

Peppard Wood

Management Plan 2020-2025

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 (wooglandtrust.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:

- I. 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.
- 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: Peppard Wood

Location: Rotherfield Peppard

Grid reference: SU696818, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 174

Area: 5.96 hectares (14.73 acres)

Designations: Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Peppard Wood is located in the village of Rotherfield Peppard, South Oxfordshire in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site was acquired by The Woodland Trust in 1994 and was part of the grounds of the former Peppard hospital. The land was set aside for woodland creation as part of a planning agreement to develop the housing estate next to the wood, which lies immediately to the north of the site. To the south is the rough grazing pasture of Kingwood Farm.

The site is on level ground and sits over chalk, the bedrock that gives rise to the characteristics of the AONB, and has a clay-with-flint deposit under the northern block of woodland and a sand and gravel deposit in the south.

This 6 hectare wood was planted in 1996 with a mixture of native broadleaves including beech, oak, birch, wild cherry and native scrub. The local community was involved in the design of the wood, which contains an open grassy glade in the centre. The wood also contains a number of mature specimen trees, including Corsican pine and lime, which were growing in the former hospital grounds. There is also an old orchard of apple and plum trees.

The wood has a good network of permissive pedestrian paths through it and is well used by the local community.

2.2 Extended Description

Peppard Wood is located in the village of Rotherfield Peppard, South Oxfordshire in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site was acquired by The Woodland Trust in 1994 and was part of the grounds of the former Peppard hospital. The land was set aside for woodland creation as part of a planning agreement to develop the housing estate next to the wood, which lies immediately to the north of the site. To the south is the rough grazing pasture of Kingwood Farm.

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The wood has a good network of permissive pedestrian paths through it and is well used by the local community.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Getting there: Buses from Woodcote to Henley-on-Thames stop at Peppard Common (approx. I.5miles away) and Sonning Common (approx 2 miles away) after which some walking by road will be needed.

Facilities: Parking close to the site is difficult, as there is no public car park nearby, but roadside parking may be possible away from the private roads in Rotherfield Peppard. There are no public footpaths but there is a network of permissive paths. Entrance into the site is via squeeze gaps off Wyfold Lane and Dove Lane. The site is flat with no steep slopes, but all paths are un-surfaced. There is a good network of managed paths.

Public conveniences: Sonning Common village hall (approx. 2 miles away) has toilets that are normally open to the public. The village hall is at the junction of Woodlands road and Wood Lane.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline - www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0871 200 22 33 .

All distances are approximate.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

In the long term (50+ years) Peppard Wood is expected to develop into a native broadleaf woodland with a high forest structure. Dominant canopy species will be oak, beech and silver birch with a scrub edge and understorey of hazel, holly, hawthorn, Guelder rose and field maple. The mature pre-plantation trees will senesce to form veteran trees. There will be a mosaic of habitats as wide rides, wayleaves and glades will continue to be maintained, adding structural diversity to the wooded element as ride-side coppiced trees and shrubs regrow.

The Woodland Trust has given Peppard Wood a category B for access provision which translates to a moderate usage site with 5 – 15 people using one entrance per day. Informal public access will therefore remain in perpetuity, through a managed path network. Entrances will be clearly signed and made welcoming, and the site will made as safe as practicable for visitors. As the site is mainly used by local people the information for visitors will be relatively low key.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

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

5.1 Secondary Woodland

Description

The secondary woodland covers approximately 85% of the site (4.96ha). The majority of the wood was planted in 1996 with a mixture of native broadleaved trees such as oak, beech, silver birch, wild cherry, field maple, hawthorn and hazel. Scattered throughout the site are several dozen mature trees which were part of the landscape in the former hospital grounds, and these include Corsican pine, lime, oak and silver birch. There is also the remnant of an orchard with 15-20 veteran apple and plum trees. The fruit trees have not been pruned or managed traditionally for many years. The wood also contains an element of open grassland in the centre (approximately 15% of the area – Iha) which was part of the original design plan to maintain views over the surrounding landscape.

Significance

This area of new woodland extends and buffers the remnant woodland to the north of the site and forms part of a habitat network within a well wooded area. This enhances the landscape's overall resilience to threats such as climate change, fragmentation and impacts from the urban environment.

Opportunities & Constraints

Factors Causing Change

Decline in ash population due to Hymenoscyphus fraxineus. Ash is a rare component of the canopy therefore overall impact will be relatively low.

Mammal damage (deer and squirrels) affecting natural regeneration of trees in the future. However, due to small area of the site and its proximity to properties, management of deer and squirrels would be inappropriate.

Windblow of veteran orchard trees as their crowns thicken with summer growth creating a more unstable crown.

Scrub encroachment.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The species composition and structure of the woodland will largely be left to develop by natural processes. As the wood matures it will continue to contain a mixture of native broadleaves such as oak, silver birch and beech, which may require some silvicultural intervention in the future in order to encourage structural diversity. The small population of ash in the wood is likely to succumb to ash dieback and become an increasingly minor component. The loss of ash and other species will add to the site's deadwood habitat as trees die through natural competition or disease.

