

Spitfire Forest

A new woodland near Twyford

Consultation report and
our response to key
issues raised

August 2026



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1. Executive summary

Between 19 May and 14 June 2026 we held a consultation on proposals for the designs of Spitfire Forest, a new woodland, on land we recently purchased near Twyford in Hampshire.

This report focuses on the feedback we received to the consultation and our response to the key issues raised. We received 205 responses to the consultation, including 18 from stakeholders and stakeholder organisations. Whilst we received many broadly supportive comments, some highlighted concerns, and others raised questions and made suggestions.

After carefully considering the responses, further design work, and in response to consultation feedback, we have:

- Reached out to the South Downs National Park's Rights of Way and Access team to agree how we can best work with them and other key stakeholders to potentially deliver multi-user paths in the future.
- Are creating a new site entrance into the field adjacent to Woodland Drove to improve safety and to move it further away from properties on Woodland Drove and the existing Public Right of Way. The existing access arrangements will remain in place temporarily until the new entrance is operational.
- Updated our maps to reflect all footpaths, bridleways and permissive paths.

In response to feedback from Natural England we have:

- Confirmed suitable buffering will be in place for Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), mature trees and hedgerows.
- Undertaken to plant the broadleaved element of mixed woodlands on the edges of the planted areas to improve connectivity between neighbouring ancient woodlands.
- Confirmed the retention and management of the semi-improved grassland.

We will shortly be submitting our proposals to the Forestry Commission for regulatory review ahead of planting the new woodland.

This report outlines our approach to the consultation, a summary of the key issues and questions raised, and our response.

2. About the consultation

2.1 Introduction

Forestry England is creating a new 168-hectare woodland on land we have purchased near Twyford, Hampshire. The new woodland, which will be called Spitfire Forest, will be planted with mixed conifer and broadleaf trees, specially selected to be resilient to future climate conditions.

The new woodland will be open to the public for people to explore and enjoy, whilst also being a valuable place for wildlife and producing sustainable timber for a greener economy.

The consultation invited views from the public and stakeholders on our proposals for the planting and design of the new woodland. Feedback will help shape and inform our final designs, which will be submitted to the Forestry Commission for regulatory review ahead of planting the new woodland.

2.2 Objectives of the new woodland

Our objectives for the new woodland are to:

Establish a new mixed resilient woodland: plant a mixed species woodland with structural diversity that will thrive in future climate conditions.

Produce a lasting supply of sustainable timber: using climate modelling and in-depth site assessment plant the right trees to produce a lasting supply of certified sustainable timber.

Enhance biodiversity and improve woodland connectivity: link existing woodlands to improve habitat connectivity. Create a mosaic of habitats with open space, hedgerows, lower density planting, native broadleaf planting, shrub planting and mixed woodland to improve biodiversity.

Sequester atmospheric carbon: tackle climate change and support net zero targets by locking up carbon through climate resilient woodland creation, combining fast-growing conifers and native species as well as exploring research trials to support future-proof, sustainable timber production.

Public access for health and wellbeing: create a new green space for local people to explore on foot, supporting health and wellbeing.

Benefits for the wider landscape: capture carbon, supporting net zero emissions targets.

2.3 Consultation purpose

The aims of the consultation were to:

- Provide the public and our stakeholders with sufficient information about our proposals to allow them to give informed responses and suggestions.
- Understand the reasons for any issues or concerns about our proposals.
- Identify any issues we might not already be aware of.
- Provide adequate time for people to respond.
- Consider all responses carefully ahead of making any changes to our proposals.

2.4 Early engagement

In late March, we contacted Colden Common Parish Council, Twyford Parish Council, and our new immediate neighbours to let them know about our plans for the land we had recently purchased at Park Farm, near Twyford. We also told them that we would soon be sharing our design proposals for the new woodland as part of a consultation and inviting their feedback.

We received initial thoughts from both Colden Common Parish Council and Twyford Parish Council, Ward councillors for Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council as well as from an immediate neighbour on Woodland Drove, a neighbouring equestrian yard owner and a British Horse Society volunteer.

Key feedback included:

- Include horse-riding and cycling access with specific suggestions for routes from Colden Common to allow horse-riding and cycling access and linking to the existing bridleways outside the woodland; an off-road route which connects the village of Twyford and Colden Common; options for a network of accessible routes for pedestrians and cycles both north/south and east west.
- Include access into the woodland from the Parish Council owned Stratton Copse where land is earmarked for future development.
- Plant native trees only and consider landscape and heritage impacts when developing the designs.
- Undertake community and stakeholder engagement ahead of public consultation.

- Liaise with the South Downs National Park to consider the best approach to joining up existing routes across the Park Farm site.
- Include solar/renewable energy infrastructure on the site.
- Provide more information on parking.

Appendix A of this document sets out our response to the key emerging issues raised in early engagement.

2.5 Who we consulted - public consultation

Our public consultation on the draft design proposals for the new woodland was open to anyone who lived or worked in the local area or had an interest in our proposals.

We focused our publicity on people living in the local area, as well as stakeholders (officers and elected local ward members) from Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council, the South Downs National Park, Colden Common Parish Council and Twyford Parish Council, as well as interest groups such as the British Horse Society and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

We also told the statutory stakeholders we consult with when creating a new woodland, including the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.

The list of stakeholders we contacted is included in **Appendix F**.

2.6 Dates and duration

The consultation for the new woodland was open from Tuesday 19 May to midnight on Sunday 14 June 2026.

2.7 What we asked

The consultation survey included one open question inviting written feedback or questions about our proposed plans for the new woodland at Spitfire Forest. We also asked respondents to give their name and email address and, where applicable, supply details of the organisation on whose behalf they were responding.

The survey we published on the website, is included in **Appendix C**.

2.8 Methods of responding

Respondents to the consultation were invited to give their views by:

- Viewing the proposals and completing the questionnaire included on our consultation portal at <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/spitfireforest>
- Giving comments by email to Woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk
- Leaving comments at the public consultation drop in event at Colden Common Community Centre, St Vigor Way, Colden Common, Winchester, SO21 1UU on **Wednesday 3 June from 4pm-7pm.**
- Feedback received at the drop in event is summarised separately in section 3.6 of this report.

2.9 Consultation materials and publicity

2.9.1 Consultation materials

The consultation materials published on our website and available to view in person at our consultation drop in event included:

- An overview of Forestry England's Woodland Creation Programme and tree planting objectives.
- A site appraisal, with photographs and maps to give context.
- An overview of the surveys undertaken and our objectives and principles, which have informed our design proposals for the new woodland.
- An overview of different tree and shrub species included in the proposals.
- Visuals of how the new woodland might look soon after planting and in the future.
- Information on how to respond to the consultation.

2.9.2 Consultation activity

We publicised the consultation in the following ways:

- **Media release:** distributed to local news outlets.
- **Dedicated webpage:** on the Forestry England website at: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/woodland-creation/spitfire-forest>
- **Citizen Space consultation portal:** <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/spitfireforest>
- **Emails:** to stakeholders and those asking to be contacted with details of the consultation.
- **Leaflets:** to approximately 500 addresses close to the site boundary.
- **Posters:** a poster publicising the consultation and drop in event was put up in several locations near the site. Posters were also shared with the local parish councils for inclusion on their noticeboards/websites.

- **Consultation drop-in event:** Our drop in event at Colden Common Community Centre, displayed the information already published on the website on large posters around the venue and Forestry England staff were available for people to talk to about the proposals, answer questions or queries, and listen to any concerns.

Those attending the event were also encouraged to leave immediate feedback on the comments board and to respond to the consultation formally via the online survey, by email, or by completing a hard copy of the consultation questionnaire. We also asked attendees to leave their contact details if they would like to be kept updated about the proposals.

2.9.3 Analysis of consultation responses

Consultation responses were analysed by assigning (or coding) the points made by each respondent to one or more codes within a code frame. Codes were organised by theme and separated into comments or suggestions, and concerns/negative comments.

Each code reflects a point raised by one or more individuals in a variety of ways. From this it was possible to count how many times the same or similar points had been raised by respondents.

3.Consultation feedback

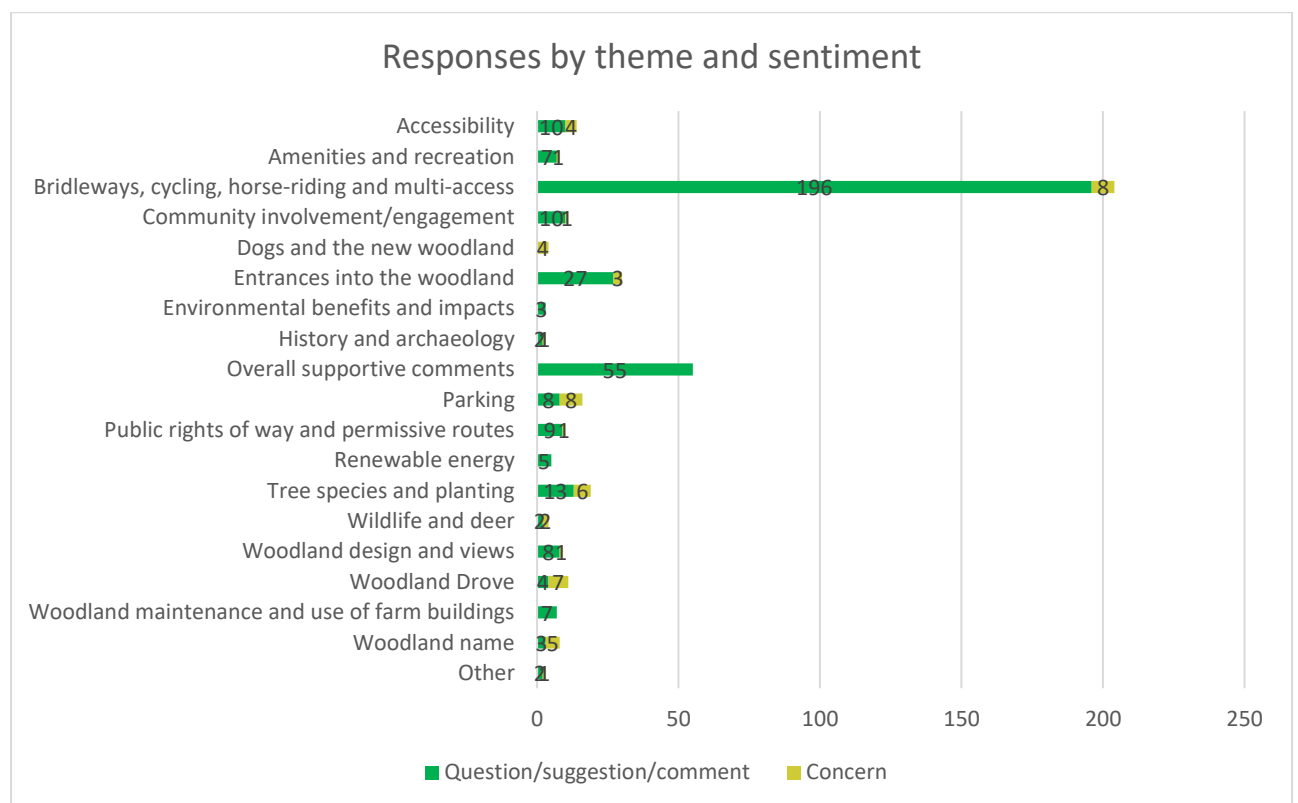
3.1 Consultation response overview

We received 205 individual responses to the consultation including 18 from stakeholders or stakeholder organisations. Whilst some responses contained broadly positive supportive comments for the new woodland, some raised concerns and others asked questions, made suggestions or raised comments that were neutral in sentiment. We received responses from the stakeholder organisations listed below. A full list of the stakeholders we contacted is available to view in **Appendix F**.

