Grassland is a mixture of unimproved and semi-improved of varying species-diversity (MG5/6 NVC communities). The woodland succession areas tend to be dominated with abundant creeping thistle, dock and common nettle with dense stands of bracken and bramble scattered scrub, trees and patches of oak, ash and hawthorn scrub woodland. Between the fields are unmanaged hedgerows supporting mature shrubs and trees. Running through the compartment is Coxbury Lane which is bound by banks supporting ancient semi-natural woodland. A large number of notable mature trees, over 170 of which have been individually tagged and including many ancient small-leaved lime pollards, occur both along the banks of Coxbury Lane and the field margins. Previous management has included the planting of broadleaves to create a small area of woodland (Coxbury Grove) at 15e in 2001. In 2013 the whole area (cpt 15) was entered into a Higher Level Scheme of Environmental Stewardship which runs until 2023 with the aim of introducing sheep grassland to the majority of the compartment. However, since this time much of the grassland remains in declining condition and bracken and vigorous weeds tend to dominate several of the woodland succession areas.

Significance

With increasing recognition of the importance of 'ecotones' this dynamic mosaic habitat likely supports a wide range of species, notably birds, butterflies, small mammals and bats as well as vascular plant species and invertebrates. At both areas, the woodland grassland/scrub margin is adjacent to much larger areas of significant woodland and thus provides excellent early transition/succession and open habitats. At Little Doward there are a number of rare sorbus species (*Sorbus eminens* and *S. porrigentiformis*) that are nationally significant; at Highbury fields, several red data book invertebrates have been recorded.

Within the wider Wye Valley context the strong mosaic of these habitats elsewhere ensure the landscape is robust and permeable for many species.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

- Provide better woodland habitat connectivity between Cadora woods and neighbouring Highbury Wood National Nature Reserve
- Ensure survival of rare grassland habitat and species including sorbus associated with rocky outcrops (Little Doward)

Constraint:

- Difficulties associated with finding and retaining grazier
- Difficulties associated with operating grazing in areas with dog walkers, public access etc.
- Scheduled Monument areas at Little Doward, need to protect archaeology from damage (potential poaching and difficulty in erecting fencing and graxing infrastructure) and to ensure all works covered by Statutory Monument Consent
- SSSI designation on some areas at Little Doward and need to obtain Natural England's consent for management
- HLS agreement include number of prescriptions for cpt 15.
- Difficulty in practicalities of managing rare grassland on rocky outcrops

Factors Causing Change

- Lack of grazing
- Development/dominance of invasive weed species such as bracken, thistle
- Deer browsing
- Boar damage
- Scrub/tree growth

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The areas of mixed mosaic habitat will be managed to provide a range of mixed and interacting niche habitats enhancing woodland connectivity while safeguarding specialist open habitat flora and fauna. This patchwork of 'ecotones' will form a shifting and dynamic mosaic that changes its boundaries, composition and structure over time as part of the natural succession process, but one continually maintained through a combination of grazing and scrub clearance to represent the full range of habitat type supporting all associated species, notably those that are rare or particularly distinct to the local area.

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

- Introduce sheep grazing at Highbury Fields (cpt 15a,b,h-m) as per the HLS agreement to create and maintain a diverse sward height while retaining 10% to co-exist notably at the woodland edges to provide transitional habitat.
- All natural woodland succession processes to occur at Highbury Fields (cpt c-e and f-h) to create an important woodland transitional habitat between Cadora Woods and Highbury Wood NNR. This may be periodically grazed lightly in summer but in order to protect developing natural regeneration temporary fencing should be used to exclude livestock where appropriate.
- Ensure management at Highbury Fields is compliant with HLS agreement options
- Ensure hedge management is carried out according to the HLS agreement requirements
- Ensure areas of rare grassland and sorbus trees at Little Doward are protected through a programme of scrub removal, tree cutting where appropriate - commission mapping survey to record areas of significance
- Develop and maintain programme of annual patchwork cutting of interior of hill fort at Little Doward to promote development of large areas of temporary scrub habitat to be cleared at a maximum of 3 years growth (in order to protect the scheduled monument from further root development or burrowing animals). This may be supplemented with grazing where appropriate.

