

National Character Profile: 105 Forest of Dean and Lower Wye source: Natural England (April 2014)

The National Character Area (NCA) is centred around an undulating well wooded plateau of ridges and valleys. Sitting over shallow Coal Measures, it is contained by an outer rim of a more open landscape on Carboniferous Limestone and Devonian Old Red Sandstone. The NCA enjoys areas of extensive woodland concentrated on the central plateau that are contained within the Statutory Forest. The eastern edge of the central plateau falls away steeply into the Severn flood plain, the estuary of the Severn, and the Severn and Avon Vales NCA. From clear, unwooded higher ground along this eastern edge, the Cotswold scarp can be seen rising out of the flat vale.

Sitting between the River Severn and Wye with only 3 main roads (A4136, A40 and A48) there is a sense of isolation and historically the rivers - and then the railways were the main trade and communication corridors (most of which are now obsolete and derelict, but now many contribute to both nature conservation and also means of exploring the forest on foot or bike) - while the rest of the Dean is criss-crossed by relatively small roads and narrow lanes, continuing the relative isolation of some of its communities.

The woodlands feature rich wildlife habitats including grassland, heathland and traditional orchards. Wooded areas range from managed coniferous plantations to broadleaved woodlands, many of which are ancient woodland - defined as being continuously wooded since 1600; the Statutory Forest is an ancient forest, having been heavily exploited for timber, although the majority is considered either as ancient or semi-natural woodland. These woodlands form one of the largest remaining areas of broadleaf semi-natural woodland in the country, and are home to suites of nationally important assemblages of woodland birds, butterflies, internationally important woodland, river and bat sites; and a range of other rare flora and fauna. The Forest Waste within the Statutory Forest retains characteristic acid grassland habitat, although the dwindling of grazing due to foot and mouth means scrubbing up of many of these areas is now apparent.



View from PROW west of Drybrook Quarry looking along the northeasterly aspect of Ruardean Hill [Astonbridge]

Often sprawling and linear in nature, encircling the edge of the Statutory Forest is a ring of villages and hamlets where buildings are interspersed with industry, open grazing land and often associated with iron ore and coal deposits, whose remnant workings are often subsumed by woodland canopy.

Statement of Environmental Opportunity (SEO)

SEO1: Protect and manage the extensive internationally important woodland for its biodiversity, landscape, and ability to store and sequester carbon. Provide a sustainable timber resource while recognising the woodland's recreational value and heritage, and its contribution to a sense of place and tranquillity. **The FP will achieve this through:** 1) An increased use of CCF through LIS, but use clearfelling where appropriate. 2) Diversifying species composition and age structure of the wood 3) Improving the management of wet woodland habitats 4) Increasing connectivity of habitats and provision of woodland edge.

SEO 4: Protect and enhance assemblages of internationally important species associated with the River Severn estuarine Special Area of Conservation (SAC), employing good land management practice throughout the Forest of Dean to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion and regulate water flow. **The FP will achieve this through:** 1) creation of water catchment plans for all 4 main watercourses within the main block 2) buffering watercourses to 10 or 20m 3) creating coupes for each of these buffers within the plan so they are easily identifiable 4) Planting of appropriate native species to enhance ecological and natural value.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (Character makes each part of the landscape distinct and gives each its particular sense of place, regardless of perceptions of quality or value)

The grain of the landscape is generally north to south although this is rarely evident in the landscape, due to dense woodland obscuring even the most dramatic relief features such as slades, valleys and ridges, with exceptions being Serridge ridge and Greathough valley that run east-west. The biggest influence on the landscape has been that of industry and mining. The forest now being almost a continuous extensive blanket of both coniferous and broadleaved woodland, draped across the syncline, contributing to a strong and coherent "forest" identity that is carefully managed for its commercial timber, scenic qualities, amenity value.

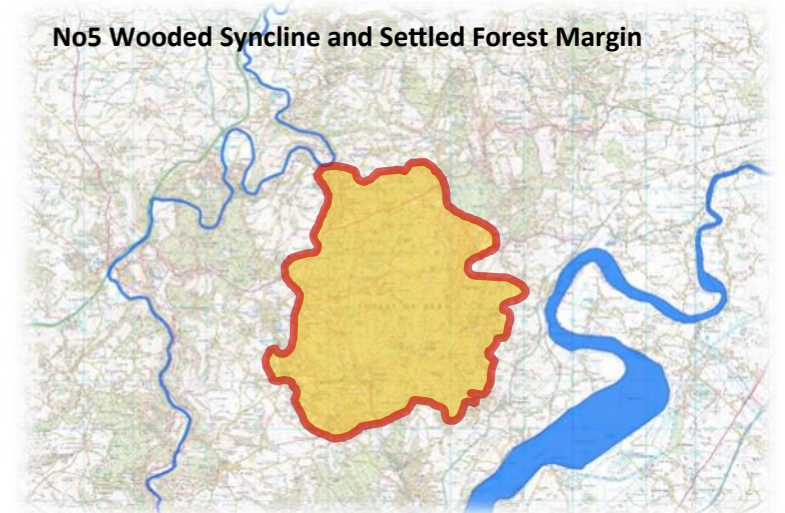
The 17th to early 19th centuries saw extensive areas of woodland cleared either for war efforts or for local industries, with the 1808 Dean Forest Timber Act seeing large scale enclosures for the planting of Oak, and survivors from this period can be seen most notably around Speech House and Cannop Valley, with extensive younger generations of Oak in Astonbridge and Kensley. Deciduous woodlands occupy approximately half of the forested areas and are characteristically Oak, grown as dense standards although Birch, Sweet Chestnut and Sycamore are also prevalent. These are often remnant areas of ancient semi natural woodland or replanted ancient semi natural woodland.

The extensive and dense woodlands harbour both small and large scale coal workings often visible in the landscape. For the smaller ones, colonisation by birch and gorse ensures they remain prominent and visible in the landscape, with larger ones developing massive spoil tips e.g Northern United. Elsewhere the local term "scowle" refers to and indicates the location of ancient iron ore extraction.

The outer edge of the Forest has a high number of settlements generally located close to the Crease Limestone band that contains the iron ore, where as the central parts are almost devoid of settlement, with the notable exception of Parkend, Edge End and Brierley. The forest creates a backdrop and edge to most settlements and so it is rare for buildings to break the skyline, although there are many instances of houses being in clusters that can be seen to climb up the sides of valleys in characteristic, informal loose terraces.

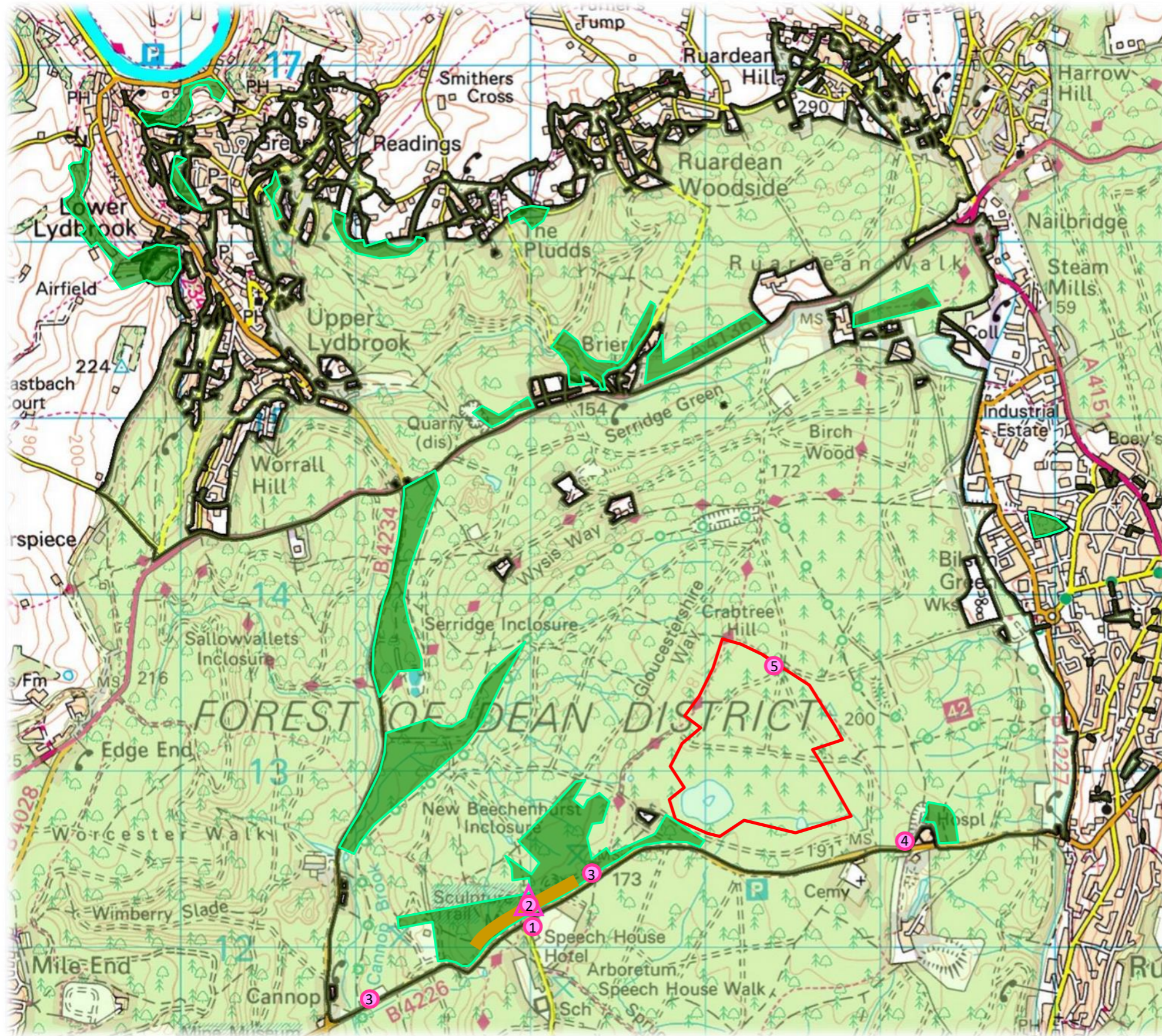
The internal landscape is often small in scale and the dense woodland significantly limits long distance views. Vantage points from which to survey the extent of woodland within the syncline exist, but these views are rare. The dense woodland is extensive and attracts thousands of visitors a year thanks to the perceived "wilderness" of many areas. This is especially the case within the Forest Core where the sense of isolation and wilderness is retained.

The syncline is asymmetrical, allowing water to collect in the central basin in a multitude of streams and brooks, such as Cinderford Brook, whilst deep valleys (slades) such as Greathough Valley are formed by streams draining the slopes of the rim. The majority of streams join the main central drainage basin of the Cannop Brook, which emerges from the forested syncline at Park Hill, before joining the Lyd and entering the Severn. The majority of these watercourses are virtually invisible amidst the woodlands, with many bordered by alder and riparian habitats containing wetland species, e.g. reeds and Flag Iris. These represent the most important locations for standing water habitats in the Forest of Dean.



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Designations



Special Area of conservation

Westbury Brook Iron Mine and the Buckshaft Mine are both components of the "Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat SAC" and lie circa 1.5 miles to the east of the plan area. The whole plan area provides functionally linked habitat for the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat SAC, meaning it is vital to the long term conservation of the Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats, for which the SAC has been designated. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) assessing the plans potential impact on the SAC has been undertaken, and can be viewed in Appendix 3:- "Supporting Information".

Sites of Special Scientific Interest



 Speech House Oaks (8.5ha out of 17Ha)

Key Wildlife Areas

 Woorgreens

Scheduled Monuments (SM)


There is one SM within the plan area:

 Bledisloe Obelisk 

Listed buildings and sites

-  Speech House Hotel
-  Bledisloe Obelisk
-  Milestones
-  Railway Bridge at Dilke Hospital
-  Enclosure Marker

Provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory

 Ancient Woodland

Falling completely within the Statutory Forest of Dean, the remainder of the plan area is recorded on Natural England's provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory as Plantation Ancient Woodland.

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Right: Maps show that conifer has a confined and generally much younger age range compared to the Broadleaves, and the quantity of pre-1900 species is predominantly broadleaf but finite. The Peak of planting for conifer versus broadleaf is offset by 2 decades (1940s/1960s respectively), and note that age structure is much younger in Astonbridge than either Serridge or Crabtree Hill.