	Consultee/organisation
1	MP - Winchester constituency - on behalf of a constituent
2	Ward councillors - joint response from Hampshire County Council ward member for Bishops Waltham and Winchester City Ward Council ward members for Colden Common and Twyford
3	Winchester City Council - Ward Councillor
4	Winchester City Council - Ward Councillor -on behalf of a constituent
5	South Downs National Park
6	South Downs Local Access Forum
7	Hampshire Countryside Access Forum
8	Winchester City Council - Archaeology
9	Colden Common Parish Council
10	Owslebury Parish Council
11	Twyford Parish Council
12	Environment Agency
13	British Horse Society
14	Cycle Winchester
15	Ramblers Association
16	Winchester Scouts
17	Riding for the Disabled
18	Natural England - submitted a response following an on-site meeting with members of the Forestry England team after the consultation closed. Their feedback is addressed in Section 5 of this report but is not included within the charts or analysis in the main body of the report.

3.2 Consultation response by theme

The responses were categorised into themes and sub-categorised into concern, or question/suggestion/comment.



3.3 Supportive/positive comments

We received 55 general overarching positive/supportive comments. These included:

“This gets my full support and I look forward to hearing more about it” “I fully support these plans and am really excited to see this happen” “A good idea and very good use of space” “Love the idea of planting a forest, great idea” “Great appreciation to all concerned for pursuing a strategic long term plan for the good of the area and for future generations to enjoy” “A fantastic biodiversity asset” “An excellent use of the land which enhance the local environment and preserve access for future generations to utilise and enjoy”.

3.4 Concerns/negative comments

We received 53 concerns/negative comments. These have been summarised below:

Theme and mentions	Summary of key concerns
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding and multi-user access (8)	Concerns about the lack of provision for horse riding and cycling, alongside concerns that existing bridleways, particularly Watley Lane and Monarch's Way, are poorly maintained and often impassable in wet conditions. Some respondents felt bridleways and footpaths should remain separate, with others preferring pedestrian-only routes. One response raised a concern that increased horse-riding visitors could put additional pressure on the narrow bridleway along Watley Lane.
Parking (8)	Concerns about the lack of proposed parking provision and the potential for visitors to park in inappropriate locations, including Hunters Park and along Boyes Lane. Concerns were also raised about the possible use of open space on the western side of the hill for parking or visitor facilities, and the impact of horse boxes travelling to access any new bridleways in an area where parking is already limited.
Woodland Drove (7)	Concerns about increased vehicle use on Woodland Drove, including concerns it could become an access point for the new woodland and the impact this could have on existing public rights of way. Respondents also raised concerns about water run-off from the new woodland onto Woodland Drove and Main Road following heavy rain and sought reassurance that mitigation measures will be put in place.
Tree species and planting (6)	Concerns about the inclusion of conifers, particularly in large blocks, with respondents noting that dense conifer plantations can create dark, gloomy environments, affect the character of the South Downs landscape and dominate the skyline. Concerns were also raised about their perceived impact on safety for lone walkers and runners using dark woodland paths.

Woodland name (5)	Concerns about the proposed name <i>Spitfire Forest</i> , with respondents questioning its basis and suitability.
Dogs and the new woodland (4)	Concerns about an increase in dog walking and associated issues, including dog fouling, discarded waste bags, bags left in trees and a lack of dog waste bins.
Accessibility (4)	Concern that access to the new woodland is confined to those visiting on foot/walkers only and that the proposals may be inconsistent with the principles of the Equality Act 2010.
Entrances into the new woodland (3)	Concerns that open spaces without gates could lead to an increase in unauthorised encampments and concern that the plans show pedestrian-only access from Colden Common.
Wildlife and deer (2)	Concerns about deer culling and safety risks to woodland users.
Amenities and recreation (1)	Concern that the inclusion of woodland attractions would impact on parking in the village
Community involvement/engagement (1)	Concern from an immediate neighbour they had not been notified of the consultation.
History and archaeology (1)	Concern that the forest design may have relied solely on Historic Environment Record (HER) data and a request for further archaeological surveys and information.
Public rights of way and permissive paths (1)	Concern that there are no improvements to the Public Rights of Way network with the inclusion of accessible paths.
Woodland design and views (1)	Concern the woodland could alter views and change the existing character of the western end of the South Downs National Park.
Other (1)	Concern about food security and ensuring enough arable land is maintained for food production.

3.5 Questions, comments and suggestions

We received a further 316 comments, questions and suggestions. The themes most frequently raised focused on bridleways, cycling, horse-riding and multi-use access, entrances into the new woodland, woodland maintenance and farm buildings and tree species and planting.

The questions, comments and suggestions are summarised below. All feedback is included in the code frame in **Appendix E**.

Theme and mentions	Questions, comments and suggestions
Bridleways, cycling horse-riding and multi-use paths (196)	There was strong support for providing cycling, horse-riding and multi-user access within the new woodland. The most frequently mentioned suggestions were to include bridleways and horse-riding routes (45), provide access for cyclists (40), with specific route suggestions - the most mentioned was for a new bridleway link between Colden Common Recreation Park and Watley Lane (26) plus 14 comments specifically supporting the Parish Council proposal, with other comments (5) specifically supporting extending cycle and equestrian access from Colden Common Recreation Park into the woodland (5). Several comments highlighted opportunities to contribute to wider active travel aspirations and provide safe off-road routes for cyclists and horse riders. Respondents also highlighted the importance of providing well-designed multi-user access routes that can be used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Several comments supported upgrading and surfacing existing paths to accommodate a range of users, while others suggested ensuring that horse-riding is only permitted on routes with suitable surfaces. Other suggestions included the provision of paths accessible for carriage drivers, by neighbouring equestrian facilities, explore seasonal access arrangements, and sought an agreement in principle that such a route could form part of the site's long term vision and to work with stakeholders to develop long-term cycling and equestrian access.
Entrances into the woodland (27)	Responses focused on improving access into the woodland from surrounding communities. The majority of comments (25) focused on providing access from the southern end of Coldon Common via Stratton Copse/Chalk Dell. Other suggestions include keeping access gates to the open field adjacent to Woodland Drove closed to avoid unauthorised encampments and that consideration should be given to a controlled entrance system.
Tree species and planting (13)	Respondents supported a woodland design focused on native broadleaved species, natural regeneration and ecological resilience, with limited or no conifers. Suggestions included incorporating species such as beech, aspen, juniper and trees with foraging value, while

	encouraging broadleaved regeneration in existing woodlands. There was also support for creating a more connected woodland landscape and maintaining a balance between woodland planting and the area's open downland character.
Accessibility (10)	Responses focused on the inclusion of accessible tracks, gates and paths for non-motorised users - including mobility scooters /wheelchairs (5) and accessible access from Colden Common Park. Other suggestions included creating an accessible surfaced circular route and parking to support those with limited mobility and called for continued engagement with access forums, local authorities and user groups to help shape an ambitious and inclusive access strategy.
Community involvement and engagement (10)	The most mentioned suggestions focused on opportunities for tree planting and volunteering by local residents and community groups (3) and the provision of forest education opportunities, outdoor classrooms, shelters and learning activities (3). Other suggestions included the creation of an area where local people could dedicate trees to loved ones, engagement with key stakeholder groups in future consultations and a question about the purpose of consultation on new woodlands, given the potential costs and delays this may involve.
Public Rights of Way and permissive routes (9)	Suggestions supported retaining existing public rights of way and permissive routes, with clear signage to distinguish between them and avoid confusion over access rights. There were also requests to improve links between the woodland and the wider rights of way network serving Twyford, Colden Common and surrounding areas, and a suggestion that should new paths be created for horses to access the woodland - make them permissive intended primarily for local access rather than destination horse-riding.
Parking (8)	Views on parking were mixed. Some comments suggested the inclusion of car parking, with a specific suggestion for a small car park at Woodland Drove, and another supported the proposal not to provide parking. Suggestions also requested clarity on the reasons for the parking approach, an implementation timeline and ensuring any future parking proposals consider equestrian access from the outset.

Woodland design and views (8)	The most mentioned suggestion (3) was to retain existing hedgerows and mature trees. Others included a suggestion to include Taylors Copse in the scheme, consider how close trees are planted to nearby properties, use planned access design to support nature recovery, directing people onto robust legible routes and a suggestion to ensure that the landscape history, character and evolution continue to be readable, seen in views and experienced in the woodland.
Amenities and recreation (7)	Suggestions supported the inclusion of features such as a play area, facilities for young people, and benches or picnic seating to encourage recreation and use of the site.
Woodland maintenance and use of farm buildings (7)	Questions and comments included the role of the retained farm buildings, how habitat and path damage from forest operations will be minimised and how the ancient woodland, in particular Park Copse, will be maintained.
Renewable energy (5)	Include renewable energy/solar panels on the site.
Woodland Drove (4)	Comments welcomed confirmation that Woodland Drove would not be the main vehicle access route to the new woodland; suggested that any new operational track next to Woodland Drove should be designed to direct runoff away from Woodland Drove and prevent it reaching Main Road and requested that access rights up Woodland Drove were clarified and enforced using the existing gate.
Woodland name (3)	Suggestion that the name of the new woodland should have formed part of the consultation process with comments suggesting the name should be reconsidered to reflect the woodland's location and historical context.
Environmental benefits and impacts (3)	The Environment Agency confirmed the development raises no environmental concerns, and questions about plans to reduce nitrates and phosphates in the River Itchen and if the new woodland planting could be used to offset carbon credits for development proposals.
Other (2)	Request for a more detailed map of the woodland to show precise woodland boundaries and more information about the additional surveys undertaken and if they are available to view.
Wildlife and deer (2)	Comments confirming the presence of deer on the site
History and archaeology (2)	A question was raised about why Park Farm's historic role as one of the enclosed parks of the Bishop of Winchester is not more central to the proposals, a request for archaeological survey information to be made available,

and whether further archaeological investigations are planned as the project progresses.

3.6 Feedback from the consultation drop in event

Around 100 people attended the drop-in event which displayed the information already published on the consultation website on large posters around the venue. Forestry England staff were on hand to talk about the proposals, answer questions and listen to any concerns from those attending.