5.5 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

Access/infrastructure

The Wye Valley Woods complex is served by 3 car parks which are likely the gateway entrance points for most visitors. These are located at Little Doward, a small car park to the north of the site just off the A40, and at Cadora Woods (x2), a reasonable sized car park at Bigsweir to the south of the site off a minor road leading from the A466, and a smaller area further north directly off the A466 created primarily for articulated lorry access. In addition to the car parks there are numerous other entrances as follows:

Little Doward: 7 public entrances in total, the most important of these are to the NE of the site, the route joining a track leading from the Forestry Commission's car park at King Arthur's Cave, and the two entrances on the southern edge (East and West) adjacent to the River Wye that form part of the Wye Valley Trail, a long distance trail. There are also local entrances to the east of the site likely used by local visitors on foot, although more recently there have been reports of people parking in this area following upgrades to a private road. All entrances require significant upgrades in terms of signage and access infrastructure as they currently give an unwelcoming impression of neglect and under management. The main car park is not large but with some remedial work parking could be better rationalised to accommodate significantly more parking spaces.

Quarry Wood: 2 public entrances on the eastern edge of the site that run through the wood and link with local PROW. The south end is relatively accessible but with no parking is seldom used. The entrance to the north links with PROW but walkers have to go past an area with aggressive dogs which create a very unwelcoming feel to the route. Current signage requires some further upgrading but remains adequate for this seldom used site.

Symonds Yat West: 5 formal public entrances but in practice 6 which is a management entrance. All are pedestrian only routes and are rather informal as the site boundary is unclear. It is unclear which entry points are used most as the site likely receives few visitors. To the north is a byway with access directly into the woods which is likely used by local visitors living in the cottages adjacent. To the south the site borders with Forestry Commission land which tends to provide better access routes throughout this woodland complex. Signage is present but ownership is very unclear. There is a notable absence of access furniture which often provides key visual guides to access points (gates etc.). The woods feel neglected and unwelcoming.

Highbury Fields: 3 formal entrances which include management gates into grassland areas. All are reached via Coxbury lane (outside of WT ownership) itself a byway running from Redbrook village. While the lane is accessible to pedestrians, the route is usually too muddy for vehicular access and there are no current areas for parking. Signage is present and adequate but will need upgrading in the new branding style as part of the whole site refresh. As the signage is relatively fresh and the access areas clear, the area is generally inviting to people although it is assumed very few people access the site here.

Cadora Woods:

North: There is one main entrance to the top of the woods running off Coxbury Lane; this is the main route from Redbrook village. The entrance is clear and well sign-posted but requires an upgrade and refreshing. More could be made of the potential parking in this area although investigation would

need to take place over ownership boundaries given access is via a public byway.

Middle: There are 6 entrances including the main management entrance/car park directly off the A466. Other than this all are small pedestrian entrances linked to PROW. All entrances are generally in very poor condition, notably those to the east either lacking completely in any signage or requiring immediate upgrades. The car park is serviceable but could do with refreshing of signage and upgraded access.

South (Bigsweir) 7 entrances including the main Bigsweir car park entrance which is by far the most used entrance here. Other entrances open out onto the road and to a network of minor tracks east of the site. Some paths run adjacent to Offa's Dyke and form part of the national trail of the same name. There is a pedestrian footpath entrance directly off the A466 which has been recently re-diverted by the local PROW team. All entrances are generally in very poor condition, notably those to the east either lacking completely in any signage or requiring immediate upgrades. The car park is serviceable but again could do with refreshing of signage.

Current signage is a mixture of old wood boards and old brand white dibond signs, It is recommended all signage is upgraded in the new WT branding with larger A1 signage installed at the 3 car parking areas.

