



Forestry England

For external consultation  
June 14<sup>th</sup> - July 21<sup>st</sup> 2023

# Dymock Woods Forest Plan

## 2023-2033

### Reference OP10/28

Rachel Giles  
Summer 2023



# Application for Forest Plan approval

## Dymock Woods - Summer 2023

<b>Forest district</b>	West England Forest District
<b>Woodland or property name</b>	Dymock Woods
<b>Nearest town, village or locality</b>	Newent, Gloucestershire
<b>OS grid reference</b>	Centre of the Plan area is at SO 6806 2787
<b>Local authority</b>	Herefordshire Council and Gloucestershire County Council  Linton, Upton Bishop, Dymock, Kempley and Oxenhall Parish Councils

<b>Plan area</b>	511 hectares
<b>Conifer felling</b>	8.88 hectares
<b>Broadleaf felling</b>	0 hectares

- 1) I apply for Forest Plan approval for the property described above and in the enclosed Forest Plan.
- 2) I confirm that the scoping, carried out and documented in the consultation record attached, incorporated those stakeholders that the FC agreed must be included. Where it has not been possible to resolve specific issues associated with the Plan to the satisfaction of consultees, this is highlighted in the consultation record.
- 3) I confirm that the proposals contained in this Plan comply with the UK Forestry Standard.
- 4) I undertake to obtain any permissions necessary for the implementation of the approved Plan.

Signed... **signature**

Kevin Stannard, Forestry England Forest Management Director

Date... **date**

Signed..... Forestry Commission Area Director

Date of approval.....

Date approval ends.....



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## Appendices

Appendix 1 - Explanation of some of the terms used in the Forest Plan
Appendix 2 - Dymock Woods SSSI Plan <b>to be added as PDF to final version</b>
Appendix 3 - Michael Harper Reserves Management Plan <b>to be added as PDF to final version</b>
Appendix 4 - Consultation record <b>to be added as PDF to final version</b>

# Section 1 - Forestry England vision

## Forestry England - who we are and what we do

Forestry England is the country's largest land manager.

Our purpose is to secure and grow the social, economic and natural capital value of the nation's forests.

The foundation of our organisation is our world-class sustainable management of the nation's forests.

### Our vision for wildlife...

The nation's forests provide the most valuable places for wildlife to thrive and expand in England.

### Our vision for people...

The nation's forests are a living treasure for all, deeply connected to people's lives improving the health and wellbeing of the nation.

### Our vision for climate...

The nation's forests are resilient to climate change, increasing their value for communities by producing high-quality, sustainable timber and absorbing carbon emissions.

The above is taken from 'Growing the future: 2021-2026':

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/growing-the-future>

For more information about who we are and what we do, please visit:

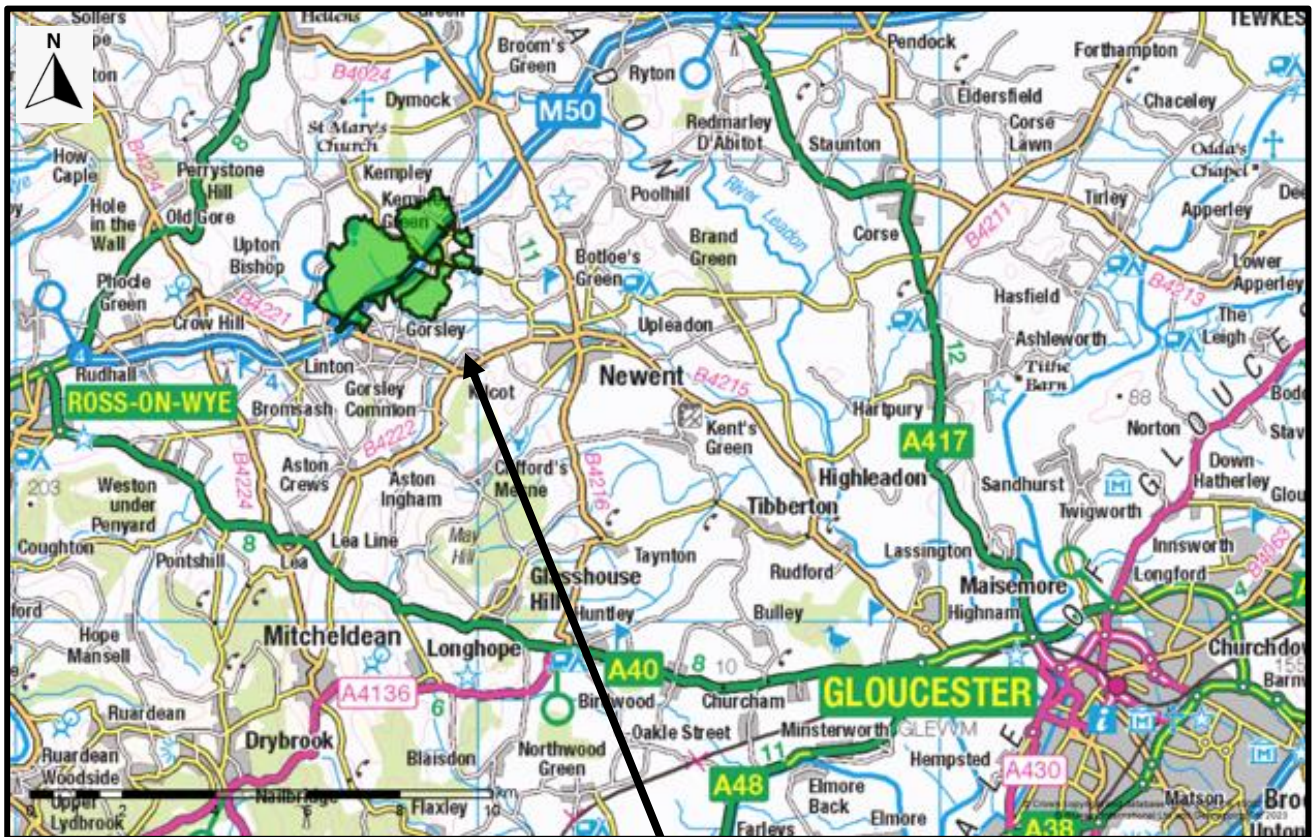
<https://www.forestryengland.uk>

For an explanation of some of the terms used in this Forest Plan, see [pages 26-27](#).

## Section 2 - About Dymock Woods

### Location

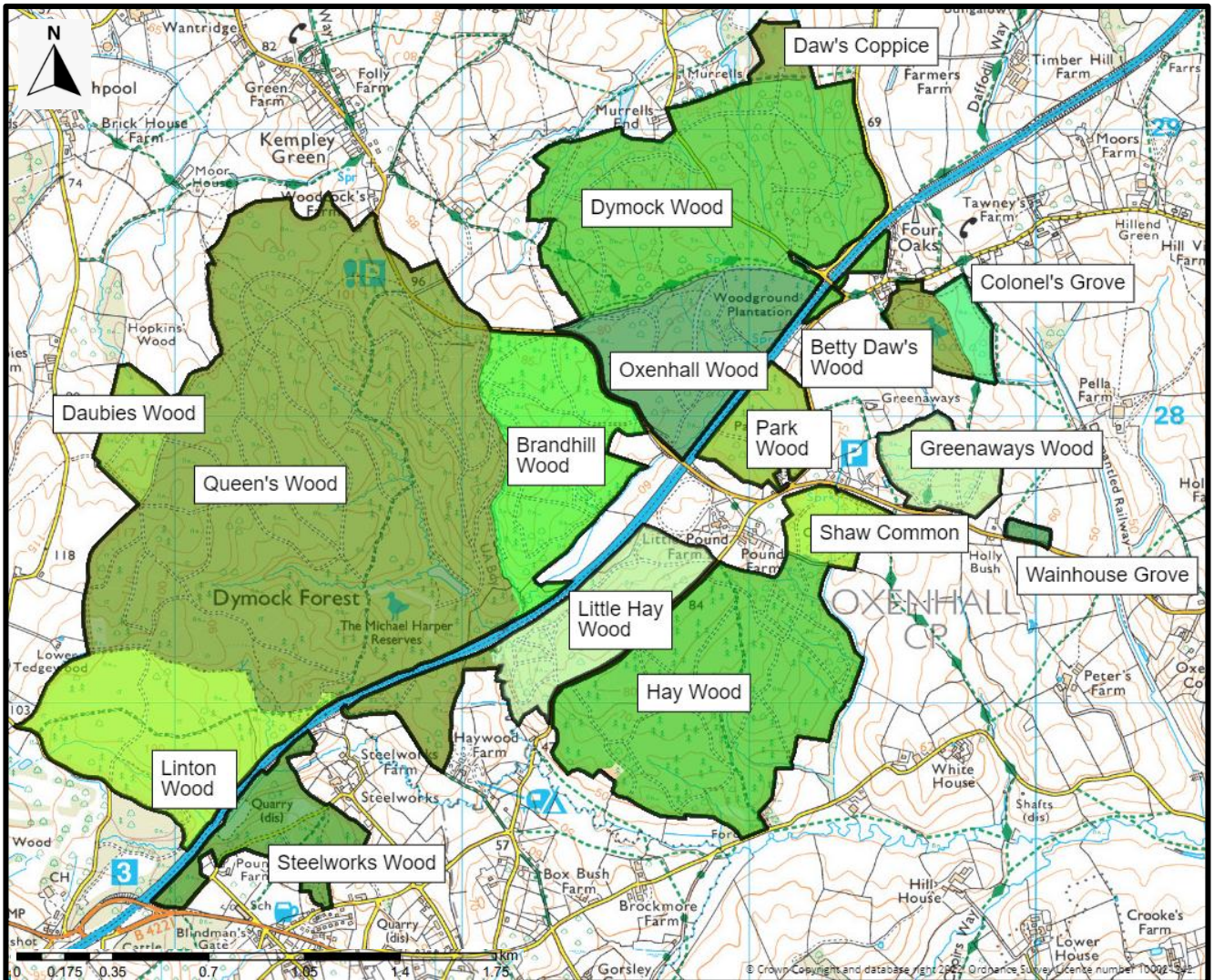
Dymock Woods cover 511 hectares and lie about 3 miles northwest of Newent in Gloucestershire and 5 miles northeast of Ross on Wye in Herefordshire (Figure 1). The Gloucestershire-Herefordshire county boundary cuts north-south through the Forest Plan area, parts of which fall into four parish councils.



**Figure 1**  
Location of the Dymock Woods Forest Plan area

## Location (continued)

The Dymock Woods consist of one large area of continuous woodland, along with some smaller outliers to the south. Parts of the wood have different names depending on which map or management plan is referred to. The names which will be used in this Forest Plan are shown in **Figure 2**.