Attendees were also encouraged to leave immediate feedback on sticky notes on the comments board. 22 sticky notes were posted on the board. Many of the comments mirrored those also received from the formal consultation responses. The comments are summarised below:

Theme	Comments posted on sticky notes at the consultation event	Number of Comments
Bridleways, cycling & horse-riding access	Requests for cycle access, bike-friendly paths, safer cycling routes, horse-riding access, bridleway connections, and multi-user routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.	10
Community engagement	Links with schools, youth groups, scouts, collaboration opportunities, and facilities to encourage young people to engage with the woodland.	4
Site access & entrances	Access via Stratton Copse, entrance arrangements, maps and information boards, access connections to existing routes.	3
Security, poaching & antisocial behaviour	Hare coursing, deer poaching, site security, locking gates, preventing unauthorised vehicle access, concern about dustbin lorry turning on Woodland Drove.	3
Accessibility & inclusive Access	Need for access suitable for off-road wheelchair users and removal of barriers such as kissing gates and stiles.	1
Dogs and the new woodland	Provision of dog waste bins.	1
Parking	Queries about visitor parking provision.	1
General support	Positive comments expressing enthusiasm and support for the woodland project.	2

3.7 Summary of stakeholder responses

We received formal responses from the following stakeholders during the public consultation period. These are summarised below:

	Response
1	MP - Winchester constituency Representing a local constituent requesting that Forestry England give serious consideration to allowing horse riders and cyclists access to the new woodland.
2	Ward councillors (Hampshire County Council, Bishops Waltham and Winchester City Council, Colden Common and Twyford) Welcomed the consultation event and commended Forestry England staff for their positive engagement with residents. Highlighted strong community support for providing cycle and equestrian access through the site to Watley Lane, noting that this would improve access to the South Downs National Park and could form part of a wider off-road route network linking Colden Common, Winchester and surrounding communities. While recognising that woodland establishment is the immediate priority, requested that Forestry England commit in principle to including the route within the site's long-term vision. The response also noted that planned access improvements for forestry operations could provide an opportunity to accommodate future multi-user access and emphasised that responding positively to this feedback would demonstrate that community views are helping to shape the project.
3	Councillor Liam Bailey-Morgan - Winchester City Council ward member Reiterated the points made in the joint ward councillor response (see 2 above) and provided further context for the request to extend bridleway access across Spitfire Forest and include renewable energy within the proposals. Noted that improved bridleway access would support the South Downs National Park Authority's plans for an off-road route between Twyford/Shawford and Hockley, with the Park Farm link forming an important part of a wider active travel network if these proposals progress. Also highlighted the inclusion of solar energy generation aligns with ideas discussed at a recent Future Energy Landscapes workshop, which explored opportunities for local renewable energy provision. Expressed disappointment that the initial consultation plans did not include new bridleways or renewable energy.
4	Councillor Sue Cook - Winchester City Council ward member Submitted a range of questions and observations on behalf of a constituent - including about drainage issues on Woodland Drove and Main Road, request for a larger scale site plan, tree species, historical context, woodland name,

	permissive paths, community involvement, future use of farm buildings, deer fencing and opportunities for carbon credits/nitrate offsetting.
5	South Downs National Park Broadly supportive of the project. Supported a multi-user access approach, with routes designed for walking, cycling and horse riding, linked to wider active travel plans and the rights of way network. Highlighted the site's historic deer park and agricultural heritage, the need to maintain a balance between open and wooded landscapes, protect views, archaeology and landscape character, and improve public access. Noted the lack of parking, cycling and equestrian provision. Recommended maintaining the historic farmstead's character, safeguarding future multi-user active travel routes, restoring woodland habitats, respecting field patterns and landscape qualities, supporting juniper scrub, and recognising the role of timber production in the local economy.
6	South Downs Local Access Forum Welcomes woodland creation and recognises its benefits. Recommends safeguarding multi-use routes for walking, cycling and horse riding, designing access infrastructure for future shared use, improving links with existing rights of way, providing inclusive access, considering equestrian and cycling access from the outset, supporting nature recovery through route design, and continuing engagement with stakeholder groups.
7	Hampshire Countryside Access Forum Raised concerns about the lack of proposed improvements to Public Rights of Way for non-motorised users, exclusion of cyclists and horse riders, limited accessibility, lack of parking, and unclear mapping of permissive paths. Recommended accessible surfaced routes, parking provision, seating, wider stakeholder engagement, and a review of the decision to exclude cycling and equestrian access.
8	Winchester City Council Archaeology and Historic Environment Team No specific objections. Recommended further archaeological surveys and investigations to inform the detailed woodland design.
9	Colden Common Parish Council Welcomes pedestrian access but requests access for cyclists and horse riders using existing farm tracks and bridleway networks. Request to reconsider the name of the woodland. Would welcome further discussions with Forestry England and neighbouring parish councils.

10	Owslebury Parish Council Supports the project and environmental benefits. Supports proposals for cycling and horse-riding connections and wider accessible routes linking local communities. Would welcome further discussions with Forestry England and neighbouring parish councils.
11	Twyford Parish Council Supports the woodland proposal. Recommends landscape, heritage, archaeology and ecology assessments; consideration of renewable energy opportunities; improved cycling and equestrian access; surfacing of key tracks; water quality improvements in the River Itchen; greater emphasis on native woodland; review of conifer planting; and recognition of the site's historic identity in the woodland name. Would welcome further discussions with Forestry England and neighbouring parish councils.
12	Environment Agency Confirmed no environmental concerns and provided guidance on statutory planning requirements.
13	British Horse Society Supports woodland creation and climate benefits but objects to the current design due to lack of equestrian provision. Requests dedicated riding access, multi-use tracks and future-proofing for equestrian infrastructure, including parking.
14	Cycle Winchester Supports woodland creation but is concerned about the lack of cycling provision, including for disabled cyclists. Suggested a range of east-west, north-south and circular cycle routes.
15	Ramblers Association Supports retention of rights of way and permissive paths. Requested better representation of existing routes on maps, earlier public access to woodland tracks, parking provision, and consideration of cyclists and horse riders.
16	9th Winchester Scouts (Colden Common) Strongly supports the woodland creation project and is interested in volunteering for tree planting, habitat creation, woodland management and environmental initiatives during establishment and long-term management.
17	Riding for the Disabled Carriage Driving Requested clarification on whether the woodland will be accessible to carriage drivers.

18	Natural England Submitted a response following an on-site meeting with members of the Forestry England team after the consultation closed. Their feedback is addressed in Section 5 of this report but is not included within the charts or analysis in the main body of the report. Broadly supportive, subject to mitigation and habitat protection measures. Recommended protecting ancient woodland and veteran trees, reviewing species selection, retaining open habitats, improving habitat connectivity, maximising biodiversity, using locally appropriate species, restoring PAWS woodland, aligning with agri-environment schemes, encouraging landscape-scale collaboration and applying UK Forestry Standard requirements.
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4. Our responses to issues raised

We have considered all the feedback we received to the consultation, and our responses to the key issues raised are set out on the following pages.

We have grouped the issues into broad themes for a more readily understood overview of the issues. Many respondents made positive comments about the proposals, all of which have been noted. For conciseness, these have not been included.

Following further design work and surveys, and in response to consultation feedback, we have made the following changes to our proposed designs for the new woodland:

After carefully considering the responses, further design work, and in response to consultation feedback, we have:

- Reached out to the South Downs National Park's Rights of Way and Access team to agree how we can best work with them and other key stakeholders to potentially deliver multi-user paths in the future.
- Are creating a new site entrance into the field adjacent to Woodland Drove to improve safety and to move it further away from properties on Woodland Drove and the existing Public Right of Way. The existing access arrangements will remain in place temporarily until the new entrance is operational.
- Updated our maps to reflect all footpaths, bridleways and permissive paths.

In response to feedback from Natural England we have:

- Confirmed suitable buffering will be in place for Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), mature trees and hedgerows.
- Undertaken to plant the broadleaved element of mixed woodlands on the edges of the planted areas to improve connectivity between neighbouring ancient woodlands.
- Confirmed the retention and management of the semi-improved grassland.

The key issues raised during the consultation and our response are set out below:

Accessibility, recreation, entrances, bridleways, cycling, horse-riding and multi-user routes:

In response to requests for bridleways, cycling, horse-riding and multi-user routes:

Consultation feedback has told us how important multi-use paths are to local people for walking, cycling and horse-riding, and we recognise the local interest in creating safe, off-road connections through Spitfire Forest.

However, it remains the case that the funding for the new woodland is from the Defra Trees Programme, which is ring-fenced to pay for the woodland planting and maintenance and the essential infrastructure needed to manage it, such as access tracks and new entrances.

However, in response to feedback, and in line with the South Downs National Park's [Active Travel Network Programme](#), we have deliberately left sufficient space within the woodland design that could potentially accommodate new permissive multi-use paths in the future.

This could, subject to funding, help support a strategic route linking Colden Common Park (Boyes Lane), existing permissive paths, and farm and forestry tracks through the woodland to the Watley Lane bridleway, with onward connections to Hensting Lane, Owslebury, Marwell, Twyford and the wider South Downs network.

We have begun discussions with The South Downs National Park Rights of Way and Access team about how we can work with them and other key stakeholders for potential future multi-user routes. This will include considering how any new routes could be funded, how they could be incorporated into the woodland's long-term management plans, as well as delivery and long-term maintenance arrangements.

In the meantime, subject to the necessary regulatory approvals being secured, we hope to progress with the woodland planting as planned while ensuring that opportunities for future multi-user access remain under consideration.

In response to requests for accessible paths and gates:

Visitors will be welcome to use the new surfaced forest tracks that will be created for woodland management purposes.

However, funding from the Defra Trees Programme does not include the provision of new surfaced accessible paths or new dedicated accessible gates to be installed.

The woodland is intended to provide a productive, sustainably managed woodland that balances timber production, biodiversity enhancement, carbon capture, wildlife management with opportunities for informal public access and enjoyment.

In response to requests for woodland amenities and recreation:

The new woodland will be open for local people to enjoy as a quiet, natural space. Once it is established, we will dedicate it under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act so people can explore and enjoy the site. While we have no plans to include formal recreation or other amenities at this time, subject to funding, we would be open to considering recreational opportunities in the future. Any proposals would comply with the necessary planning permissions and engagement with the local community.

In response to requests for additional entrances into the woodland

We received a number of requests for additional access points into the woodland, including from the southern end of the village via Stratton Copse, near Sandyfields and Knights Park.

This specific entrance would lead into an area of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). PAWS are ancient woodland areas that have been replanted in the past and are of significant ecological and heritage value. Careful management is needed to protect and restore these sites and their associated habitats and for this reason, we would not support the creation of a new access point that could adversely affect or disturb these sensitive areas.

Our current focus is on establishing the new woodland and making use of the existing network of public rights of way and permissive paths.

Community involvement and engagement

- **Interest in tree planting and volunteering opportunities**

Forestry England works with many 'friends of' societies and community groups that help manage our woodlands. While our resources will be limited when it comes to supporting long-term volunteering opportunities on the site, we do recognise and value community involvement. A community planting day is something we would consider in the future, subject to interest and capacity.

- **Include opportunities for forest education, outdoor classrooms and shelters**

While some of our larger forests across the country have a range of facilities for educational forest visits, this will not be possible at Spitfire Forest in the early years of establishment. Our funding for this project is from the Defra Trees Programme and does not include funding for any visitor infrastructure, including toilets and educational facilities.

However, Forestry England offers a wide range of downloadable educational resources that are linked to the national curriculum, cover a variety of core subjects and can be easily adapted for different age groups and learning settings. For further information visit: [Learning resources | Forestry England](#)

- **Include an area in the forest for local people to dedicate trees to loved ones - managed by a voluntary organisation**

We are aware that some organisations offer opportunities to dedicate trees or woodland areas in memory of loved ones. However, Forestry England does not currently operate a memorial tree planting scheme in its forests. This is because managing woodlands to ensure they remain healthy and resilient means we need to fell certain trees when they reach particular ages or heights or to better manage the diversity of trees. In addition, some trees die through pests or disease and so it's not possible to guarantee that a particular tree planted in memory of a loved one will reach maturity and be a place for relatives and friends to revisit in years ahead. As a result, we are not proposing dedicated memorial tree planting areas at Spitfire Forest. Our focus remains on creating a woodland that will provide lasting environmental, landscape and community benefits for everyone to enjoy.