Concept

Age structure will be diversified through targeted Clearfelling, with use of Low Impact Silviculture evaluated for use on certain sites. Establishment and restocking for the next rotation will be achieved through the use of both planting and natural regeneration. This mixed approach will enable a more diverse woodland structure to be developed, to benefit and deliver against ecological, social & economic objectives. In general the plan will contain a more diverse range of tree species that reflect the changing soil and topography. In the long term there will be a higher proportion of broadleaf, with conifer retaining a prominent part in composition.

This photo shows an example of a site that would usually be clearfelled, but assessment found it suitable to be underplanted instead, thanks to clean ground conditions that mean faster establishment due to minimal weed competition.

IMPORTANT FOR SENSE OF PLACE: Across the plan area, mature conifer stands of Douglas Fir, Red Cedar, Norway Spruce, Scots Pine, but also those of Oak and Beech, all vary in stocking density and size, adding uniqueness and distinctiveness. These crops are often a valuable component in the internal landscape, adding structure and diversity, often engendering a sense of tranquillity. Externally, these areas can be visually impressive, offering a sense of scale, awe and grandeur, with steep terrain in Astonbridge also bringing a certain sense of drama to the landscape. Along council roads, on many occasion the age, spacing or species of tree define the character of the landscape; it could be the veteran Oaks along Speech House road, the mature Douglas Fir at Dances Corner, the large Corsican Pine at Steam Mills, the Copper Beech along Brierley Straight and Hawkwell or the scenic character along the Speech House to Cinderford Bridge road that gives a perspective of sense of depth.

Concept

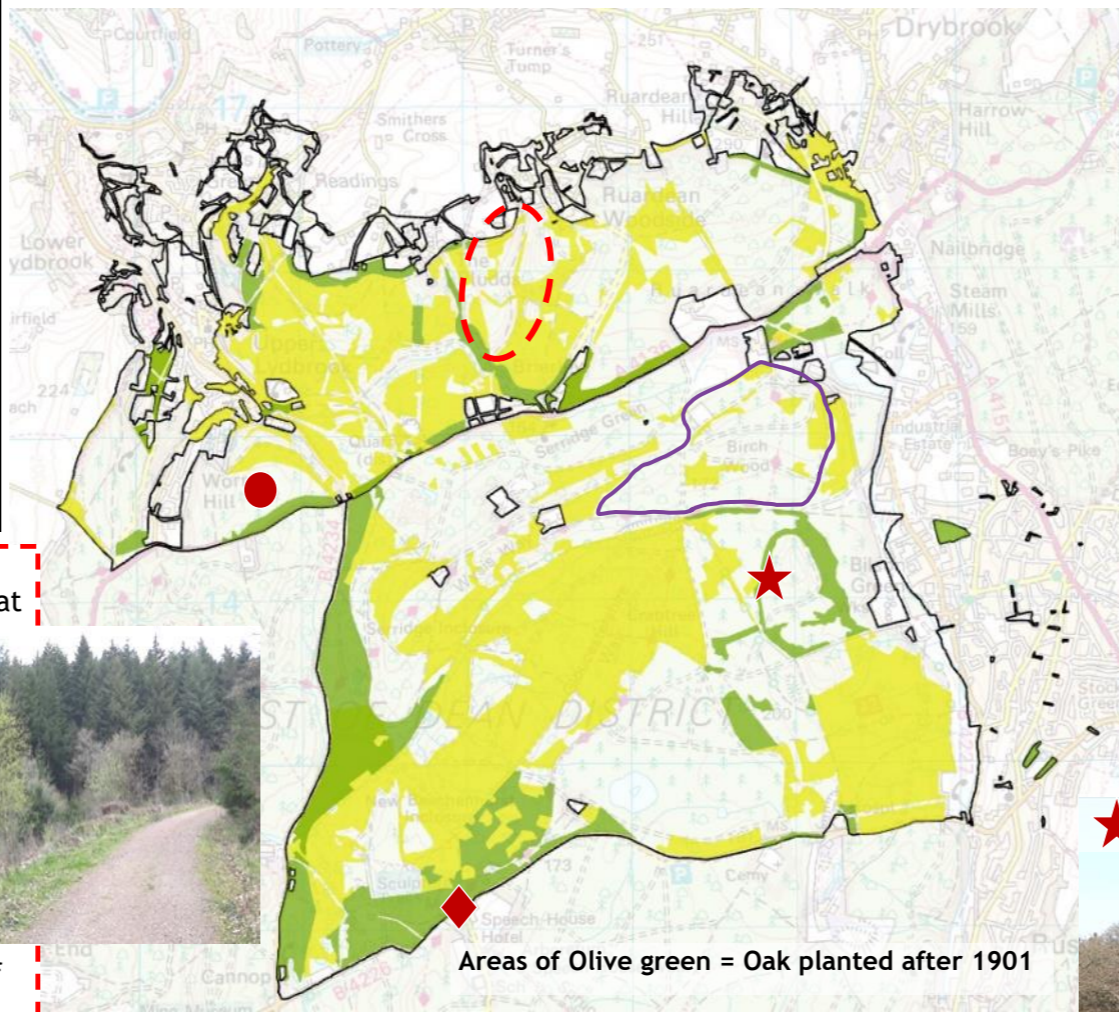
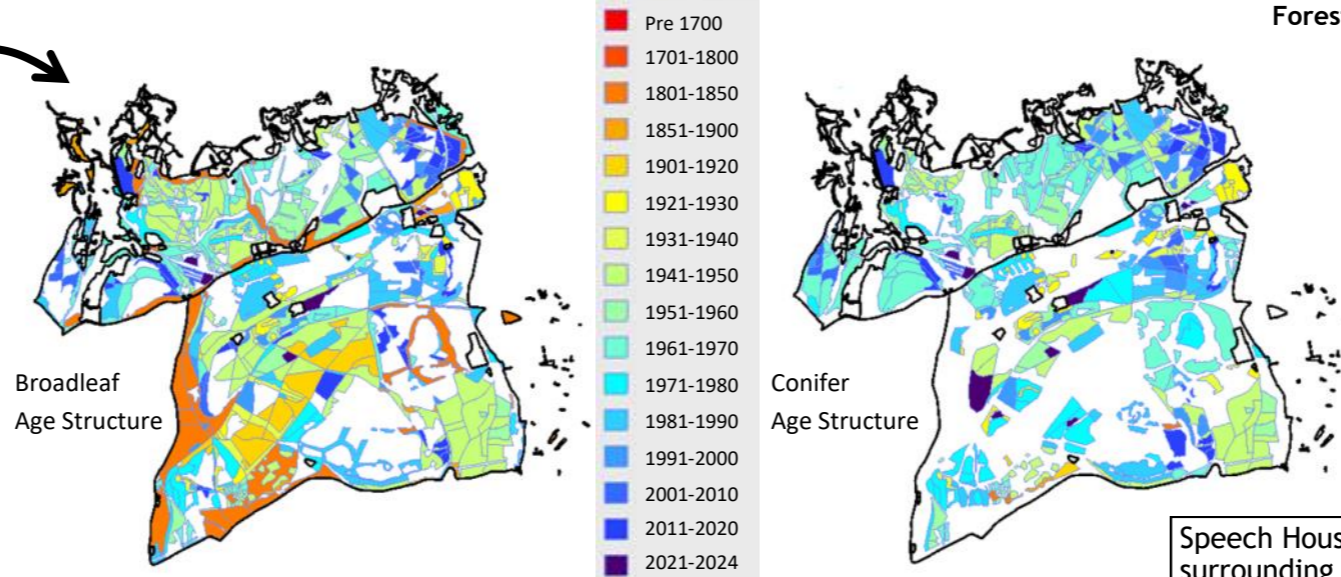
These types of landscape contexts contribute their own uniqueness and local distinctiveness to the "Sense of Place" at external and internal levels, and will be managed so as to sympathetically retain and enhance the Sense of Place.

Scale of landscape varies, often being linked to the complexity of landform and topography. Some earlier plantings from the 1960s, are at odds with what one would expect.

Concept

Coupes will be designed so as to take scale, landform and topography into account. In some areas such as Newham Bottom, this is more to do with species and scale so should be rectified though a mixture of clearfelling and heavy thinning, use of natural regeneration, restocking and enrichment planting.

As a rule of thumb, conifer should appear on higher ridges and upper slopes, with broadleaves in valleys and gullies. With this guidance, the conifer on the slope to the left of the photo would be all broadleaf; extending from the valley bottom to the skyline.



Speech House is the traditional centre of the Forest, with the surrounding woodland being some of the oldest oak in the Forest. The Speech House Oaks is an important SSSI, cited for their Woodland Type and associated internationally important lichen assemblages, mostly found on the understory of veteran holly. The character and composition of the SSSI continues outside the SSSI boundary into woodland to the north. The Napoleonic Oaks here were originally planted for ship building, but now provide a variety of habitats for a diverse range of flora and fauna as well as contributing to the variety of deadwood, Sense of Place and contributing towards the mental wellbeing of woodland users.

Concept
These sites will be maintained in accordance with the SSSI plan, generally requiring occasional scrub clearance, with odd trees requiring tree surgery*, along with vegetation management and options to retain deadwood habitat. The adjacent areas of p1800 Oak will be managed sympathetically, encouraging similar spacing and opportunities for holly recruitment, thus extending opportunities for the lichen population to spread. (*Note that felling will be a last resort in order to facilitate longevity of the tree and provide deadwood habitat in varying degrees of condition, with pollarding potentially considered, but on suitable younger candidates)

Old Napoleonic oak within the plan area generally occur in small fragmented and scattered groups. They are a finite resource that are invaluable to both nature and society.

Concept
These areas will be protected through minimum intervention and natural reserve, but maybe thinned help with crown condition or ecological condition of the site.

Some areas of woodland e.g. Birch Wood and Ruardean, are planted primarily with Larch which is affected by Phytophthora ramorum, making the restructuring process much less predictable, as infected sites are subject to Statutory Plant Health Notices.

Concept
Some Larch areas within a mile of recently felled diseased sites will be felled earlier on in the plan period, others will be given a felling date for some point in the future, but may need felling earlier due to infection. The idea is not to pre-empt felling because of infection, but try to maintain a sustainable flow of timber to market, as well as steadying the pace of the restructuring programme.





Looking up the valley in a southerly direction from Horslea

Both sides of the A4136 feature numerous specimen Copper Beech, between Hawkwell Row and Brierley.

Concept

Forestry Operations will look out for and protect such feature trees during operations. There maybe opportunity for planting more Copper Beech in the right locations to perpetuate the feature.



Scattered old Oak and community woodland that can be diverse in nature, occur typically within the peripheral woodland edges and associated villages. They often coincide with areas of Forest Waste too. The old Oak are appealing due to their species and age. These peripheral areas are well used and explored by the public, and supported by a network of desire lines that are important for quality of life.

Concept

Maintain these areas as community and amenity orientated woodlands. Thinning will be permitted for ecological or health benefits.

▲ There are numerous dwellings that lie nestled within the woodland, these include the “Forest Lodges” and clusters of houses, often found on the peripheral edges of the plan area. This illustrates the interwoven nature of woodland and people within the plan area (see photo above).

Concept

Prescriptions and operations will reflect this interwoven nature by adopting sympathetic management that align with plan objectives and landscape context.



Scots Pine at Waterloo Screens

◆ The slopes of the spoil heaps around Waterloo Screens and Trafalgar Mine feature mature Scots Pine, being characteristic of many old mining sites within the plan, they are features within the landscape that also add ecological value.

Concept

Scots Pine will be retained and thinned to develop crowns and character, where practical.