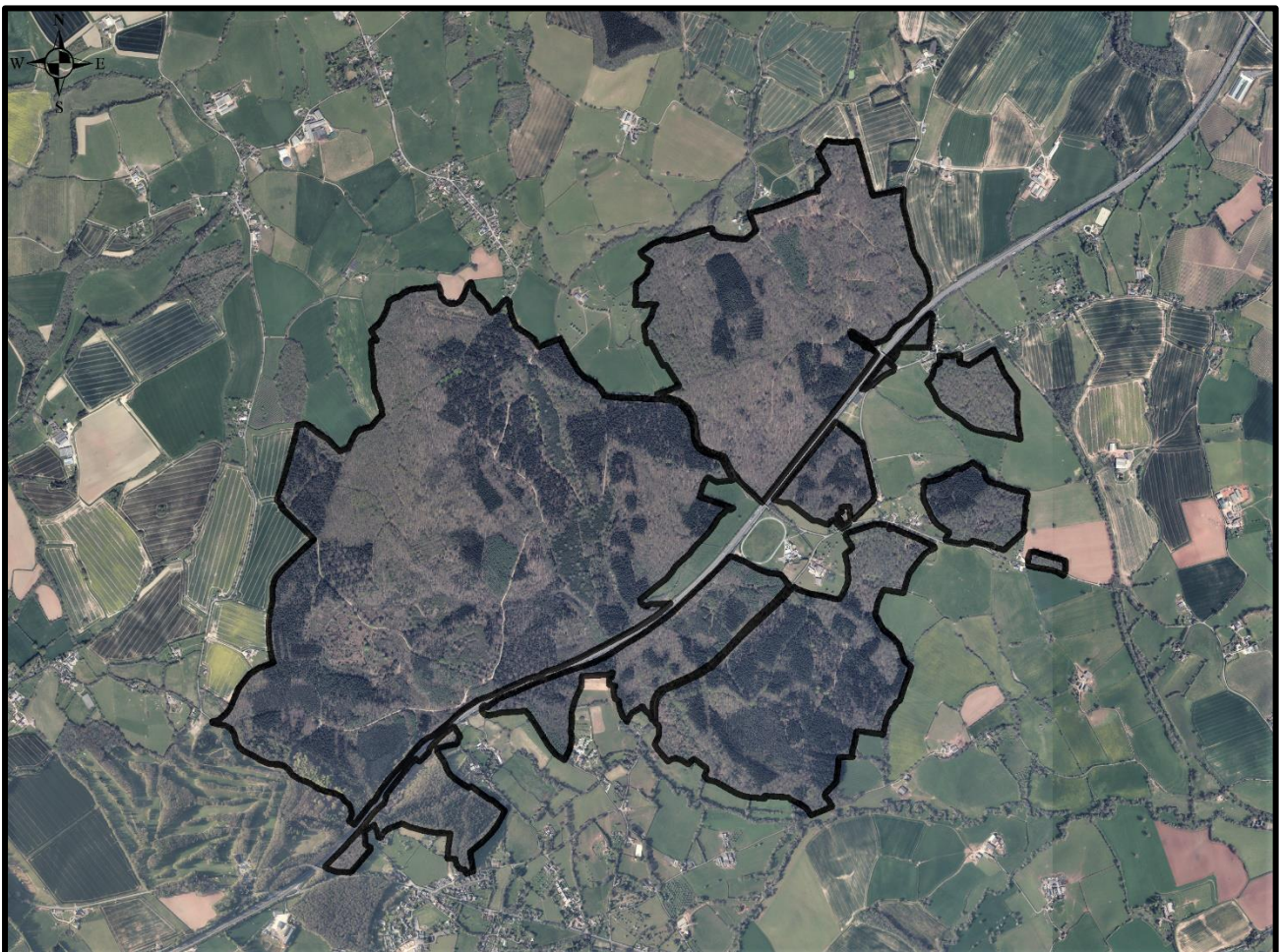
**Figure 2**  
Dymock Woods - names used in the Forest Plan

## Landscape

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, many authorities carried out extensive research into local landscapes - mapping the various landscape types, and describing the combinations of elements and features that make them distinctive.

The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (2004) puts Dymock Woods and surrounding area into the “wooded hills and farmlands” category, whereas the Forest of Dean (Gloucestershire) LCA (2009) describes it as “undulating hill farmland”. Both mean much the same - this is an area of discrete blocks of irregularly-shaped ancient semi-natural woodlands surrounded by fields bounded by hedgerows (**Figure 3**). Streams are important features - running through the woods and into the farmland, and other significant elements include remnants of heathland vegetation, old orchards and unimproved grassland on woodland edges that is populated by wild daffodils in the spring.

The Forest Plan area is divided by the M50 motorway, which was built in the 1960s, and a number of smaller roads pass through the woods. The woodland itself is mostly flat or gently undulating and there are few panoramic views over the forest from outside. Internal landscape is varied with areas of conifers, broadleaves, open space, numerous paths, forest roads and rides, streams, small ponds and a lake.



**Figure 3**  
Aerial photo of Dymock Woods showing Forestry England land bordered in black, surrounding farmland and the M50 motorway cutting through the centre

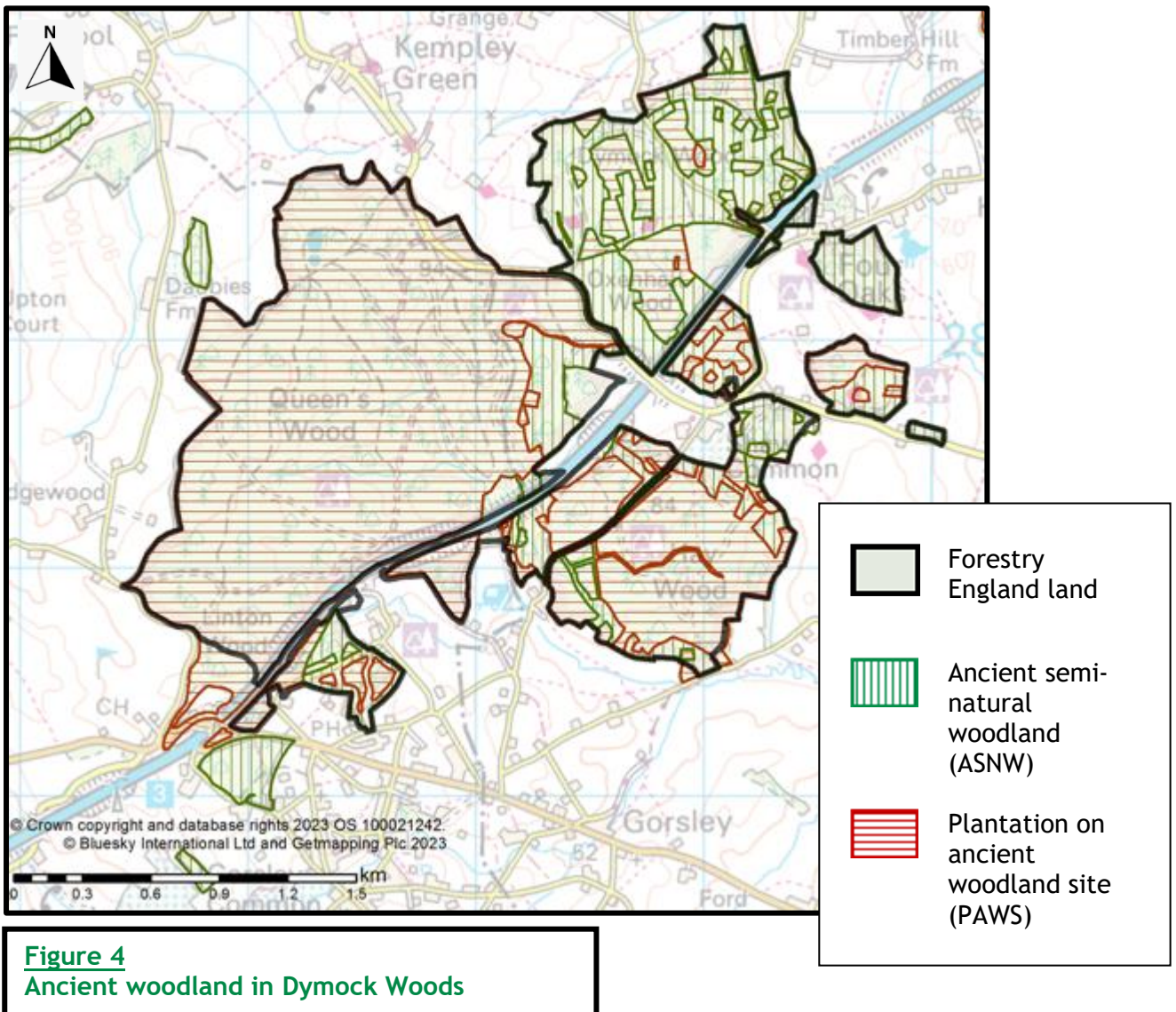
## Designations - ancient woodland

Ancient woodland is any area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes:

- ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW), which is mainly made up of trees and shrubs native to the site, usually arising from natural regeneration;
- plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), which are replanted with conifer or broadleaved trees, but retain ancient woodland features, such as undisturbed soil, ground flora and fungi.

Secondary woodland is that which is growing on a site that has not been continuously wooded since 1600AD.

Almost all of Forestry England's land in Dymock Woods is recorded as PAWS or ASNW (Figure 4). Plantations on ancient woodland sites may be broadleaf or coniferous, and both exist in Dymock Woods.

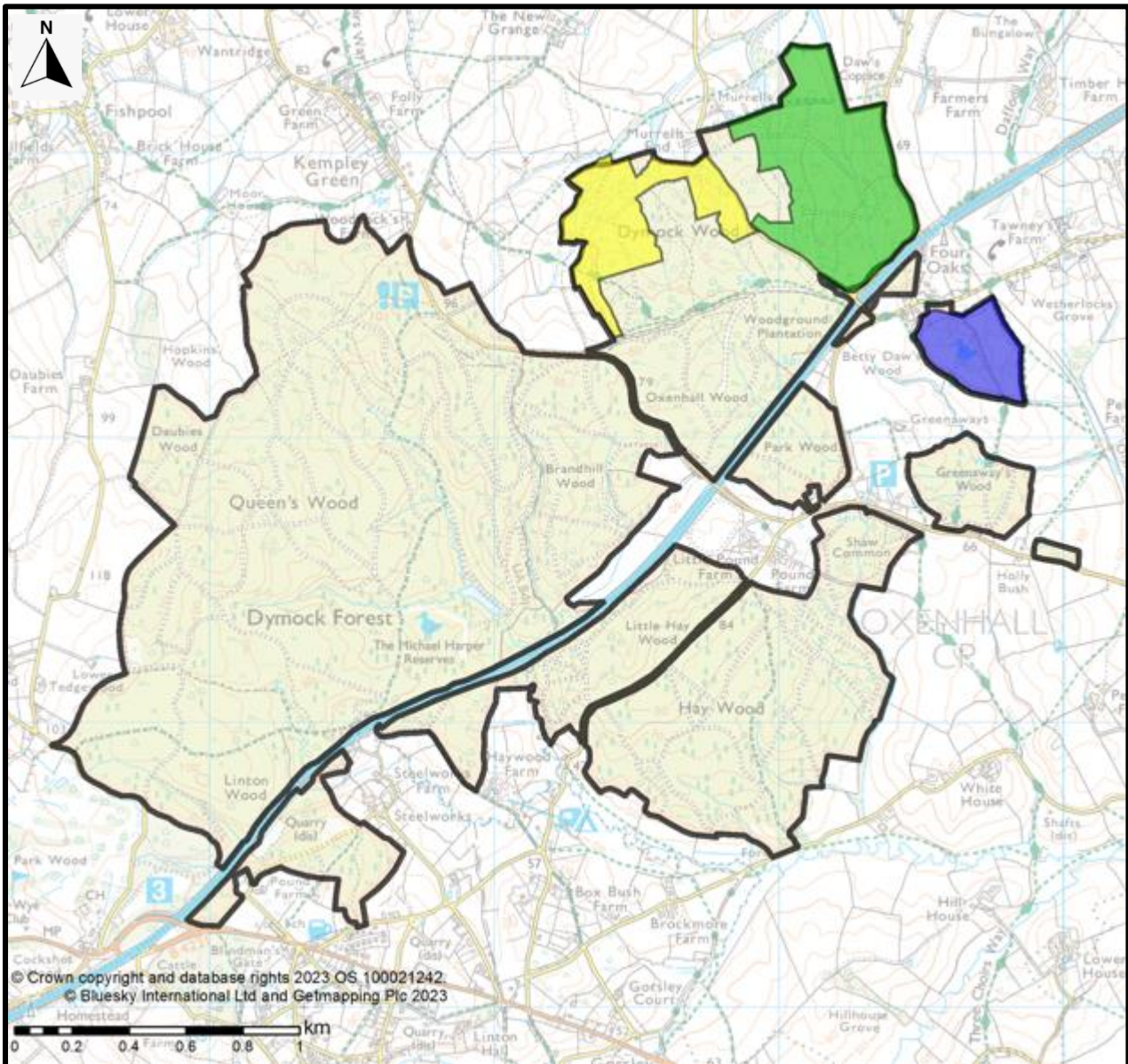




## Designations - Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

An area of 53 hectares of Dymock Wood, Betty Daw’s Wood and Colonel’s Grove is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest as an excellent example of sessile oak dominated woodland and for its Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths). The SSSI consists of three units (sections) - **Figure 5** - which were assessed by Natural England in 2013 and recorded as “unfavourable recovering”, due to “*lack of age structure, lack of veteran trees and scarce deadwood; limited open space; management activities planned but not implemented*”.