- **Provide information boards**

At this stage, our focus and available resources will be directed towards establishing the new woodland, and we intend to keep signage to a minimum so visitors can enjoy the area's natural beauty and sense of place. We propose to install signage at the main entrances to the new woodland, but we have no plans to provide additional information boards or install further signage within the woodland during the establishment phase.

- **Engage with key stakeholder organisations in future consultations**

We are keen to maintain an open and constructive dialogue with key stakeholders as the scheme develops as well as engaging with statutory organisations in line with the relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

- **What is the purpose of consultation if it adds to costs and delays?**

Consultation gives people the opportunity to comment on the proposed woodland before the plans are finalised and submitted to the Forestry Commission for review. We want to hear local knowledge, understand concerns and identify opportunities to improve the design. Feedback from local communities, stakeholders and specialist organisations can highlight important information that may not be identified through technical surveys alone.

All comments have been carefully considered and, where appropriate, used to refine the forest proposal. This ensures that local environmental and community feedback is properly considered and can reduce the risk of issues arising later in the project that could lead to costly delays.

- **Didn't receive a letter about the consultation**

We sent leaflets promoting the consultation and the drop-in event to 500 properties closest to the site boundary. Recognising that people receive information in different ways, and there can occasionally be instances where items are not received, we supplemented the leaflet distribution with a wider programme of communication, including local media and social media publicity, posters displayed near the site, and information shared with Colden Common and Twyford Parish Councils for circulation through their notice boards, websites and other local channels where appropriate. This was intended to maximise awareness of the consultation and opportunities to participate.

Dogs and the new woodland

- **Concerns about an increase in dog walking and implications - fouling, bags in trees, lack of dog bins etc**

The new woodland will be open for people to enjoy, and visitors will be welcome to walk their dogs. While we are not planning to provide a dedicated dog exercise area or dog bins, the site will offer a natural space for local people to spend time outdoors. The primary focus of the woodland creation is to create a healthy, resilient woodland, with public access provided as an added benefit for the community. Dog owners must be responsible and keep their pets under control in all the forests and woodlands we care for, and always clean up their dog's poo by bagging, binning it or taking it home following signs and our [Forest Dog Code](#).

Environmental impacts

- **Explore the opportunity to reduce nitrates and phosphates in the river Itchen.**

Woodland typically generates lower nutrient runoff than agricultural land. As a result, converting the site from agriculture and game bird management to woodland is expected to reduce, rather than increase, nitrate and phosphate levels entering the River Itchen. The absence of fertiliser use within the new woodland, together with the generally lower nutrient losses associated with forestry, means the scheme is expected to deliver a net benefit for water quality. Any chemical use during the woodland establishment phase would be limited, targeted and managed in line with the UK Forestry Standard.

- **Will the new woodland be available for offsetting carbon credits for development proposals?**

The woodland is not being created to provide carbon credits for development proposals. Any carbon benefits would be managed through Forestry England's woodland creation and carbon programmes, rather than being used to offset the impacts of third-party developments.

Forest design

- **Include Taylors Copse in the scheme given the ancient trees it contains**

Taylors Copse is outside the boundary of the Spitfire Forest woodland creation scheme and is not owned or managed by Forestry England. As a result, it cannot be included within the scheme. The ancient trees within Taylors Copse will remain outside the project area and are not affected by the proposed woodland creation.

- **Design a well-planned network of clear, sustainable paths to support nature recovery, helping visitors stay on designated routes and reducing impacts on wildlife, habitats and other users**

The woodland design already incorporates a network of existing public rights of way and seeks to encourage people to use clearly defined routes through the site. A network of footpaths and a bridleway currently cross the site, and these will continue to provide access to the woodland.

The design includes the use of open space, shrubs, broadleaved trees and other woodland features along footpaths and tracks to create attractive, varied routes for visitors while also providing wildlife corridors. Along public rights of way, planting will be more varied and include open areas and longer views to create an enjoyable walking experience.

The woodland also includes native broadleaf buffers and habitat corridors to support biodiversity and nature recovery, helping to balance public access with the protection of wildlife and sensitive habitats.

- **Consider nearby properties in your designs**

We have carefully considered the visual impact of the new woodland on nearby properties and a Landscape and Visual Appraisal helped us identify the properties most likely to be affected. To reduce impacts, planting has been set back from property boundaries, with shrubs and more widely spaced broadleaf trees used in areas where there are direct views of the woodland. This will help create a softer, more varied woodland edge.

Forest maintenance and use of farm buildings

- **What will the existing park farm buildings and yards be used for?**

No decisions have been made about the future use of the existing Park Farm buildings and yards. Should any changes be proposed in the future, they would be developed in line with all relevant planning policies and requirements, and would be subject to the appropriate planning permissions, consents and regulatory approvals where required.

- **Provide information on how habitat and path damage from forestry operations will be minimised**

Forestry operations will be carefully planned to minimise soil compaction, and damage to footpaths and habitats. Measures may include avoiding work during very wet conditions, using designated routes and utilising machinery with low ground pressure tyres or tracks. The timing of works will also take account of environmental considerations, including key wildlife breeding and nesting periods where appropriate. Additional habitat surveys will also be undertaken before work begins. Forestry England have a robust Operational Site Appraisal process before starting operations. Any significant damage to paths or access routes caused by forestry operations would be repaired as part of our woodland management process, and any temporary closures required for safety reasons will be clearly communicated and kept to a minimum.

- **Provide local employment opportunities through woodland management and timber processing**

The creation and management of new woodlands will support regional employment opportunities during establishment and beyond through the contractors and staff we will employ to help with tree planting, fencing, maintenance, and ongoing woodland management.

Forestry England does not generally process timber itself. For Spitfire Forest specifically, there is unlikely to be any significant timber harvesting for many decades while the woodland becomes established and matures.

Any future timber harvested from the woodland would be managed and sold in accordance with the Forestry England process and regulatory requirements in place at the time. Current practice is for Forestry England to sell timber to commercial sawmills and wood-processing businesses through its timber sales processes.

We would support the use of local sawmills and timber processors where this is practical, represents value for money and meets the required specifications. Local supply chains can help support rural businesses and employment, strengthen the local economy and reduce transportation distances where suitable facilities are available.

Forest name

- **Reconsider the name of the new woodland and explore alternative options that better reflect the site's geographical, environmental or historical context.**

We have carefully considered the feedback received about the proposed name and reviewed the suggestions and concerns raised during the consultation. The name *Spitfire Forest* reflects Hampshire's strong historical connection to the

Supermarine Spitfire, which was designed in Southampton and first flown from nearby Eastleigh.

The name was chosen to celebrate this important part of the area's heritage and local identity. Having reviewed the feedback received, we consider *Spitfire Forest* to be an appropriate and meaningful name for the woodland and therefore have no plans to change it.

History and archaeology

- **Provide archaeological surveys - detailed forest design should not rely on just HER data - request to see surveys. Is archaeological work planned?**

An archaeological assessment was undertaken which included a review of Historic Environment Record (HER) data and a range of additional sources including Historic England datasets, aerial photography and mapping, LiDAR, historic mapping, Portable Antiquities Scheme records and Historic Landscape Characterisation data. In addition, a site visit was undertaken to ground-truth a number of areas and assess the archaeological potential of the site. The findings of the assessment have directly informed the woodland design in line with the UK Forestry Standard. Areas of high archaeological potential have been excluded from planting and protected through buffer zones. These include two possible Bronze Age burial mounds and three Iron Age/Roman enclosures. The design has also been developed to ensure that proposed access routes, roading and associated groundworks avoid known archaeological features. No archaeological fieldwork is currently planned as part of creating the new forest.

- **The dominant historical use of most of Park Farm was as one of the enclosed parks of the Bishop of Winchester; hence its name. Why is this not a central part of the new design ?**

The historic importance of Twyford Park has been carefully considered in the forest design. Historic parkland boundaries that are still visible in today's field boundaries and hedgerows have been kept in the forest design and protected with buffer zones, in line with the UK Forestry Standard. The design also follows the route of key historic rides shown on eighteenth-century maps. By retaining the north-south ride and part of the east-west ride, the scheme helps preserve the historic layout and character of the former parkland within the new woodland.

Parking

- **Provide further information on visitor parking proposals, including why parking is not currently planned, how and when this decision may be reviewed, how access needs for people with mobility limitations would be considered, whether future parking provision could accommodate equestrian users, and concerns that a lack of parking could lead to**

inappropriate parking on nearby roads and open spaces, including Boyes Lane, Hunters Park and surrounding areas.

While the new woodland will be open for the public to enjoy, our funding for this project does not extend to the creation of new car parking, visitor or other recreational facilities. We expect that most visitors will visit the new woodland on foot, using the existing public and permissive paths.

If inconsiderate parking does become an issue, we will consider signs in appropriate locations to discourage this.

For those wishing to visit a woodland by car, [Stoke Park Wood](#) is a short drive from Twyford and offers free public parking along with some gravel paths and low-key visitor facilities.

Public rights of way and permissive routes

- **Ensure existing public rights of way and current permissive routes remain open**

We will carefully plan and co-ordinate the creation of the new woodland to minimise any impact on existing public rights of way.

We will follow all relevant rules for public rights of way. In the unlikely event works to manage and maintain the new woodland temporarily obstructs a public footpath, this will be clearly marked, with signs to let people know what is happening and if there are any temporary changes to the pathway.

Once the woodland is established, the footpaths will remain open, forming part of the new woodland for people to enjoy.

- **Not all permissive routes are included in your maps - will all existing permissive paths be retained?**

We plan to keep all existing permissive paths and these are shown on the forest design plans. To identify and map existing routes, we reviewed Ordnance Survey mapping, aerial photography, site survey information and information provided by the former landowner. Following a further review of the available information and feedback received during the consultation, we have updated the maps to ensure the existing path network is reflected as accurately as possible in the designs.

As part of this consultation, we have also engaged with Hampshire County Council's Public Rights of Way team and the South Downs National Park Authority. If you think a specific permissive path has been missed or shown incorrectly, please let us know and we will review it.

Renewable energy

- **Include renewable energy/solar panels on site - drawing on Energise South Downs - Future Energy Landscapes workshop that considered local renewable energy options**

As Spitfire Forest is funded through the Defra Trees Programme, the primary purpose of the project is the creation of a sustainable new woodland. The funding is primarily intended to support woodland establishment, helping to increase tree cover, capture and store carbon, provide wildlife habitat and contribute to the future sustainable timber resource.

The woodland design and planting proposals must meet Forestry Commission and UK Forestry Standard requirements, including minimum woodland planting densities and other criteria associated with woodland creation funding. As a result, the current proposals are focused on establishing and managing the new woodland rather than incorporating other forms of land use, such as solar energy infrastructure.

Forestry England recognises the important role that renewable energy has to play in addressing climate change and already uses renewable energy technologies across parts of its wider estate. We will continue to explore opportunities for renewable energy generation where appropriate, but there are currently no proposals to include solar energy infrastructure as part of the Spitfire Forest project.