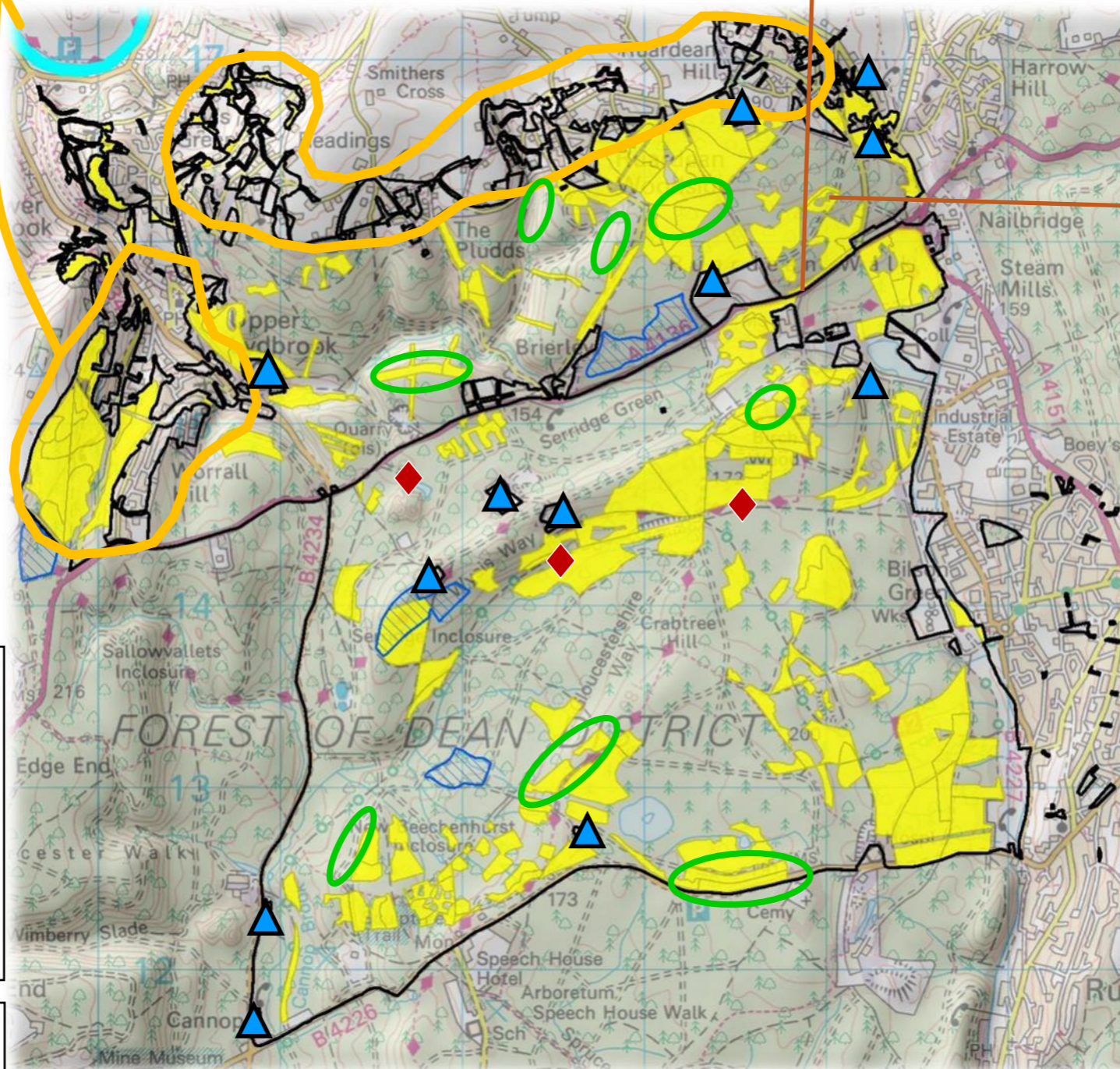
◆ Running east from Drybrook Road Station, there is a strip of Scots Pine that follows a section of the Wysis Way that helps develop the character of the trail. There is a similar strip along the bottom of Trafalgar that follows the Colliers Trail.



Scots Pine at Trafalgar

Concept

Adding visual interest and aesthetical appeal to the woodland users experience, the Scots Pine will be retained and perpetuated.



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The plan area contains 38% (189Ha) Larch and Sweet Chestnut, a further 33Ha is Corsican Pine, with Ash at 2%. Oak accounts for 50% of the area at 266Ha. All these species are at risk from pests and disease, such as Phytophthora on Larch and Sweet Chestnut, Dothistroma Needle Blight on Corsican Pine, Hymenoscyphus (was Chalara) on Ash, Chronic/Acute Oak decline and Oak Processionary Moth on Oaks.

Concept

This is about diversity. Pests and diseases will be managed through a variety of silvicultural means that include clearfelling, thinning, mulching, under-planting and species choice. This approach will diversify woodland composition and see an increase in the use of mixed woodland, i.e. conifer with broadleaf and vice-versa. Forest Research may actively monitor chosen sites to learn more and trial potential control techniques and measures for pests and disease.

Compartment 4214a features some conifer planted with the initials GR (King George V)

Concept

This feature will be protected during forestry operations to ensure it remains a feature.

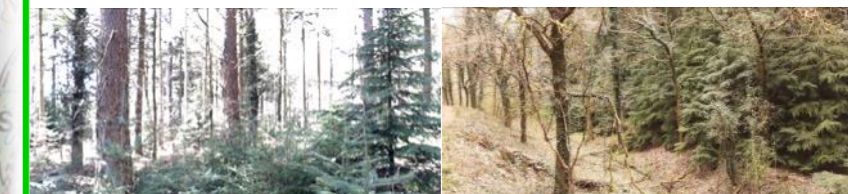


Evidence of conifer and/or broadleaf natural regeneration is confined to small areas, with most stands typically being only a few hectares. Whilst some areas of natural regeneration hamper and challenge the potential to optimise the woodland ecosystem and landscape. Other sites may not feature natural regeneration but have potential for underplanting instead.

Concept

Recruitment of regeneration will only be encouraged in suitable stands and locations that meet with Forest Plans objectives. Within other areas, underplanting can be utilised and in some, clearfelling and restocking will be more appropriate. Enrichment planting is a consideration where the species of regeneration needs diversifying or is too sparse in stocking density. E.g. Western Hemlock next to Ancient Woodland or within a water buffer would require removal and replacement with an appropriate species. It is also likely that in order to achieve successful establishment, adequate levels of protection against predation and fraying will need consideration, e.g. fencing, topical treatment, tree shelters or lethal means.

An example is the conifer adjacent to the watercourse at Newham Bottom that will benefit from remodelling, restoring native broadleaves along the bottom of the valley.



Douglas Fir Regen at Ruardean

Hemlock regen at Newham Bottom

Left photo shows the right natural regen in the right place. Right photo shows the wrong regen in the wrong place.

The plan has several registered seed stands for the collection of seed, acorns and chestnuts at: Brierley Banks, Kensley Enclosure and Trafalgar Lodge.

Concept

Stand management will be more individually tailored than other crops, retaining and developing crowns of dominant seed, acorn or nut producing trees.

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TSI Oak at Speculation

Whilst there are numerous veteran and ancient trees, there are even more that have potential to become ancient and veteran that are in various states of health, providing a variety of habitat types. Some can be classed as “Trees of Special Interest” (TSI) and can be of any species, conifer or broadleaf. Trees with this potential are always valued and being discovered, whether through operational planning, community projects or members of public observing and reporting them.

Concept

The Forest Plan recognises these trees as important features. Their location and context within the wood will determine how best to manage them. Eg haloing to remove interfering conifer or invasive species such as Western Hemlock, the Oak at Speech House designated as SSSI, or the many veterans in and around the villages and communities on the periphery of The Forest. All these contexts have differing management needs. The prime objective is to retain the tree, with felling being an absolute last resort. The retention of deadwood will raise the quality of soil and the ecological value of the woodland.

The belt of Norway Spruce along the western edge of the field adjacent to Herbert Lodge is performing well at Yield Class 20, and was due for clearfelling in the 2017-2021 period.

Concept

Whilst the belt of spruce feels out of context with the adjacent stands of Sweet Chestnut and Oak, the belt is showing signs of good regeneration in its northern half and provides some shelter to the field. The site will be managed through Low Impact Silviculture, potentially with some enrichment planting required in the southern half at some point.



★ There are numerous areas of mixed conifer and broadleaf woodland like the ones just north of Brierley, other similar areas would include sites around Beechenhurst and Serridge.

Concept

To ensure a forest that is robust and resilient in all its forms for the future, we will see a higher proportion of mixed rather than pure sites. Not only does this achieve the resilience needed, but provides a more diverse complex of habitat, as well as Sense of Place.

The spatial restructuring of conifer to the higher ground and broadleaves to lower valleys and slopes, has pretty much been achieved by previous plans. However, most stands of Oak remain monocultured in their nature, ▲, with some on drier and sometimes more skeletal soils (e.g. Ware Slade and Horsley Flat), that indicate Oak may become less favourable on those types of sites in the future, due to a warming climate.

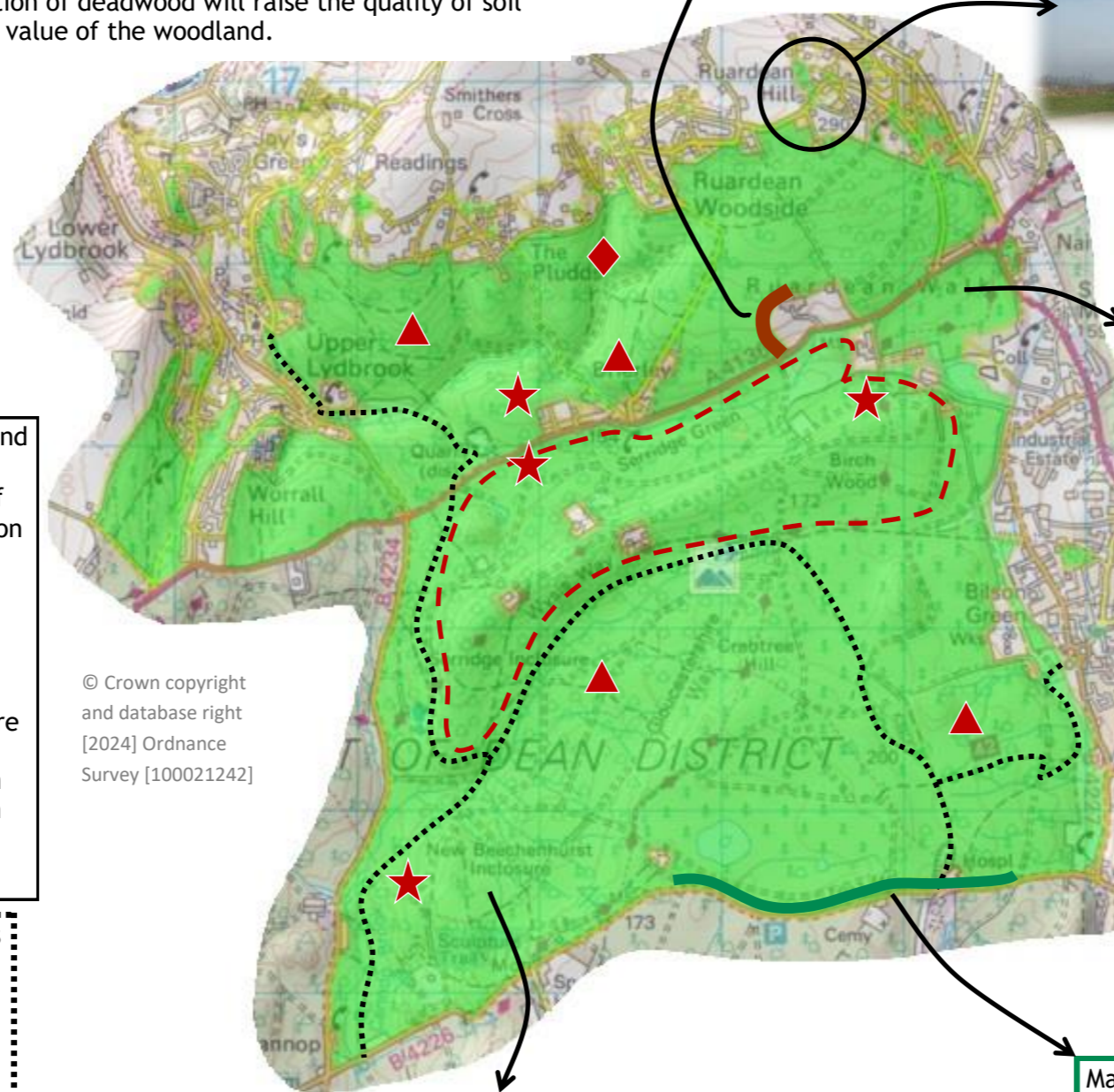
Concept

In the future, across the plan area, Oak stands will be more diverse by nature by way of species and age structure, although some areas may remain pure, Oak will remain an important species within most mixtures; achieved through an appropriate mix of thinning, natural regeneration and proper choice of provenance for any enrichment planting.

The Plan area has a large disused network of railway lines and tramways, some of which have been reformed into cycle trails. Much of the Cycle trail network is hemmed with trees, some sections being long and straight in nature, and others set in steep sided valleys and cuttings.

Concept

Woodland edge and structure along the cycle trail should be diversified in species and varied in stocking density, in order to expand the depth of view into the woodland, giving a more inviting and appealing landscape to engage the user experience. This could be achieved through the use of short to mid length rotation coppice, or in other areas, thinning can create open glades, with feathered edges used to highlight specimen trees.