Forestry England has an approved SSSI Management Plan for 2019-24, which has been updated to the same timeframe as the Forest Plan, with actions and objectives to improve the condition (see **Appendix 2**). See **page 11** for more about the biodiversity of the SSSI.



**Figure 5**

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Dymock Woods**



SSSI Unit 1



SSSI Unit 2

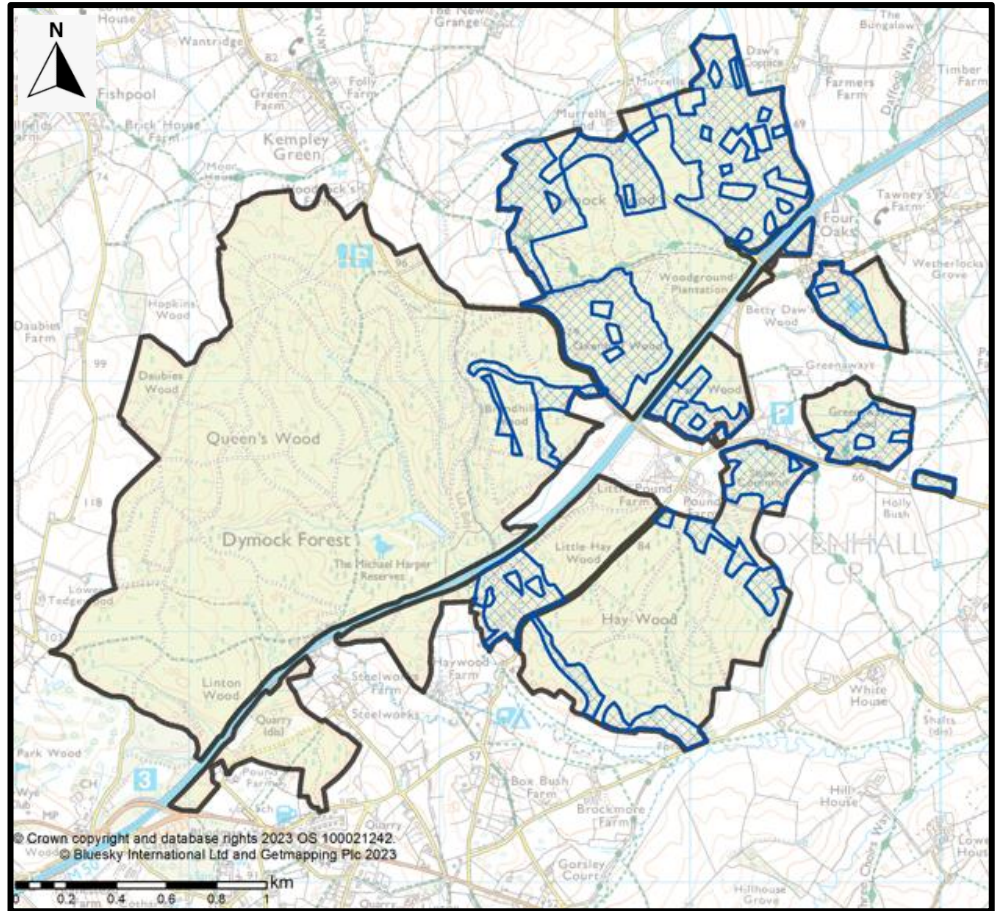


SSSI Unit 3

## Registered seed stand

Large parts of Dymock Wood, Park Wood, Betty Daw's, Shaw Common, Greenaways, Little Hay Wood and Wainhouse Grove have been designated as a FRM (Forest Reproductive Material) registered seed stand owing to the high quality of sessile oak (Figure 6).

Several tons of acorns are collected most years.




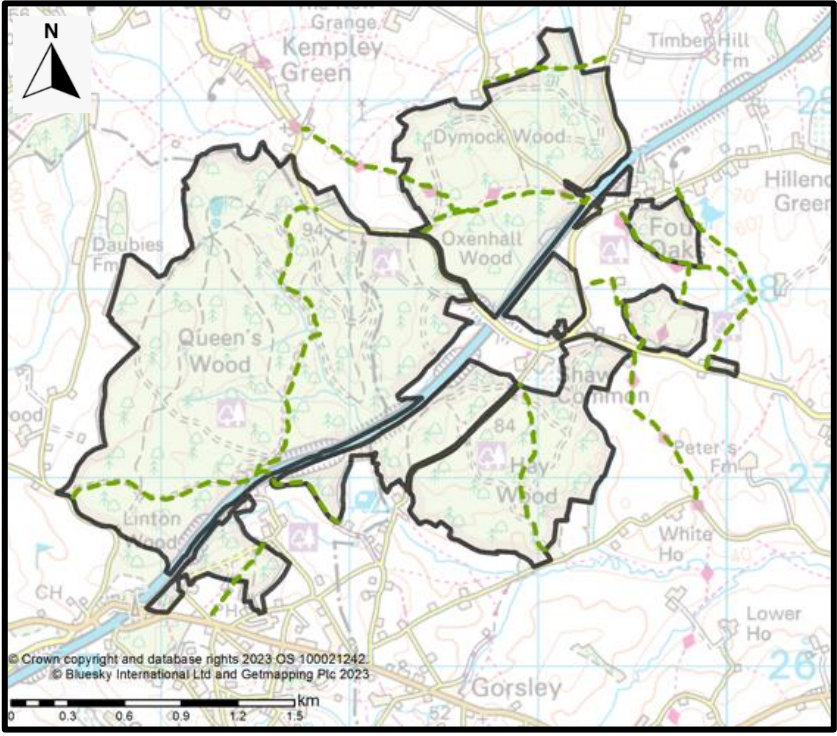
**Figure 6**  
Registered oak seed stands in Dymock Woods 

## Public rights of way

The block is freehold and is dedicated under the CRoW Act, meaning that people are allowed to roam freely on the tracks and trails.

There are a few public rights of way which cross the woods (Figure 7), including the national trail “the Daffodil Way”.

**Figure 7**  
Public rights of way in Dymock Woods 



## Biodiversity - SSSI

The SSSI, the condition of which is described by Natural England as “unfavourable recovering”, is predominantly oak woodland with a hazel understorey in places, most of which has probably been managed as coppice in the past. Until 2008, there were patches of conifers within Units 1 and 2, but these were felled and replaced with planted sessile oak and prolific birch regeneration.

Recent work to improve the condition of the SSSI includes clearing vegetation from ridesides and track junctions to create temporary open space and sunny linear corridors connecting the areas of birch which are

coppiced every 3 to 5 years. Deadwood has been created by felling some native trees and leaving them when they fall (photo to the right).

Potential future veteran trees have been identified and marked with bat and / or bird boxes (photo below), so that they are protected when the woodland around them is thinned.

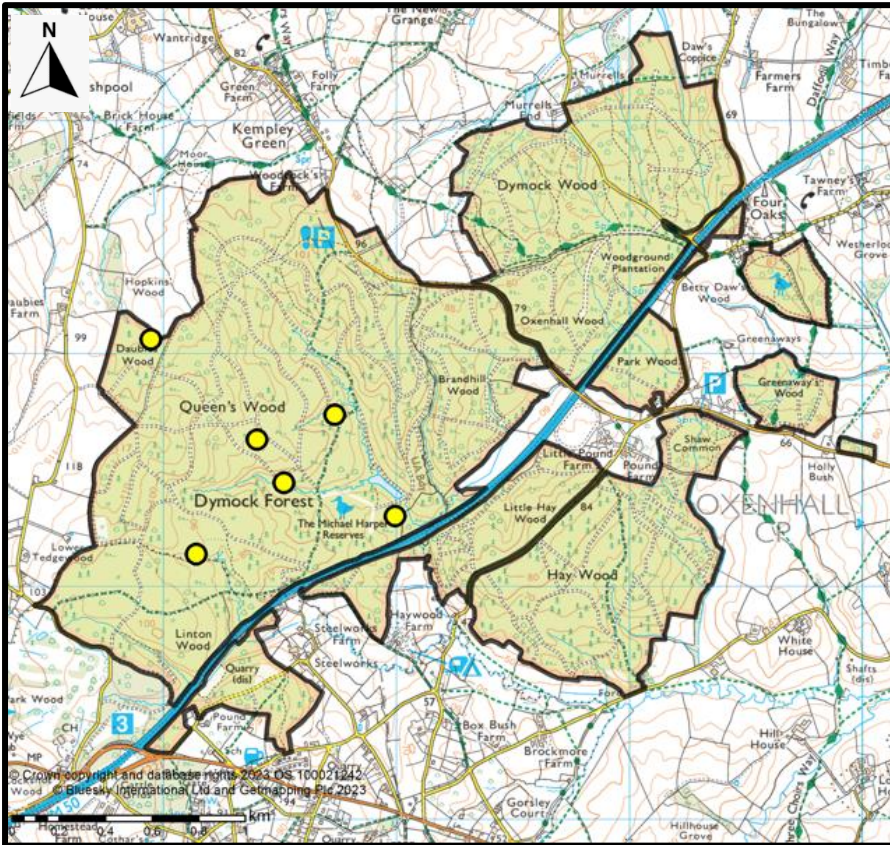


Until recently, Unit 3 of the SSSI (Betty Daw’s Wood and Colonel’s Grove) was managed by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, although responsibility for its management has now passed back to Forestry England. Volunteers have been monitoring bird and dormouse boxes there for many years.

The citation (reason for designation) for the Dymock Woods SSSI is provided in full in the SSSI Management Plan (2023-2033), along with the action plan describing the work we will undertake in order to continue to improve the condition of the SSSI - [Appendix 2](#).

## Biodiversity - Michael Harper Reserves

In Queen's Wood are a number of small, but important, areas managed as nature reserves (Figure 8). They were identified by a local entomologist, Dr Michael Harper, in the late 1960s as habitats of importance for Lepidoptera (moths and butterflies) and, at that time, were just small remnants of coppice, fen and heathland within a productive broadleaved and recently partly coniferised woodland. In agreement with the Forestry Commission, Dr Harper began recording the Lepidoptera here and, along with members of the Ledbury Naturalists Field Club, undertook small scale coppicing and clearing.