Tree species and planting

- **Concerns about the inclusion of conifers and adverse impact on the skyline and local landscape character. Concern that conifers create dense, enclosed areas that could affect the experience and perceived safety of path users?**

We are planning to plant a wide range of species at Spitfire Forest. Excluding the research trial area, this includes 11 conifer species and 28 broadleaf species. This diverse mix will include Douglas fir, Scots pine, western red cedar, European larch, other pine species, redwoods, beech, oak, silver birch, sweet chestnut, sycamore, whitebeam and field maple.

Conifers will make up around 52% of the woodland planting. They have been included because they play an important role in creating resilient, productive and sustainable forests. Many of the conifer species selected for Spitfire Forest are light-demanding and are unlikely to form dense, dark woodland. Some of the more shade-tolerant species will initially create denser areas of woodland, but as the forest matures and is thinned through active management, more light will reach the forest floor, encouraging a diverse ground flora and a varied woodland structure.

The woodland has also been designed so that conifer planting is generally not located in close proximity to public access routes. This will help maintain a more open and varied experience for visitors using the path network, while retaining the benefits that conifer species bring to the woodland as a whole.

- **Explore the introduction and restoration of native woodland as a preference to timber production;**
- **What is the purpose of the inclusion of exotic tree species in the forest - are the woodland objectives carbon capture or commercial timber?**

The woodland is being designed to deliver a range of environmental, social and economic benefits. A central aim is also to establish a diverse and resilient woodland that can provide a lasting supply of timber in the future.

Native tree species are an important part of the design and at Spitfire Forest, species such as beech, oak, silver birch and field maple are included in the planting mix.

Different tree species provide different benefits, and a mixed woodland is generally more resilient to pests, diseases and climate change than one made up of a single species. Forestry Commission and Natural England guidance supports the use of a range of tree species in woodland creation, including both broadleaved and conifer species, where they are appropriate to the site and the objectives of the woodland. Well-designed woodlands often include a mix of species to deliver benefits for biodiversity, climate resilience, carbon storage and sustainable timber production.

- **Planting of native trees would be financially justified by the offset with the nitrate neutrality objectives?**

The Defra Trees Programme is separate from nitrate neutrality offsetting schemes. Nitrate offset programmes are designed specifically to mitigate nutrient pollution arising from new development, whereas the Defra Trees Programme provides funding for woodland creation and related environmental benefits.

- **Balance the proportions of woodland/tree planting to open field systems in this agricultural downland mosaic landscape**

Careful consideration has been given to the balance and pattern of planting in the landscape. Where the landscape character is defined by the existing field pattern and woodland, the proposed planting will sit within those field boundaries retaining important hedgerows so that the evolution of the landscape can be clearly identified.

The landscape character changes to the northeast and west and the planting has been designed to reflect this change to a more open mosaic landscape with views out into the wider landscape preserved as far as reasonably possible. Corridors have been left open to create framed views to the west. Whereas on the northeast, panoramic views are retained. Whilst views along public rights of way will be altered, care has been taken to use the planting to create a variety of

glimpsed and framed views along the way to enhance the experience of those using the paths.

Views

- **Protect existing views - concerns that the impact on views will change the existing character of the western end of the South Downs National Park**

We have engaged with the South Downs National Park as part of this consultation. The woodland design has been developed in line with the UK Forestry Standard, which requires woodland creation projects to conserve and enhance local landscape character and historic features. To inform the design, we have reviewed Historic Landscape Characterisation data, historic mapping, aerial imagery and archaeological data to understand how the landscape has evolved over time. Significant heritage features have been retained within open space and buffer areas, helping to protect their setting and ensure the historic character, history and development of the landscape remain visible and can continue to be experienced within the future woodland.

Wildlife and deer

- **Will deer fencing limit public access to major parts of the woodland?**

We will use deer fencing to protect larger sections of the new woodland and tree tubes in smaller areas. Deer fencing is needed to protect young trees while they become established. The fencing will be installed in compartments, with approximately four-metre-wide gaps around the fenced areas, allowing people to continue using existing paths and to move around the site, much as they do today. Deer fencing will be removed and where possible recycled after the trees become established.

- **Concerns about deer culling and the safety of forest visitors**

Our highly skilled wildlife rangers replace the role of Britain's missing predators across our woodlands by safely and humanely controlling deer populations where necessary and contributing to landscape scale management in the wider area. England is part of the [Deer Initiative](#), a partnership that promotes sustainable deer management in England and Wales.

Deer management helps protect young trees and woodland habitats as the forest becomes established. Any deer control is carried out by Forestry England's trained wildlife rangers and deer wardens in line with strict safety, welfare and legal requirements. Where deer culling is necessary, it is carefully planned and carried out by qualified staff. Public safety is the highest priority, and operations are managed to ensure they are undertaken safely and responsibly.

More information on how Forestry England manages deer can be found here: www.forestryengland.uk/article/managing-deer-the-nations-forests

Woodland Drove - traffic, access and water-run off

- **Concerns about the increase in vehicles on Woodland Drove and their impact on the existing right of way**

During the woodland establishment phase, Woodland Drove will be used as the primary access route for fencing and planting activities. However, we expect the majority of vehicle movements to be cars and vans, with only limited HGV movements. To minimise impacts on Woodland Drove and nearby residents, we will require contractors to receive deliveries at a yard away from Park Farm and transport materials to the site using smaller vehicles on an as-needed basis. This approach will help reduce traffic volumes and the number of large vehicles using Woodland Drove.

- **Concern that Woodland Drove will eventually be used as an entrance or an exit point for access to the new woodland.**

We have designed the woodland so that the new access route will be constructed within the field to the south of Woodland Drove, running parallel to it. Once the woodland is established, Woodland Drove will be used as a public right of way only, helping to minimise vehicular traffic along the Drove.

- **Stop non-forestry vehicles using Woodland Drove to access the site - clarify and enforce access rights and enforce the use the existing gate**

We plan to secure Woodland Drove beyond our site access point (past the neighbouring properties) by installing either a vehicle and pedestrian access gate or collapsible bollards. This will allow continued pedestrian access along the public right of way while preventing unauthorised vehicle access and improving site security. Our aim is to ensure Woodland Drove remains accessible to walkers while protecting the route from inappropriate vehicular use.

- **Concern about the refuse lorry serving Woodland Drove and impact on existing turning arrangements.**

We are in discussions with Winchester City Council about turning arrangements for refuse collection vehicles.

- **Concern about water run-off from Park Farm onto Woodland Drove and Main Road (B3354) after heavy rain and assurance from Forestry England that steps will be taken to mitigate the problem; Any new operational track next to Woodland Drove should be designed to direct runoff away from Woodland Drove and prevent it from reaching Main Road.**

We recognise that these drainage issues existed before we acquired the site. As part of the woodland creation project, we will install new drainage infrastructure alongside the proposed new forest road network and will seek opportunities to improve water discharge into the existing drainage system along the B3354. This will help ensure that the woodland development does not worsen existing drainage

issues and, where possible, contributes to improved water management across the site.

- **Secure the gate to the field adjacent to Woodland Drove to prevent unauthorised access.**

We intend for this gate to be locked when not in use.

Other

- **What additional surveys have been undertaken and are these available for the public to view?**

We have undertaken a range of surveys and assessments to inform the woodland design, including ecological surveys, archaeological and heritage assessments, landscape and visual assessments, and habitat surveys. These have helped us understand the site's environmental, cultural and landscape characteristics and ensure they are considered within the woodland design.

For those wishing to view specific surveys, please contact the Woodland Creation team with your request and we will consider how best to make the relevant information available.

- **Provide a more detailed map at 1:2500 scale showing the precise site boundaries**

A map to this scale has been included in our updated materials on our consultation platform here: <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/spitfireforest>

Our response to key issues raised by Natural England

Natural England confirmed they are broadly supportive of the proposal - subject to the delivery of suggested mitigation and habitat protection measures including:

- **Protect ancient woodland and veteran trees by maintaining appropriate buffer zones around ASNW, PAWS and veteran trees.**

All single and hedgerow veteran trees, and those on the edges of the existing ancient woodland will be buffered with a minimum 20m no planting zone. This will follow Forestry England's Operational Guidance on Trees of Special Interest.

- **Review species placement to ensure sufficient separation between priority woodland habitats and species with potential invasive characteristics, including red oak, western hemlock and western red cedar.**
- **Develop proposals for PAWS restoration within Park Copse to improve the condition and resilience of ancient woodland features.**

Natural regeneration of red oak, western red cedar and western hemlock is not seen as an issue as all these species are at least 50m from the edges of ancient woodland. The management of the on-site PAWS woodland at Park Copse will include the removal of the western hemlock and other non-native conifers as part of the reversion to native broadleaves to improve the habitat for biodiversity.

- **Retain and manage open habitats to support skylark and other farmland birds, including grassland, scrub, field margins and other suitable habitat features.**

The creation of new woodland on agricultural land will inevitably displace populations of skylarks but provide additional habitat for woodland birds. The retention and management of the existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees will still support populations of farmland birds.

- **Maximise biodiversity by including open space, scrub, rides, glades and diverse woodland edge habitats within the design.**

Overall, the current design includes 51.1ha of open space (30% of the total area) comprising buffer zones, unplantable areas beneath powerlines, and semi-improved grassland. In addition to these areas, within each of the fenced planting blocks a headland of open space will be retained for management purposes, and several blocks in the western part of the site are planted at wide spacing, prolonging their availability for skylarks.

- **Incorporate habitat connectivity measures by strengthening links between existing woodland blocks through native woodland corridors.**

Connectivity will be improved between neighbouring existing blocks by concentrating broadleaved tree planting in the new mixed woodland to the edges of each block. This will provide planted corridors between adjacent ancient woodlands, further bolstered by the retention and management of existing on-site hedgerows.

- **Use locally appropriate species and allow opportunities for natural colonisation where suitable.**

The tree species have been selected to be resilient to predicted climate change conditions and are currently free from pests and diseases. Opportunities for natural colonisation of the on-site ancient woodlands exist due to the retention of wide buffer zones.

- **Consider existing agri-environment agreements and ensure woodland creation proposals complement ongoing SFI and Countryside Stewardship commitments.**

Although existing agri-environment scheme funding cannot be claimed for the site, the established field margins will be retained.

5. Appendices

Appendix A: Our response to key themes from early engagement

Access to the new woodland

The new woodland will be called Spitfire Forest and open for local people to enjoy as a quiet, natural space. Once it is established, we will dedicate it under the Countryside and “Rights of Way Act” so people can explore the site.

The new woodland can be reached using the existing Public Rights of Way from Twyford, Colden Common and the surrounding area, and the entrances already in place. Once there, a network of new grass routes will make it easy for people to explore the new woodland and for us to look after the site. Other than the new forest track needed for our forestry vehicles, we’re not planning any additional surfaced trails or facilities for cycling or horse-riding.

Dogs will be welcome, but the woodland will not be fully fenced and we do not plan to install dog waste bins. We expect all dog owners to act responsibly and keep their pets in sight and close by at all times in the new woodland, following our ‘Forest Dog Code’¹

Traffic and parking

The new woodland is being designed as a quiet space, and we expect most visitors to access it on foot. For this reason, the proposal does not currently include public parking.

The woodland is funded by the Defra Trees Programme. This funds the planting of the woodland and the essential infrastructure needed to manage and maintain it, such as access tracks and new entrances. We have left space in the design so that if funding becomes available in the future, parking or recreational facilities could be considered. Any such proposals would be subject to consultation with local residents and the relevant planning permissions.