General Communication Drivers

The sites are likely to lend themselves to visits by the local community and visitors to the area. The local population is quite small made up of small hamlets and villages in the immediate area. However the larger towns of Monmouth and Chepstow to the south and Ross on Wye to the north mean the sites are in easy reach of a relatively large population. Many local people are likely to be aware of both Little Doward and Cadora although perhaps less so the other woodland areas. The local visitors are boosted by visitors from further afield. The Wye Valley is a prime location for nature tourists, with Symonds Yat East being a real hotspot especially during school holidays offering numerous adventure activities associated with the river as well as fine dining and a large number of holiday cottages and local hotels, guesthouses and B and Bs. Little Doward is likely the most visited site by these visitors, either enjoying woodland and river views from the Wye Valley Trail that runs through the south of the site, or to visit the Iron Age hillfort with its outstanding panoramic views, or possible the limestone caves to the south. The sites contain some of the very best examples of woodland habitat available in the UK, notably some large pollards at Cadora and veteran open grown trees at Little Doward. However, more than likely the sites are overshadowed by the Forestry Commission's local holdings including Symonds Yat Rock, King Arthur's Cave and the Biblins campsite all in close proximity to Little Doward, with people occasionally venturing beyond its boundaries onto Little Doward without realising the change of ownership. A large number of local visitors enjoy the southern end of Cadora, but it is unknown whether others from further afield visit. One likely element drawing people to the site is Offa's Dyke trail a national long distance trail running adjacent to much of the scheduled monument. Sections running through Cadora can be clearly seen and appreciated. Little is known about visitors to Symonds Yat West or Highburys fields, but there are fantastic views across the river and down the gorge from the former, and Highbury Fields gives wide open views above the steep slopes of Cadora and further upwards to Highbury Wood NNR (owned by Natural England). In addition to the nature and landscape appeal of the sites are the numerous remnants of the industrial heritage of the area. Little Doward and Symonds Yat both have intact limestones kilns and the former is pockmarked by disused mine

shafts. Little Doward is strewn by archaeological remains but often it is difficult for the visitor to picture these together in the context of the Wye Valley and its history.

Current interpretation tends to be sporadic. Little Doward formed part of a wider project on the interpretation of the history of the Wye Valley and there is a good interpretation board in the main carpark and another adjacent to the limekiln to the south of the site. At Cadora, there was a interpretation board in Bigsweir car park ut this has had to be removed due to deterioration. There is another just off Cox's lane about the open grassland and relatively new plantation. Overall interpretation is poor given the internationally important habitat, nationally important archaeology, and long distance trails running through 2 of the sites. By incorporating the sites into a holistic management plan better more coordinated interpretation planning with specific themese related to the key features should be possible as part of the welcoming site programme.

Other communication drivers include the restoration of the PAWS area at Cadora woods. Much work has been carried out prior to this plan although this has stalled in recent times. The site is excellently placed to showcase the Woodland Trust's gradual restoration approach to broadleaved composition through selective thinning and will be an accessible site to much of the forestry industry operating in this area. As part of this process, a specific CCF monitoring scheme will be operated at the site (as with other demonstration sites) to record changes to demonstration stands over long periods of time. As this data grows the site will be of increasing interest as part of a network of sites adding to the body of evidence on PAWS restoration.

Events: There are currently no events operated within this complex of sites. It is likely that events would be popular especially in school holidays when tourists are likely to visit. Outside school holiday, local events may be popular but given the limited size of the local population likely restricted to smaller interest groups.

Welcome Sites: Current visitor numbers are unknown. There are no known current user groups other than the general public although the sites are likely to be interesting to conservationists, historians, geologists, walkers/ramblers.

There are few barriers to access in general, although there is limited parking and no clear way marked circular routes which may deter some visitors. Information on the terrain of walks is also limited and often many routes include long sections of steep paths/tracks, although a good network of forestry tracks at Little Doward and Cadora do provide good year round access. However these have been designed for management use rather than public access and so don't tend to lend themselves to circular walks.

Volunteering: There are currently no volunteers operating at these sites.

Schools: There are approximately 7 schools in the local area covering the complex of sites, predominantly based around Monmouth. Currently there is no formal engagement between them and The Woodland Trust at these sites.

Wider Community Engagement: is currently minimal

Significance

The woodland complex contains internationally important rare woodland habitat and is some of the finest in the UK supporting a host of rare and interesting species as well as numerous veteran trees and pollards notably limes unique to this area of England. The woods contain 2 nationally significant scheduled monuments, Offa's Dyke and Little Doward Camp as well as interesting caves and limestone cliffs. The whole area is known for its nationally and potentially internationally significant industrial heritage. The area was also a pioneer in the development of English tourism and remnants of this are still evident at Little Doward's former ornamental deer park. Locally the complex forms just part of the wider woodland throughout the lower Wye Valley, although it contains some important jewels in the crown within the area.

