



Forestry England

# Growing the nation's forests

## A proposed new woodland at East Worth, West Devon

### We are planting new woodlands to expand the nation's forests

We are working on designs for a new woodland at East Worth, West Devon, approximately 1/2 mile north of the village of Northlew. We would like your comments and feedback on our initial proposals. Your feedback will inform our final designs for the woodland.

Working with public and private landowners, we're choosing the right places for woodlands to grow and flourish, carefully planting a mix of tree species to be resilient in our changing climate.

Every new woodland will have public access so you can explore and enjoy them to support your health and wellbeing.

They will be valuable places for wildlife, often linking other woods to provide green corridors for wildlife to move and thrive across the landscape.

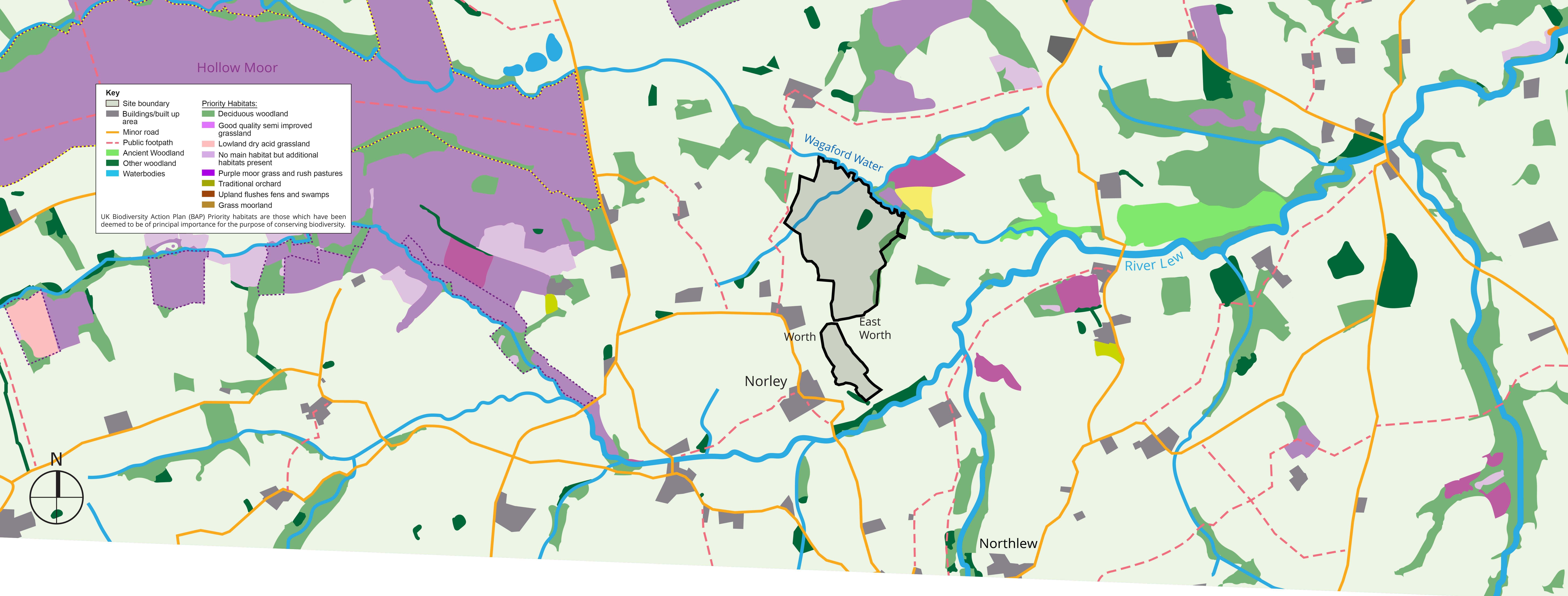
In time, each new woodland will provide sustainable timber, contributing to a rural economy. And they'll have wider environmental benefits including absorbing carbon, improving soil health and air quality, and combating flooding.

Forestry England is creating these woodlands through the Nature for Climate Fund.

Scan the QR code to find out more:

[forestryengland.uk](https://forestryengland.uk)





