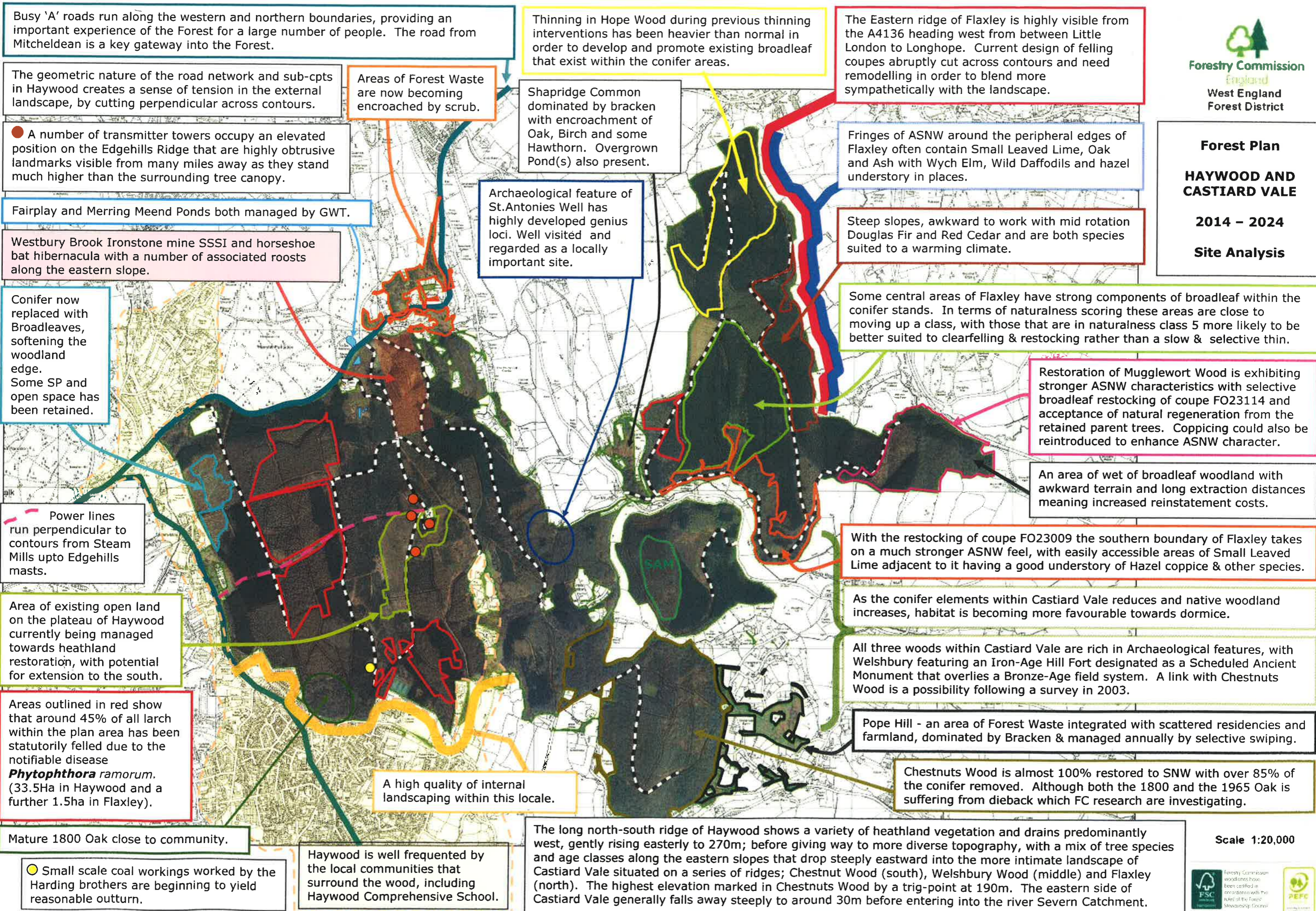


**Forest Plan**  
**HAYWOOD AND CASTIARD VALE**  
**2014 - 2024**  
**Site Analysis**



Busy 'A' roads run along the western and northern boundaries, providing an important experience of the Forest for a large number of people. The road from Mitcheldean is a key gateway into the Forest.

The geometric nature of the road network and sub-cpts in Haywood creates a sense of tension in the external landscape, by cutting perpendicular across contours.

● A number of transmitter towers occupy an elevated position on the Edgehills Ridge that are highly obtrusive landmarks visible from many miles away as they stand much higher than the surrounding tree canopy.

Fairplay and Merring Meend Ponds both managed by GWT.

Westbury Brook Ironstone mine SSSI and horseshoe bat hibernacula with a number of associated roosts along the eastern slope.

Conifer now replaced with Broadleaves, softening the woodland edge. Some SP and open space has been retained.

Power lines run perpendicular to contours from Steam Mills upto Edgehills masts.

Area of existing open land on the plateau of Haywood currently being managed towards heathland restoration, with potential for extension to the south.

Areas outlined in red show that around 45% of all larch within the plan area has been statutorily felled due to the notifiable disease *Phytophthora ramorum*. (33.5Ha in Haywood and a further 1.5ha in Flaxley).

Mature 1800 Oak close to community.

● Small scale coal workings worked by the Harding brothers are beginning to yield reasonable outturn.

Areas of Forest Waste are now becoming encroached by scrub.