**Figure 8**  
Map to show the  
locations of the Michael  
Harper Reserves

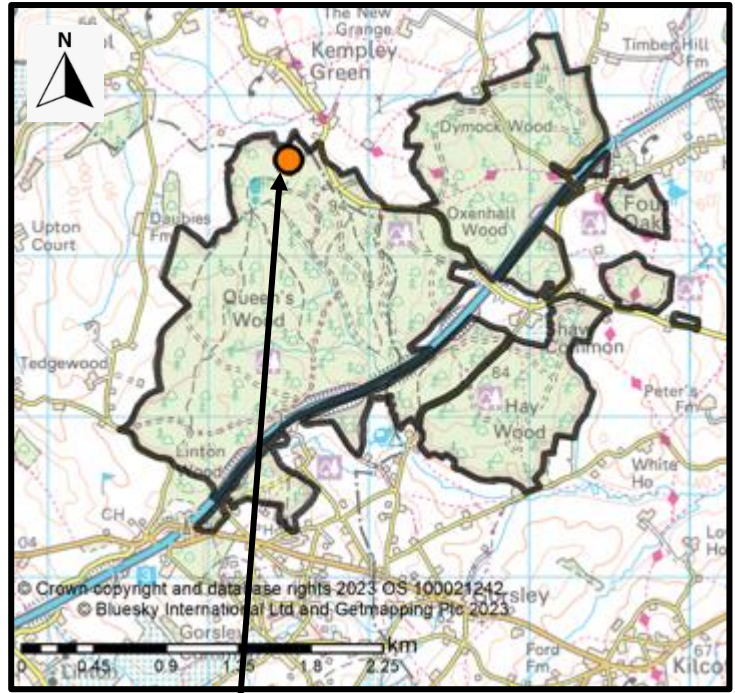
Today these reserves are still managed with biodiversity in mind, predominantly by volunteers under Forestry England guidance. Monitoring continues, not just of Lepidoptera, but also of plants, birds and small mammals including dormice which thrive in the reserves. Neighbouring areas have been cleared of conifers and allowed to regenerate naturally in a mosaic of birch and other broadleaves, patches of open space and heathland vegetation.

More information about the reserves is provided in the Michael Harper Reserves Management Plan - [Appendix 3](#).

## Biodiversity - The Glade

Also in Queen’s Wood (Figure 9) is The Glade - a 2 hectare site which, following the removal of Norway spruce in 2015, was planted with flowering and fruiting trees of local provenance as a community project led by volunteers from DyFRA (Dymock Forest Rural Action). Native tree species include sessile oak, wild cherry and hornbeam, as well as 100 wild service trees planted by local school children in 2019 to celebrate the centenary of the Forestry Commission.

The planted trees, together with birch regeneration, areas of bramble and other shrubs, and a small meadow in which wild daffodils are thriving, will develop into a fantastic habitat for wildlife, especially invertebrates, and are a great example of a partnership approach to native woodland creation and management (photo below).



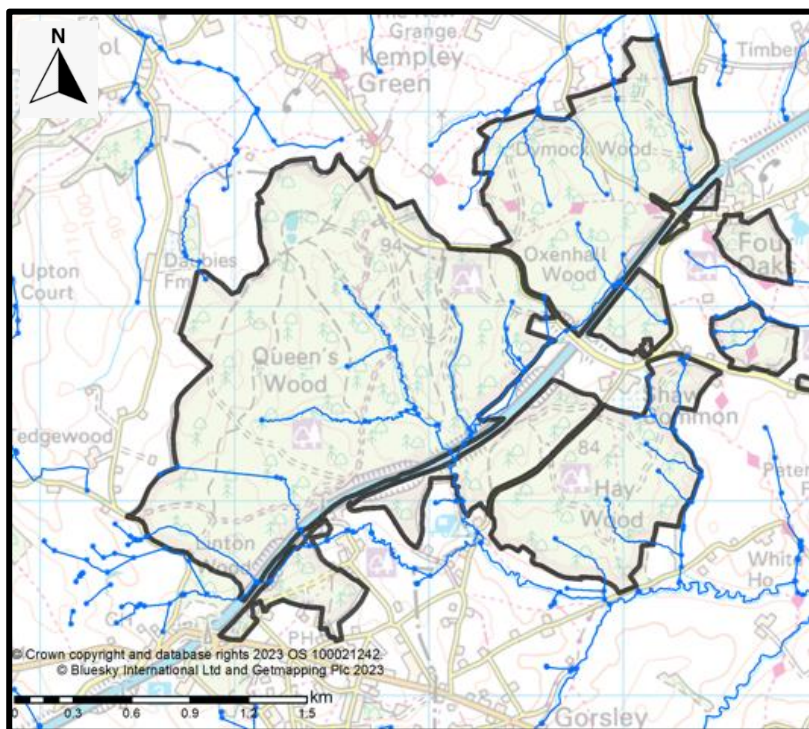
**Figure 9 - Location of The Glade in Queen’s Wood**



## Biodiversity - the rest of Dymock Woods

Although the SSSI, The Glade and the Michael Harper Reserves are specific, defined areas that are managed for biodiversity, the rest of Dymock Woods contain numerous other important habitats and species.

Streams and ponds (Figure 10) support particular assemblages of plants, such as sedges and rushes, and associated invertebrates; in places, fallen branches cause streams to overflow creating wet woodland.



**Figure 10** - Map to show the numerous streams running into and through Dymock Woods, and (above right) one of the many small ponds

More than 1000 species of butterflies and moths have been recorded in Dymock Woods, many of them locally and nationally rare, thanks to the diversity of flora including broad leaved helleborine, fragrant agrimony, herb paris and lily of the valley. Another uncommon invertebrate found here is the glow-worm - not actually a worm, but a beetle - which benefits from the open ridesides and dark night skies. Dormouse habitat, in particular the hazel which grows underneath the much older oaks, is common across Dymock and dormice breed successfully in many parts of the forest. Raven, goshawk and nightingale have also been recorded.

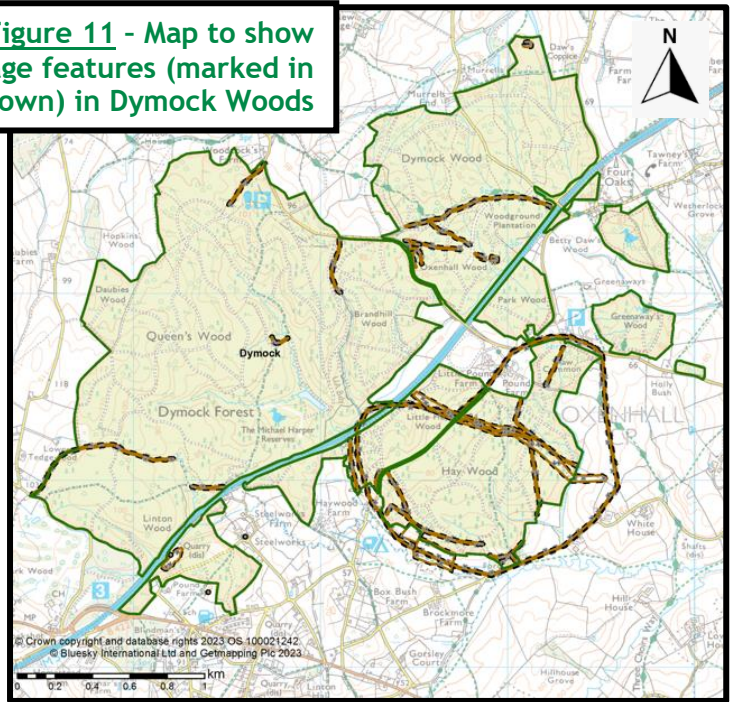
There are remnants of lowland heath in Queen's Wood, and towards the eastern side of the block are areas where wild daffodils flower in the spring (photo to the right), attracting many visitors. In Betty Daw's Wood, a small traditional orchard was planted with pear, plum and apple trees in 2004.



## Heritage

There are a number of unscheduled heritage features on Forestry England land in the Dymock Woods (**Figure 11**). These are mainly linear features - earth banks and associated ditches - the most significant one being the medieval earthwork - 'Danes Bank' - which encircles parts of Hay Wood and Shaw Common.

**Figure 11 - Map to show heritage features (marked in brown) in Dymock Woods**



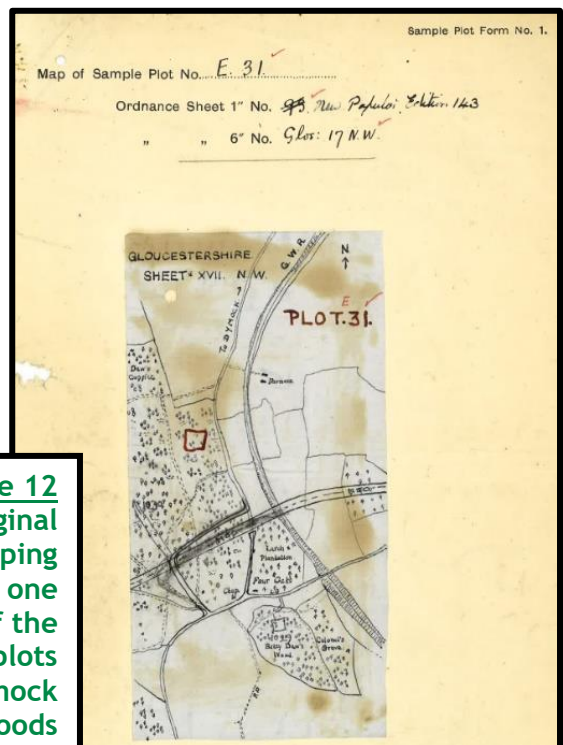
## Dymock - a working forest

As well as being valuable for biodiversity, heritage and recreation, the Dymock Woods produce timber from broadleaf and coniferous trees. Active forest management - thinning, felling and coppicing trees - creates habitats in which wildlife thrives, and visual diversity for people to enjoy.

The eastern parts of the woods - the seed stand - produce some of the best sessile oak timber in the country, and removing the right quantities at the right times provides the remaining oaks with room to develop their crowns, enabling them to grow for many more centuries. Felling conifers, at a scale appropriate to the site, provides temporary open space in which native woodland can become established. Carefully planned thinning leads to a more diverse structure - with smaller trees growing in the gaps created.

## Research plots in Dymock Woods

Forest Research, Great Britain's principal organisation for forestry and tree-related research, has five research plots in the Dymock Woods, three of which are part of the UK's network of permanent mensuration (forest measurement) plots, which date back to the very start of the Forestry Commission in 1920 (**Figure 12**). The oak trees in these plots have been measured from time to time over the past 100 years, contributing to the nationally-used species yield data tables.



**Figure 12 Original mapping (1920) of one of the research plots in Dymock Woods**

## Current tree species

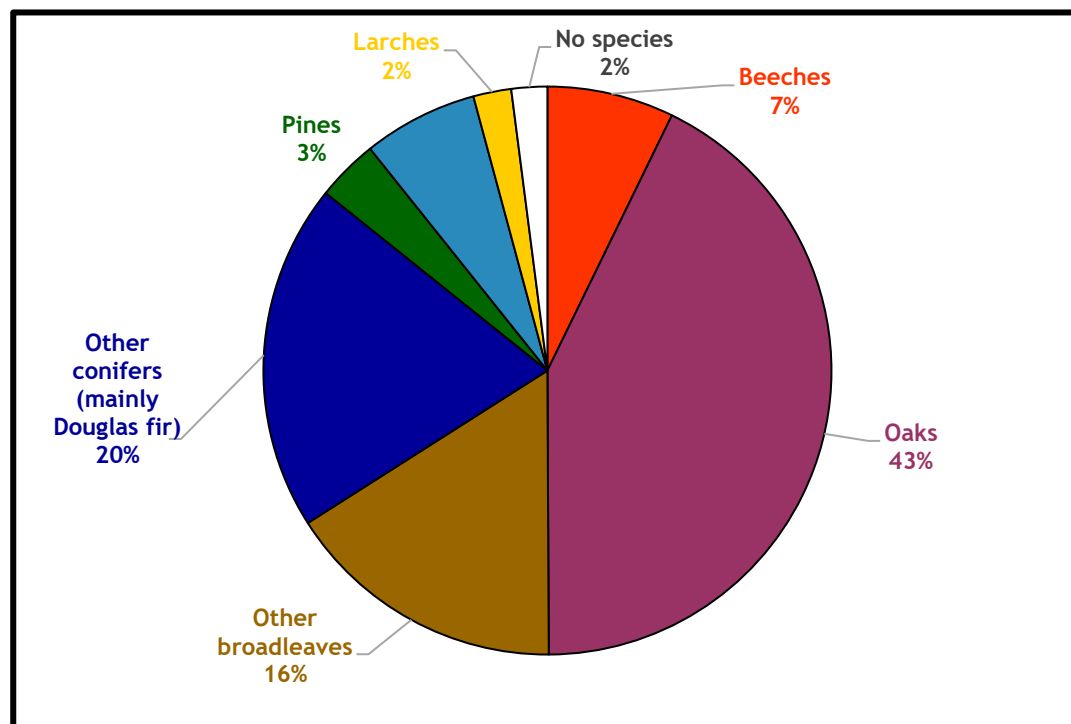
Current proportions of broadleaves, conifers and open space as recorded in Forestry England’s subcompartment database are shown in **Table 1** below.