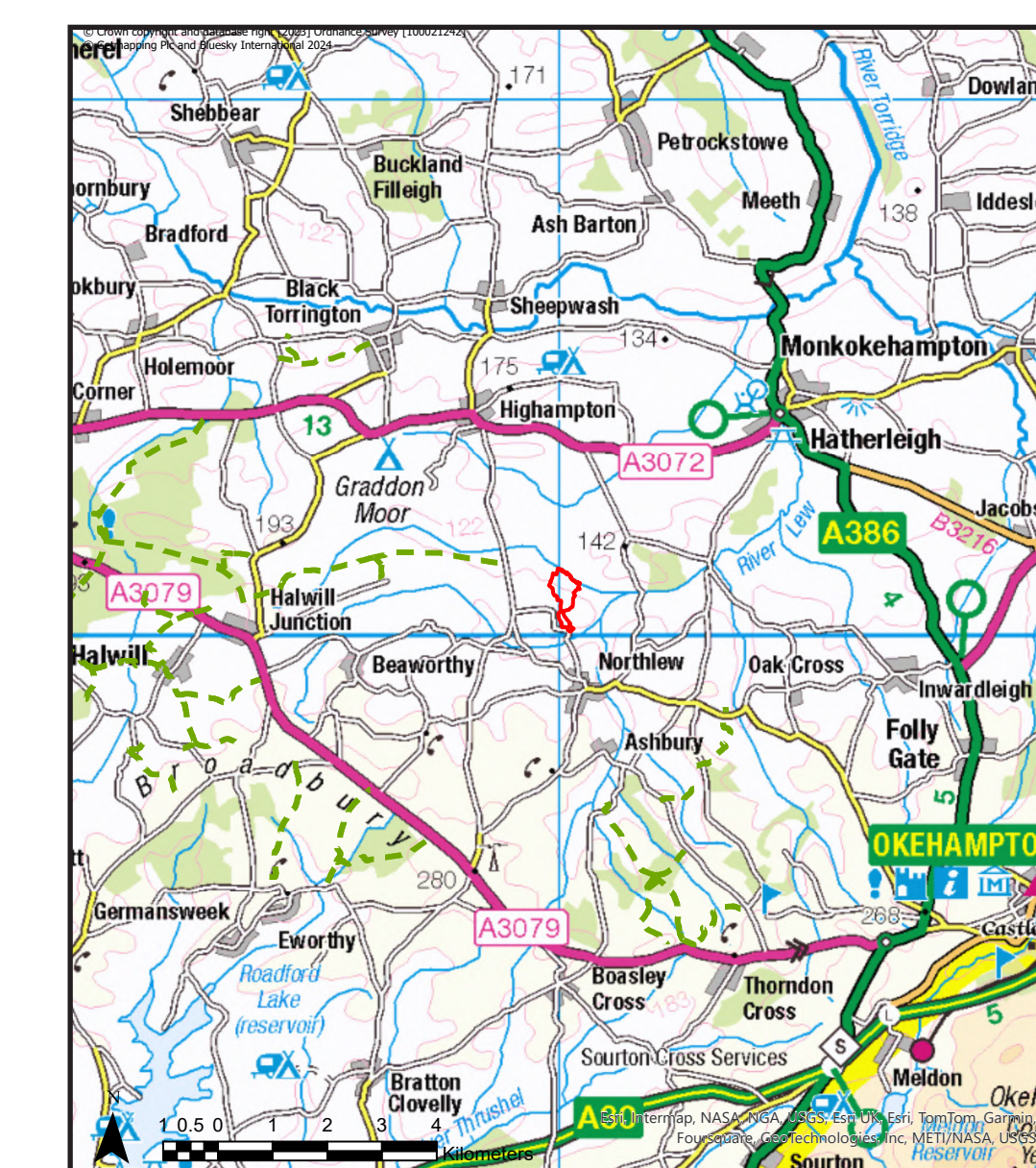
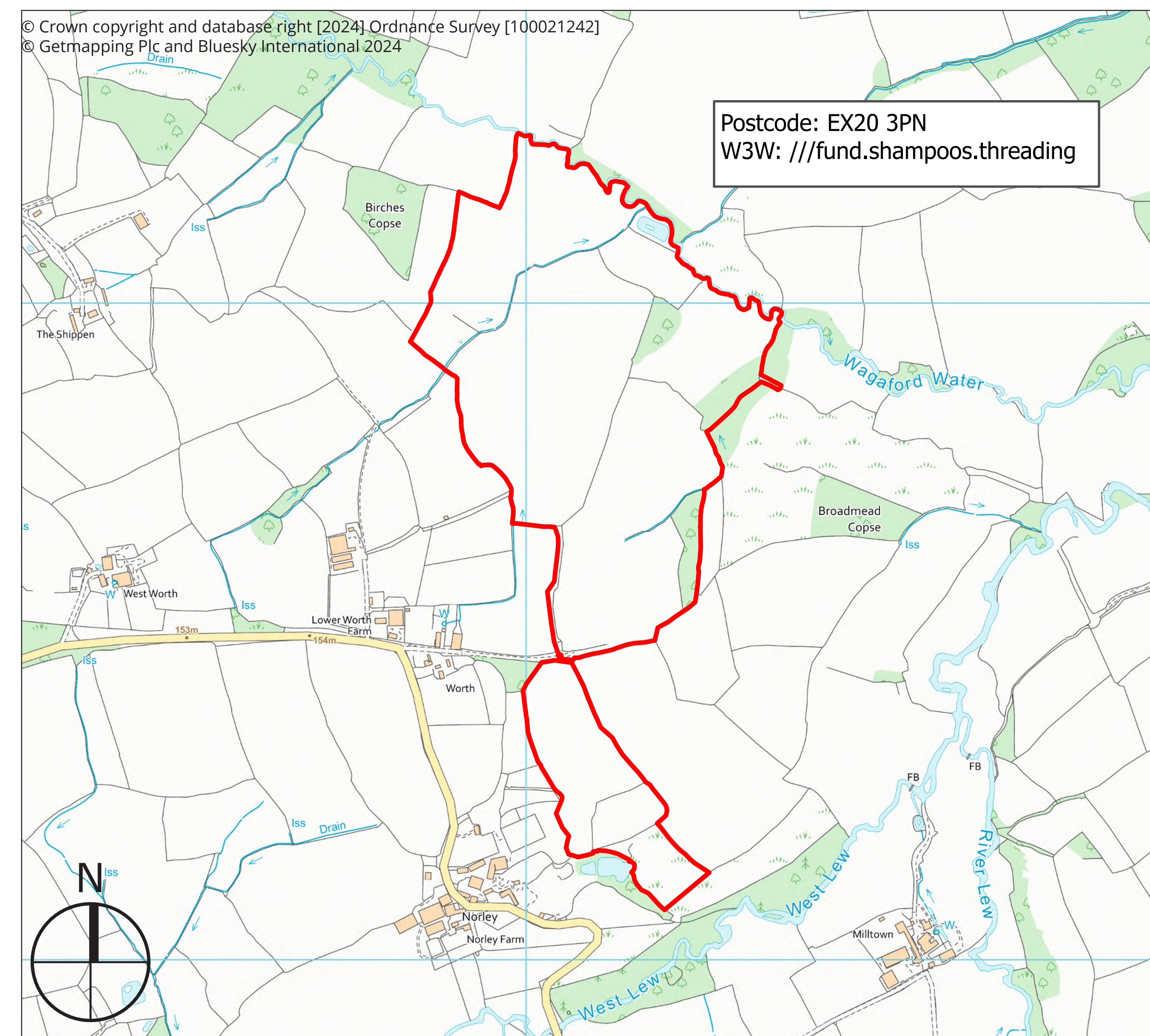
# Site Location & Wider Context