The site is also an important demonstration site for the Woodland Trust's PAWS restoration approach. Its importance in this regard is likely to increase once the harvesting programme has been reinitiated.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

Develop woodland complex wide interpretation strategy

Work with local partners on landscape scale interpretation and engagement (eg local Wye Valley River festival etc)

Develop engagement plan to better interact with local community and visitors from further afield

Create better links with interest groups and local schools to better promote the site and the work of the Woodland trust

Develop better parking facilities at Little Doward and better promote wider access around the complex of woodland sites.

Upgrade key areas of tracks/path surfaces to facilitate better 'easier' access and where possible promote existing circular routes through waymarking and interpretation

Constraints:

No single honey pot threshold such as Symonds Yat East is owned by the Woodland Trust.

The woodland holdings are spread out over the landscape with very poor access to some areas

Larger holdings of the Forestry Commission with better access may deter potential visitors

Restricted opportunities for engagement given small car parking, no facilities and limited access around the sites

Sensitive site regarding the SSSI/SAC areas and the scheduled monuments and limited holding capacity

Factors Causing Change

Increase in visitor numbers

Increase in erosion affecting SSSI/SAC and Scheduled monuments

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The Welcoming Site Programme will lead to a series of lasting upgrades that will improve the visitor experience and will likely increase the number and range of visitors to this complex of outstanding woodland. An attractive and serviceable network of car parks tracks and paths will further encourage the appreciation of the woodland complex both on the site and in the locality. The complex of sites will be managed to meet the required high standards of the Welcoming Site Programme and will provide a clear welcome; well-maintained car parks, entrances, furniture, signs and other infrastructure as well as sustainable path and track surfaces across the variable ground conditions. Access will better facilitate use by a wider range of visitors potentially including those with mobility constraints and/or those with young children using off road pushchairs. Paths will also continue to provide more abled bodied visitors with access to the wider and wilder areas of the wood. Interpretation will bring the sites together and promotes the interests and key features of the complex as a whole and in context with the wider local landscape. An engagement plan will set out a developed programme of engagement activities and events further enhancing people's visit to the site. The site will be a truly valued resource in the local community and well respected.

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

Upgrade of all signage across all entrances to new Woodland Trust branding according to guidance with A1 signage installed at the 3 car parking areas.

All existing interpretation to be removed and replaced following the development of an appropriate interpretation scheme that brings the sites together and promotes the interest and key features of the complex as a whole and in context with the wider local landscape

Access infrastructure to be upgraded ensuring all threshold entrances are fresh and welcoming to visitors. Where possible styles should be replaced with gates/kissing gates to better facilitate access.

Areas forming routes of long distance trails should be maintained to very high standards and better signposted for visitors

All paths and tracks to be cut and maintained appropriately with regards to aesthetics as well as nature conservation.

Existing circular walks at Little Doward and Cadora should be specifically promoted on site through way marking where appropriate but also advertised off site through a means media.

Areas of tracks at Little Doward (cpt 2c) and Cadora (19a.b and 16) will be upgraded/resurfaced to improve drainage, access and aesthetics

All redundant fencing will be removed to promote the aesthetics of the site

The car park at Little Doward will be rationalised to increase the ease of parking and the number of parking spaces.

The diverted access path at Cadora (cpt 19) will be formalised and the entrance onto the main road will be made safe (requires SSSI consent)

An engagement plan for the whole complex will be developed to promote a series of events and activities designed to engage the local community and key interest groups

The site will operate as a useful demonstration site and a formalised programme of outreach work will be developed to promote The Woodland Trust's Ancient Woodland Restoration work.