<b>Table 1 - Proportions of broadleaves and conifers in spring 2023</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Proportion of Dymock Woods plan area</b>
Broadleaves	337 hectares	66%
Conifers	163 hectares	32%
Open / felled / coppiced	10 hectares	2%

Only a small part of the Dymock Woods is currently recorded as “open”, which is not precise because there are always other areas which are temporarily open following coppicing or when rideside vegetation is cut, which are not usually recorded in the database as “open”.

**Figure 13** shows the proportions of each tree species group in the Dymock Woods. The dominant broadleaf species is oak, and the most common conifer is Douglas fir. Other broadleaf species include beech, birch, alder, ash and small leaved lime, and other conifers include Norway spruce, larch and Scots pine.

Another significant species in the broadleaf woodland is hazel, which grows prolifically under the oak canopy and, in places, has been managed as coppice in the past. Hazel is a lower storey component so it has been excluded from the data used in this section because it is very challenging to estimate accurate proportions. Other lower storey components present in smaller proportions include holly and yew.

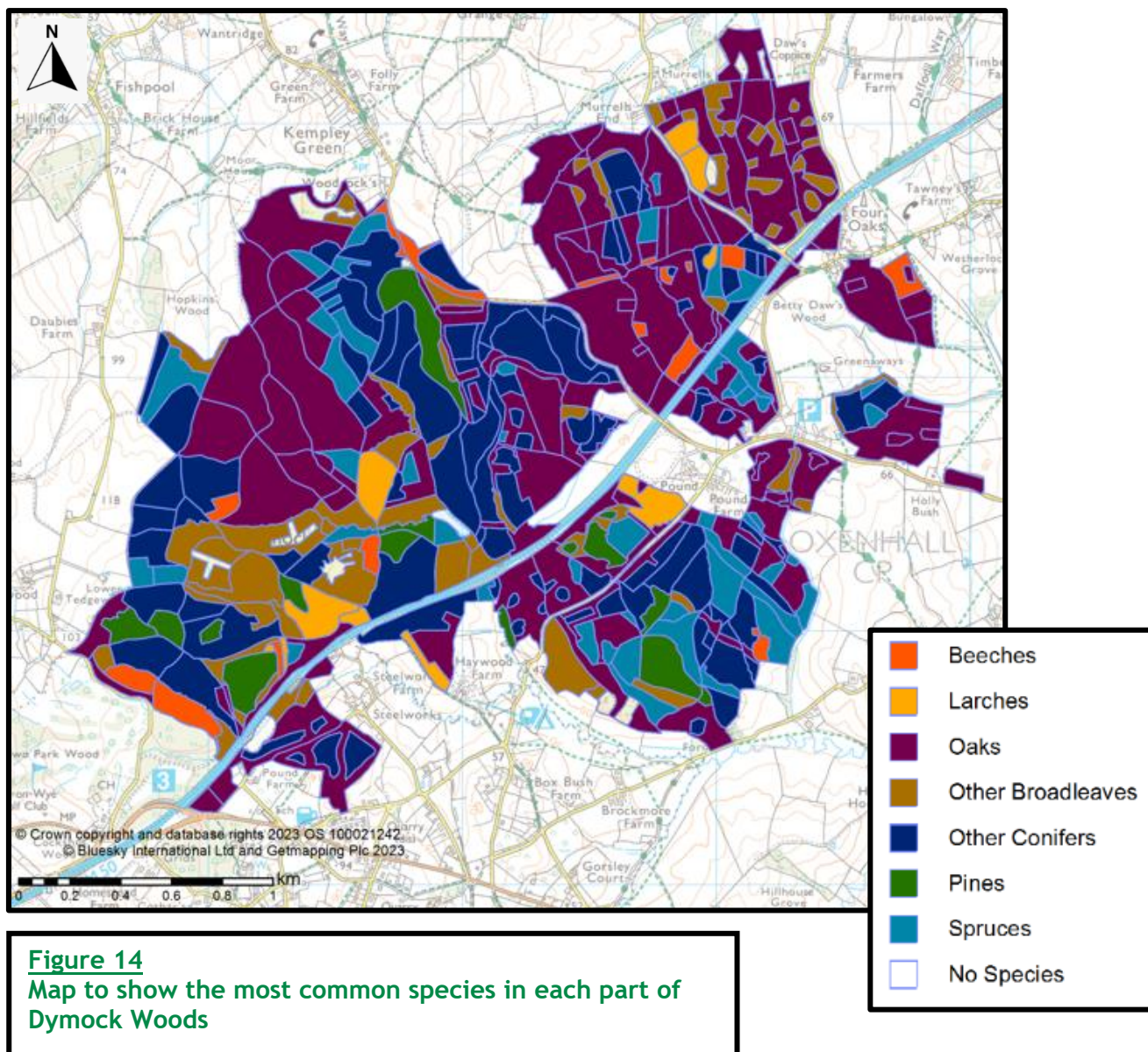


**Figure 13**  
Chart to show proportions of different species in Dymock Woods



## Current tree species (continued)

Figure 14 shows how the tree species groups are distributed throughout Dymock Woods.



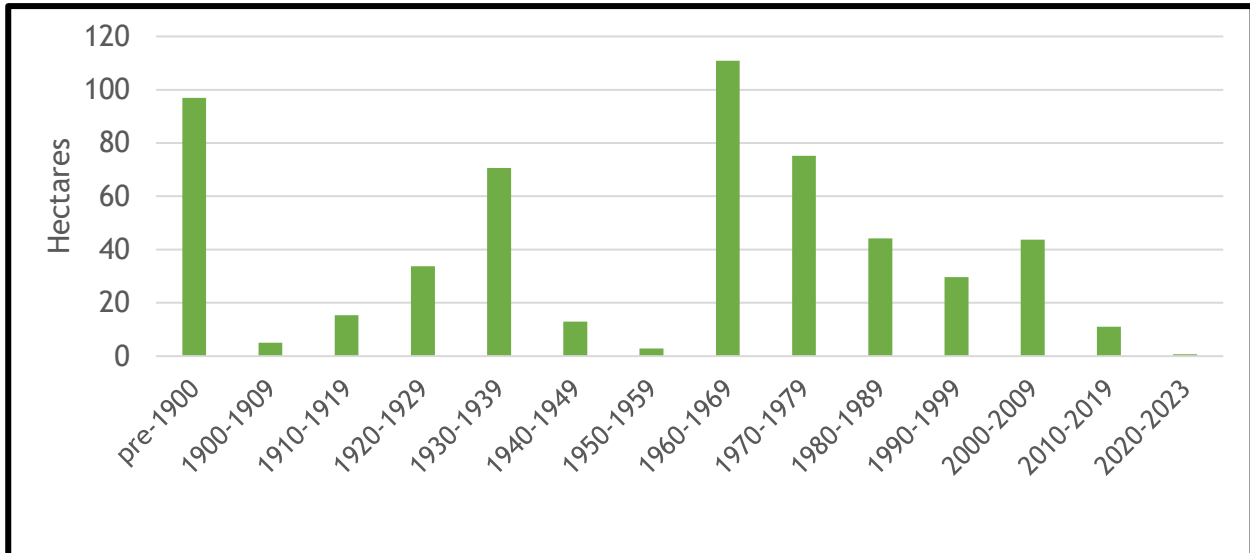
## Pests and diseases in Dymock Woods

Muntjac and roe deer, present in increasing numbers across the Dymock Woods, cause a great deal of damage to regenerating hazel coppice, because they eat the young shoots. Grey squirrels are also a problem - they strip the bark from many broadleaf tree species, affecting the way the tree grows and sometimes killing it. Neither of these mammals were pests when the 1860 and 1930 oaks were established in Dymock, but now, they both have a huge impact on the success of any broadleaf planting or regeneration, and have to be considered in our management planning.

Ash dieback has become a problem in woodlands across the country, but there is very little ash in the Dymock Woods. Diseases of larch and Corsican pine are also causing problems elsewhere, but again, are not a big issue here. At the moment, therefore, tree diseases are not a big driver of management decision making in Dymock.

## Current age composition

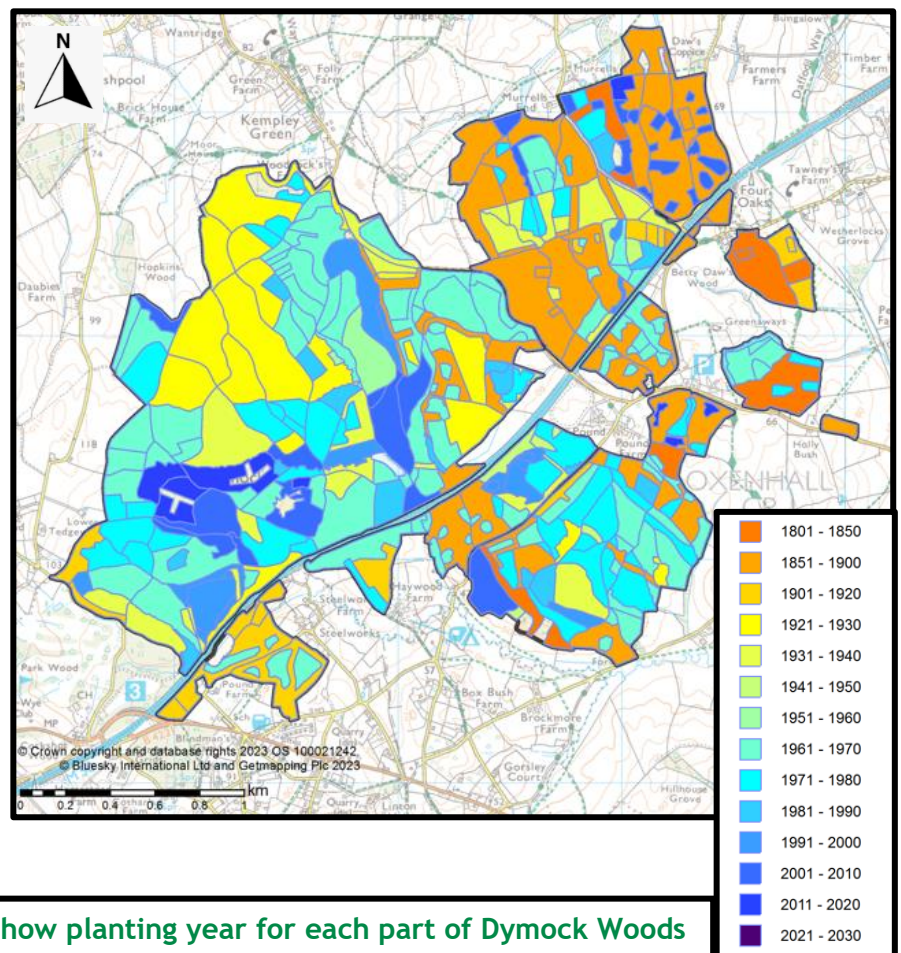
**Figure 15** shows how many hectares of tree planting (or natural regeneration following coppicing or felling) took place in Dymock Woods in each decade. We don't have very accurate records of exact years that the older trees were planted, which is why the pre-1900s have been grouped together.