The proposed new woodland is next to the village of Norley, approximately 1/2 mile north of the village of Northlew and 6 miles northwest of the town of Okehampton.

The site for the new woodland lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 149: The Culm. This area is mostly remote and sparsely populated. It is a landscape of rolling ridges and plateaus and small valleys with fast flowing rivers and streams that drain the area. Heavy poorly-drained soil supports a pastoral landscape. Typical of this area are distinctive culm grasslands<sup>1</sup> with uncommon plant communities such as purple moor grass.

There is little tree cover on the plateau of this character area, except for occasional wind-sculpted hedgerow, farmstead trees and conifer blocks. Broadleaf woodland is more frequent in the shelter of the valleys. A mosaic of field patterns reflects the historic land use of the Culm.

<sup>1</sup> grasslands characterised by species-rich grass and herb communities which grow on shallow lime-rich soils





# The existing site

The site is mostly pasture farmland with medium sized fields and managed hedgerows with mature broadleaf hedgerow trees. There are a few small broadleaf woodland copses and ribbons of broadleaf woodland following streams within and around the site. The general landform is undulating with limited height for viewing points. High hedgerows and winding roads limit views of the site from a distance. These features coalesce to give the appearance of a heavily wooded landscape

Habitats on site comprise mostly modified grassland<sup>1</sup>, with a small area of neutral grassland<sup>2</sup> at the southern end of the site. There is riparian<sup>3</sup> woodland, trees and scrub along Wagaford Water. Historic maps show areas of Culm grassland running along the northern boundary of the northern block (Wagaford Water) and the southern end of the southern block.

1 vegetation dominated by a few fast-growing grasses on fertile, neutral soils  
 2 vegetation dominated by grasses and herbs on a range of neutral soils usually with a pH of between 4.5 and 6.5  
 3 relating to or situated on the bank of a river