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	1.73	European larch		High forest	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access to the site	Connecting People with woods & trees	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Planted Ancient Woodland Site, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Secondary woodland, NW of main track. Part of previous cpt 1a - EL, SC, SY, BE							
1b	3.20	Sweet chestnut		High forest	Archaeological features	Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Secondary woodland, SC, SY, EL, BE - formerly part of cpt 1a.							
2a	1.42	Sweet chestnut		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
SSSI secondary woodland - SC, BE, triangle area between tracks. formerly part of 1a.							
2b	4.23	Mixed broadleaves		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
SSSI secondary woodland - SC SY MB - formerly part of 1a.							
2c	4.49	Beech		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
SSSI secondary woodland, formerly part of 1b - BE, SOK							

2d	4.16	Ash		High forest	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access to the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Connecting People with woods & trees	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest
SSSI secondary woodland, AH, BE, MB, formerly part of 1c and a small area of 1a. Area to the north of the site comprising woodland on former small holdings/fields, The woodland is varied with areas dominated by ash (recently thinned), sycamore (recently thinned - 1997/8), dense hawthorn scrub, planted conifers and mixed broadleaved species. The field layer is variable and includes locally abundant bluebell, bracken, bramble, ferns and dog's mercury (W8/W10/ W21).							
3a	0.95	Ash		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland to North-east of site, AH/SY. Formerly part of 1c.							
3b	0.38	Sweet chestnut		High forest	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access to the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Secondary woodland at the north-east of the site, split from 3a by the main track giving access from the east. Formely part of 1c.							
Moderate south facing to the south-east of the site (south of Dennis Grove) supporting mature high forest dominated by beech with ash and occasional oak. There is a reasonable shrub layer comprising holly, hazel and hawthorn. The field layer is dominated by carpets of ransoms at the base of the slope and scattered to locally abundant dog's mercury and lords-and-ladies on the slopes (W12). The northern boundary of the sub-compartment includes limestone outcrops supporting limestone rock woodland with frequent wild service-trees, whitebeams and fingered sedge.							

4a	0.51	Sweet chestnut		High forest	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access to the site	Connecting People with woods & trees	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Secondary woodland to the north-east of the site cut off from the main block by track. Formerly 1d.</p> <p>Moderately sloping sub-compartment on formerly open land to the north of the Hill Fort. The majority has been planted with conifers but areas of semi-natural beech, oak, ash and hazel occur to the east. A number of veteran beeches are present. Small areas of open ground are also present (W8/W12/W21). Most of the ground is bare but bracken and dog's mercury are locally abundant and primrose, wood anemone, lords-and-ladies are scattered throughout.</p>							
5a	0.15	Mixed broadleaves		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
<p>Secondary woodland outside the SSSI area - woody shrubs and mixed b/l</p>							
6a	2.16	Sitka spruce		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
<p>Secondary woodland to the north of the scheduled area. Almost pure quite dense sitka spruce. Wet in places. Formerly part of 4a.</p>							
6b	9.66	Mixed broadleaves		Non-wood habitat	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access to the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Connecting People with woods & trees	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Scheduled Ancient Monument
<p>The Hill Fort (SAM) area bounded by distinct ramparts and cliffs with scattered mature broadleaves, patches of scrub and broadleaved woodland and open areas supporting bracken, scrub, common nettle and areas of rather rank grassland. Formerly 4c. Previously dominated by a spruce plantation which was removed in 2008/9.</p>							

6c	0.87	Hybrid larch		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland to the east of the scheduled monument. Visible in the landscape from the main road. Formerly part of 4a.							
6d	3.11	Beech		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland in between SSSI/SAC woodland and scheduled area. Previous site for tower. Quite open area, scrub and mature b/l. formerly part of 4a and 4b.							
7a	9.69	Ash		High forest	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access to the site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Area of ASNW/SSSI/SAC woodland. Dennis Grove. Gently sloping, north east facing sub-compartment supporting woodland locally dominated by mature beech, ash, oak and sweet chestnut standards, with an understorey of coppiced hazel, hawthorn, field maple, sweet chestnut and ash. To the west are a number of mature to over-mature individual trees. However, standards are absent over at least half the sub-compartment with dense young ash dominating these areas along with some sweet chestnut and hazel coppice. Field layer species include abundant dog's mercury, bluebell and ransoms (W8). Cliffs along the hill fort boundary support frequent yew and the rare lobed maidenhair spleenwort. formerly cpt 3a.							
8a	5.03	Ash		High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Connecting People with woods & trees	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Secondary SSSI/SAC woodland. Northern section south of ramparts is also included within scheduled monument area. Moderately sloping sub-compartment which mostly consists of young ash maidens, hawthorn scrub. Small areas of conifer are present on steeper ground to the south of the hill fort ramparts including a formerly open limestone outcrop. A number of large mature/veteran trees are present comprising scattered large oaks over grass and bracken.							