Thinning in Hope Wood during previous thinning interventions has been heavier than normal in order to develop and promote existing broadleaf that exist within the conifer areas.

Shapridge Common dominated by bracken with encroachment of Oak, Birch and some Hawthorn. Overgrown Pond(s) also present.

Archaeological feature of St. Antonies Well has highly developed genius loci. Well visited and regarded as a locally important site.

A high quality of internal landscaping within this locale.

Haywood is well frequented by the local communities that surround the wood, including Haywood Comprehensive School.

The long north-south ridge of Haywood shows a variety of heathland vegetation and drains predominantly west, gently rising easterly to 270m; before giving way to more diverse topography, with a mix of tree species and age classes along the eastern slopes that drop steeply eastward into the more intimate landscape of Castiard Vale situated on a series of ridges; Chestnut Wood (south), Welshbury Wood (middle) and Flaxley (north). The highest elevation marked in Chestnuts Wood by a trig-point at 190m. The eastern side of Castiard Vale generally falls away steeply to around 30m before entering into the river Severn Catchment.

The Eastern ridge of Flaxley is highly visible from the A4136 heading west from between Little London to Longhope. Current design of felling coupes abruptly cut across contours and need remodelling in order to blend more sympathetically with the landscape.

Fringes of ASNW around the peripheral edges of Flaxley often contain Small Leaved Lime, Oak and Ash with Wych Elm, Wild Daffodils and hazel understory in places.

Steep slopes, awkward to work with mid rotation Douglas Fir and Red Cedar and are both species suited to a warming climate.

Some central areas of Flaxley have strong components of broadleaf within the conifer stands. In terms of naturalness scoring these areas are close to moving up a class, with those that are in naturalness class 5 more likely to be better suited to clearfelling & restocking rather than a slow & selective thin.

Restoration of Mugglewort Wood is exhibiting stronger ASNW characteristics with selective broadleaf restocking of coupe FO23114 and acceptance of natural regeneration from the retained parent trees. Coppicing could also be reintroduced to enhance ASNW character.

An area of wet of broadleaf woodland with awkward terrain and long extraction distances meaning increased reinstatement costs.

With the restocking of coupe FO23009 the southern boundary of Flaxley takes on a much stronger ASNW feel, with easily accessible areas of Small Leaved Lime adjacent to it having a good understory of Hazel coppice & other species.

As the conifer elements within Castiard Vale reduces and native woodland increases, habitat is becoming more favourable towards dormice.

All three woods within Castiard Vale are rich in Archaeological features, with Welshbury featuring an Iron-Age Hill Fort designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument that overlies a Bronze-Age field system. A link with Chestnuts Wood is a possibility following a survey in 2003.

Pope Hill - an area of Forest Waste integrated with scattered residencies and farmland, dominated by Bracken & managed annually by selective swiping.

Chestnuts Wood is almost 100% restored to SNW with over 85% of the conifer removed. Although both the 1800 and the 1965 Oak is suffering from dieback which FC research are investigating.

Scale 1:20,000

**Forest Plan**

**Haywood and Castiard Vale**

**2014 – 2024**

**Forest Plan  
Concept**

Open areas straddling the A4136 will be maintained as a mosaic of open space and scrub. This will produce a soft and well developed transitional edge to the forest. Small areas of acid grassland should be maintained through bracken control where practicable.

Open areas around the ponds in the north of the plan area should be maintained as open habitat.

Thinning in Hope Wood will continue to develop and promote existing broadleaf that exist within the conifer areas.

Fringes of ASNW around the peripheral edges of Flaxley will expand through restocking the eastern flank with native broadleaves. Natural regeneration can be accepted, but species composition should be diversified through group planting of other native species following thinning of adjacent PAW crops.

Internal landscape quality along the A4136 has a predominantly wooded prospect, with the semi-mature Douglas Fir and Scots Pine becoming visually attractive and will be maintained as a long term retention. The Red Cedar in and around the scowles on the northern edge of the A4136 should be removed to open up the character of the landform and enhance the broadleaves.

Use Red Cedar as shelter for broadleaf establishment. Removal of remaining RC once broadleaves are established will create a mosaic of open space complementing Shapridge Common to the west.

Sympathetically remodelled coupes on the eastern slopes of Flaxley will be managed through clearfelling and restocking rather than selective thinning on this terrain that is difficult to work.

The geometric nature of the western slopes will be broken up by future restocking and connect the middle slopes to the skyline, breaking up unnatural horizontal visual influences within landscape. A generous provision of open space either side of the powerline at the time of restocking will also help.

Ensure successful establishment of hedging along the western boundary of Edgehills quarry SSSI to protect sensitive flora.

Some areas along the western side of the central area fall in naturalness class 5 and having minimal broadleaf components are better suited to clearfelling & restocking.

Broadleaves have been retained following larch PR fellings. Restocking will be broadleaf and should be bold and varied enough to include species such as: Oak, Hornbeam, Hickory, Cherry, Hazel, Wych Elm, Whitebeam and Wild Service. Some Scots Pine might be retained or planted adding visual interest and diversity.

Reinstate pond(s) on Shapridge Common.

Existing broadleaf components in this area of Flaxley will continue to be developed through thinning. Some areas will revert to SNW with one thinning intervention; other parts will take longer, notably some areas of NS and in this situation, group felling and planting can be used to ensure the future diversity within the future native species composition and future age class structure.