An element of open ground (a central glade and wide rides) will be retained and managed on the site and

this will cover approximately I ha of the site area. Younger woody growth will be encouraged on the edges of the open ground. The older pre-plantation trees will be retained for as long as possible with the hope that some may become veterans if they survive. The small remnant orchard will also be retained and competition from neighbouring tree growth will be managed.

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

During this plan period the short term objective is to encourage more structural diversity in the woodland, maintain the open ground feature and enhance the pre-plantation trees.

- The glade (approx. I ha in size) will be mown annually.
- Wayleaves will be mown biennially (2022, 2024) and an existing glade in the NW corner of the wood (approx. 0.19ha) will be cut once every 5 years (2023).
- The hedgerow running along the west boundary of the site will be cut biennially (2020, 2022, 2024).
- Scrub either side of the central glade and around the orchard and pre-plantation trees will be managed. Scrub along the northern side of orchard and glade to be cut back up to 10m in 2021 and southern side to be cut in 2023.
- Old orchard trees will be managed to reduce their unstable crown and risk of windblow. Works likely to include removing small dead or diseased branches, removing summer water-shoots, rubbing branches, reducing weight of structural branches. Assessment of crowns to be made annually, starting in 2020, with works only ever reducing the crown by 20% in one go.
- Carry out monitoring in 2021 to ensure that the pre-plantation and orchard trees are not overtopped or threatened by any younger trees. Resulting work will be undertaken, as required.
- Carry out monitoring to determine any risks to the wood, e.g. from tree diseases or deer browsing. An informal monitoring visit is scheduled for 2021 and a more thorough woodland condition assessment will be undertaken in 2024.

5.2 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

The wood has a network of approximately 1.3km of permissive paths for pedestrian-only use, and there are 4 main entrances which link to local roads. Open ground in the wood allows views over the surrounding countryside to the south. The site is well used by the neighbouring local community.

Significance

While the site is in a rural area with public rights of way, it provides the local population with the opportunity to have full access to an area of woodland. The informal access within the site allows local residents a safe and easy walk for dogs and children.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities

The wood is very close to many residential properties and there is the opportunity to involve people in the management of the wood in the future, should there be an interest.

Constraints

The limited parking available at the site means that the wood is unlikely to be used by visitors from further afield.

Factors Causing Change

- An increase in visitor numbers could cause a detrimental impact on the wood e.g. increased risk of path encroachment, increased compaction around tree roots near to paths
- Antisocial behaviour e.g. fly tipping

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Public access for informal and quiet recreation will be maintained in perpetuity. The wood will kept as safe as possible for visitors and there will be a managed network of paths, together with visible and clearly signed entrances.

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

During this plan period the short term objective is to provide low key public access which is safe and enjoyable.

- Approximately 1.3km of path and 4 entrances will be maintained annually. This will include strimming path edges and entrances, and appropriate tree safety work identified by an annual Zone A inspection and a Zone B inspection carried out every 3 years.
- Entrance infrastructure and signage will be maintained as necessary.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
2020	SL - Routine Safety Work	Cutting and shaping of hedge along Dove Lane. Approx 50m. Cut every other year.	29/02/20
2020	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Budget to replace and improve visitor infrastructure following MP review	30/06/20
2020	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	1st path cut. Path and entrance management: Path and entrance management: 1. Entrances - maintenance and inspection: a. Cut back vegetation around all signs and entrances so signs / info boards are clearly visible and accessible b. Cleaning of all signage with anti-fungal wash and treatment of wooden signs with Danish oil c. Fixing of any immediate problems with entrance furniture such as broken fence rails etc. d. Reporting of any more serious problems or replacement requirements to SM. e. Removal of any out of date temporary signage from entrances / notice boards 2. Path cutting and maintenance a. Clear fallen, leaning or hung up vegetation from entrances and paths throughout b. Cut all marked paths to approx. 3m width, cutting back any encroaching branches 3. Collect and remove litter from entrances, glades and paths	30/06/20
2020	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	2nd path cut. Path and entrance management: 1. Mow/cut central paths only (as shown on map) to approx 3m in width ensuring overhanging branches are dealt with 2. Cut back vegetation at all marked entrances, clean signs and carry out any minor repairs 3. Remove litter from entrances and paths. 4. Mow the central glade, retaining an unmown 10m edge next to the woodland. Mow area around orchard trees.	31/08/20
2021	WMM - Ancient / Veteran Tree Work	TBC budget for orchard tree management	28/02/21
2021	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	1st path cut. Path and entrance management: Path and entrance management: 1. Entrances - maintenance and inspection: a. Cut back vegetation around all signs and entrances so signs / info boards are clearly visible and accessible b. Cleaning of all signage with anti-fungal wash and treatment of wooden signs with Danish oil c. Fixing of any immediate problems with entrance furniture such as broken fence rails etc. d. Reporting of any more serious problems or replacement requirements to SM. e. Removal of any out of date temporary signage from entrances / notice boards	30/06/21