**Figure 15**  
Chart to show area (in hectares) of Dymock Woods that was established in each decade

**Figure 16** is a map of the woods with the planting / establishment years shown in different colours. The peaks from Figure 9 are matched to some of the most significant features of the woods:

- Pre-1900 planting is shown in orange - this is the oak seed stands in the eastern parts of Dymock Woods.
- The yellow areas are where extensive areas of oaks were planted around 1930.
- Turquoise parts are where conifers were planted in the 1960s and 70s.
- Darker blues represent more recent planting and coppicing in the SSSI and Michael Harper Reserves.





**Figure 16** - map to show planting year for each part of Dymock Woods

## Section 3 - Objectives

Our Forest Plan objectives, and how they link to the Forestry England vision, are listed in [Table 2](#) below.

**Table 2**  
Objectives of management in Dymock Woods

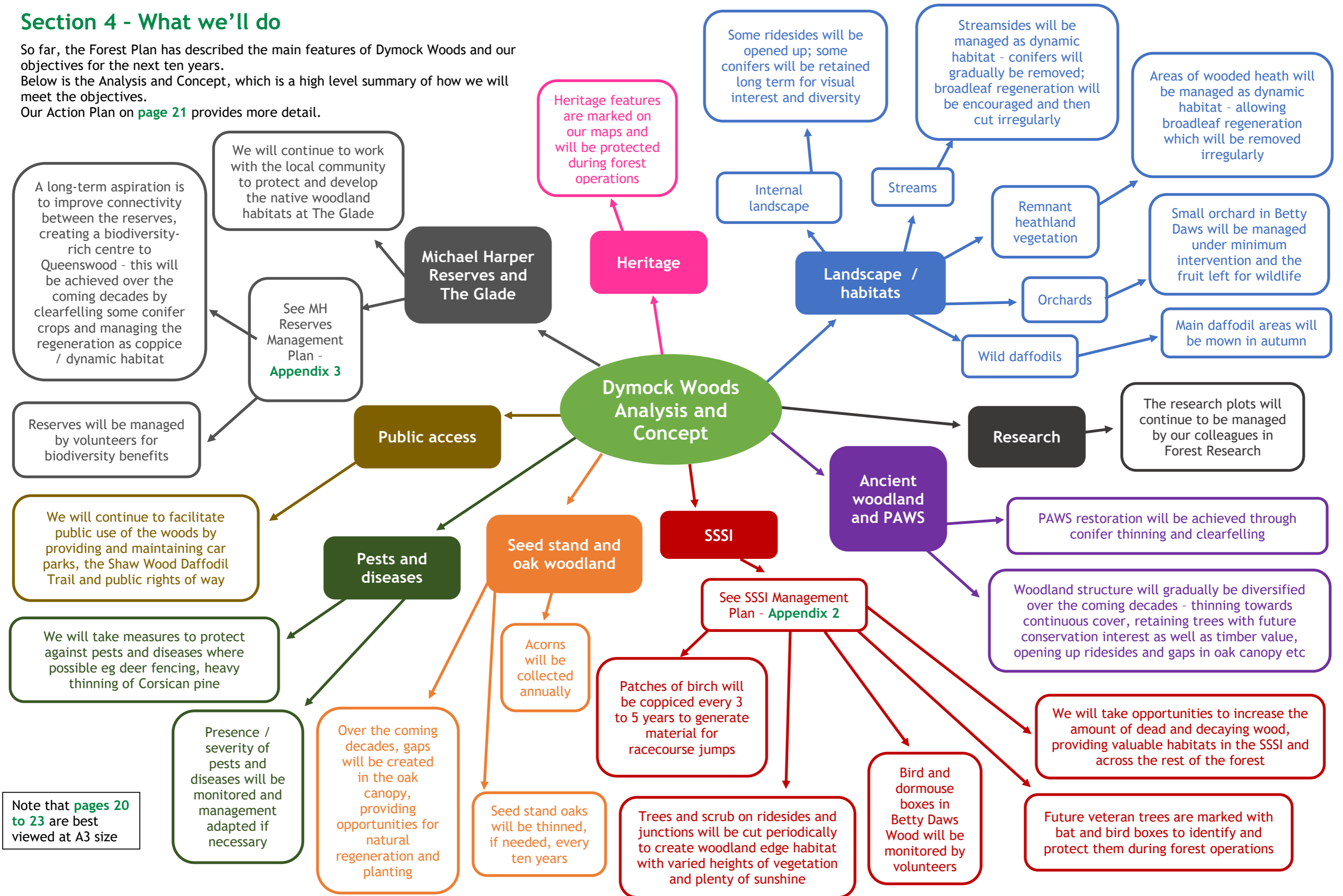
<p><b>Forestry England vision for the nation's forests</b> </p> <p><b>Dymock Woods Forest Plan objectives</b> </p>	<p><b>Our vision for wildlife:</b> The nation's forests provide the most valuable places for wildlife to thrive and expand in England.</p>	<p><b>Our vision for people:</b> The nation's forests are a living treasure for all, deeply connected to people's lives, improving the health and wellbeing of the nation.</p>	<p><b>Our vision for the climate:</b> The nation's forests are resilient to climate change, increasing their value for communities by producing high-quality, sustainable timber and absorbing carbon emissions.</p>
Generate <b>forest products</b> to suit current / changing markets			✓
Increase <b>resilience</b> to future changes in climate, pests and diseases	✓	✓	✓
Improve <b>ecological condition</b> and restore ancient woodland	✓	✓	✓
Protect the <b>historic environment</b>		✓	
Provide opportunities for <b>informal public use and enjoyment</b>		✓	

## Section 4 - What we'll do

So far, the Forest Plan has described the main features of Dymock Woods and our objectives for the next ten years.

Below is the Analysis and Concept, which is a high level summary of how we will meet the objectives.

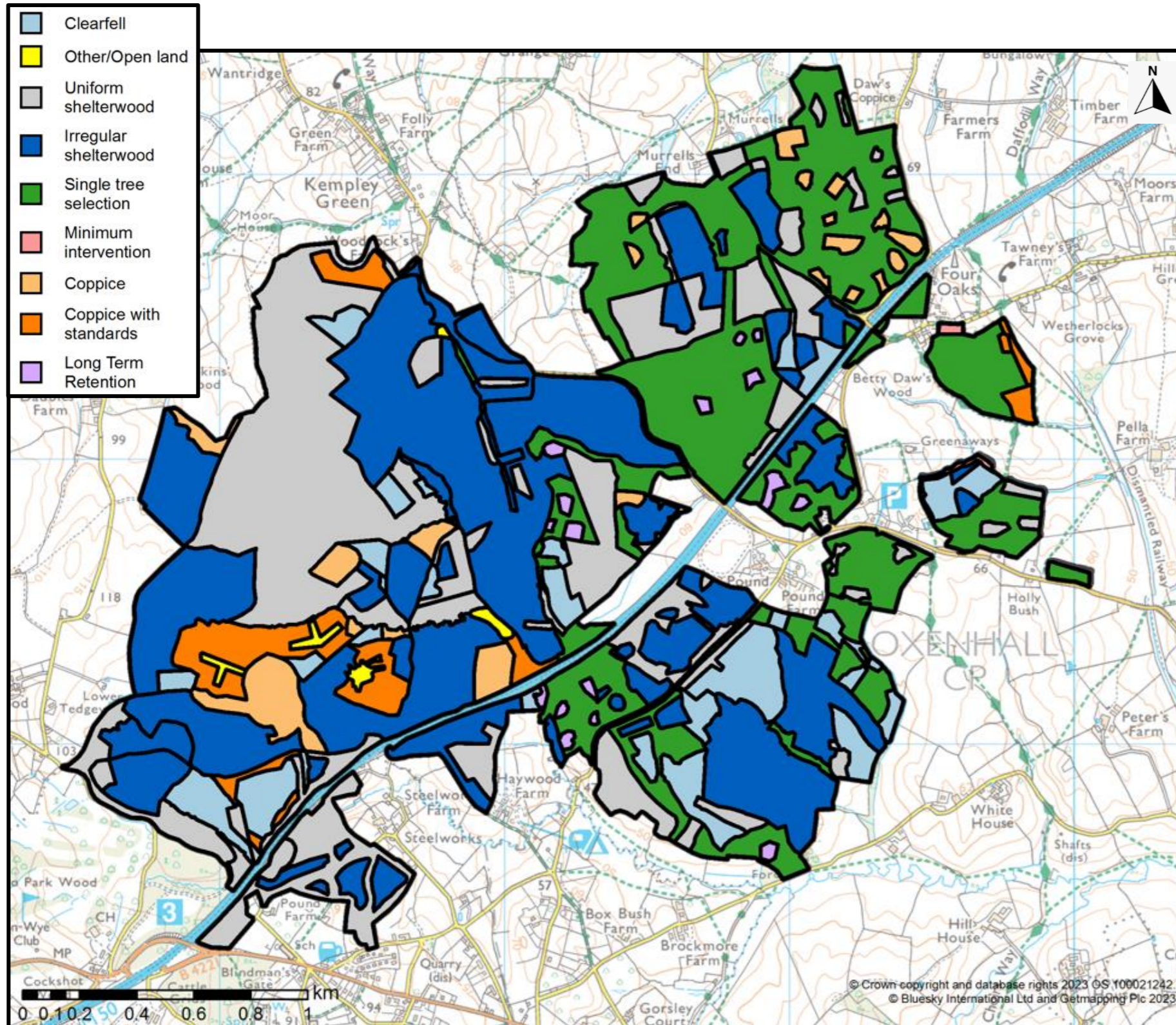
Our Action Plan on [page 21](#) provides more detail.