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Pan Tod is the highest point in the Forest of Dean and much valued by local people. It is situated within extensive areas of Forest Waste that extend and nestle along the north and northeastern edge of The Forest. Management of Pan Tod is aided with the help of the friends of group.

Concept

Forest Waste plays an important part in generating structure to the forest edge, creating a rich diverse mosaic of different habitats that are all managed to different degrees, with Pan Tod being in the higher degree.

The mature Corsican Pine at Steam Mills planted in 1924, was identified in the 1990s as a “gateway to The Forest”. A few years later it was under planted with native broadleaves and Larch, and within features the old Hawkwell Mine coal tip. Poorer ground to the west consists heavily of old coal scree, creating a very skeletal soil.

Concept

Site will be retained and managed under Low Impact Silviculture (LIS), with the coal scree ground to the west being left as open habitat with targeted planting on the better ground.

The main landscape feature across the centre of the plan area is the ridge in Serridge. It runs east west, with maturing Beech dominating the skyline. The north side of the ridge primarily consists of Scots Pine and Douglas Fir planted in the 1960s and 1980s; the southern slopes being warmer, are primarily broadleaf from the 1940s, with some Larch and Pine mixed in.

Concept

Larch to the south will gradually be replaced with alternative conifer species. Recently felled areas on the northern side, will be restocked sympathetically, creating a more cohesive complex of open habitats and planted ground, using a mix of conifer and broadleaf. The large areas of Douglas Fir will be restructured using LIS, with ridesides being widened from Great God Meadow, along to Waterloo Screens pond. Areas of Hornbeam at Brierley will be bolstered by further plantings. Thinning the Beech along the main ridge should look to develop a more irregular structure, with opportunity for enrichment planting.

The Sculpture Trail utilises the woodlands within Kensley and Beechenhurst Enclosures. Artists will often link the rich cultural, social and economic tapestry of The Forest together through construction of their sculptures, supported by a location of their choice. As sculptures are decommissioned, some remain resolutely poignant to this day, e.g. Bois Mort.

Concept

Woodland will be sympathetically managed around the sculpture locations and this should include those that are decommissioned.

Mature conifer and Scots Pine line the road from Kensley Lodge to the Dilke, and thanks to being well thinned, is beginning to develop good structure, allowing natural regeneration of Douglas Fir, Western Hemlock and Scots Pine to be fostered. Below the Dilke, Napoleonic Oak take over and are reminiscent of the rich cultural heritage the Forest has to offer, and should be retained.

Concept

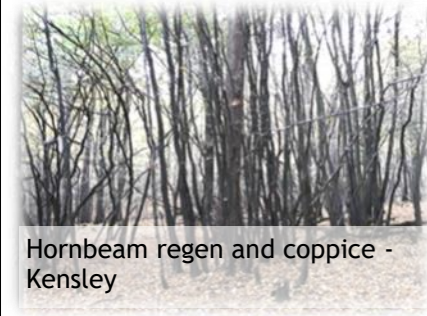
Thin to favour Douglas Fir, removing over mature Western Hemlock that suffers from butt rot, with younger cohorts of regen also being thinned to develop an open grown feel to the stand enhancing the Sense of Place.

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The plan area enjoys both large and small areas of Beech and Hornbeam that is particularly good for Hawfinch e.g. Great God Meadow and North Lodge.



Hornbeam regen and coppice - Kensley

Concept

Planting should be mindful to enhance habitat for Hawfinch, e.g. at the Delves, or through recruitment of regeneration e.g. Kensley



Photo showing an isolated 1 hectare area of rich and diverse open habitat at Foxes Bridge tip

Laymore Quag is a rich wet habitat supporting numerous species of Dragonfly and Damselfly along with Adder and Great Crested Newts.

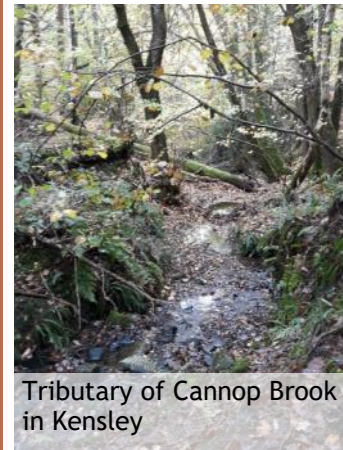
Concept

Site will be maintained with a view to improving the wetness of the site by decanalising or breaching the incoming and straight watercourse at the northern end of the site.



2

Cannop Valley runs along the Western edge of the plan area. The east side of the valley is within the plan area and is home to Cannop Brook, fed from streams and tributaries within Kensley and Beechenhurst inclosures. This area is not well frequented by people and is wet in places with mixed wet woodland species like Alder and Willow, with Oak, Hazel and Birch mixtures occurring on the drier ground. Some areas of Oak to the north of the valley around the Speculation area have already been heavily thinned, virtually to a Wood Pasture type setting, although a dense understory of birch has now become established.



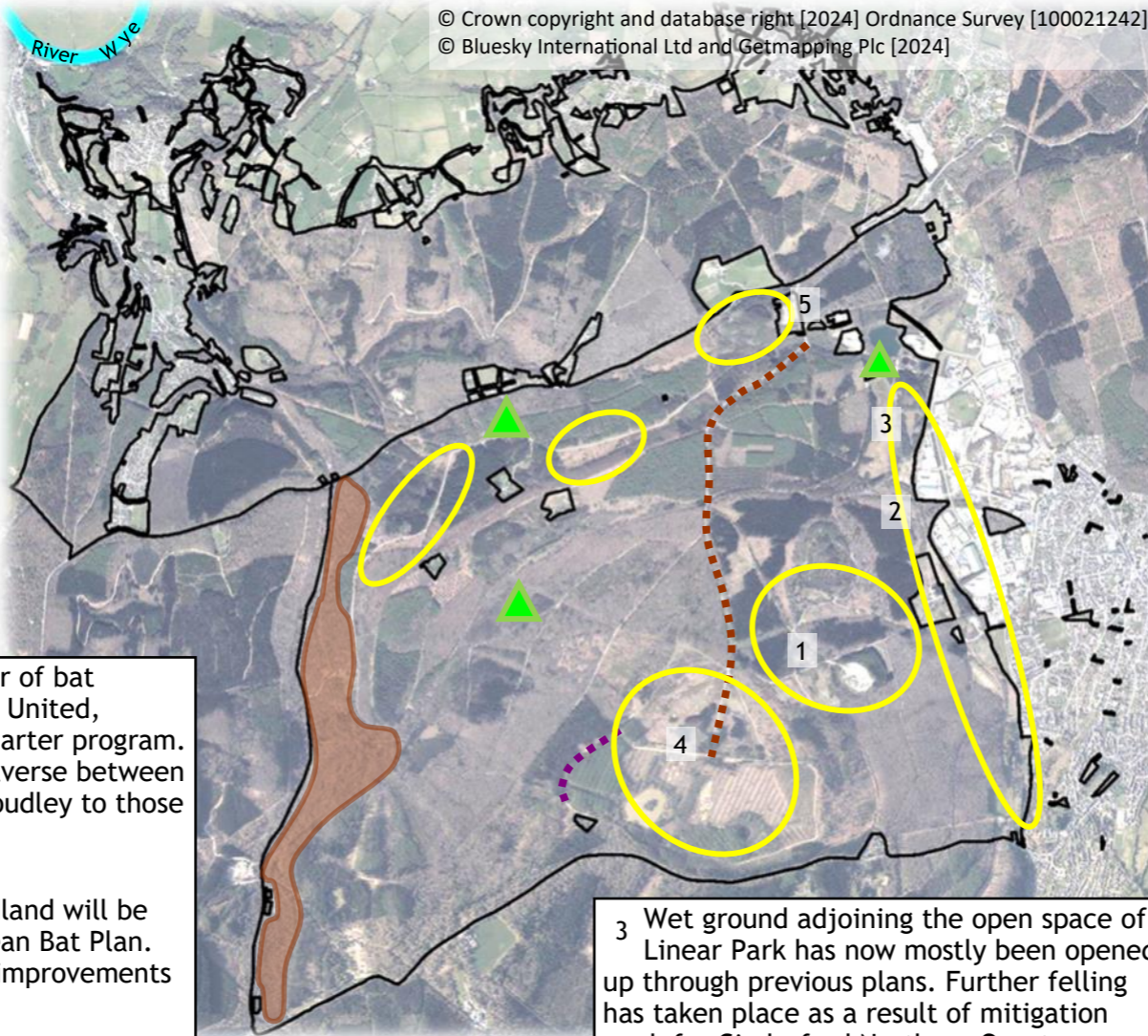
Tributary of Cannop Brook in Kensley

the drier ground. Some areas of Oak to the north of the valley around the Speculation area have already been heavily thinned, virtually to a Wood Pasture type setting, although a dense understory of birch has now become established.

Concept

Majority of the Oak will be managed through Minimum Intervention or Single Tree Selection. Understories of Birch within Wood Pasture at

Speculation, and areas of Hazel further south along Cannop Brook can be coppiced in rotation, subject to protection measures. This will bring about a more varied habitat structure and diverse range species using the site.



The plan offers crucial habitat and refugia, with a number of bat hibernacula throughout the plan area, including Northern United, provided through mitigation work for Cinderford Northern Quarter program. The plan area provides vital links for bats to navigate and traverse between sites to the south at Oakenhill, Buckshaft, Bradley Hill and Soudley to those in the North at Wigpool Ironstone Mine.

Concept

Prescriptions will be sensitively selected to ensure that woodland will be carefully managed in line with EPS guidance and Forest of Dean Bat Plan. This ensures habitats are safeguarded including the planned improvements to the forest edge along ride sides.

Highland cows grazing at Woorgreen at Crabtree Hill.



The consistency of open habitats varies from Lowland Heath at Woorgreen that contains heather, gorse, rough grasses, bracken and birch, to areas whose composition is of an acid grass and wetland, like at Linear Park or at the Delves which has a mix of these.

Concept

Management will sympathetically soften the hard edges of these habitats by additional conifer removal and thinning to further refine and develop feathered edges. Sites will be managed through grazing, mechanical methods, and the efforts of contractors and volunteers.

Wet ground adjoining the open space of Linear Park has now mostly been opened up through previous plans. Further felling has taken place as a result of mitigation work for Cinderford Northern Quarter Regeneration programme.

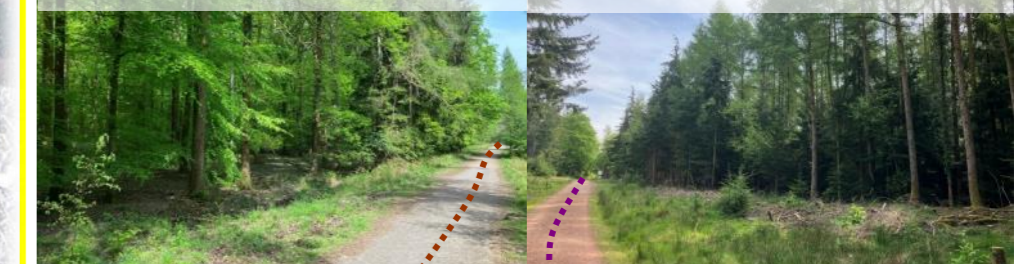
Concept

Mitigation felling of Norway Spruce at North Lodge has extended the open space at the northern end of the Linear Park upto the Brickworks. Now fenced and partially planted it is being grazed by a private grazier, complimenting the grazing at Woorgreen. The site will continue as mixed open habitat. Mature Scots Pine in the surrounding woodland will be retained.

Woodland composition of the plan area currently sits with a fairly even split of conifer and broadleaf, with just over 20% of open space, although open habitats are contained within 2 or 3 primary areas at Woorgreen, Linear Park and The Delves. Open habitats remain somewhat distinct and separated from each other. This could be explained by the monocultured nature of surrounding woodland, linked with an increased use of Low Impact management prescriptions. The effect on these habitats of being isolated is amplified, as the transitory nature of the woodland cycle, provided through clearfelling and restocking (that wildlife would otherwise enjoy), is reduced in quantity. However, due to the monoculture plantings of the C20th, many of the forest roads and rides such as the NSM road, lack diversity in their structure, both spatially and in species, with the gradation of woodland edge greatly reduced and often missing.