8b	5.19	Beech		High forest	Archaeological features, Management factors (eg grazing etc), No/poor vehicular access to the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Planted Ancient Woodland Site, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Secondary, SSSI/SAC woodland split from 8a by the main track/path running up to the scheduled monument. Formerly part of 2b.</p> <p>'Moderately to steeply sloping southern slopes primarily on limestone. There are frequent veteran and mature beech and oak maidens and pollards with significant areas of open mature woodland. However, low grazing pressure in the 1950s-80s resulted in the infilling of the open canopy with locally abundant dense young ash (and some beech and birch). Limestone outcrops are present through the sub-compartment supporting "limestone rock woodland" dominated by ash (with some oak and beech), whitebeams and yew and with a distinctive field layer flora including fingered sedge (beech dominated analogue to W8g). Other open areas support dense bracken with local broom and gorse. Scattered buddleja and very occasional holm oak are present.</p>							
8c	1.80	Ash		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
<p>Secondary, SSSI/SAC woodland split from 8b and 8d by the main track/paths running up slope to the scheduled monument and west to cpt 9. Formerly part of 2b.</p>							
8d	0.72	Ash		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
<p>Secondary, SSSI/SAC woodland split from 8b,8c by the main track/paths running up slope to the scheduled monument and west to cpt 9 and the south of the main track facing the River Wye. Formerly part of 2b.</p>							

8e	1.66	Ash		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
<p>Secondary, SSSI/SAC woodland split from 8b and 8d by the main track running east/west, part of the Wye Valley trail. Formerly part of 2b. A row of mature poplars is present along the river Wye. Himalayan balsam is present along the river bank although WT's ownership does not run to the river.</p>							
8f	8.80	Beech		High forest	Archaeological features, Management factors (eg grazing etc), No/poor vehicular access to the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Candidate Special Area of Conservation, Planted Ancient Woodland Site, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Secondary SSSI/SAC woodland, previously part of a deer park. Formerly part of 2a and 2b. Moderate to steeply sloping western slopes on mainly acidic soils. Most of this area was replanted in the 1950s-70s primarily by mixed conifer species (including Coronation Grove). However, a number of mature broadleaved trees remain including occasional to locally frequent veteran oak and beech (some pollards) and younger trees are locally frequent (birch, sycamore, oak). To the south is an area of mature sweet chestnut and hornbeam. Small conglomerate cliffs and boulders occur throughout the sub-compartment. Much of the ground is bare with scattered bracken (locally dense in open areas), creeping soft-grass and wood-sorrel. (W10/W14/W15/U4/U20 with W8 at the slope base).</p>							
8g	2.82	Douglas fir		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
<p>Secondary SSSI/SAC woodland dominated by Douglas fir. Area sits outside of 19th century deer park. Formerly part of 2a.</p>							
9a	0.34	Ash		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	

Secondary woodland adjacent to the SSSI/SAC areas.							
9b	1.10	Ash		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland adjacent to the SSSI/SAC areas. Ash with occ Yew and Beech. on southern track.							
9c	1.58	Sweet chestnut		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland adjacent to the SSSI/SAC areas. Strip of mixed b/l and conifer on southern edge of site. Some fencing cuts off potential management in areas.							
9d	0.95	Beech		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland adjacent to the SSSI/SAC areas. Mix of Beech, yew, with occasional Corsican pine on strip between tracks.							
9e	1.31	Norway spruce		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland adjacent to the SSSI/SAC areas. Area dominated by Norway spruce on edge of SSSI/SAC running up the slope to the north.							
9f	1.91	Beech		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland adjacent to the SSSI/SAC areas. Dense area unthinned running on the western edge of the site. A very small area is technically SSSI/SAC where broadleaves dominate.							
9g	2.46	Douglas fir		High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	
Secondary woodland adjacent to the SSSI/SAC areas.							