Our forestry vehicles will need to access the new woodland from the road so they can manage and maintain the site. Initially we plan to use the existing field entrance off the B3354, adjacent to Woodland Drove. We would upgrade the existing field track and add barriers at the entrance to prevent unauthorised vehicle access and reduce the risk of antisocial behaviour.

Design, landscape and views

The new mixed woodland will enrich the landscape by boosting biodiversity and enhancing the natural environment. We have done surveys to tell us more about

the plants, wildlife and soil conditions at Spitfire Forest. These surveys, along with a landscape and visual appraisal, have guided our draft designs.

The site has been designed to protect and improve the landscape character of the South Downs National Park. It reflects the pattern and scale of the surrounding countryside and the design preserves the park's scenic quality, especially by keeping important views.

We have planned the woodland layout to respect views from neighbouring properties. We will keep open space next to these properties, with conifer and broadleaf planting set further back.

Planting is more open in the west and the north-east of the site, allowing longer views across valued local landscapes such as the River Itchen Valley. Views from public rights of way will change over time, but they have been planned to be visually rich and varied, creating interesting surroundings for people walking, spending time, or passing through the woodland.

The trees we will plant

We are using years of experience and the latest scientific evidence to choose the right trees to plant in 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 local 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, often planted together in mixtures, with groups of 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 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.

Species at Spitfire Forest might include sessile oak, red oak, Douglas fir, radiata pine, European larch, black walnut, hazel and hawthorn.

Establishing and managing the new woodland

We aim to plant the new woodland in winter 26/27. Maintenance during the first five years is especially important to ensure the woodland's long-term success. The woodland will be managed by the Forestry England team and our contractors.

Longer term, Forestry England will develop a Forest Plan to make sure that future timber production is sustainable. 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 many years to come.

Community involvement

Forestry England works with many ‘friends of’ societies and community groups that help manage our woodlands. Whilst we have limited resource to support long-term volunteering opportunities on this site, we will monitor interest at Spitfire Forest as part of our wider engagement plans for other Forestry England woodlands in the area. We hope to host a community planting day when we begin planting the new woodland for local people to join in creating this special place.

Protecting the new woodland from deer

The UK is home to six species of deer. As their natural predators (bears, lynx and wolves) are no longer present in the UK, our wildlife management team have to manage the deer populations. Without predators or management, deer populations become unnaturally large, and their browsing can damage or kill young trees and wildlife habitats, reducing the resilience of the new woodland to the effects of climate change and lowering the carbon captured from the atmosphere.

We will use deer fencing to protect larger blocks of new planting and tree tubes in smaller areas. Rabbit and deer fencing will protect young trees from browsing, while tree tubes will safeguard smaller, widely spaced areas. After the woodland has become established, deer fencing and tree tubes will be removed and recycled where possible. This usually happens after approximately 10 years.

Forestry England is part of the Deer Initiative², a partnership that promotes sustainable deer management in England and Wales. Our highly skilled wildlife management team will safely and humanely control deer populations in our woodlands, working to the highest standards. More information about how Forestry England manage deer can be found on our website³.

Why are you planting on agricultural land

The new woodland will capture carbon, restore and connect habitats, enhance biodiversity, supply sustainable homegrown timber and a wonderful place for people to enjoy.

We understand concerns around food security, and we want to keep the best-quality land in agricultural production. This is why we do not create woodlands on the most productive land (grades 1 & 2). The land at Spitfire Forest has been found to be grade 3 and is not considered to be of high agricultural quality.

Forestry England’s role is to manage and expand the nation’s forests to ensure they are healthy and sustainable and benefit wildlife, people, and the economy. The new woodland will capture carbon, connect existing woodland habitats for

wildlife to move between, and provide a sustainable source of timber, which is crucial for the UK's green economy.

References:

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

Appendix B: Consultation information

The materials presented for the consultation are also available to view at: <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/spitfireforest>



 Forestry England

Growing the nation's forests

Spitfire Forest - A proposed new woodland near Twyford, Hampshire

Forestry England is planting new woodlands to expand the nation's forests

We are working on designs for a new woodland, Spitfire Forest, near Twyford, Hampshire. We would like your comments on our initial proposals. Your feedback will inform our final designs for the woodland.

The name "Spitfire Forest" reflects a local wartime story that a Spitfire made an emergency landing on or near the site during the Battle of Britain, alongside the aircraft's strong historic links to Hampshire.

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 and hedgerows to provide green corridors for wildlife to move and thrive across the landscape.

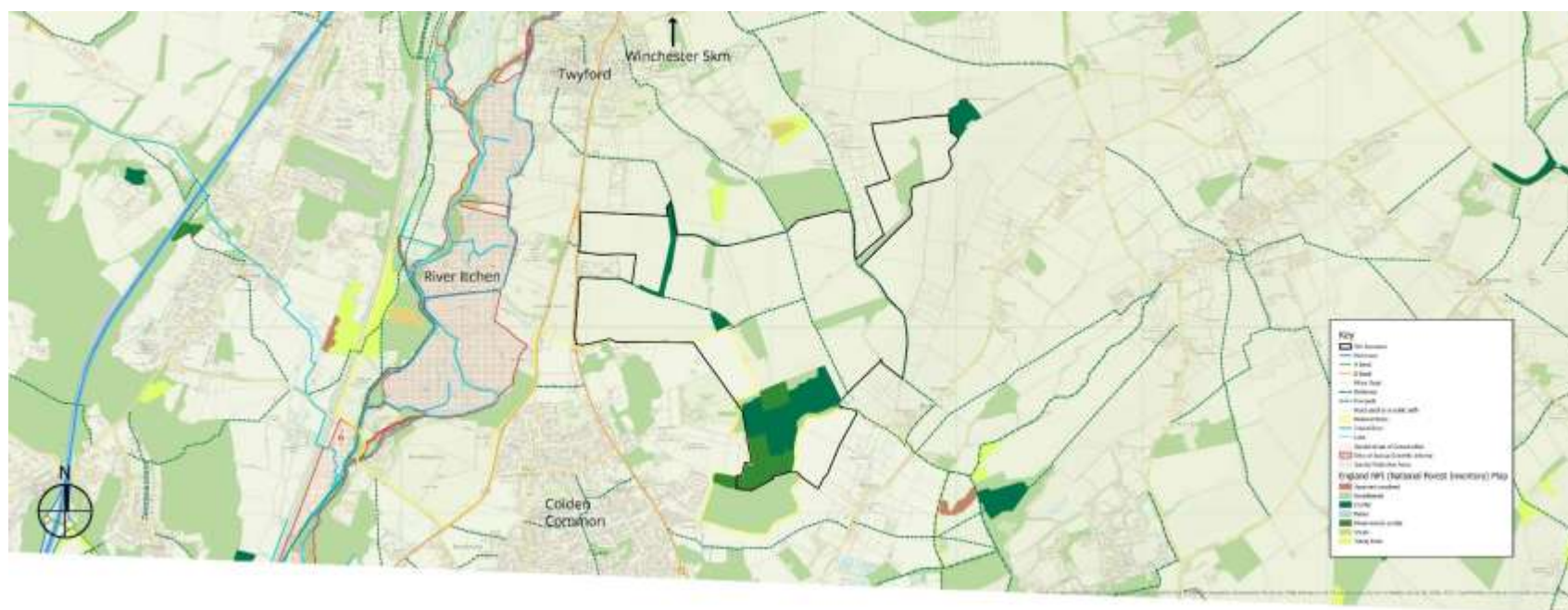
In time, each new woodland will provide sustainable timber, contributing to the rural economy. And they'll have wider environmental benefits including absorbing carbon, improving soil health, air quality and water management.

Forestry England is creating these woodlands through the government's Trees Programme.

Scan the QR code to find out more:

forestryengland.uk



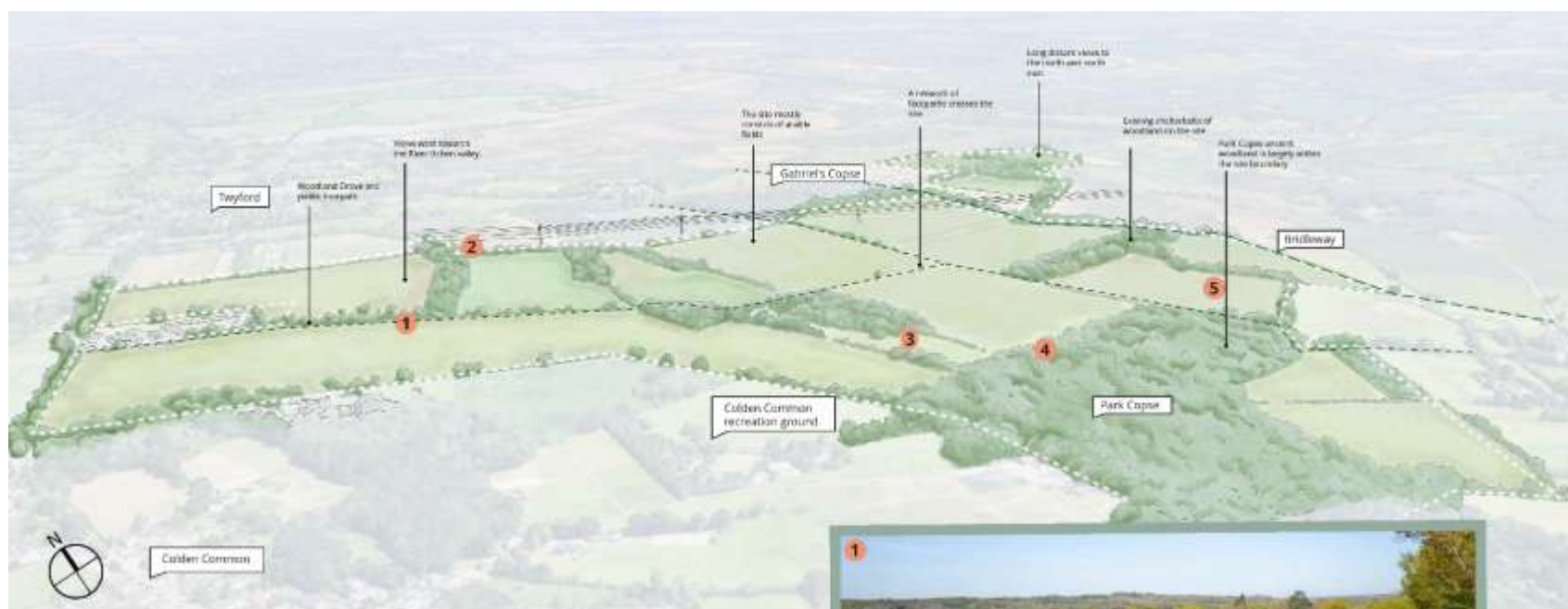


Site location & context

The site is located at Park Farm, south-east of Twyford, north-east of Colden Common and approximately 5km south of Winchester. The majority of the site is within the western edge of the South Downs National Park. The River Itchen and its valley are about 600m to the west of Park Farm.

At a national level, the site spans two of Natural England's National Character Areas. These are the South Downs (NCA 125) and to a lesser extent the Hampshire Downs (NCA 130). The South Downs is a broad elevated chalk ridge that breaks into a series of hills in the west. The area is characterised by diverse, inspirational landscapes and views. There is a rich-cultural heritage which has been well preserved. It is an environment shaped by centuries of farming and which contains a variety of wildlife and habitats including rare fragments of semi-natural chalk grassland.