The Northern Strip Mining “NSM” road in Crabtree Hill

Forest road into Woorgreen from Kensley Lodge



Photos above show the very mundane and monocultured nature of ride edges, often typical within this plan, stifling potential diversity, flow of species and therefore connectivity. - The Oak edge to the left will be heavily thinned and under planted with Hazel and other coppicable native species and on the right Western Hemlock and Larch felled and replaced with the same.

Concept

The connectivity of open habitats and spaces should be enhanced and linked with surrounding areas, with corridors reflecting the scale of adjacent woodland. Stronger, more robust corridors can be created by adopting the principles of a transient, graded woodland edge. By implementing this approach, we can create stronger, more robust corridors. This will improve permeability and flow between different habitat types, thereby linking and reducing the isolation and the disparate nature of primary open sites.


This improved quality of woodland edge will be achieved through varying the intensity of thinning, adoption of coppicing, using felling, planting and/or recruitment of natural regeneration. Work can be done through forest operations or, realised through volunteer groups like the Dean Green Team, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust or Butterfly Conservation.

Secondly, phased clearfelling will still be programmed for other areas within the plan, at a pace that will try to account for the increase statutory fellings due to disease, both of which will provide further transitory habitat to compliment the improved quality of woodland edge.

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 Despite the high proportion of broadleaf woodland, Dormice have not been observed within the plan area. Equally, we can not assume their absence, and can only presume absence due to poor structure and less suitable habitat.

Concept
The planned creation of enhanced woodland edges and adoption of coppice will see an improvement in structure and diversity of tree species. This will increase availability of suitable habitat within the plan area.

6 The Beavers at Greathough Brook were released in 2018, with the first kits born in 2023. They are already having a dramatic effect on the landscape and the capacity for the site to holdback water during periods of wet weather.

Concept
7 Other areas such as the stream from Newham Bottom to Piano Corner, could have potential as possible future beaver habitat, once plan proposals have been implemented.

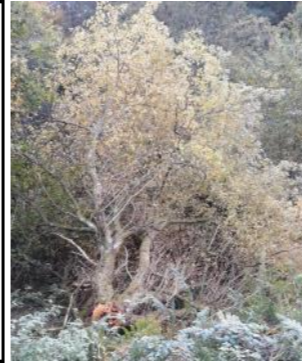




Photo left shows a mature willow felled by the Beavers at Greathough. Note how the crown of the tree has been left in tact. Eventually, all of this will be reduced into manageable sized pieces to be used in dam construction, Lodge construction and for food.


8 Adjacent woodland to the Speech House Oaks SSSI show similarities to those of the SSSI site itself.

Concept
The area will be managed sympathetically to stimulate the spread of Holly, promoting development of the oak woodland, and hopefully provide additional favourable habitat for some of the lichen population within the SSSI to spread and stabilise.

 Some of the area already has had the conifer cleared and although some oak have died, this is an opportunity for the lichen to colonise and thrive.

 Goshawk are an iconic species for the Forest of Dean and have been very successful due to the diverse mix of mature conifer habitat.


Concept
Mature conifer habitats will be managed to ensure suitable habitat remains available for nesting and breeding.

 The Plan area provides functionally linked habitat for the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites Special Area of Conservation, and the whole plan area is noted as crucial for the success of this species.

Concept
Changes to forest structure will be gradual and known flightline and foraging areas will be preserved. The intended operations will increase connectivity across the plan area and increase opportunities for foraging.

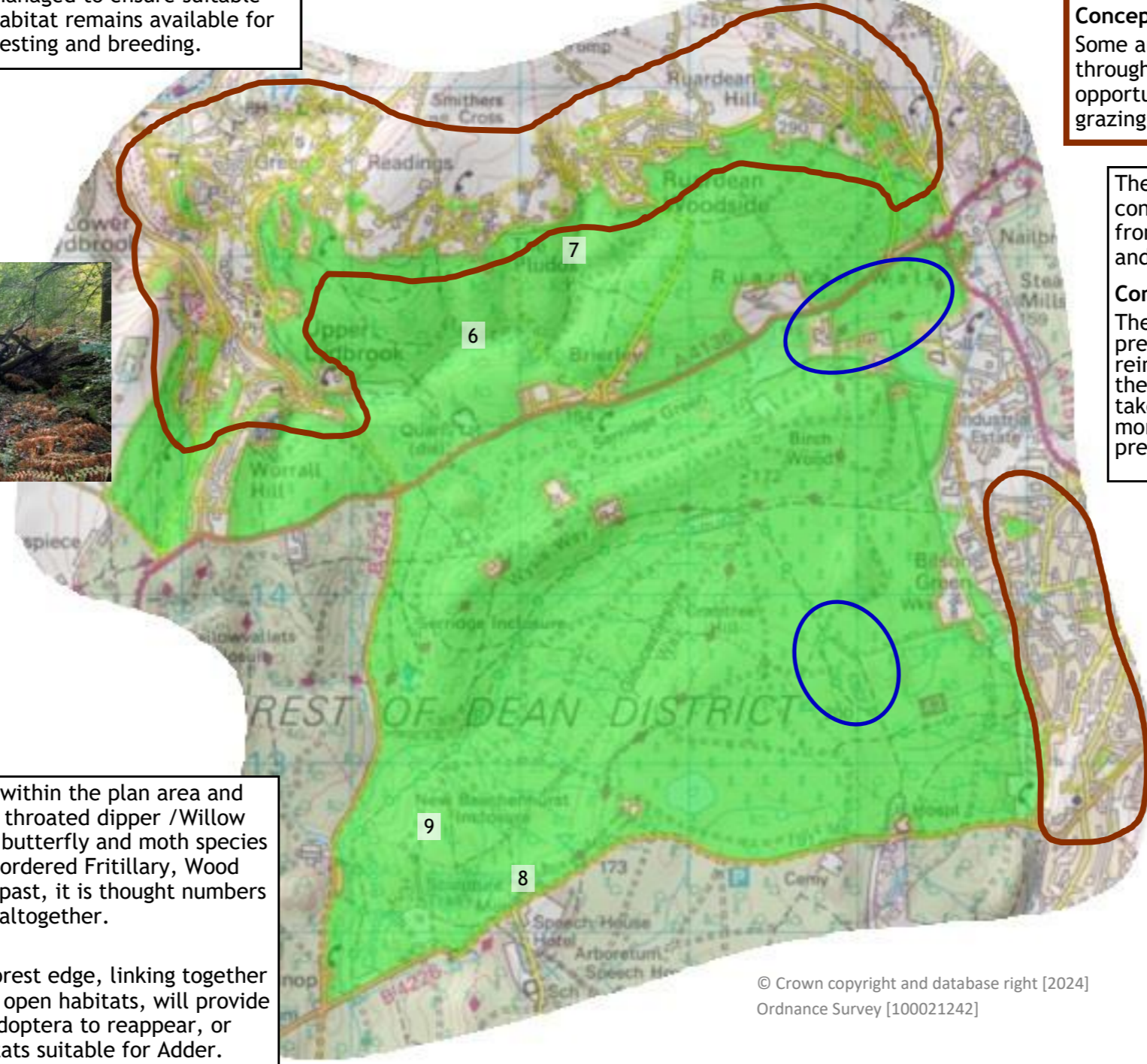
Areas of Forest Waste are an important feature and component of the wooded landscape, enhancing the distinctive character of the area mainly around peripheral edges of the woodlands and can provide habitat for the likes of adders, Glow-worms, other reptiles and invertebrates. Some areas are being lost to successional infill by gorse, bracken and pioneer tree species due to the lack of grazing since foot and mouth in 2001.

Concept
Some areas of Forest Waste should continue to be managed both through mechanical means and volunteer groups. There maybe opportunities to incorporate Forest Waste into larger open areas for grazing animals to manage.

 Fallen trees, branches and crowns left intact on site provide a rich habitat for a wide variety of species that will change over time as the wood rots down.

Unlike standing deadwood that has longevity, fallen deadwood decomposes much more quickly meaning that different species groups are catered for, making the forest ecology system even richer.

Concept
Management will continue to accrue different varieties of deadwood to ensure the range of habitats is continually refreshed and remain topped up.



The plan area is capable of producing high quality timber from both conifer and broadleaves, with both the Oak in Kensley, Douglas Fir from Astonbridge commanding high prices, although squirrels, boar and deer are a challenge.

Concept
The quality of the timber needs to be safeguarded from natural predation by the likes of squirrels. It is hoped that the successful reintroduction of Pine Martens in 2019 and 2021 will start to reduce the number of squirrels and their associated damage, however it will take time to reverse their impact, and could take 15-20 years or more. Fencing, tree shelters and lethal means will be used for other predators such as boar and deer.



9 Photo left shows a Sweet Chestnut Coppice at Beechenhurst severely damaged by Squirrel. These tops will die off and eventually snap out. The end result is that timber value is severely impacted upon.

The adoption of broadleaf regeneration and some planting will continue, as any damage can be “stumped back” in the future and regrown, once the squirrel issue is redressed sufficiently through a mixture of methods.

A wide variety of bird species has been recorded within the plan area and these include: Longeared Owl /Kingfisher /White throated dipper /Willow Tit /Haw Finch /Woodlark /Woodwarbler. Whilst butterfly and moth species including Dingy skipper, Grizzled Skipper, Pearl Bordered Fritillary, Wood White, White Admiral have been recorded in the past, it is thought numbers are dwindling and rare if not gone from the area altogether.

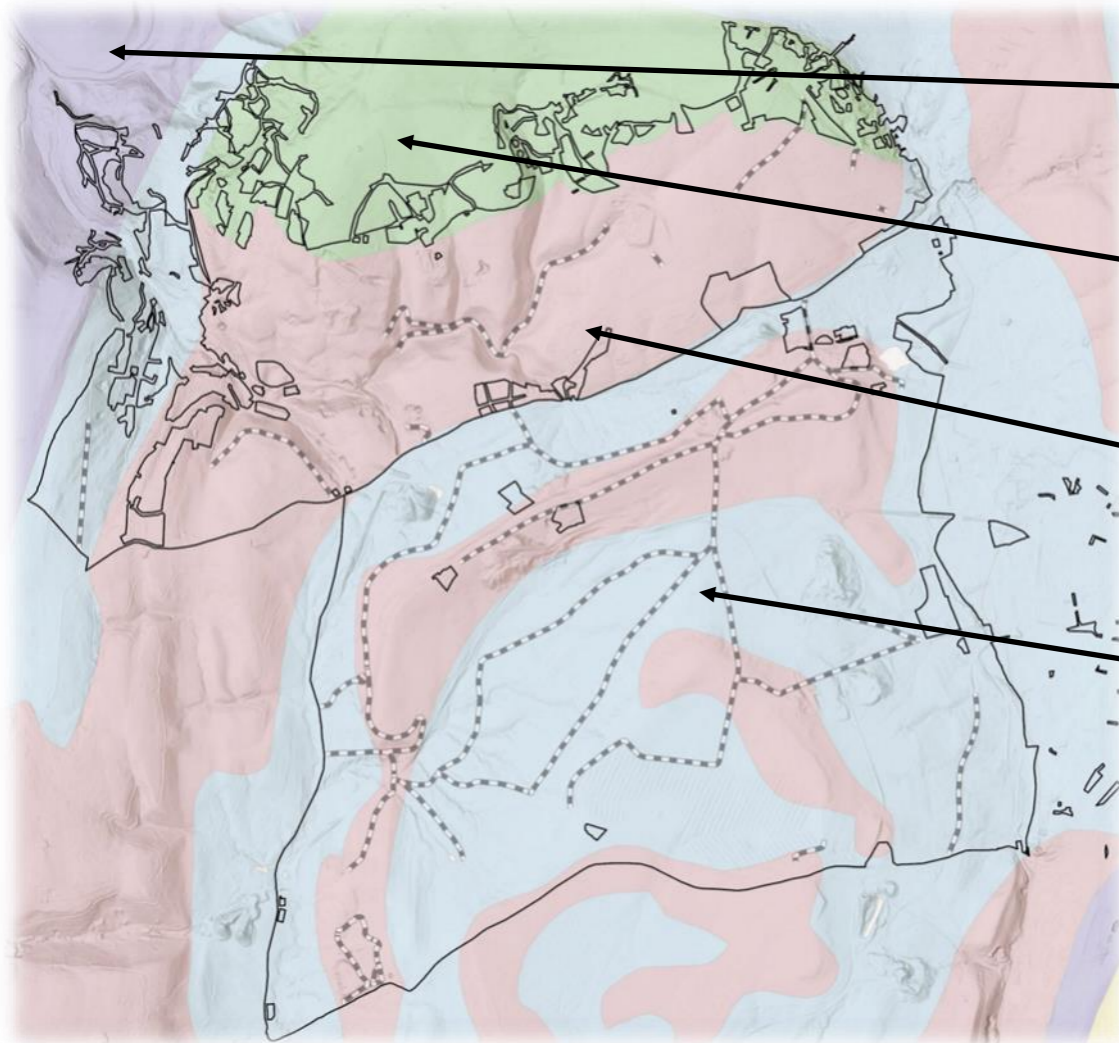
Concept
It is hoped that the proposed improvements to Forest edge, linking together and providing a more robust connection between open habitats, will provide enough favourable habitat for some of these lepidoptera to reappear, or stabilise and will certainly help with linking habitats suitable for Adder.