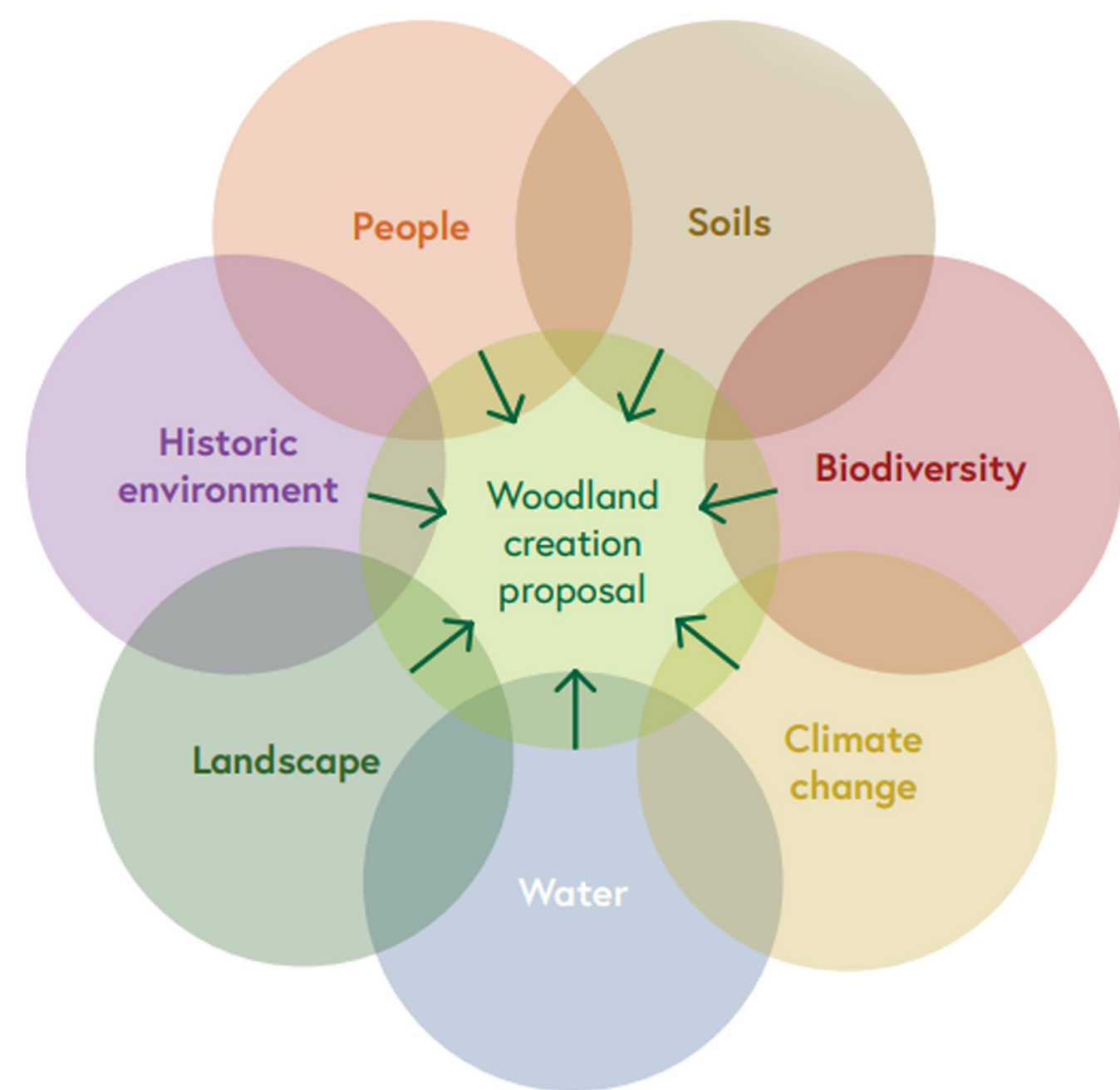
Photos: 1. View north from entrance to northern part of the site. 2. View of the southern field from farm gateway to the south. 3. View south from within the southern field. 4. Open ditch within the site. 5. View north from within the site.



# Draft design

## How we design new woodland

We are designing the new woodland to benefit people, wildlife and the wider landscape (natural capital approach). Our design meets the UK Forestry Standard, which takes into account the following elements (Forestry Commission, 2021):



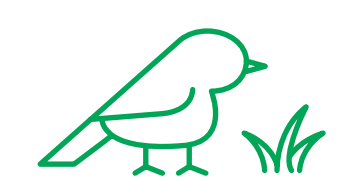
Detailed desktop surveys, site surveys and analysis will guide our design. These include:

- Preliminary habitat assessment
- Historic environment records
- Landscape and visual appraisal
- Local environment records
- Soil mapping
- Ecological site classification
- Climate matching tools
- Utilities searches
- Responses to initial consultation

## Objectives for the new woodland



**Create a diverse and resilient woodland:** plant a mix of trees for a lasting supply of certified sustainable timber.



**Improve connections between woodlands:** connect adjacent woodlands to improve habitats. Maintain hedges and create open spaces within the woodland for wildlife to thrive.



**Extend and improve riparian (riverside) woodland:** include riparian buffers and wetland scrapes along Wagaford Water and other watercourses within the site.



**Provide public access for health and wellbeing:** provide low key recreation opportunities by improving access to the countryside.

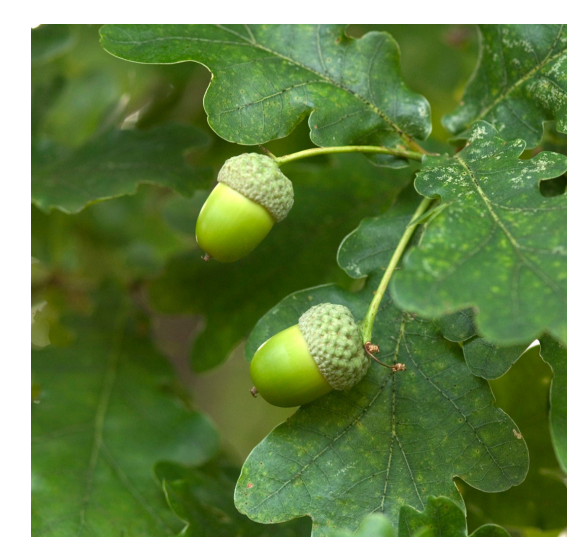


**Capture carbon from the atmosphere:** support net zero emissions strategies by planting and managing woodland that will thrive in future climate scenarios.