ASNW character of Mugglewort will continue to develop by the removal of conifer through thinning and will be enhanced through the introduction of Coppicing in some areas – notably the northern edge in compartment 4149c and the eastern end of Mugglewort in 4150a. Coppicing can begin in 4149e once majority of conifer has been removed.

Where heathland vegetation is common; it is principally associated with outcrops of Drybrook Sandstone and the associated dry, acidic (podzolic) soil types. – Over the next 40 years, the existing heathland area on Edgehills will expand along this outcrop following the north-south ridge. Areas of SP will be retained to add diversity, conservation value and visual interest.

Felled due to PR, this area will be managed by GWT, complimenting the heathland site to the north.

Thin the overstory in Compartment 4150a prior to starting the introduction of coppicing to promote conservation value. It is an awkward area to work and extraction would incur high reinstatement costs. Coppicing within this area should be done using volunteers such as the Dean Green Team to similar prescriptions as those used in Dymock Woods, leaving produce on site and creating "deadwood wigwams".

Open up riparian zone by removal of remaining NS from Watercourse. Thin remaining conifer to develop broadleaf components. Any natural regeneration will be accepted.

Consolidate and expand belt of broadleaf to create and strengthen habitat linkage to scrubby woodland edge in farmers field by felling small area of DF and restocking with native broadleaves.

The majority of the eastern slopes of Haywood should be reverted to broadleaves. The approach will be slow with low levels of change and most conifer being removed through thinning. Larch will only be removed if it becomes infected with *P.ramorum*, with any felling of infected larch in this area being replaced mostly by broadleaf. This will help maintain and enhance the quality of the valley to the east that is distinct from the rest of the Statutory Forest.

The FC Research team will investigate Oak dieback that is on landscape scale. Regular aerial surveys will help monitor condition. Thinning will continue under advice from the Research team.

As broadleaves will be retained be mindful when thinning remaining conifer along southern boundary not to create a jagged / bitty appearance as viewed from the Flaxley road.

Within Welshbury SAM area, begin coppicing the Small Leaved Lime at an appropriate coupe scale in accordance with the County Archaeologist guidance laid out within the SAM plan.

Scale 1:20,000





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**Forest Plan**

**Haywood and  
Castiard Vale**

**2014 - 2024**

**Silvicultural Systems**



**Legend**

- Forest Road
- Forest Ride
- Forest Plan boundary

**Target dates for final overstorey removal**

- Fell 2027-2031
- Fell 2042-2046
- Fell 2032-2036
- Fell 2047-2051

These are areas that have little or no broadleaf components. Within these areas groups of upto 0.75Ha may be felled during routine thinning interventions. Some interventions may have no groups felled at all to further encourage a varied age structure and remain compliant with FS regulation. The gaps created would be restocked with a variety of native broadleaves with final removal of any remaining overstorey dependant on successful establishment and growth rates of the planted groups of trees. Using this method will hopefully achieve a future crop that is commercially viable and ecologically robust.

**Removal of conifers by thinning**

Although no target date is set for the final removal of overstorey trees, the understorey will be assessed at each thinning intervention, with natural regeneration of the appropriate size being released and existing broadleaves being haloed. Additional gaps created will be of upto 0.5Ha and used for enrichment planting.

**Conifer retention**

These areas will be retained as conifer into the foreseeable future. They mainly have conifer species that are better suited to a predicted warming climate and will be managed through routine thinning. Areas may show conifer regeneration which, once at an appropriate size will recruited into what will become a component of the future crop through thinning the surrounding overstorey to favour the regeneration.

**Conifer crop on extended rotation**

These areas of conifer will be felled at some point but no fell date has yet been set. They will be managed through routine thinning, promoting the development of native species and may include creation of additional gaps allowing for natural regeneration or enrichment plantings to take place.

**Scheduled Ancient Monument site**

Management will be dictated by the SAM management plan drawn up by the archaeological department from Gloucestershire County Council. This may involve coppicing at a small scale to minimise damage resulting from wind throw. (See Appendix 2 for draft proposals as to how this maybe implemented)