Hawkwell and Foxes Bridge collieries. These old spoil heaps provide rich open habitats suitable for butterfly, moth and adder populations. However, these areas are generally isolated, fragmented and too small, with habitats being transitional in nature, so putting pressure on remaining populations of priority species.

Concept
Prescriptions will be tailored to enhance existing linkages and create new ones in order to provide better connectivity, functionality, diversity of habitat and woodland edge.

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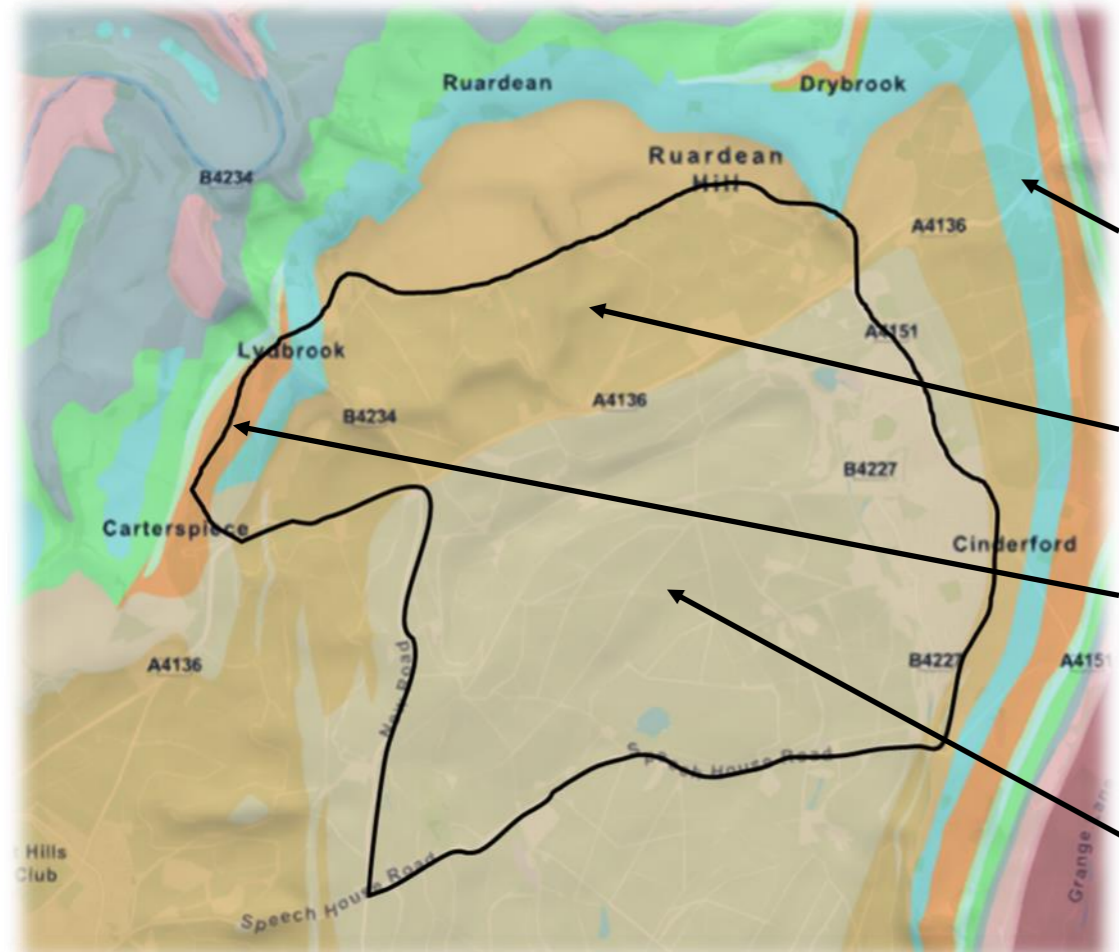
Shallow
Rendzina/Ranker

Agillic Brown (Gleyed) Earth

Podzolic Brown Earth
with some areas of Gley

Surface-Water Gleys

Bedrock Geology



Trenchard Formation - Mudstone and Sandstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 309.5 and 308 million years ago during the Carboniferous period

Coleford Member - Sandstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 309.5 and 308 million years ago during the Carboniferous period.

Cromhall Sandstone Formation - Sandstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 344.5 and 329 million years ago during the Carboniferous period.

Cinderford Member - Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 309.5 and 302 million years ago during the Carboniferous period.

Average rainfall 870-1060mm, with Conifer upto Yield Class (YC) 24 on better sites but as low as YC10 on poorer sites, and expect YC 8 to YC 4 for Broadleaves across the plan area.

Crabtree Hill - A shallow domed plateau lying between the upper part of the Cannop Valley in the West and Cinderford Brook in the East. Predominantly moderately fertile clay loams that are capable of supporting production of quality broadleaves. In areas around previous coal mining sites at Beechenhurst, Foxes Bridge and Crump Meadow, the spoil areas consist of heavy clays. Acidic brown earths and podzols are found around Crabtree Hill and Beechenhurst, associated with underlying sandstone geology. Heavier gleys can be found to the south of Crabtree Hill around Woorgreen.

Bedrock is Carboniferous Mudstones/Siltstones and Sandstones.

Serridge - As the name suggests, is a ridge peaking at 205m asl, that runs east-west denoting the “strike” of the coal measures of the Dean mineral basin. Gley soils prevail across much of the site with areas of acidic brown earth found on the upper parts of the ridge. And in areas where mineral exploitation has taken place, soils are often low nutrient heavy clays, restricting species choice.

Bedrock is Carboniferous Mudstones/Siltstones and Sandstones.

Astonbridge - Overall aspect is a southern one. Soils generally derived from sandstone, with limestone just coming within the north western corner of the area. Acid Brown earth dominate northern slopes and the higher ground within Astonbridge. On the lower valley slopes soil gives way to heavy clay loams. Well drained nature of soils make sites relatively dry with wetter sites on the lower slopes and valley bottoms.

Bedrock Carboniferous Sandstones.

Concept

With the use of local knowledge in conjunction with Ecological Site Classification (ESC) tools and where appropriate soil pits, the future woodland structure will move away from monocultures, continuing to diversify what is already a diverse woodland. Composition will include those species classed as “Alternative” or “Emerging” that will give the woodland a more robust composition suitable to face a changing climate, threats of pests and disease and increased fire risk.

The Industrial past of the Forest has led to some areas of poorer, more impoverished and sometimes skeletal soils. Eg the strip mining in Woorgreen, and mining at Hawkwell and Northern United.

Concept

Following completion of quarrying, sites are restored but are often left open due to being acidic in nature or having a low nutrient value, although species such as alder, birch and pine are good pioneering species for these types of sites.

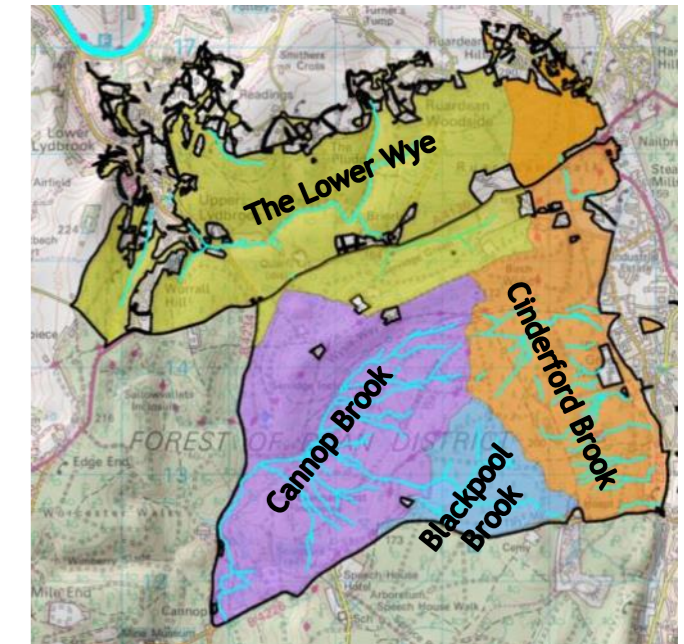
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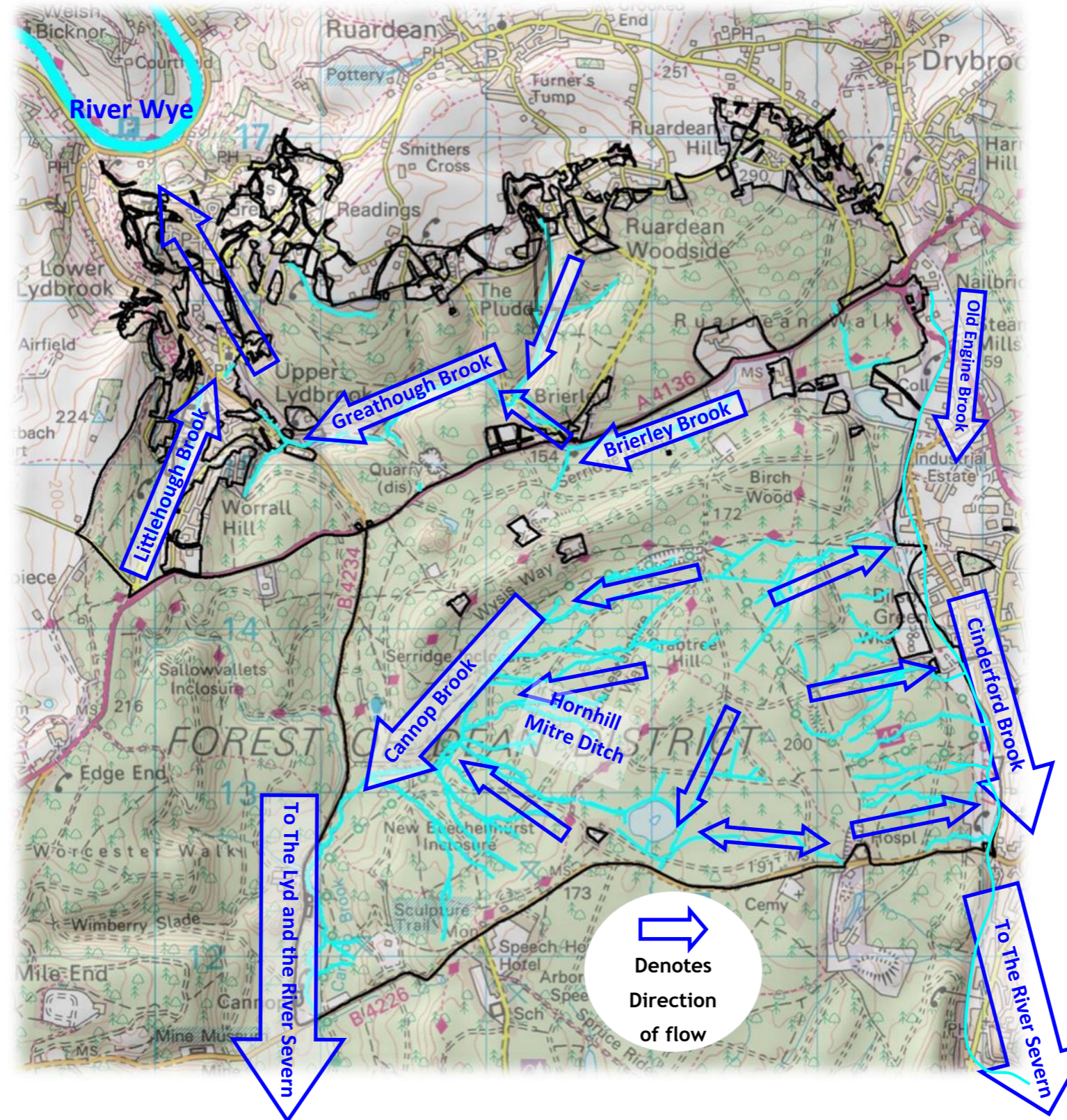
Water catchments within the Forest Plan

The map below denotes the four water catchments covering the Forest Plan area as identified in the Environment Agency’s Water Framework Directive. The main watercourses involved can be seen in more detail on the map to the left.