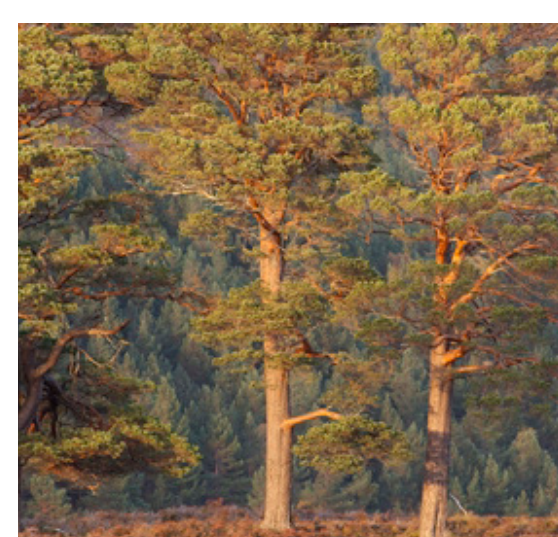


**Include Sitka spruce research trial:** to better understand how trees produce timber and capture carbon in a changing climate.

## Tree species we could plant



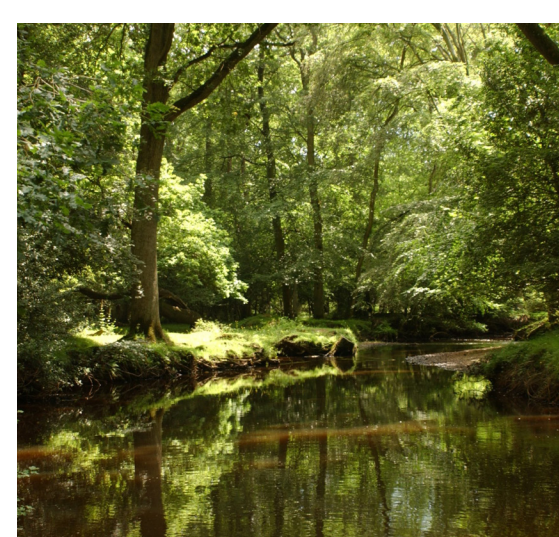
**English oak**  
with hornbeam, rowan, alder and small leaved lime



**Scots pine**  
with western red cedar, coast redwood, sycamore and hornbeam



**Sitka spruce**  
climate matching/ resilience trial and spacing trial



**Riparian buffers**  
with willow, alder, black poplar and aspen



**Shrubs** including hawthorn, wild cherry, field maple, crab apple and hazel



**Sessile oak**  
with Scots pine, western red cedar, coast redwood, hornbeam and small leaved lime



**Wild Cherry** with wych elm, rowan and sessile oak

**Key**

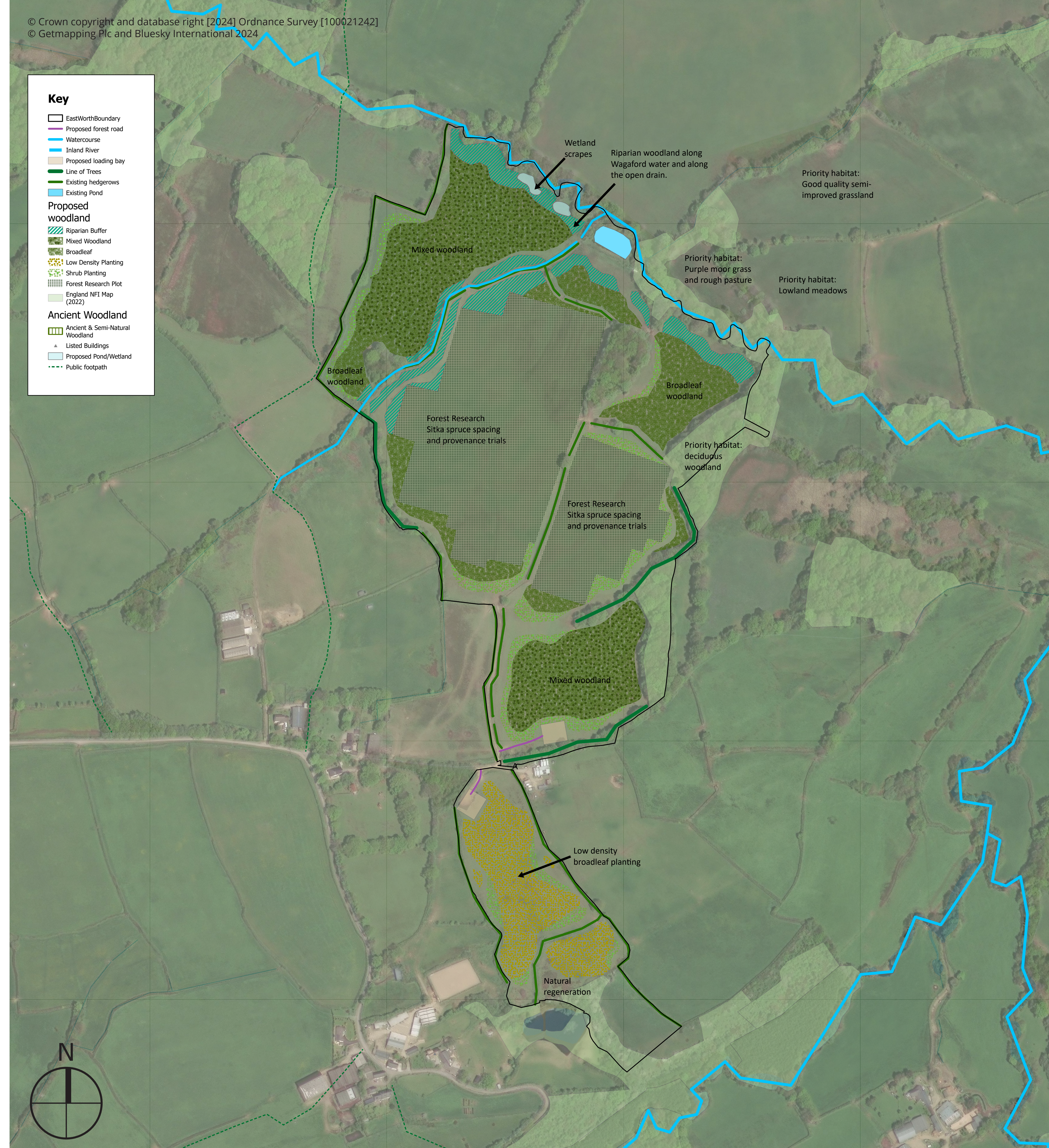
- EastWorthBoundary
- Proposed forest road
- Watercourse
- Inland River
- Proposed loading bay
- Line of Trees
- Existing hedgerows
- Existing Pond