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2019	7a	Thin	9.68	15	150
2019	8f	Thin	8.80	17	150
2019	8g	Thin	2.82	25	70
2020	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2020	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2020	2a	Thin	1.42	19	27
2020	2b	Thin	4.23	19	82
2020	2c	Thin	4.49	17	75
2020	2d	Thin	4.16	19	80
2020	3a	Thin	0.95	16	15
2020	3b	Thin	0.38	21	8
2020	4a	Thin	0.51	16	8
2020	5a	Thin	0.15	13	2
2021	9a	Thin	0.34	15	5
2021	9b	Thin	1.10	9	10
2021	9c	Thin	1.58	16	25
2021	9d	Thin	0.95	16	15
2021	9e	Thin	1.31	8	10
2021	9f	Thin	1.91	18	35
2021	9g	Thin	2.46	20	50
2022	6a	Thin	2.16	23	50
2022	6c	Thin	0.87	11	10
2023	6b	Thin	1.50	7	10
2023	6d	Thin	3.11	3	10
2023	8a	Thin	5.03	10	50
2023	8b	Thin	5.19	4	20
2023	8c	Thin	1.80	11	20
2023	8d	Thin	1.66	12	20
2023	8e	Thin	0.72	7	5
2023	8f	Thin	8.80	17	150
2023	8g	Thin	2.82	25	70

2024	7a	Thin	9.68	15	150
2025	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2025	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2025	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2025	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2025	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2025	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2025	2a	Thin	1.42	19	27
2025	2b	Thin	4.23	19	82
2025	2c	Thin	4.49	17	75
2025	2d	Thin	4.16	19	80
2025	3a	Thin	0.95	16	15
2025	3b	Thin	0.38	21	8
2025	4a	Thin	0.51	16	8
2025	5a	Thin	0.15	13	2
2026	9a	Thin	0.34	15	5
2026	9b	Thin	1.10	9	10
2026	9c	Thin	1.58	16	25
2026	9d	Thin	0.95	16	15
2026	9e	Thin	1.31	8	10
2026	9f	Thin	1.91	18	35
2026	9g	Thin	2.46	20	50
2027	6a	Thin	2.16	23	50
2027	6c	Thin	0.87	11	10
2028	6b	Thin	1.50	7	10
2028	6d	Thin	3.11	3	10
2028	8a	Thin	5.03	10	50
2028	8b	Thin	5.19	4	20
2028	8c	Thin	1.80	11	20
2028	8d	Thin	1.66	12	20
2028	8e	Thin	0.72	7	5
2028	8f	Thin	8.80	17	150
2028	8g	Thin	2.82	25	70
2029	7a	Thin	9.68	15	150
2030	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2030	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35

2030	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2030	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2030	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2030	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2030	2a	Thin	1.42	19	27
2030	2b	Thin	4.23	19	82
2030	2c	Thin	4.49	17	75
2030	2d	Thin	4.16	19	80
2030	3a	Thin	0.95	16	15
2030	3b	Thin	0.38	21	8
2030	4a	Thin	0.51	16	8
2030	5a	Thin	0.15	13	2
2031	9a	Thin	0.34	15	5
2031	9b	Thin	1.10	9	10
2031	9c	Thin	1.58	16	25
2031	9d	Thin	0.95	16	15
2031	9e	Thin	1.31	8	10
2031	9f	Thin	1.91	18	35
2031	9g	Thin	2.46	20	50
2032	6a	Thin	2.16	23	50
2032	6c	Thin	0.87	11	10
2033	6b	Thin	1.50	7	10
2033	6d	Thin	3.11	3	10
2033	8a	Thin	5.03	10	50
2033	8b	Thin	5.19	4	20
2033	8c	Thin	1.80	11	20
2033	8d	Thin	1.66	12	20
2033	8e	Thin	0.72	7	5
2033	8f	Thin	8.80	17	150
2033	8g	Thin	2.82	25	70
2034	7a	Thin	9.68	15	150
2035	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2035	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2035	1a	Thin	1.73	20	35
2035	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2035	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60

2035	1b	Thin	3.20	19	60
2035	2a	Thin	1.42	19	27
2035	2b	Thin	4.23	19	82
2035	2c	Thin	4.49	17	75
2035	2d	Thin	4.16	19	80
2035	3a	Thin	0.95	16	15
2035	3b	Thin	0.38	21	8
2035	4a	Thin	0.51	16	8
2035	5a	Thin	0.15	13	2
2036	9a	Thin	0.34	15	5
2036	9g	Thin	2.46	20	50
2037	6a	Thin	2.16	23	50

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.