Catchment	Catchment area (square miles)	
	Total	In plan
Cannop Brook	22.5	1.90
Cinderford Brook	10.6	1.72
Blackpool Brook	6.5	0.45
The lower Wye	42.8	2.65

Concept
The Forest Plan coupled with Our Shared Forest and the Forest Waters Project, will look for ways in which to harmonise forest management prescriptions with the character of freshwater ecology within the plan area. This will ensure natural features, processes and habitats are delivered that will provide protection from natural hazards such as flooding, soil erosion and help in protecting the needs of aquatic species. To achieve this the plan will embrace the principles laid out in UK Forest Standard Guidelines for Water.



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The image below is taken from the Dasgupta Review of 2019 (HM Treasury) and calls for changes in how we think, act and measure economic success to protect and enhance our prosperity and the natural world.

Forestry England has embraced the [natural capital approach](#) and increasing Natural Capital is one of Forestry England’s core objectives.



Concept

This Forest Plan will seek to identify those watercourses in need of priority treatment in order that their biological and ecological values are greatly enhanced, achieved by following key guidance for riparian buffers laid out in the Catchment Management Plans prepared by the Forest Waters Manager and the District Ecologist.

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The areas of Douglas Fir and Western Hemlock that run from Newham Bottom to Piano Corner are densely stocked, and their proximity to the brook is not in keeping with water guidelines. Originally, the broadleaf either side of the brook was to be felled, but this has not happened yet. The brook eventually flows into Greathough Brook.



Concept

Retain the broadleaf on either side of the brook, and instead restructure the valley so that, following removal of conifer, the brook enjoys a robust corridor of native broadleaves, that will marry with the broadleaves towards the bottom of the valley.

Water drains from Wareslade and Astonbridgehill Inclosure in a westerly direction down to Lydbrook.

Concept

Beavers were released in Greathough Brook in 2018 to help natural processes re-establish themselves within the riparian area of Greathough, and in doing so helping to increase the water retention capacity within the woodland, slowing and smoothing the flow of water downstream. In the future there could be potential for more releases to be planned elsewhere within the plan area.



The headwaters of Cannop Brook emanate from the central part of the plan area, from within Kensley Inclosure, flowing to the westerly boundary, before heading southerly to Cannop Cross Roads and on into Cannop Ponds. Some streams are seasonal and some disappear before reappearing further downstream.

Concept

Introduction of woody debris will be employed to help stabilise, smooth and slow water flows, meaning woodland soils should not dry out so quickly during prolonged periods of dry weather.

Cannop Brook flows much faster here, being broader and more firmly established, the landscape has been heavily influenced and modified both through natural process, as well as through built infrastructure that has canalised parts in an attempt to prevent water from draining into underground workings.

Concept

It is hoped that in time, through various measures, Cannop Brook can become more naturalised through natural processes.

Watercourse with modified sections that used to feed the Old Mill above the Old Vicarage. Has wet woodland and a dry waterfall that has been bypassed.

Concept

Consider rewetting and reinstating waterfall.

Steam Mills Lake, site of Wights opencast and settling ponds, closed in 1969.

Concept

Site will continue to be enjoyed for fishing and surrounding area for amenity use.

Area of valuable wet woodland including deadwood habitat on the edge of Linear Park and adjacent to the old Hawkwell mine.

Concept

Retain feature as it is, and encourage site potential for water holding.

Brierley Brook, an entrenched watercourse capable of heavy water flow. Surrounding woodland has just been felled due to disease.

Concept

Open habitat will increase when site is replanted with introduction of woody debris employed in the brook to slow the flow and improve habitat.

Woogreens is a Key Wildlife Area that was opencast for coal in the late 1970s to early 80s. The lake was then created and together with its margins, were designated a local nature reserve and is managed by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT). The remainder of the opencast was restored to woodland, and the site heavily drained as the ground was greatly disturbed and compacted, with the area adjacent to the lake prepared through “rig and furrow”. The ground is acidic and the Corsican Pine and Norway Spruce was performing poorly. In the late 1990s, it was decided to fell the site, returning the area to lowland heathland, with ponds and scrapes installed within the furrows as part of the Million Ponds project, that was funded by Biffaward and run by the Fresh Water Habitat Trust. Mallards Pike was also created thanks to the Woogreen opencast project.

Concept

The area will continue to be managed by GWT, with coppicing being introduced, further diversifying the variety of habitat, within areas of mature Alder. The area of Larch to the west will gradually be felled and replanted with native broadleaves that will then be managed as coppice using wet woodland species such as Alder and Willow.

An old canal system that brought coke and fed water to the old Cinderford Iron Works, closed in 1894, now known as Linear Park. The site currently features a cycling trail that runs along a former tramway, either side of which there is open habitat, including a series of ponds, and this is all that is left of the old canal.

Concept

The site managed for its conservation potential, enhancing the natural capital of the site and whilst heavily developed/modified, extensive areas of diverse semi-natural habitat, particularly grasslands and ponds remain, and is one of the most important areas for biodiversity in the Forest of Dean, with improvements being made in partnership with Severn Rivers Trust.

A Complex area, with heavily modified sections. Old Engine Brook is a straight leat carrying water quickly downstream, bypassing Steam Mills Lake, meaning this stretch and further downstream are very “flashy” in their nature following periods of heavy or prolonged rain.

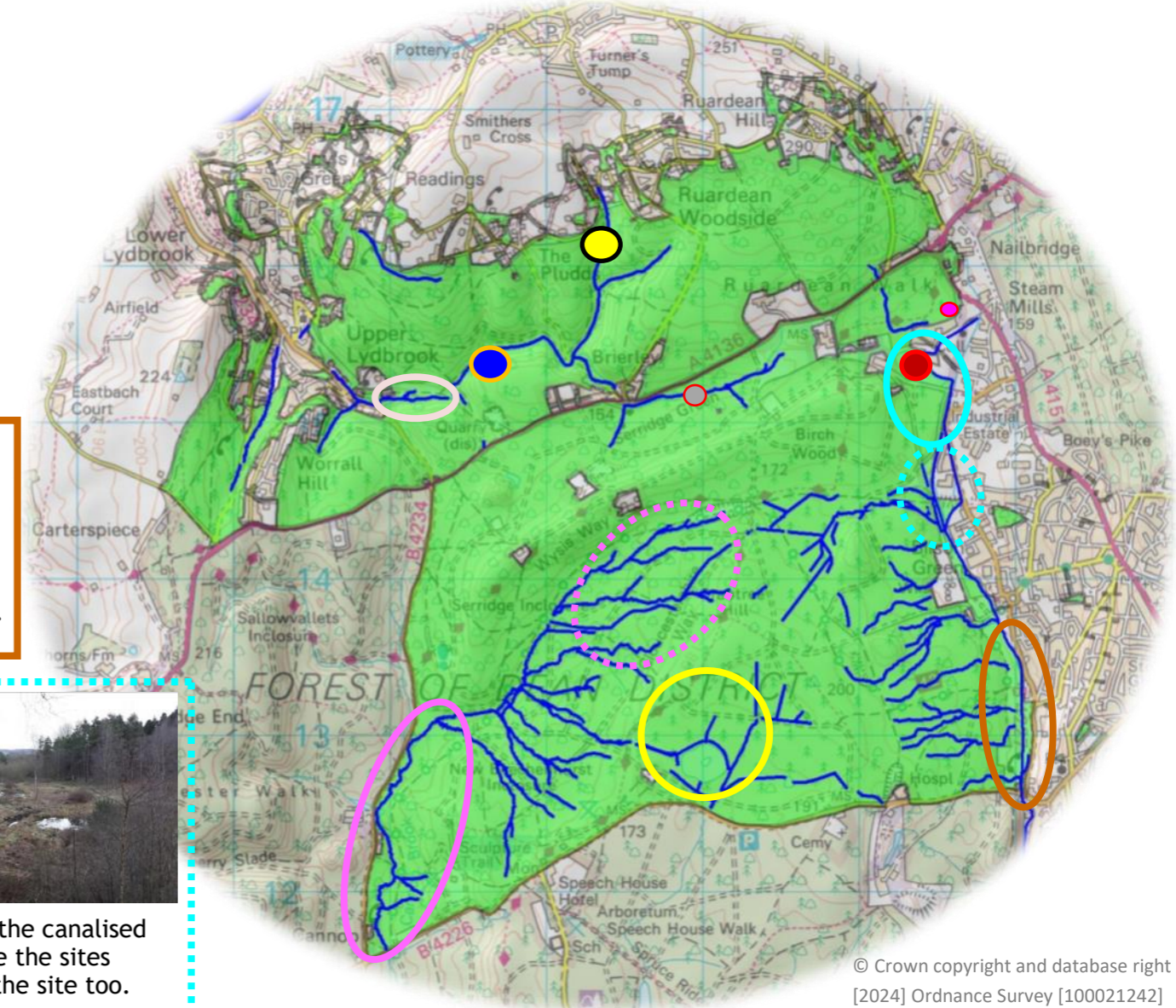
Concept

Various techniques and methods are being looked at to alleviate flooding potential. In partnership with Severn Rivers Trust and Severn Trent, Forestry England have carried out several ecological enhancement projects along Old Engine Brook and Cinderford Brook.

Laymore Quag is an area of open wetland, with a series of ponds and a canalised watercourse along its western edge. The site has potential to increase its capacity as a wetland, sitting in a key location for slowing the flow and holding water back following periods of heavy or prolonged rain.

Concept

Further fieldwork is required to ascertain the extent of which the canalised watercourse can be re-naturalised, that would further increase the sites holding capacity for water, increasing the ecological value of the site too.



The industrial past of the Dean has left a legacy of features that provide opportunities for local recreation and education as well as recording cultural identity. Examples include:

- Opencast sites such as those at Woorgreen, hint at their past - are now a haven for wildlife and enjoyed by many visitors.
- Extensive networks of dismantled railways - now used as informal footpaths and also more formally converted for cycling.
- Colliery tips such as those at Northern United and Crump Meadow - have now been planted, usually with Scots Pine that become features of the Forest.

Concept

Each of these features in turn requires their own specific prescriptions, often relating to ensuring the quality of the landscape is maintained through sensitive management. This can take the shape of maintaining the mature Scots Pine that grow alongside the Colliers Trail (was Family Cycle Trail), running through Crabtree Hill and Serridge - it means creating an interesting and diverse woodland edge with varying tree species and density, mixed with areas of open space giving vistas into the forest within.



Crabtree Hill

The photo shows what remains of part of the old Great Kensley enclosure demarcated by an earthbank. Once a stone wall that used to enclose the area for purposes of growing trees and keeping sheep out, it was dismantled in the mid 1800s as a result of the Warren James riots of 1832. The stone used in the walls was dressed and sold per linear meter for building houses.

Iron markers, like this boundary marker were used to mark the "boundary of administration" for the Forester in Charge of a certain area, whilst Forest Lodges had a stone marked "ARP" built into the wall. This is an old English measurement of land [acres, rod and perches] and the ARP stone identified the area of the enclosure for that boundary using this measurement.

Concept

These remnant enclosure walls and iron boundary markers will be retained and protected from damage during forest operations.



Crabtree Hill

Gale Stone no 85 marks the corner of the Rose in Hand Gale in Kensley Enclosure, worked by Great Western Collieries co.



Kensley



Sculpture Trail - "Coal Measure Giants"

"Coal measure giants" sculpture in Kensley looks at the relationship of the geological [rocks trees, and iron] matched to the technical expertise of bringing minerals to the surface.

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Many of the ponds that the plan area enjoys were created following quarrying activity. Ponds provide numerous benefits for education, recreation, habitat and species diversity.

Concept

Management will reflect the high aesthetic value given to the ponds, the expectation that mature trees will be present, as well as the needs of the associated habitats and their surroundings.



Woorgreen

The majority of this plan area has historically been an area of intense industrial activity, especially for coal and stone. Leaving a rich legacy of industrial archaeology, with some industrial activity continuing today. Wildlife has taken advantage, with the area now known for Horseshoe Bats, with a number of bat hibernacula being present in the old mining buildings and more recently artificial ones.

Concept

Management will be sensitive, ensuring bat habitats are maintained through the site planning process, and mining features that are of benefit to bats safeguarded, complementing the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites Special Area of conservation.