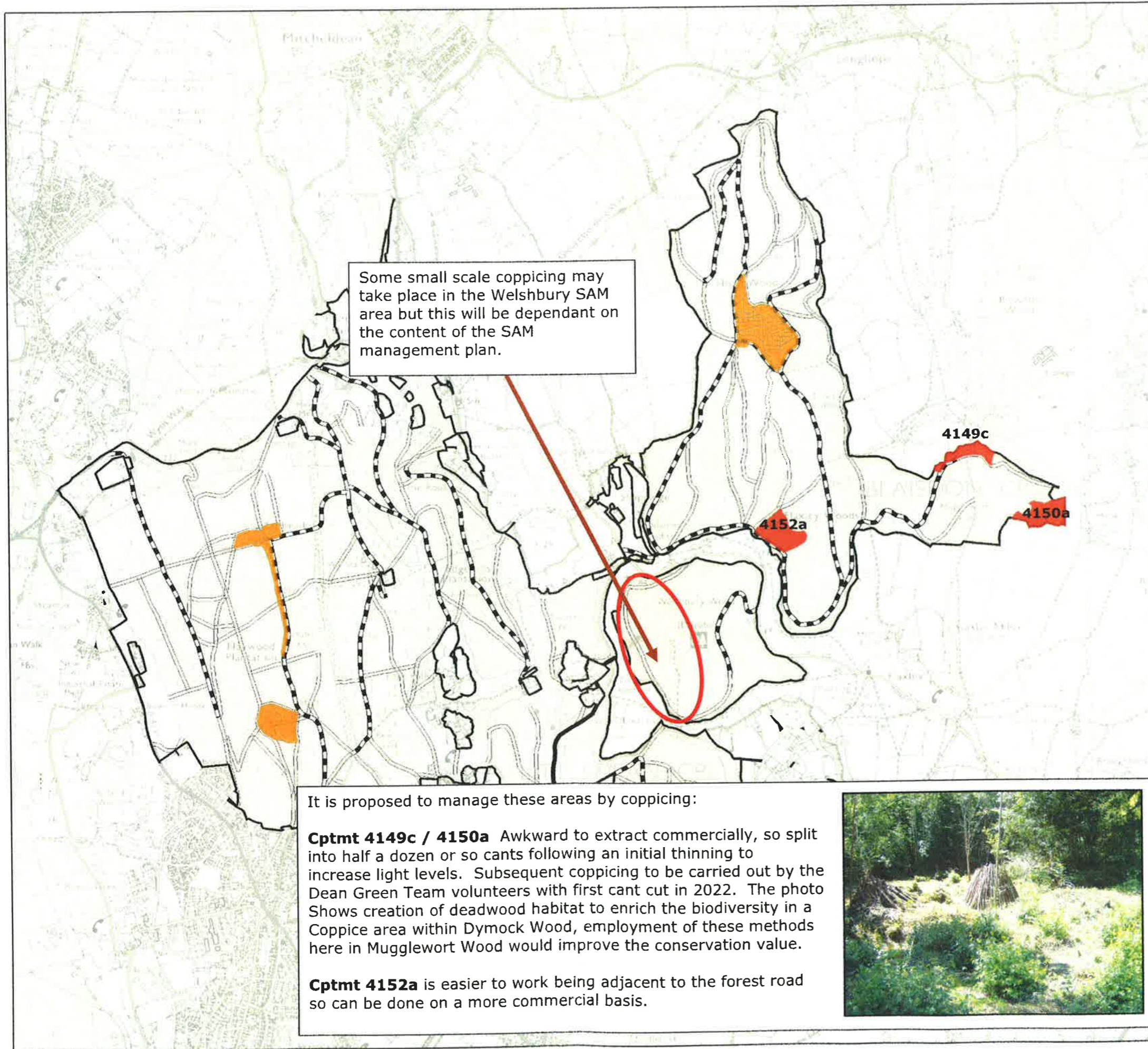


**Forest Plan**

**Haywood and  
Castiard Vale**

**2014 – 2024**

**Coppicing**



**Legend**

- CastiardVale\_&\_Haywood\_Roads
- CastiardVale\_&\_Haywood\_Rides
- existing areas of working coppice
- New areas proposed for coppicing