**Proposed woodland**

- Riparian Buffer
- Mixed Woodland
- Broadleaf
- Low Density Planting
- Shrub Planting
- Forest Research Plot
- England NFI Map (2022)

**Ancient Woodland**

- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Listed Buildings
- Proposed Pond/Wetland
- Public footpath





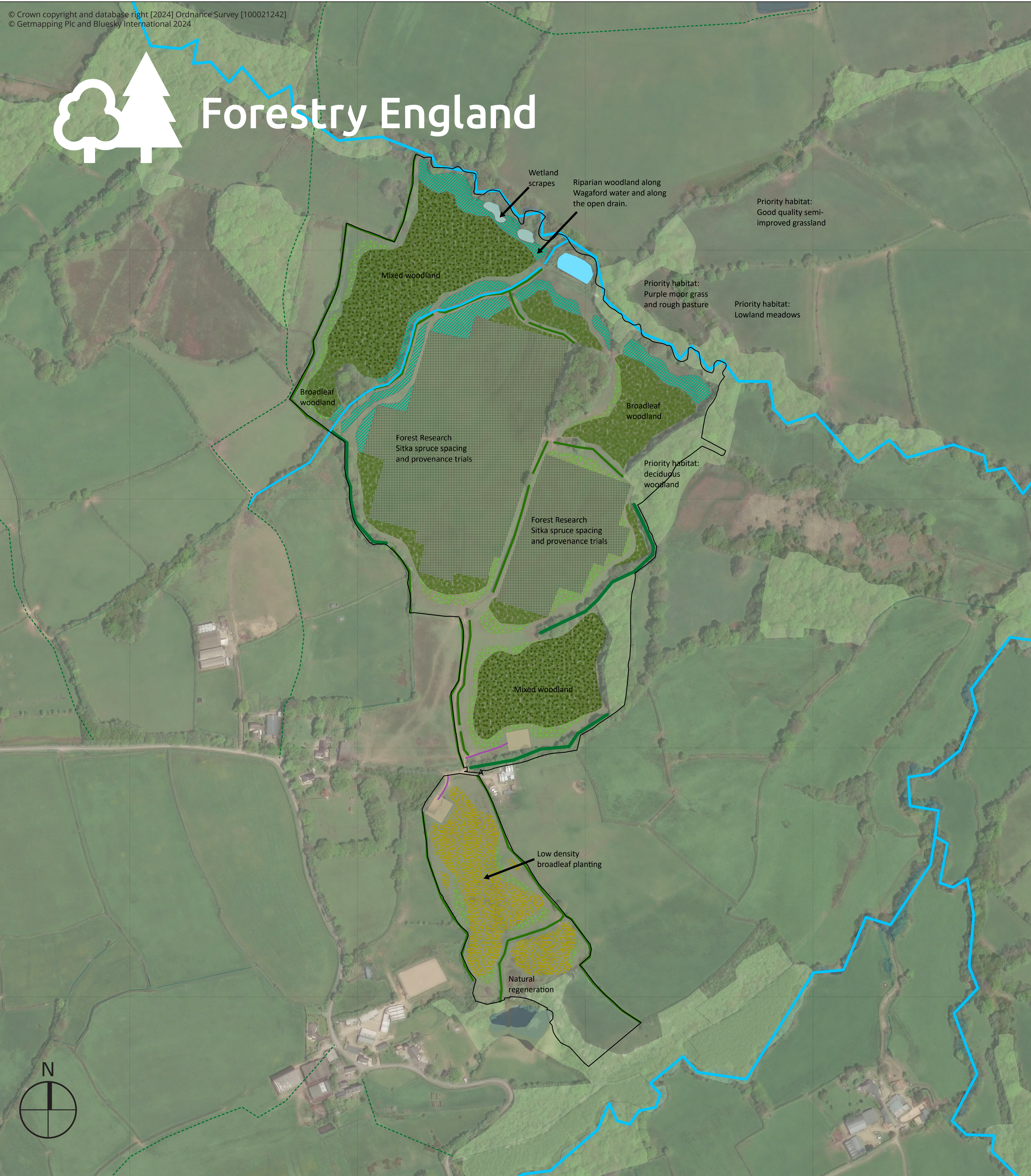
# How the new woodland could look

Our initial designs include proposals to:

- Include a research trial for Sitka spruce to improve our understanding of how this species will grow and capture carbon in a changing climate. The trial will look at how different spacings between the trees can affect their growth. Sitka spruce is our most commercially important timber species and this trial will help us to estimate more accurately how timber and carbon is stored in British woodlands.
- Run a tree breeding trial to find the different types of Sitka spruce that can best resist pests, diseases and drought.
- Plant a 20m buffer of riparian/wet woodland species such as alder, willow and aspen along Wagaford Water and 10m of wet woodland species along the open drain through the site.
- Include wetland scrapes and open space to extend and improve the existing riparian habitat.
- Create open corridors by providing buffers around hedgerows. Along these open spaces we will be planting shrubs at the edges of the woodland to create areas for wildlife to thrive.
- Plant broadleaves in the southern field and retain areas of hawthorn scrub where the benefit to wildlife has been identified.
- Connect existing areas of broadleaf woodland in and around the site by creating broadleaf corridors.



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Your views are important to us - let us know what you think





# Forestry England

## Your views are important to us - let us know what you think

### Responding to this consultation

We encourage you to submit your response online. You can view our plans and submit your views by completing the online feedback form at:

- <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/eastworth-consult>
- If you are unable to do this, you can respond via email at [woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk](mailto:woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk)

All views should be received by midnight on Sunday 15th September.

### What's next ?

- Review of consultation feedback
- Further design work to refine our proposals
- Application to the Forestry Commission for permission to create the new woodland
- Initial planting (Winter 2024/25)

Scan the QR code  
to find out more:

[forestryengland.uk](https://forestryengland.uk)





## A Coronation Wood at East Worth - our response to key themes from early engagement

We invited local people to share their initial views about our plans to create a new woodland at East Worth. Here are our responses to the key themes and questions people raised.