Note that [pages 20 to 23](#) are best viewed at A3 size

Dymock Woods Action Plan  Actions - what we will do (2023-33)	Objectives - what we hope to achieve					Monitoring - how we will measure success
	Generate forest products to suit current / changing markets	Increase resilience to future changes in climate, pests and diseases	Improve ecological condition and restore ancient woodland	Protect the historic environment	Provide opportunities for informal public use and enjoyment	**note that some of these are long-term goals - possibly not evidenced in this Forest Plan period
<b>Ancient woodland and PAWS</b> Conifer and broadleaf thinning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All stands will be surveyed for readiness for thinning between 2024 and 2029</li> <li>Conifer thinning regime will depend on whether stand is being worked towards final clearfell or PAWS restoration (see management prescriptions map <a href="#">page 22</a>)</li> <li>Oak thinning - favour best timber trees AND those with veteran / biodiversity potential</li> <li>Begin to create gaps in oak canopy where natural regeneration is developing underneath (probably in future plan periods)</li> </ul> Conifer clearfells - for detail, see felling plan on <a href="#">page 23</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearfell 5 conifer coupes - total 8.88ha</li> <li>Restock with broadleaves / natural regeneration</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have conifers been thinned?</li> <li>Have clearfells and restocking been carried out as per the felling plan?</li> <li>**Has proportion of conifers been reduced?*</li> <li>**Have gaps been created in oak canopy facilitating natural regeneration? **</li> </ul>
<b>Seed stand</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess for readiness for thinning every ten years - thin to encourage crowns to develop so that oaks continue to produce quality timber and acorn crop</li> <li>Continue to facilitate annual acorn collection</li> </ul>	✓					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>**Have seed stand oaks been thinned?*</li> <li>Are acorns being collected regularly?</li> </ul>
<b>SSSI</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions are listed in the SSSI Management Plan - <a href="#">Appendix 2</a></li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring methods are set out in the SSSI management plan - <a href="#">Appendix 2</a></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape / habitats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve water quality and value of streamside habitats, conifers will be removed from along watercourses, and broadleaves allowed to regenerate; they will then be managed as dynamic habitat (<a href="#">page 22</a>)</li> <li>Opportunities to coppice rideside vegetation, creating sunny corridors for Lepidoptera, will be identified through the site planning process prior to forest operations (apart from in the SSSI where it is more formally mapped)</li> <li>Some conifers (eg Scots pine, Douglas fir) will be retained to become very large and old, and deadwood will be allowed to accumulate to benefit invertebrates</li> <li>Wooded heath areas will be managed as dynamic habitat (<a href="#">page 22</a>)</li> <li>Daffodil areas will be mowed in autumn</li> <li>The orchard will be managed under minimum intervention, leaving the fruit for wildlife and for local people to forage</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>**Have conifers been removed from streamside?*</li> <li>**How successful is dynamic habitat management (streams / wooded heath)?**</li> <li>Have opportunities been taken to open up ridesides?</li> <li>Have some conifers been identified for long term retention?</li> </ul>
<b>Michael Harper Reserves and The Glade</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions are listed in the MH Reserves Management Plan - <a href="#">Appendix 3</a></li> <li>Continue to work with Dyfra to develop ideas to increase biodiversity in the Glade and surrounding woodland</li> </ul>				✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are MH Reserves being managed according to the plan (<a href="#">Appendix 3</a>)?</li> <li>Have we continued to work with Dyfra to develop projects for biodiversity?</li> </ul>
<b>Heritage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that heritage features are marked on our maps and are considered in the site planning process before forest operations</li> </ul>				✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are historic features considered during the site planning process?</li> </ul>
<b>Community engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform stakeholders about the Forest Plan through the external consultation process - trial new methods of engagement and analyse effectiveness</li> <li>Continue to value work carried out by volunteers - MH Reserves, The Glade and nestbox monitoring</li> </ul>					✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How much public engagement has taken place, and has it been successful?</li> <li>Are volunteers still welcomed and valued?</li> </ul>

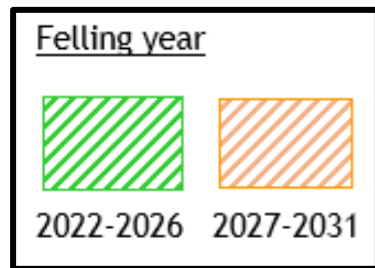
## Our management prescriptions for Dymock Woods (Figure 17)



**Figure 17 - Management prescriptions for Dymock Woods**

- Conifer crops with substantial broadleaf understorey will be managed as **irregular shelterwood** - the overstorey of conifers will be removed gradually through thinning, creating space around the broadleaves so that they can develop to become the next crop.
- The 1930s oaks and some other broadleaf areas are managed as **uniform shelterwood** - the overstorey provides seed and shelter for the next generation of trees to develop.
- The oak seed stand and other pre-1800 oaks will be managed under a **single tree selection** system where trees are considered, and managed, individually. This will enable them to continue to be a valuable seed source and to develop into very old trees providing important wildlife habitats in the future.
- Some conifer crops, which have no significant broadleaf component, will be **clearfelled** when they reach economic maturity, either in this plan period or future decades (see felling plan - [page 23](#)), and restocked with native broadleaf species.
- The orchard in Betty Daws Wood and a strip along the northern edge of Greenaways will be managed under **minimum intervention**, which benefits species that do well under low levels of disturbance.
- **Coppicing** is important in Dymock Woods, and there are a few different types of management that fall under this heading, all of which create mosaics of temporary open space and different aged regrowth:
  - Areas of birch in the centre of Queen's Wood and the SSSI will be cut every 3 to 5 years or so, generating material for horse racecourse jumps.
  - The Michael Harper Reserves are managed on coppice rotations of varying lengths to benefit different species of flora and fauna.
  - The Glade and part of Colonel's Grove are managed as **coppice with standards** (individual trees at low density which are left to grow on when the understorey is cut).
- Small patches of conifers growing among the large areas of broadleaf woodland will be thinned gradually towards PAWS restoration, with the intention of keeping some individual conifers and small groups as **long-term retention** to provide visual interest and diversity in the internal landscape.
- **Dynamic habitat** - although not recorded as a management type in our GIS system (and therefore not shown on [Figure 17](#)), Forestry England values transitional, dynamic habitats, for example where scattered trees grow irregularly in former open space, and where ridesides and streamsides are partially cleared and then allowed to regenerate naturally. Ecologically, these areas provide a wealth of microhabitats - in shade and in sunlight, and with mosaics of different aged vegetation and open space - and are even more valuable where they are linked together to form networks. In Dymock, the lightly wooded heath adjacent to the Michael Harper Reserves will be managed as dynamic habitat (recorded on [Figure 17](#) as 'coppice with standards'), as will some streamsides and ridesides.

Dymock Woods - felling plan 2023-2033 (Figure 18)



**Clearfell coupe 28041 (0.64ha)**  
Fell 2028/29

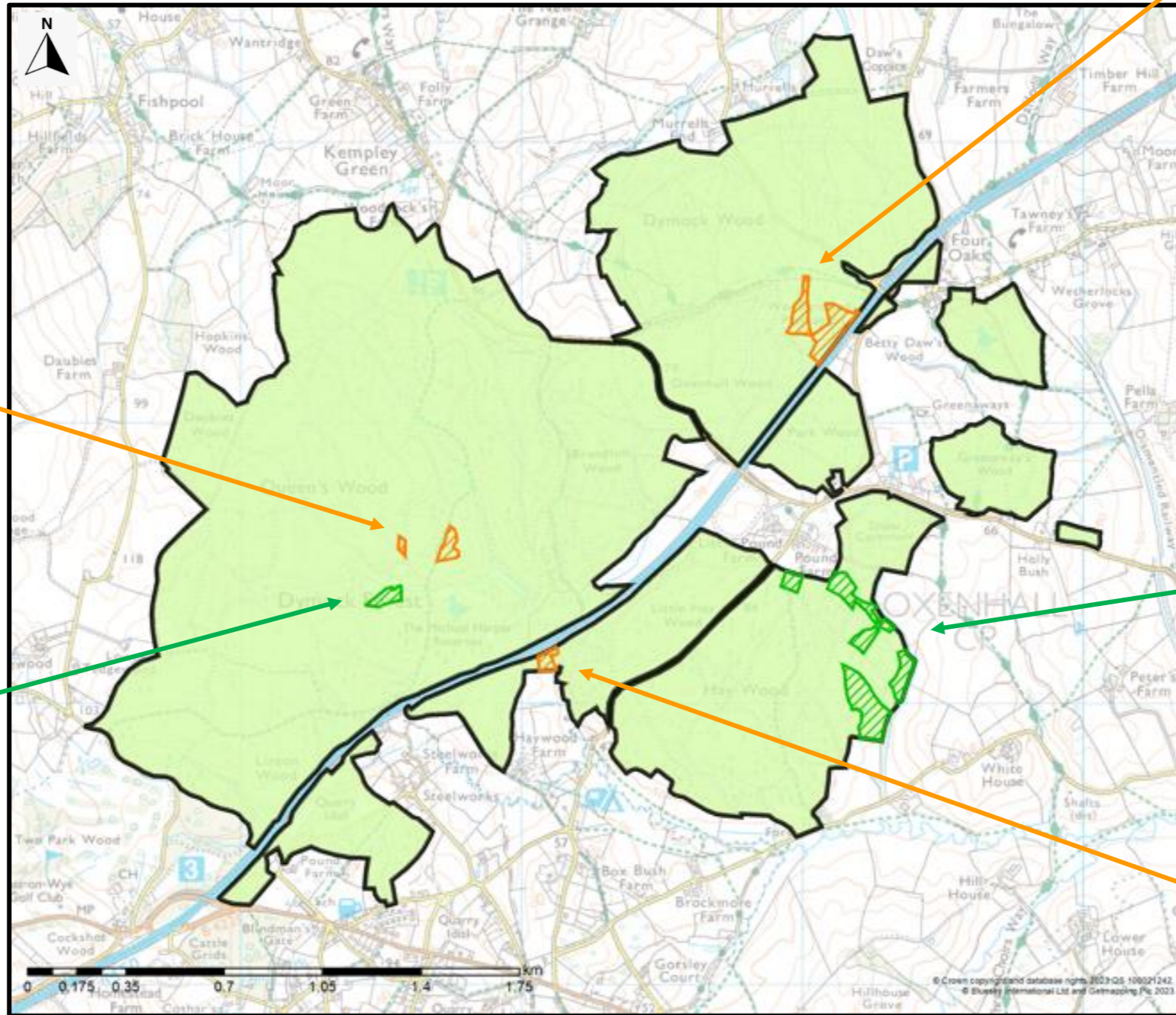
Create large open glades up to 0.1ha on rideside

**Restock:**  
Allow to regenerate naturally into areas of dynamic habitat that will be coppiced from time to time and will improve connectivity between the Michael Harper Reserves

**Clearfell coupe 28039 (0.50ha)**  
Fell 2024/25

Clearfell Norway spruce in centre of Michael Harper Fiveways Reserve

**Restock:**  
Allow to regenerate naturally then will be managed by volunteers as coppice / dynamic habitat



**Clearfell coupe 28061 (2.38ha)**  
Fell 2028/29

Clearfell Norway spruce and Douglas fir; retain broadleaves along the edge of the motorway and consider keeping a few individual mature Douglas fir for visual interest / long term retention

**Restock:**  
Restock with mixed broadleaves - oak, hornbeam

**Clearfell coupe 28011 (4.97ha)**  
Fell 2023/24

Clearfell Norway spruce and Douglas fir; retain any broadleaves

**Restock:**  
Restock the majority of the coupe (4.7ha) with mixed broadleaves - oak, wild cherry, lime

Allow streamside to regenerate naturally to become dynamic habitat (0.3ha) - a mosaic of native species and open space that may be coppiced from time to time