Scale 1:20,000



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**Forest Plan**

**Haywood and Castiard Vale**

**2014 - 2024**

**Felling Plan and restocking 2014 - 2024**

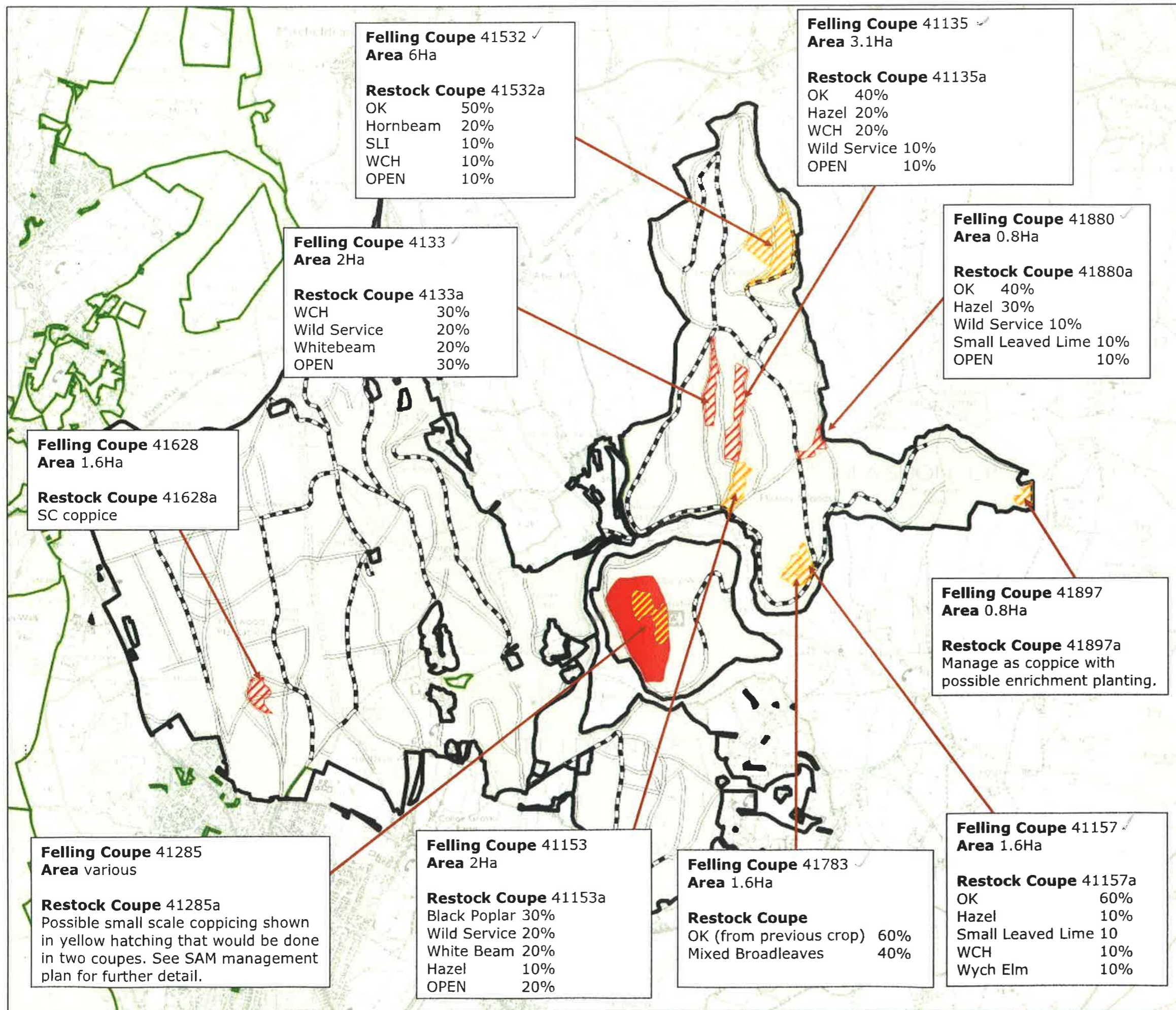
**Legend**

- Forest Ride
- Forest Road
- Forest Plan boundary
- Fell 2017-2021
- Fell 2022-2026
- Scheduled Ancient Monument site

Scale 1:20,000



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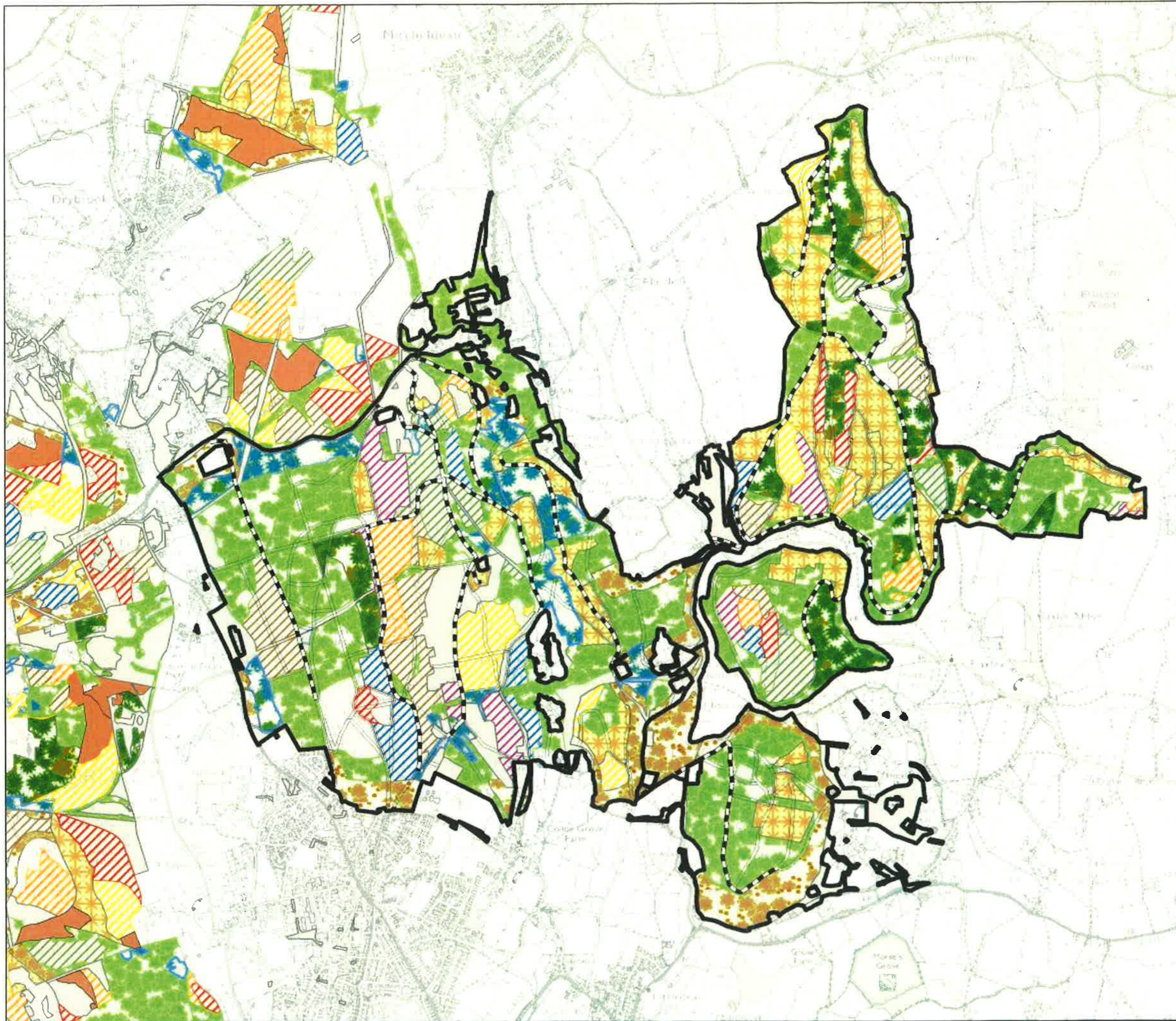
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**Forest Plan**