### Public access

The new woodland at East Worth will be open to the public and our focus will be on providing a quiet space for local people to enjoy without significantly increasing car traffic. Our proposal does not include public parking.

There will be pedestrian access to the new woodland via the existing track leading into the site which will allow people to explore the new woodland. There is no plan to include surfaced trails, cycling or horse riding specific infrastructure.

Visitors will be welcome to walk their dogs in the new woodland, we won't put a fence around the whole woodland. We expect all dog owners to be responsible and to keep their pets under control in all the forests and woodlands we care for, following signs and our Forest Dog Code.

### Design, landscape and views

Our draft design has considered the existing field pattern, the wider landscape character and closeness to nearby properties.

We are doing ecology and habitat surveys to tell us more about the plants, wildlife and ecosystems at East Worth and this will help shape our final design for the new woodland.

Our plan for the new, resilient woodland with a variety of trees at East Worth aims to:

- Create a diverse and resilient woodland: provides a lasting supply of certified sustainable timber.
- Improve connections between woodlands: connect adjacent woodlands to improve habitats. Maintain hedges and create open spaces within the woodland for wildlife to thrive.
- Extend and improve riparian (riverside) woodland: include riparian buffers and wetland scrapes along Wagaford Water and other watercourses within the site.
- Provide public access for health and wellbeing: provide low key recreation opportunities by improving access to the countryside.
- Capture carbon from the atmosphere: support net zero emissions strategies by planting and managing woodland that will thrive in future climate scenarios.
- Include Sitka spruce research trial: to better understand how trees produce timber and capture carbon in a changing climate.

A landscape and visual appraisal has informed our designs and we have carefully considered how close the new woodland will be to our new neighbours. Where nearby properties have views towards the woodland, we will plant more shrubs and broadleaves to provide structural and visual diversity with the height, texture and seasonal colour of the trees. The southern part of the site will be planted with broadleaves and shrubs only, with some areas of open space. This will provide a visual connection to existing areas of woodland as well as providing valuable habitat.

There will be a Sitka spruce research trial within the woodland. Many of the trees within the trial area will be planted at wider spacing creating an open woodland structure and

allowing them to develop a full and attractive crown. At the edges of the research area we will be planting broadleaf shrubs and trees to create a gentle feathered edge.