**Clearfell coupe 28019 (0.39ha)**  
Fell 2028/29

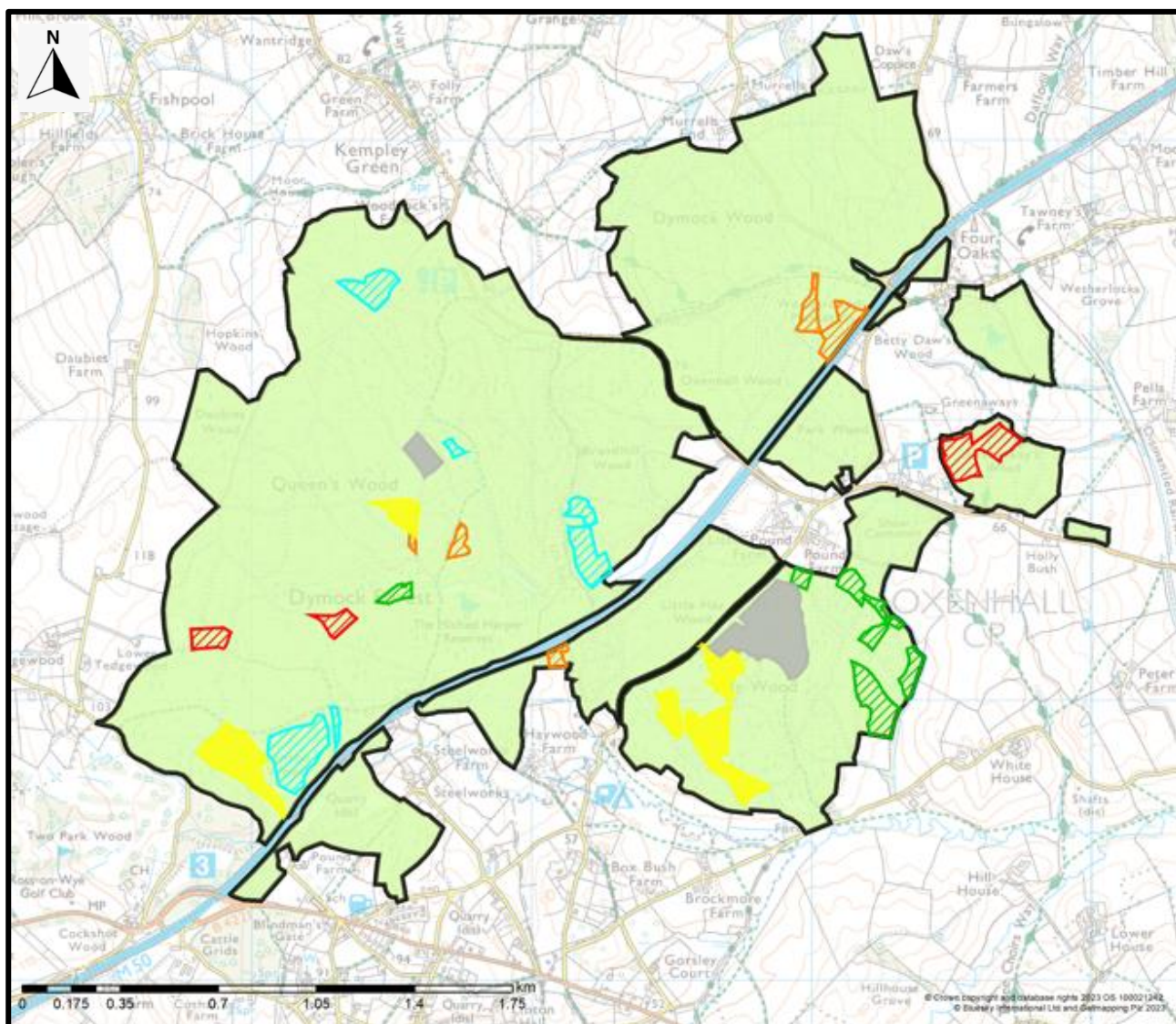
Clearfell when thinning neighbouring coupe

**Restock:**  
Restock the majority of the coupe with common alder and oak

Allow streamside to regenerate naturally to become dynamic habitat - a mosaic of native species and open space that may be coppiced from time to time

Figure 18 - Felling operations to be carried out in the Dymock Woods 2023-2033

## Dymock Woods - felling plan 2023-2053 (Figure 19)



**Figure 19 - Long term felling plan for Dymock Woods 2023-2053**

### Felling year





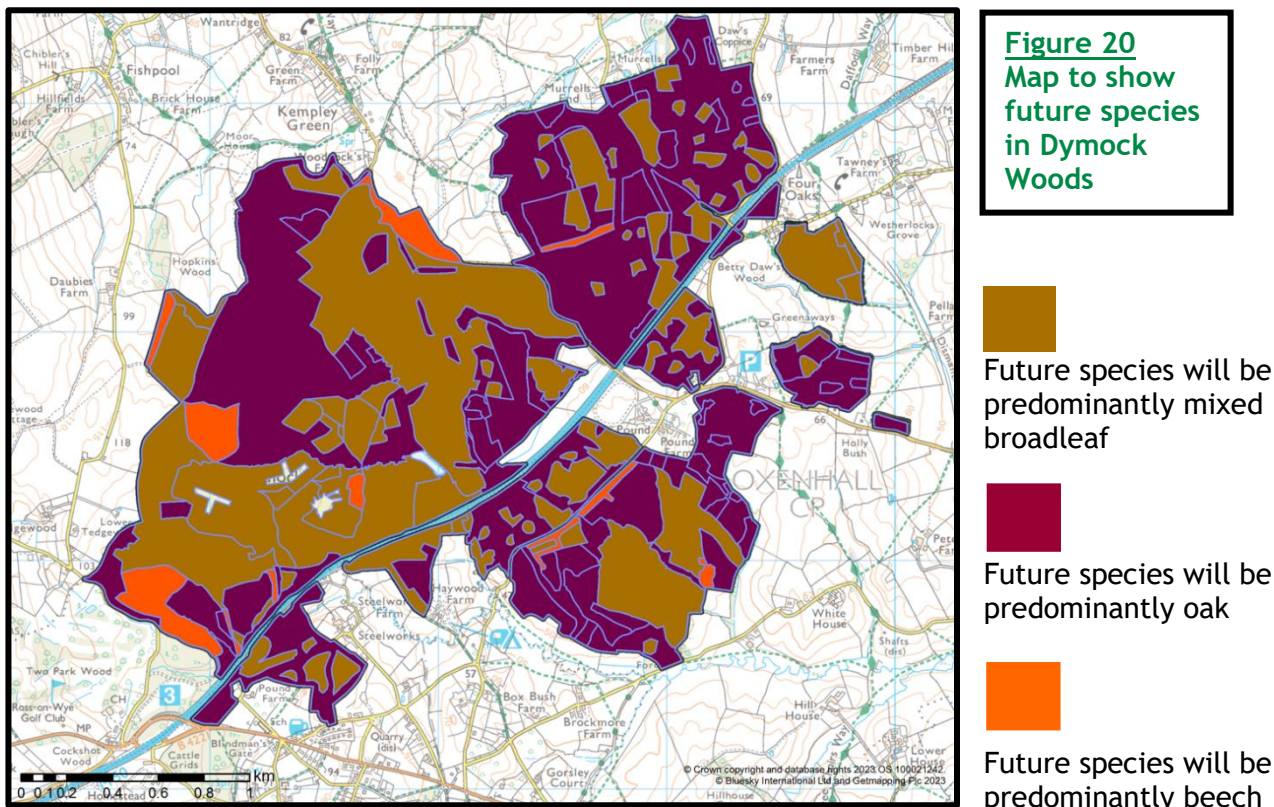
## Future habitats and species

The proportion of conifers in Dymock Woods will gradually be reduced through clearfelling conifer crops and through thinning mixed stands to favour broadleaf trees.

Many of the broadleaf crops in Dymock, for example the 1930s oaks, are being managed under shelterwood systems, meaning that the overstorey provides the seeds for the next generation of trees, and suggesting that future crops will be of a similar composition to those currently growing on site. However, in order to ensure that the woods are resilient to changes in climate and pests and diseases, we will need to take opportunities to diversify. This is not a priority for this plan period (2023-33) because the oaks are still relatively young and have decades of growth ahead of them. However, in future plan periods, we will need to create gaps in the oak canopy and plant more varied species mixtures.

When choosing which species to plant in the gaps and following clearfelling, we will consider the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) woodland type and other site features, such as aspect and soil, and will begin to use the Forest Development Types (FDT) system as and when it is adopted by Forestry England. We expect to continue to plant oak, as well as lime, wild cherry and hornbeam, alder in wet areas, and other minor species such as hazel and wild service. We may take opportunities to plant experimental species in order to assess their potential for forestry in the future. However, as almost all of the Dymock Woods are PAWS, these experiments will be on a very small scale and with the approval of our ecologist.

**Figure 20** below gives a broad overview of the future species - indicating that we anticipate the Dymock Woods to retain a high proportion of oaks, with some areas of beech, and the remainder being mixed broadleaf woodland. Note that the map does not represent a specific date because crops will all reach maturity and be replaced at different times. Note also that the map doesn't show the diversity of species that we anticipate being present in Dymock in the future - areas shown as mixed broadleaf will actually contain many different species, and areas shown as oak or beech will be more structurally diverse and species rich than the current crops.



## Section 4 - Appendices

Remove page numbering for appendices so that SSSI plan and MH plan have their own page numbering

### Appendix 1

#### Explanation of some of the terms used in the Forest Plan:

- **Natural capital value** - from the soils to the trees, and all the species which live in them, the whole forest ecosystem is a resource known as '**natural capital**'. Forestry England uses a natural capital approach to help understand the value to society of the various benefits that come from the nation's forests.
- We measure the area of our land in **hectares** - one hectare (ha) is equal to one hundred metres by one hundred metres, or the equivalent of about two and a half acres.
- **Ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW)** and **plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS)** are described on page 8.
- **Broadleaves** are trees with broad, flat leaves e.g. oak, hazel, birch. Most are deciduous (lose their leaves in winter). **Conifers** are trees with cones and needles e.g. Norway spruce, Douglas fir. Most are evergreen, but not all e.g. larch is a deciduous conifer.
- The forest is divided into **coupes** - groups of trees which will be managed in the same way. Management prescriptions (**forest operations**) include:
  - **Clearfelling** - where all the trees in an area are cut down - often because they have reached economic maturity (their highest possible economic value), but sometimes due to disease; clearfelling provides temporary open space and the opportunity to **restock** (replant) with a different species which may be more appropriate for the site and its management objectives.
  - **Coppicing** - a traditional woodland management technique where broadleaf trees are cut at the base allowing new stems to sprout; sometimes the whole coupe is coppiced; sometimes, larger trees (**standards**) are left alone and allowed to continue to grow. Areas of woodland that are not coppiced are usually referred to as **high forest**.
  - **LISS** - or **low impact silvicultural systems** - provide an alternative to clearfell, involving careful thinning of the existing crop and encouragement of natural regeneration / underplanting, to maintain continuous forest cover and conditions, and to develop the next generations of trees. These include **shelterwood** and **selection** systems which are explained on page 22.
  - **Thinning** is where selected trees are removed, giving the remaining trees room to develop.

- **Rides** are tracks through the forest - **ridesides** are often mown or coppiced to make them light and welcoming for visitors, and to create open sunny spaces for flowering plants and insects.
- A **stand** is a group, or area, of trees that are more or less homogeneous (the same) in terms of species composition, density and age. Stands of trees may be planted deliberately (**plantation**) or arise from **natural regeneration**, where trees grow from seeds which arrived on the site through natural means, usually from the previous crop, or overstorey.
- The **understorey** is made up of the trees and shrubs that grow underneath the main crop (the **overstorey**), from seeds from above, or through deliberate **underplanting** (where new trees are planted under the main crop). The understorey provides habitats for wildlife, and will often become the next crop of trees, when the overstorey is felled. The tops of the trees (the crown or leaves) is sometimes referred to as the **canopy**.
- The forest is managed by a beat team, which includes the **forester**, **ecologist**, community ranger, works supervisor (who oversees the operational contracts) and tariffing team (who measure and mark which trees will be felled and which will be kept during forest operations).
- **Veteran trees** have characteristics, such as holes, hollow trunks and fungi, that are valuable for wildlife. Sometimes they may be **halo thinned**, which is when neighbouring competing trees are removed to give the veterans more space. Standing and fallen **deadwood** also provides excellent wildlife habitat and is often left behind after forest operations.
- The **NVC (National Vegetation Classification)** describes the plant communities and trees that would grow naturally on a site - we use it to guide species choice when deciding what to plant as it gives us an idea of which species will grow successfully.
- **FDT (Forest Development Types)** is a new system which will provide guidance as to how manage stands of mixed species in the forest.
- **Dynamic habitat** refers to areas of patchy natural regeneration and open space, where trees will be removed from time to time to create a mosaic of different ages and types of vegetation.

Appendix 2 - Dymock Woods SSSI Management Plan

Appendix 3 - Michael Harper Reserves Management Plan

Add to final version as PDFs

Appendix 4 - Consultation record

Summary of 'we asked, you said, we did' will be added after external consultation

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