**Haywood and  
Castiard Vale**

**2014 - 2024**

**Felling Plan 2014-2024  
(incl adj FP areas)**



**Legend**

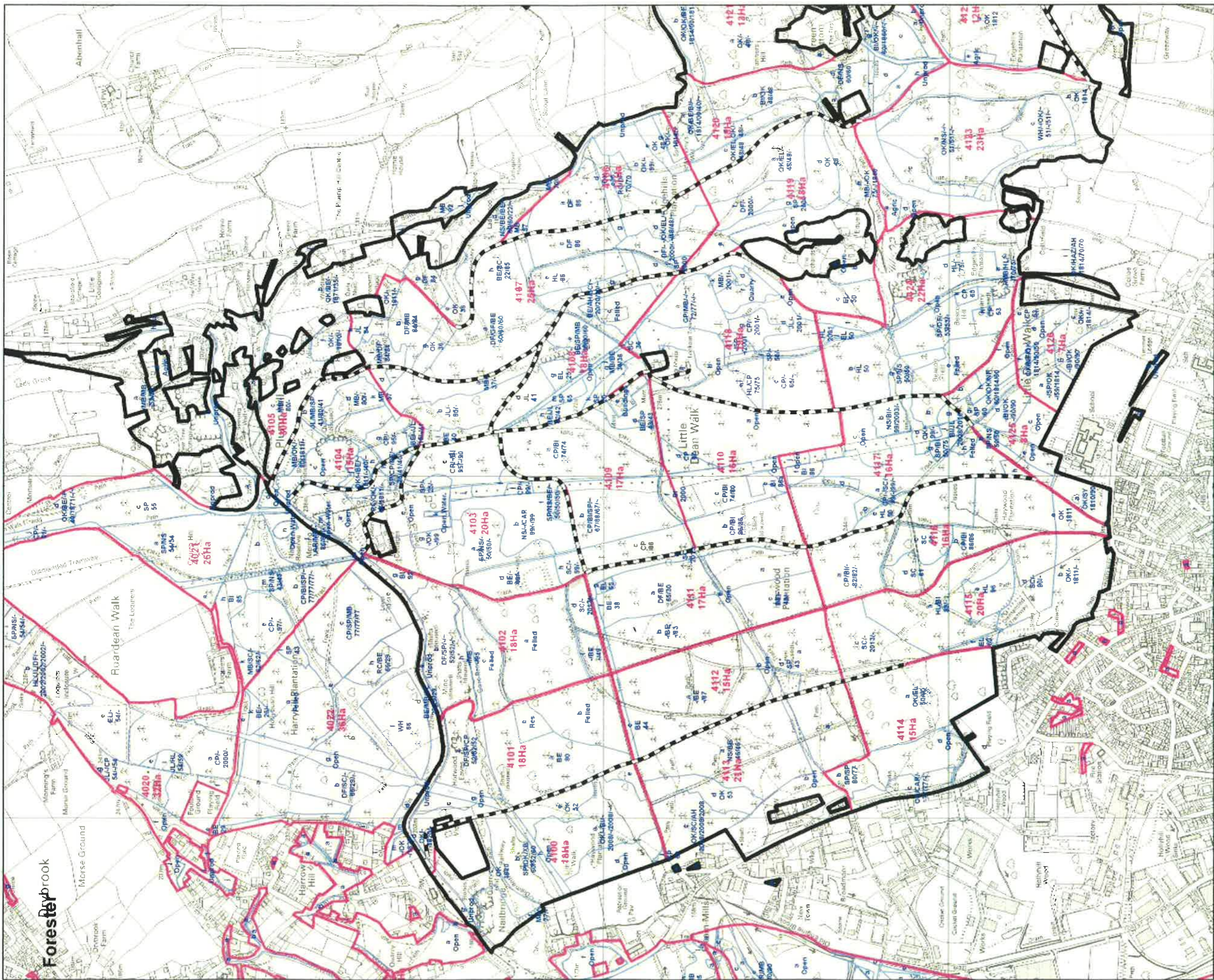
- Fell 2012-2016
- Fell 2017-2021
- Fell 2022-2026
- Fell 2027-2031
- Fell 2032-2036
- Fell 2037-2041
- Fell 2042-2046
- Fell 2047-2051
- Removal of conifers by thinning
- Conifer retention
- Conifer crop on extended rotation
- Broadleaved shelterwood
- Mature habitat retention
- Open land