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2021	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	2nd path cut. Path and entrance management: 1. Mow/cut central paths only (as shown on map) to approx 3m in width ensuring overhanging branches are dealt with 2. Cut back vegetation at all marked entrances, clean signs and carry out any minor repairs 3. Remove litter from entrances and paths. 4. Mow the central glade, retaining an unmown 10m edge next to the woodland. Mow area around orchard trees.	31/08/21
2021	WMM - Ancient / Veteran Tree Work	Cut back 10m deep scrub/coppice trees along north edge of orchard clearing and glade. Coppice trees under pre-plantation lime.	31/10/21
2022	SL - Routine Safety Work	Cutting and shaping of hedge along Dove Lane. Approx 50m. Cut every other year.	28/02/22
2022	WMM - Ancient / Veteran Tree Work	TBC budget for orchard tree management	28/02/22
2022	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	1st path cut. Path and entrance management: Path and entrance management: 1. Entrances - maintenance and inspection: a. Cut back vegetation around all signs and entrances so signs / info boards are clearly visible and accessible b. Cleaning of all signage with anti-fungal wash and treatment of wooden signs with Danish oil c. Fixing of any immediate problems with entrance furniture such as broken fence rails etc. d. Reporting of any more serious problems or replacement requirements to SM. e. Removal of any out of date temporary signage from entrances / notice boards 2. Path cutting and maintenance a. Clear fallen, leaning or hung up vegetation from entrances and paths throughout b. Cut all marked paths to approx. 3m width, cutting back any encroaching branches 3. Collect and remove litter from entrances, glades and paths	30/06/22
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2023	WMM - Ancient / Veteran Tree Work	TBC budget for orchard tree management	28/02/23
2023	AW - Visitor Access	1st path cut. Path and entrance management:	30/06/23

	Maintenance	Path and entrance management:	
		1. Entrances - maintenance and inspection:	
		a. Cut back vegetation around all signs and entrances so signs / info	
		boards are clearly visible and accessible	
		b. Cleaning of all signage with anti-fungal wash and treatment of	
		wooden signs with Danish oil	
		c. Fixing of any immediate problems with entrance furniture such as	
		broken fence rails etc.	
		d. Reporting of any more serious problems or replacement	
		requirements to SM.	
		e. Removal of any out of date temporary signage from entrances /	
		notice boards	
		2. Path cutting and maintenance	
		a. Clear fallen, leaning or hung up vegetation from entrances and	
		paths throughout	
		b. Cut all marked paths to approx. 3m width, cutting back any	
		encroaching branches	
		3. Collect and remove litter from entrances, glades and paths	
2022			
2023	AW - Visitor Access	2nd path cut. Path and entrance management:	31/08/23
	Maintenance	1. Mow/cut central paths only (as shown on map) to approx 3m in	
		width ensuring overhanging branches are dealt with	
		2. Cut back vegetation at all marked entrances, clean signs and carry	
		out any minor repairs	
		3. Remove litter from entrances and paths.	
		4. Mow the central glade, retaining an unmown 10m edge next to the	
		woodland. Mow area around orchard trees. Brushcut glade in NW	
		corner of site (approx. 0.19ha).	
2023	WMM - Ancient / Veteran Tree	Cut back 10m deep scrub/coppice trees along south edge of orchard	31/10/23
	Work	clearing and glade.	
2024	SL - Routine Safety Work	Cutting and shaping of hedge along Dove Lane. Approx 50m. Cut every	29/02/24
		other year.	
2024	AW - Visitor Access	1st path cut. Path and entrance management:	30/06/2
	Maintenance	Path and entrance management:	
		1. Entrances - maintenance and inspection:	
		a. Cut back vegetation around all signs and entrances so signs / info	
		boards are clearly visible and accessible	
		b. Cleaning of all signage with anti-fungal wash and treatment of	
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2024	AW. Vicitor Access	b. Cleaning of all signage with anti-fungal wash and treatment of wooden signs with Danish oil c. Fixing of any immediate problems with entrance furniture such as broken fence rails etc. d. Reporting of any more serious problems or replacement requirements to SM. e. Removal of any out of date temporary signage from entrances / notice boards 2. Path cutting and maintenance a. Clear fallen, leaning or hung up vegetation from entrances and paths throughout b. Cut all marked paths to approx. 3m width, cutting back any encroaching branches 3. Collect and remove litter from entrances, glades and paths	24 /00 /2
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Peppard Wood		
	 2. Cut back vegetation at all marked entrances, clean signs and carry out any minor repairs 3. Remove litter from entrances and paths. 4. Mow the central glade, retaining an unmown 10m edge next to the woodland. Mow area around orchard trees. Brushcut under wayleaves. 	

APPENDIX I: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
la	5.96	Oak (pedunculate)		Wood establishment	Services & wayleaves	Connecting People with woods & trees, Secondary Woodland	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Even-aged plantation of mainly oak, silver birch, beech and wild cherry with hazel, holly, field maple, hawthorn and Guelder rose scrub. Pre-plantation trees include a mature orchard of plum & apple trees and mature Corsican pine, lime and silver birch. The area contains wide rides, some of which follow the lines of service wayleaves and a glade in the centre of the wood in order to maintain view across the surrounding countryside to the south.

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.

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