Horseshoe Bats



Bat Hibernacula at Hicksters Way

Mining and quarrying in the Forest remains an important part of The Forest economy and continuity with its past. Features include: Northern United, Trafalgar colliery, Foxes Bridge colliery, and Crump Meadow colliery, The Delves, Woorgreen, Strip and at it, and Beechenhurst (formerly part of Speech House colliery). Old sites are now often an important part of the landscape with mature mixed woodland covering them e.g. Waterloo Screens, that also impart a valuable variety of habitat from wet woodlands at Woorgreen and Laymore Quag - for birds, reptiles, lepidoptera and odonata - to Foxes Bridge and Northern United that provides valuable acidic grassland and heath habitat.

Concept

Sites will be managed in accordance to their needs, to retain/enhance their beneficial character to society, nature and economy.



Hawkwell tip

Physical remains of historic industry are readily visible in the landscape, from old colliery tips, to old railway embankments and the disused railway and tramway network. These features now are being reappropriated whether its planting trees, waymarked trails or for open habitats and better connecting the ecology of the area.

Concept

These kinds of features will continue to be better integrated into the management of the Forest, helping to adapt the landscape and woodland to future demands and challenges, from climate change and the biodiversity crisis, to supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of local communities and woodland users.



Old Beam engine rediscovered in 2010 at Foxes Bridge Colliery before the site was levelled, now open habitat.



Disused Railway embankment at Laymore Quag, part of Great Western Line, now a good vantage point of the wetland habitats.

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● Showing four examples of stone and concrete lined structures in the plan area, (x2 at each location on the map), where leats and culverts historically played important roles in managing and controlling water flow during the Forests industrial past. This may have been simply to pass water under a road, track or in more complex ways, such as trying to prevent entry of water into underground mines. Some features still provide functionality, while some now lie dilapidated, falling partially or completely out of use.



Concept

These heritage features serve as a marker of the skilful engineering and quality of workmanship during the industrial era of The Forest. Features will be protected and preferably avoided during forest operations; whilst in order to enhance the ecological potential of the land, others may be altered or removed to facilitate or reinstate natural processes. - This is part of the Water Catchment Project, headed up by the Water Projects Manager.



Mireystock Tunnel & bridge built in 1882, connected the Severn and Wye line with Great Westerns network at Lydbrook. Closed in 1960.



Concept

The tunnel and bridge will continue to bring visitors by foot and bike. In the past it was proposed to open the tunnel for the cycle trail, bypassing the main A4136 road crossing.

A Spring on the side of the main A4136 Coleford to Cinderford road is locally known as Stay and Drink, with the concrete structure marked with a date of 1936.



Concept

The site is adjacent to The Delves and being surrounded by native woodland, management will retain its native character.

Trafalgar Arch spans the Severn and Wye Railway, built in 1878, reputedly for the purpose of tipping spoil on the other side of the line, and helps brace the retaining wall for the spoil heap of Trafalgar Colliery. The arch was renovated in 2001.



Concept

The arch will remain a key structural and landscape feature, continuing to help retain the spoil heaps of the old colliery.

Iron inclosure marker from 1896 at Whitegate, marks the re establishment of much larger enclosures for growing of oak, with conifer first planted in 1896 within the Dean, but within this plan area not till 1900, when roughly 2 hectares of European Larch at Speech House was planted.



Concept

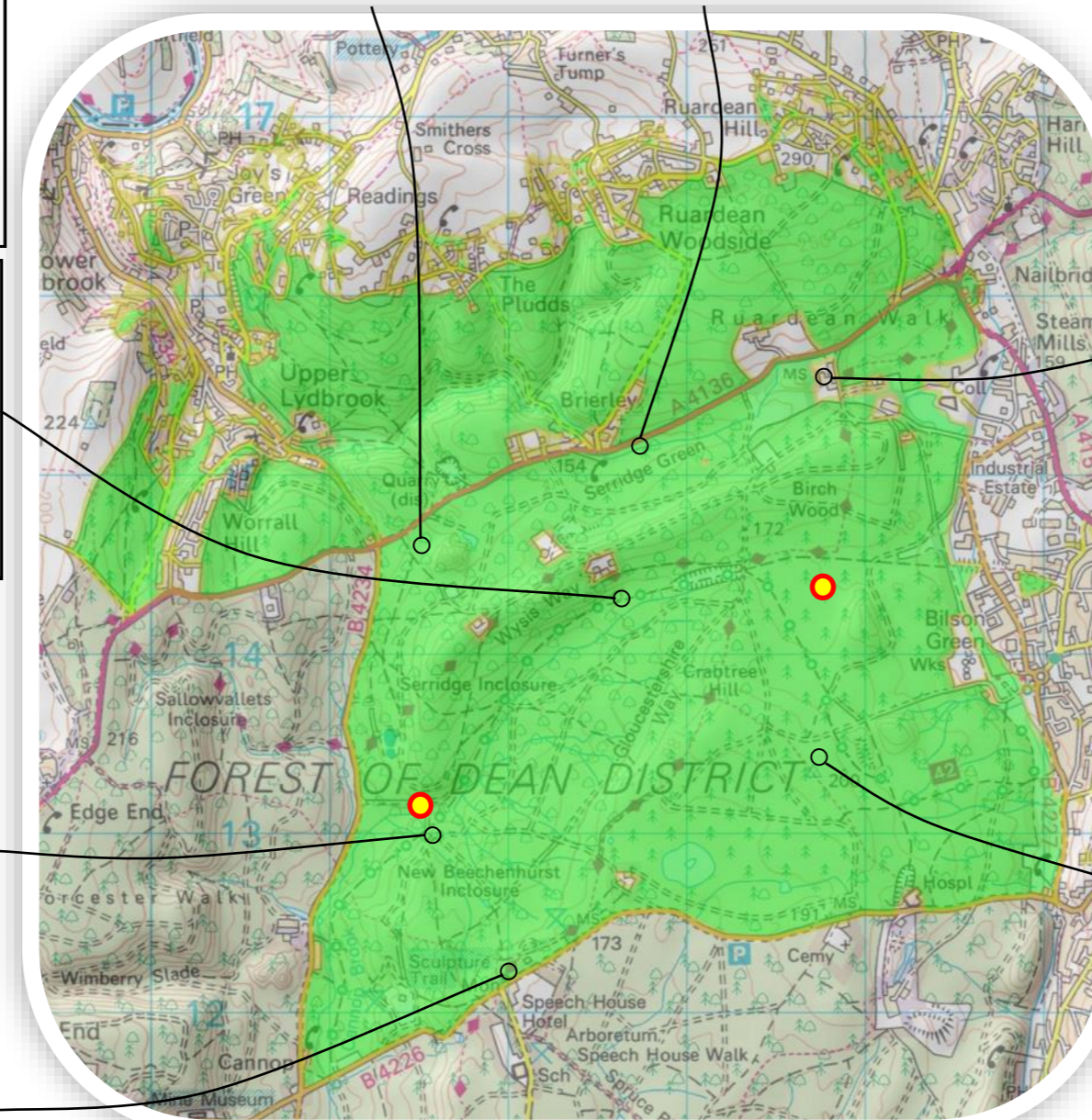
Any markers will be kept in situ. Fencing will remain an important tool for establishment of crops approved through the enclosure commissioners.

The Bledisloe Obelisk is circa 18th Century. It is a listed building, marking the centre of The Forest and can be found opposite the Speech House hotel. In the background one can see an Oak tree planted by HRH Earl & Countess of Wessex in 2014, and was formatively pruned in 2023.



Concept

Will be managed through the Conservation statement prepared in December 2023.



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Northern United colliery, site of the last deep mine in The Forest, mined the Coleford High Delf seam and was opened in May 1933, closing on Christmas day 1965. The old pit bath buildings still survive, and a memorial was built on the site of one of the main shafts. The old colliery tip was planted with Corsican Pine in 1969. The site was part of the Cinderford Northern Quarter (NQ) regeneration plan.



Concept

While some of the objectives and aims of the NQ project have yet to be met, use of the site was one of the keys to the success of building the new Gloucestershire College, meanwhile the old pit buildings continue to provide good refuge for populations of Horseshoe bat that use the site.

Foxes Bridge Colliery opened 1869, is one of the biggest collieries of the Dean. It joined with Lightmoor and Trafalgar in 1919 for purposes of flood prevention, before closure in 1930 due to pumps being turned off.



Concept

The site will extend and enhance the open habitat found at the Woorgreen lowland heathland site.

There are numerous non-scheduled features that are important to the heritage of the Dean, including charcoal hearths, scowles, wood/earth banks, and sunken tracks known as holloways.

Concept

The planning of Forest Operations will refer to and consider features captured on GIS, with any new features recorded appropriately for future knowledge.

The plan area contains numerous Forest Lodges that would have once belonged to The Crown, although all are now in private ownership. Most sit nestled within a woodland context. (For their location see Trees and Woodlands and Community & Recreation Concept and Analysis pages)

Concept

Forest management and operations should be sensitive to the context of the Lodges.





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Recreational use of the area is high, with the most frequented car parks at Beechenhurst, Speech House Woodlands, Linear Park and Speculation, as well as numerous informal car parks. The woods are used by walkers, horse riders, cyclists and mountain bikers, with an ever increasing appetite for downhill & cross country routes, with pressure to also increase horse riding facilities. These users are supported by a network of Public Rights of Way, permissive routes and formal Forest Trails.

Concept

Whether the person is a local or a visitor, the woodlands, trees, associated habitats and species provide the foundation for Recreational enjoyment of The Forest. The Forest Plan prescriptions should be sympathetic to enhance user experience, aiming to enrich the aesthetic appearances of the woodlands within a local and wider landscape context.

-  Beechenhurst
-  Speech House Hotel
-  Most frequented carparking
-  Secondary & minor carparking

*** Other facilities**


- Speculation/ Waterloo Screens/ Delves/ Hangerberry/ Hawsley/ Piano Corner/ Baptists Way/ Hawkwell/ Northern United/ Woorgreen Cottages/ Woorgreen

The plan area enjoys a multitude of recreational activities and events, mostly based at Beechenhurst that include Go-Ape and outdoor pursuits. Elsewhere others may include: fishing, horse and carriage rides, husky training, orienteering, running and motor sports.

Concept

Whilst there are currently no major recreational developments planned, some sites may require forethought in the provision of additional car parking that may influence management prescriptions.

From various vantage points throughout the plan area, one can appreciate the fantastic views of the surrounding Gloucestershire and wider countryside, especially those from the beacon at Pan Tod. Internally within the woodlands there are also a diverse range of landscapes one can enjoy, especially from top of Crabtree Hill, from along the ridge at Serridge and above Beechenhurst, that command views over the plan area and surrounding forest. Along with the open habitats at Crabtree Hill and Linear Park where the internal landscape is more intimate, and areas of Forest Waste like those at Hawsley and Lydbrook are more complex.

180° view 


Concept

The plan will look to maintain and improve these landscapes and view points through plan prescriptions. Thinning operations should also identify and consider opportunities for enhancing both the existing internal and external views, or even possibilities of creating new vistas.

The Dilke Hospital has a special and important place in the heart of local people that enjoys the woodland setting, bringing a “Sense of Place” to the site that The Crematorium also enjoys.

Concept

The Forest Plan will recognise the “Sense of Place” that makes both sites so special. The plan will look to preserve/enhance the features that make it so. Carefully planned operations, use of appropriate Silvicultural techniques and consideration of under-planting, will provide future species/structural diversity along with resilience, helping safeguard the “Sense of Place”.


 Dilke Hospital

The woodlands within this plan area have a high degree of interconnectivity with the villages and towns of The Forest. These include the “Forest Lodges” and clusters of homes set within the woods themselves.

Concept

The plan will recognise special features of the woodlands that make the interconnectivity to the integrated villages and communities of The Forest so special. In doing so prescriptions will be sensitive to these features, and operations to implement the plan will look to safeguard and enhance them. Eg veteran/ancient oaks around Speech House, the Native broadleaf dominated characteristics of New Road at Speculation, various stands of Scots pine, the developing well thinned medium Douglas Fir and Red Cedar in Kensley and Beechenhurst or the Copper Beech at Brierley.

-  Main Towns
-  Main Villages
-  Near by Villages

-  Kensley Lodge/ Serridge Lodge/ Trafalgar Lodge/ North Lodge/ Herberts Lodge/ Arran Lodge/ Ruardean Hill Lodge/ Puzzle House/ Cannop Cottages/ Cannop Villas/ Old Vicarage/ Hawkwell Row