**Scale 1:20,000**



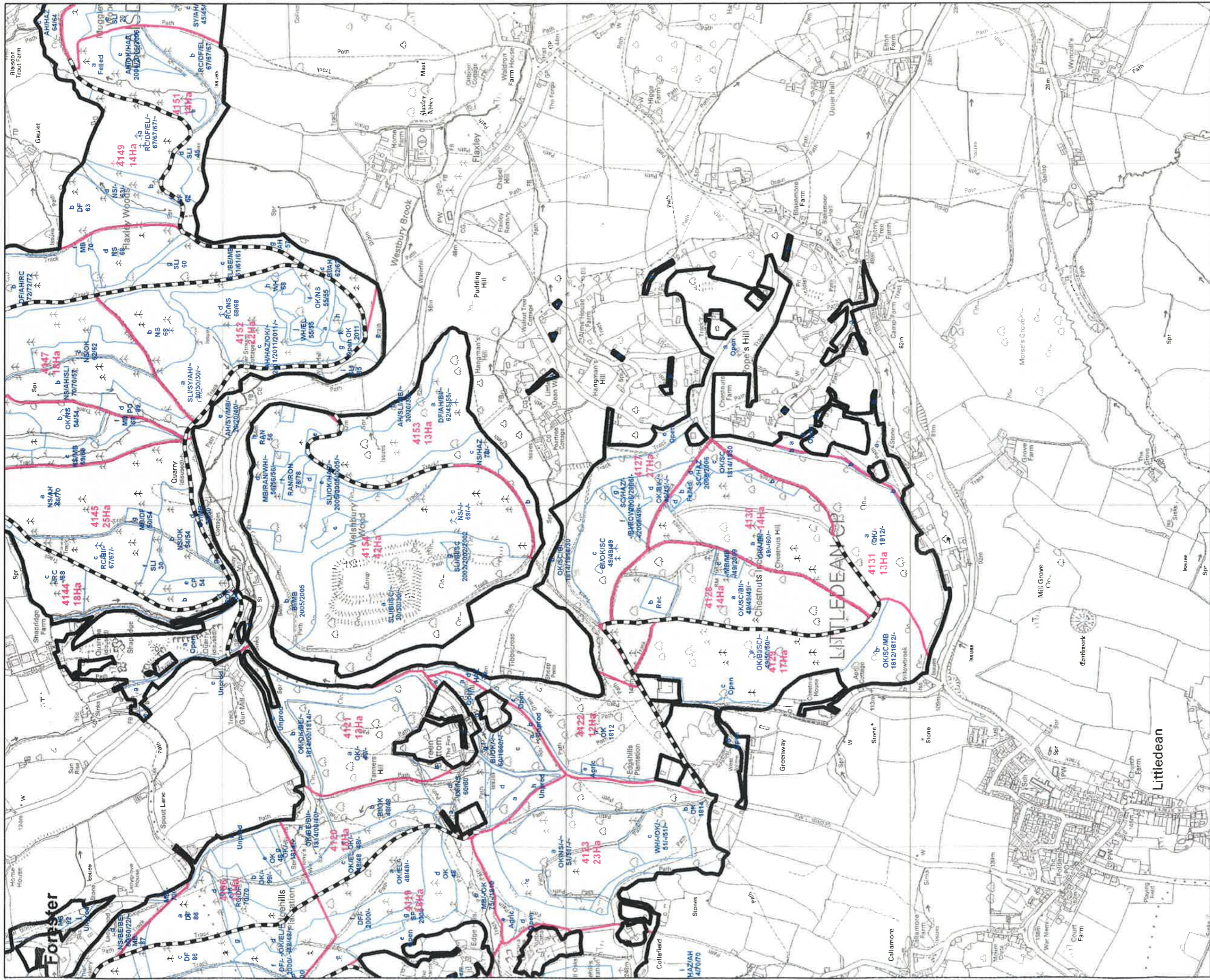
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**Forest Plan**  
**Haywood and Castiard Vale**  
**2014 – 2024**  
**Stocking data 01/04/2014**  
**Map 1 of 3 – Haywood**

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**Forest Plan**  
**Haywood and Castiard Vale**  
**2014 – 2024**  
**Stocking data 01/04/2014**  
**Map 2 of 3 – Welshbury & Chestnuts Wood**

Scale 1:10,000

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England  
West England Forest District

**Forest Plan**

**Haywood and Castiard Vale**

**2014 – 2024**

**Indicative future species at year 10**

**Legend**

- CastiardVale\_&\_Haywood\_Roads
- CastiardVale\_&\_Haywood\_Rides
- Open habitat or felled area
- Evergreen conifers
- Deciduous conifers
- Native broadleaves
- Non-native broadleaves
- SC
- Natural\_Regen\_components