The existing site

The 168-hectare site consists of mostly arable fields divided by hedgerows, copses and woodland. The buildings associated with Park Farm are central to the site and are enclosed by small copses and woodland shelterbelts. Park Copse is a relatively large area of existing ancient woodland in the southern part of the site. Another area of ancient woodland lies just outside the northern boundary of the site.

The western part of the site has a different character to the rest due to its position on the upper slopes of the River Itchen valley. There are views across the valley to and from these fields.

The woodland within the site is a mix of broadleaf, coniferous and mixed woodland. Some of the hedgerows are species rich with mature trees along them, others are more open with scrubby vegetation.

Photos: 1. View west towards the River Itchen valley. 2. View along the public footpath. 3. View of semi-improved grass field south of the farm buildings. 4. Bluebells in Park Copse ancient woodland. 5. View of arable fields within the site.





Tree species we could plant

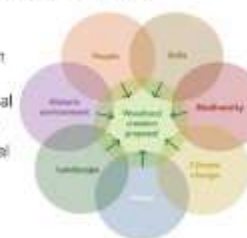


Draft design

How we design new woodland

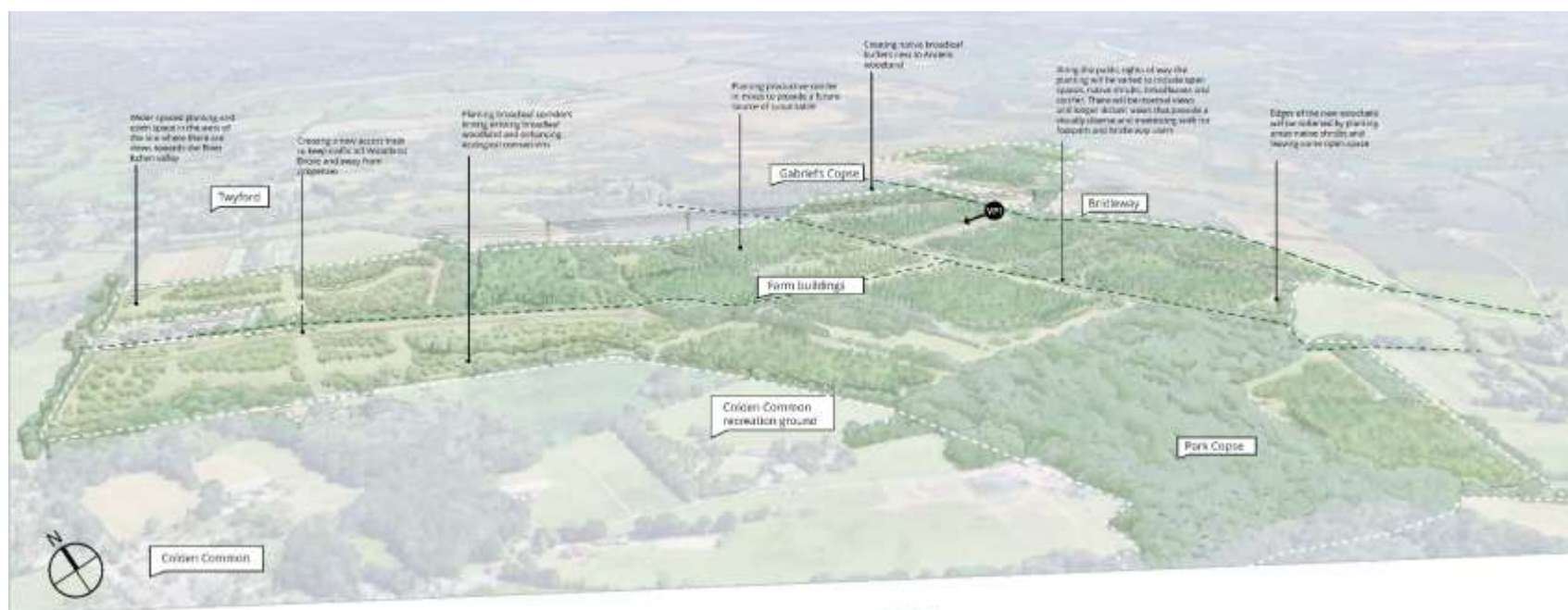
We are designing the new woodland to benefit people, the economy, climate, wildlife and the wider landscape. Our design meets the UK Forestry Standard, which takes into account the following elements (Forestry Commission, 2021):

- Detailed desktop surveys, site surveys and analysis will inform our design. This includes:
 - Preliminary ecological appraisal
 - Historic environment records
 - Landscape and visual appraisal
 - Local environment records
 - Soil mapping
 - Ecological site classification
 - Utilities searches
 - Responses to initial consultation



Objectives for the new woodland

-  **Establish a new mixed resilient woodland:** plant a mixed species woodland with structural diversity that will thrive in future climate conditions.
-  **Produce a lasting supply of sustainable timber:** using climate modelling and in depth site assessment plant the right trees to produce a lasting supply of certified sustainable timber.
-  **Enhance biodiversity and improve woodland connectivity:** link existing woodlands to improve habitat connectivity. Create a mosaic of habitats with open space, hedgerows, lower density planting, native broadleaf planting, shrub planting and mixed woodland to improve biodiversity.
-  **Sequester atmospheric carbon:** tackle climate change and support net zero targets by locking up carbon through climate-resilient woodland creation, combining fast-growing conifers and native species as well as exploring research trials to support future-proof, sustainable timber production.
-  **Public access for health and wellbeing:** create a new green space for local people to explore on foot, supporting health and wellbeing.



How the new woodland could look

Our initial designs include proposals to:

- Focus our open space, broadleaf tree planting and more widely spaced planting in the west of the site on the upper slopes of the Itchen valley.
- Plant sustainable timber species towards the eastern part of the site where the landscape becomes flatter.
- Leave areas of open space for potential future recreation opportunities.
- Connect existing woodlands through belts of broadleaf planting.

- Enhance the surrounding Ancient Woodland by planting native broadleaf buffers or leaving open space.
- Use shrubs, open space and different types of woodland along footpaths and tracks to create interesting views and wildlife corridors.
- Soften the more visible woodland edges by using a mixed planting approach, with broadleaf trees or shrubs gradually giving way to the taller conifers.
- Leave open space around identified heritage features within the site.

Artist's impressions:

Viewpoint 1
How it looks now



How it could look in 25 years



How it could look in 10 years





**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/spitfireforest>
- If you are unable to do this, you can respond via email at woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk

All views should be received by midnight on Sunday 14th June 2026

What's next ?

- Review of consultation feedback and additional surveys
- Further design work to refine our proposals
- Application to the Forestry Commission for regulatory review ahead of planting the new woodland
- Initial planting (Winter 2026/27)

Scan the QR code
to find out more:

forestryengland.uk





Forestry England

A new woodland at Park Farm - our response to key themes we're asked when creating a new woodland

Access to the new woodland

The new woodland will be called Spitfire Forest and open for local people to enjoy as a quiet, natural space. Once it is established, we will dedicate it under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act so people can explore the site.

The new woodland can be reached using the existing Public Rights of Way from Twyford, Colden Common and the surrounding area, and the entrances already in place. Once there, a network of new grass routes will make it easy for people to explore the new woodland and for us to look after the site. Other than the new forest track needed for our forestry vehicles, we're not planning any additional surfaced trails or facilities for cycling or horse-riding.

Dogs will be welcome, but the woodland will not be fully fenced and we do not plan to install dog waste bins. We expect all dog owners to act responsibly and keep their dogs on sight and close by at all times in the new woodland, following our Forest Dog Code.

Traffic and parking

The new woodland is being designed as a quiet space, and we expect most visitors to access it on foot. For this reason, the proposal does not currently include public parking.

The woodland is funded by the government's Trees Programme. This funds the planting of the woodland and the essential infrastructure needed to manage and maintain it, such as access tracks and new entrances. We have left space in the design so that if funding becomes available in the future, parking or recreational facilities could be considered. Any such proposals would be subject to consultation with local residents and the relevant planning permissions.

Our forestry vehicles will need to access the new woodland from the road so they can manage and maintain the site. We plan to use the existing field entrance off the B3354, adjacent to Woodland Drive. We would upgrade the existing field track and add barriers at the entrance to prevent unauthorised vehicle access and reduce the risk of antisocial behaviour.

Design, landscape and views

The new mixed woodland will enrich the landscape by boosting biodiversity and enhancing the natural environment. We have done surveys to tell us more about the plants, wildlife and soil conditions at Spitfire Forest. These surveys, along with a landscape and visual appraisal, have guided our draft designs.

The site has been designed to protect and improve the landscape character of the South Downs National Park. It reflects the pattern and scale of the surrounding countryside and the design preserves the park's scenic quality, especially by keeping important views.

We have planned the woodland layout to respect views from neighbouring properties. We will keep open space next to these properties, with conifer and broadleaf planting set

further back.

Planting is more open in the west and the north-east of the site, allowing longer views across valued local landscapes such as the River Itchen Valley. Views from public rights of way will change over time, but they have been planned to be visually rich and varied, creating interesting surroundings for people walking, spending time, or passing through the woodland.

The trees we will plant

We are using years of experience and the latest scientific evidence to choose the right trees to plant in 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 local 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, often planted together in mixtures, with groups of 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 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.

Species at Spitfire Forest might include sessile oak, red oak, Douglas fir, radiata pine, European larch, black walnut, hazel and hawthorn.

Establishing and managing the new woodland

We aim to plant the new woodland in winter 2023. Maintenance during the first five years is especially important to ensure the woodland's long-term success. The woodland will be managed by the Forestry England team and our contractors.

Longer term, Forestry England will develop a Forest Plan to make sure that future timber production is sustainable. 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 many years to come.

Community involvement

Forestry England works with many 'friends of' societies and community groups that help manage our woodlands. Whilst we have limited resource to support long-term volunteering opportunities on this site, we will monitor interest at Spitfire Forest as part of our wider engagement plans for other Forestry England woodlands in the area. We hope to host a community planting day when we begin planting the new woodland for local people to join in creating this special place.

Protecting the new woodland from deer

The UK is home to six species of deer. As their natural predators (bears, lynx and wolves) are no longer present in the UK, our wildlife management team have to manage the deer populations. Without predators or management, deer populations become unnaturally large, and their browsing can damage or kill young trees and wildlife habitats, reducing the resilience of the new woodland to the effects of climate change and lowering the carbon captured from the atmosphere.

We will use deer fencing to protect larger blocks of new planting and tree tubes in smaller areas. Rabbit and deer fencing will protect young trees from browsing, while tree tubes will safeguard smaller, widely spaced areas. After the woodland has become established, deer fencing and tree tubes will be removed and recycled where possible. This usually happens after approximately 10 years.

Forestry England is part of the Deer Initiative¹, a partnership that promotes sustainable deer management in England and Wales. Our highly skilled wildlife management team will safely and humanely control deer populations in our woodlands, working to the highest standards. More information about how Forestry England manage deer can be found on our website².

Why are you planting on agricultural land

The new woodland will capture carbon, restore and connect habitats, enhance biodiversity, supply sustainable homegrown timber and a wonderful place for people to enjoy.

We understand concerns around food security, and we want to keep the best-quality land in agricultural production. This is why we do not create woodlands on the most productive land (grades 1 & 2). The land at Spitfire Forest has been found to be grade 3 and is not considered to be of high agricultural quality.