There will be an open buffer along good quality hedgerows often with adjacent shrub planting providing grassy paths for people to walk along.

Along Wagaford Water there will be a 20m riparian buffer zone planted with wet woodland tree species such as willow and alder at wider spacing and we may include some scrapes for additional habitat. There will also be a 10m riparian buffer along the open ditch through the site.

Where there is existing broadleaf woodland we will plant connecting broadleaf woodland corridors.

### The trees we will plant

We are using years of experience and the latest scientific evidence to plan in detail for the trees we will plant for the new woodland. Our surveys help us to choose the trees most suitable for the site now and as the climate changes. Our professional foresters carefully choose what trees to plant and where to plant them. They understand the soil, how quickly the trees will grow, and the important habitats, species and geographical features nearby. We also consider tree pests and diseases and future climate conditions to keep woods as healthy as possible.

The species will be a mix of broadleaf and conifer, planted in mixtures and single-species areas, with shrub species along edges to increase the variety and provide seasonal colour and texture. Species have been chosen to produce a future source of sustainable softwood timber. This supply of homegrown wood products will support the wider British timber and forestry industry, helping to reduce the demand for imports from other countries.

Following the UK Forestry Standard's advice, we will include riparian (riverside) buffers next to rivers, ponds and other areas of water. Over time these will develop into a network of wet woodland corridors. The design will improve the habitat for species such as the willow tit and at the same time improve the water quality and increase the storage of floodwater.

Species at East Worth will include conifers such as Scots pine, western red cedar, coast redwood, and broadleaves such as oak, hornbeam, Wych elm, small leaved lime, sycamore, willows, aspen, alder, rowan, wild cherry and hawthorn.

The Research trial consists of Sitka spruce.

### Establishing the new woodland

We aim to plant the new woodland in winter 24/25. Maintenance during the first five years is important to ensure the long-term success of the woodland. The woodland will be managed by the Forestry England team, local contractors and the Forest Research Technical Support Unit. So we can manage and maintain the new woodland, we need access from the road for our forestry vehicles. We plan to repair and improve the quality of the unadopted track that leads to the entrance to the site. A hardcore surfaced turning point for our vehicles will be created within the woodland.

As part of our ongoing management of the woodland, we will begin to remove some trees after about 20-25 years - this will provide a sustainable supply of timber and help the woodland to thrive for decades to come.

### Protecting the new woodland from deer

The UK is home to six species of deer, and their natural predators, such as bears, lynx and wolves, are no longer present in the UK. Without predators, deer populations can become unnaturally big and their browsing can damage young trees. In the short-term, this can kill the trees and in the longer-term, it can reduce the resilience of the new woodland to climate change, reduce plant and animal diversity and lower the amount of carbon captured from the atmosphere.

Forestry England is part of the [Deer Initiative](#)<sup>1</sup>, a partnership that promotes sustainable deer management in England and Wales. We will use deer fencing to protect larger blocks of new planting and tree tubes in smaller areas. Our highly skilled wildlife rangers replace the role of Britain's missing predators by safely and humanely controlling deer populations in our woodlands, working to the highest standards. More information about how Forestry England manage deer can be found [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.

Rabbit and deer fencing around the blocks of trees, will protect the young trees from browsing by deer and rabbits, and tree shelters (a protective tube or casing placed around a young tree) will protect smaller areas of wide-spaced trees.

Tree shelters and fences will be removed after approximately 10 years, after the woodland has become established, with materials being recycled where possible.

Scan the QR code  
to find out more:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk/>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.forestryengland.uk/article/managing-deer-the-nations-forests>





# Forestry England

## A Coronation Wood at East Worth - our response to key themes from early engagement

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### What research trials are you planning?

We are setting up a series of research trials to help understand how our native and commercial tree species grow and store carbon in a changing climate. These trials will look at how different spacings between trees can affect their growth across a variety of locations and climates. Over future decades, we will study how well Sitka spruce (our most commercially important timber species) survive, grow and produce timber at East Worth. The data we collect will help us estimate more accurately how much timber and carbon is stored in British woodland and guide our future plans for reducing carbon and net zero strategies.

We are also running a tree-breeding trial. We will test different types of Sitka spruce to find the ones that can best resist pests, diseases and drought. This will help us identify nursery plants that are best suited for the various weather conditions across the UK.

### Why are you planting agricultural land?

Forestry England is creating new woodlands which will capture carbon, restore and connect habitats, enhance biodiversity, supply sustainable homegrown timber and provide great places for people to enjoy. Sites are individually and carefully assessed so they are suitable for woodland creation and sensitive to the local landscape. This assessment considers the existing land use, and we target lower-quality or less productive land to create new woodlands.

Our plans are part of a wider commitment to increasing tree planting rates across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025 and provide a source of sustainable homegrown timber given the UK currently imports over 80% of its [timber](#)<sup>1</sup>

Forestry England understands concerns around food security and keeping the best land in agricultural production. Our woodland creation programme seeks to avoid the most productive land.

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to find out more:

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