Scale 1:20,000

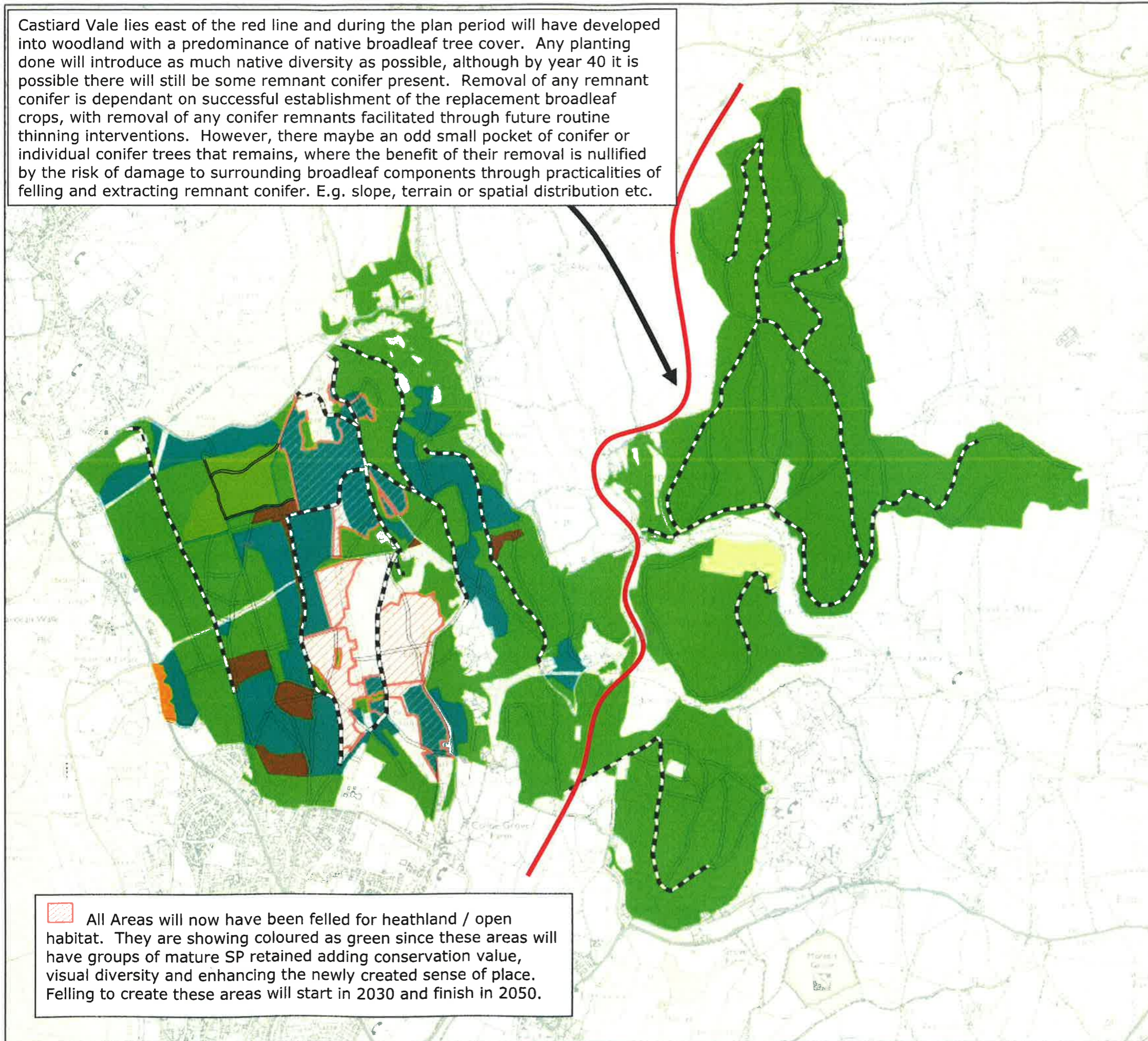



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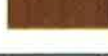
Castiard Vale lies east of the red line and during the plan period will have developed into woodland with a predominance of native broadleaf tree cover. Any planting done will introduce as much native diversity as possible, although by year 40 it is possible there will still be some remnant conifer present. Removal of any remnant conifer is dependant on successful establishment of the replacement broadleaf crops, with removal of any conifer remnants facilitated through future routine thinning interventions. However, there maybe an odd small pocket of conifer or individual conifer trees that remains, where the benefit of their removal is nullified by the risk of damage to surrounding broadleaf components through practicalities of felling and extracting remnant conifer. E.g. slope, terrain or spatial distribution etc.



 All Areas will now have been felled for heathland / open habitat. They are showing coloured as green since these areas will have groups of mature SP retained adding conservation value, visual diversity and enhancing the newly created sense of place. Felling to create these areas will start in 2030 and finish in 2050.

**Forest Plan**  
**Haywood and Castiard Vale**  
**2014 – 2024**  
**Indicative future species at year 40**

**Legend**

-  CastiardVale\_&\_Haywood\_Roads
-  CastiardVale\_&\_Haywood\_Rides
-  Haywood\_potential\_Heathland
-  Evergreen conifers
-  Deciduous conifers
-  Native broadleaves
-  Non-native broadleaves
-  SC

**Scale 1:20,000**



**Forest Plan**

**Haywood and  
Castiard Vale**

**2014 - 2024**

**Indicative future  
Habitat types  
at year 40**

**Legend**

- Forest Road
- Forest Ride
- Statutory\_Boundary
- water\_courses
- open\_water
- urban\_infrastructure
- Woodland - Broadleaves
- Woodland - Coniferous
- Grassland / Meadow / Arable
- Heathland
- Bracken

This map primarily shows that over the next 40 years the extent of proposed heathland restoration and creation during this period will rise from 15Ha to around some 73Ha bringing the total heathland coverage to around 88Ha.

Woodland in Flaxley shown as Conifer at this point will contain a mixture of conifer & broadleaf species.

The map also shows that native broadleaf coverage outside of the Statutory Forest over the next 40 years should almost have doubled from 121Ha to approx 220Ha.

The areas shaded a mid green outside of the Statutory Forest are indicative of coupes that may still contain elements of conifer after 40 years with removal achieved through future thinning and clearfelling.

Scale

1:20,000



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**Forest Plan**

**Haywood and  
Castiard Vale**

2014 - 2024

**Transition to Native  
Woodland over time**

**Legend**

-  Plan area
-  currently SC
-  native beyond 2055
-  native by 2055
-  native by 2036
-  currently native
-  other management

**Scale 1:20,000**