Forestry England's role is to manage and expand the nation's forests to ensure they are healthy and sustainable and benefit wildlife, people, and the economy. The new woodland will capture carbon, connect existing woodland habitats for wildlife to move between, and provide a sustainable source of timber, which is crucial for the UK's green economy.

Scan the QR code
to find out more:
forestryengland.uk





Forestry England



New woodland near Twyford

Come along to our public consultation event

Wednesday 3 June 4:00pm - 7:00pm
Colden Common Community Centre, St
Vigor Way, Colden Common, Winchester
SO21 1UU

Forestry England is planning to create a new woodland called
Spitfire Forest, near Twyford, Hampshire.

Please drop-in at our local consultation event to view our
proposed designs and speak to members of our team. You can
also view proposals and share your views online by scanning
the QR code or visiting <https://bit.ly/spitfireforest>



You can also contact us at:
woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk

forestryengland.uk

[New woodland: Spitfire Forest | Forestry England](#)



Visit ▾ Things to do ▾ Forestry and wildlife ▾ Support us ▾ Membership ▾ About us ▾ [Donate](#)



New woodland: Spitfire Forest



New woodland in Hampshire

Growing the nation's forests

Spitfire Forest is a new 188-hectare woodland we're planning to create just south of the village of Twyford, near Winchester. It is being carefully designed as part of our work to increase tree cover across England and create lasting benefits for wildlife, people, and the climate.

Right now, we're only in the early stages of planning what this new woodland could look like, but in the future it could provide important habitats for wildlife, including woodland birds, bats, and insects. It would also absorb carbon from the atmosphere, contribute to the UK's sustainable timber industry, and give local people a new green space to explore.

Find all our latest updates about Spitfire Forest below, and read about the fascinating local legend that inspired its name!



Work in progress...

At the moment, we're still developing our plans for Spitfire Forest. We recently hosted a public consultation, where we invited local people and businesses to share their thoughts and ideas with us. We'd like to thank everyone who got involved, as your feedback will help us shape the final designs for Hampshire's newest woodland.

Right now, we're working through the comments from the public consultation, and we'll be sharing our final designs very soon.

Photo credit: Fabrice Photography from France, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Historical roots

Spitfire Forest is being created to last for centuries, but its name reflects a fascinating wartime history. The Spitfire has strong connections to Hampshire. It was designed in Southampton and made its maiden flight from Eastleigh Aerodrome in 1936, just a few miles from Twyford.

However, the name Spitfire Forest was actually inspired by a local story that was recounted to us during a survey of the area. According to local accounts, a Spitfire was forced to make an emergency landing near Twyford on 'Black Thursday' in 1945. It may have even landed at Park Farm itself, the very land where we're planning to create Spitfire Forest!



Entrance of the consultation event



Appendix C:

Consultation questionnaire



A proposed new woodland near Twyford

Overview

Forestry England would like to share with you our proposed plans for the new woodland near Twyford

Why your views matter

Your feedback, as well as site surveys, will help shape the design proposal for how the new woodland could look. Forestry England value your comments and feedback, and welcome you to our consultation event.

Introduction

Thank you for taking part in this consultation on the design proposals for a new woodland at Twyford.

You can submit information without completing the name and email details, but if you choose to do so they will be held by Forestry England as per our privacy policy [Privacy Policy | Forestry England](https://www.forestryengland.uk/privacy) (<https://www.forestryengland.uk/privacy>)

1. What is your name?

2. What is your address?

3. What is your postcode?

4. Are you responding as:

- ☐ A local resident
- ☐ A local business
- ☐ A elected official
- ☐ [Other](#) stakeholder: Please name below

5. If you're responding on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of your organisation?

6. What is your e-mail address?

7. Would you like to be notified about future consultation on these new woodland proposals?

- ☐ Yes (please make sure you have provided your e-mail address above)
☐ No

Feedback

8. Please use this space to add feedback or questions on the proposed plans

Appendix D: Letters/emails announcing the launch of the consultation

From: Woodland Creation
Sent: 19 May 2026 08:20
Subject: Public Consultation on design proposals for Spitfire Forest, a new woodland near Twyford in Hampshire
Attachments: Spitfire Forest postcard.pdf; Spitfire Forest Twyford poster (2).pdf

Dear

Thank you for Twyford Parish Council's early thoughts about our new woodland on land near Twyford. We are contacting you today as we have now launched the public consultation on our draft design proposals for the new woodland we will call Spitfire Forest.

Our proposals are available to view and comment upon **until Sunday the 14 June at:**
<https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/spitfireforest>

While we continue with our detailed planning for the new woodland, we are keen to hear your views on our initial designs. This new woodland is one of many we're creating across the UK to grow the nation's forests. It will become a valuable habitat for wildlife and an important carbon store. In time, it will also provide a source of sustainable timber and become a new green space for you to explore and enjoy.

Public drop-in event

As part of the consultation, we will also be holding a drop-in event where you can view our initial designs for the new woodland in person and talk to members of the Forestry England team. This will be held at: Colden Common Community Centre, St Vigor Way, Colden Common, Winchester, SO21 1UU on **Wednesday 3 June from 4pm-7pm.**

Next steps

The consultation will close at **23.59 on Sunday 14 June.** All responses will then be summarised and included in a consultation report, along with our response to the key issues raised, and published on our website. Consultation feedback and further surveys will help shape the final design proposal we will submit for regulatory review ahead of planting the new woodland. We will update our website as our plans for the new woodland progress. You can see the latest information here:
<https://www.forestryengland.uk/woodland-creation/spitfire-forest>

Promoting the consultation

I attach a PDF copy of a poster promoting the consultation and the drop-in event and would be really grateful if you could include this on your website or notice boards where available. I have also included a copy of a postcard we have sent to properties close to the new woodland to let them know about the consultation and how they can respond.

Whilst we are encouraging all responses to be submitted online, should any of your parishioners be unable to access a computer, or attend the event, responses can also be submitted by post at the address below:

Woodland Creation Team - Forestry England
620 Bristol Business Park
Coldharbour Lane
Bristol
BS16 1EJ

We hope to see you at the event.

Kind regards
The Woodland Creation Team
Forestry England
Email: woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk
Website: www.forestryengland.uk
More information about Spitfire Forest please visit our website at :
<https://www.forestryengland.uk/woodland-creation/spitfire-forest>



Postcard sent to 500 addresses close to the woodland boundary



New woodland near Twyford

Share your views in our public consultation

We're planning to create a new woodland near Twyford in Hampshire, and we'd love to hear your views. Spitfire Forest will support wildlife, store carbon, produce sustainable timber, and become a new green space for local people to enjoy. We've been busy carrying out local surveys to understand the soil, wildlife, and mix of trees we can plant, and now we'd really love to hear what you think.

Have your say by midnight on Sunday 14 June by scanning the QR code, or by visiting <https://bit.ly/spitfireforest>



Scan me

I'm double-sided!



Community consultation event

Find out more about our plans to create a new woodland at our community drop-in event

Join us on Wednesday 3 June from 4pm to 7pm at Colden Common Community Centre to find out more about our plans to create a new woodland near Twyford. You'll be able to speak to members of our team and ask any questions you have.

📍 Address: Colden Community Centre, St Vigor Way, Colden Common, Winchester, SO21 1UU

🕒 Time: Drop in any time between 4pm to 7pm



I'm double-sided!

Appendix E: Code frame

Accessibility	Provide accessible access from Colden Common Park	1
Accessibility	Include tracks gates and paths that are accessible for mobility scooter/wheelchairs	5
Accessibility	Engage further with the South Downs Local Access Forum, Hampshire Local Access Forum, South Downs National Park Authority, Hampshire County Council, local parish councils and relevant user groups before the final access layout is fixed.	1
Accessibility	Concern - access to the new woodland is confined to walkers only	3
Accessibility	All aspects of design and access proposals should be characteristic, sufficiently ambitious, and inclusive	1
Accessibility	As part of Defra, Forestry England is legally bound to advance equality of opportunity (Equality Act 2010). Excluding cyclists and horse riders and not providing car parking contravenes the spirit of this duty.	1
Accessibility	Include a metalled surface small circuit suitable for wheelchair users	1
Accessibility	Make a car parking facility available as soon as possible to allow those with mobility and distance limitations access to the woodland	1
Amenities and recreation	Include a play park/recreational facilities	2
Amenities and recreation	Include facilities for young people	1
Amenities and recreation	Do not include any attractions -it will impact parking in the village	1
Amenities and recreation	Include benches/picnic benches	4
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	What is the timing for how likely the inclusion of a permissive bridleway will be included in your plans?	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Given the extension of Woodland Drove to Watley Lane, will require upgrading to provide access for Forestry England vehicles it would seem a logical and cost-effective opportunity to accommodate future cycling and equestrian access as well.	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Provide an agreement in principle to provide cycling and equestrian access and to work with stakeholders to explore how this could be incorporated into the long term plans for the new woodland	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Include horse-riding only if paths have a surface that do not get churned up by the hooves	3

Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Upgrading Twyford footpath 24/Owslebury 37 will provide safe off-road circular route benefiting both cyclists and horse-riders	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Route suggestion - Provide bridleway access from Boyes Lane/Colden Common//Watley Lane, Twyford to the wider bridleway network	26
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Supports Colden Common PC requests for new bridleway connecting Colden Common Rec to Watley Lane - supporting SDNP Active Travel Plan	14
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Do not consider important to join horse-riding paths as so few riders, horses and pedestrians do not mix well, stick to pedestrian routes only	4
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Access for cyclists	40
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Include bridleways/horse-riding	45
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Protect future strategic routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, even if implementation and surfacing are delivered at a later stage.	2
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Watley Lane becomes impassable after rain - separate bridleways and footpaths	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Make Woodland Drove a bridleway to include use by cyclists and extend to Colden Common	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Explore options for horse-riding - including designated, shared, seasonal restrictions, trial access, partnership working with local riders and Parish council	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Include multi-use paths/surface some of the access routes/upgrade existing footpaths for walkers, cyclists, horse-riders. Consider appropriate surfacing for core forest tracks multi-use/bridleways	8
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Access from Colden Common Recreation Park to Watley Lane (incorrectly labelled on map - labelled as recreation, should be park)	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Include cycle and equestrian access from Colden Common rec into the woodland	5
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding multi-use	Include an easy circular cycling route with access from Colden Common and Twyford	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Cycling route North -South - linking Twyford and onwards to Hensting Lane	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Incorporate multi-use paths/dedicated perimeter tracks that safely accommodate horse-riding without impacting standard tree planting densities	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Accessible paths for carriage drivers	3

Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Consider seasonal access for grass paths via use of permitted paths to avoid poaching	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Cycle route suggestion - north-south - need a connection from Colden Common to Twyford - via a more direct link than via Boyes Lane - the Parish Council's proposed bridleway on PC land within Colden Common park could continue directly North within the forest proposals - strategically if this route crossed Hare Lane and the path beyond Toll Gate Cottage, it would lay the foundation for future changes	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Link to Watley only in dry months as poor surface for much of year	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Cycling route - east west -linking Colden Common through the site with Watley -	2
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Create a path giving a more direct link from Colden Common and Twyford (possibly via/linking Hare Lane/Hensting Lane)	2
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Confirm that the final design will allow for future multi-user access through the woodland and that the access layout will be reviewed with relevant access bodies before implementation.	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Consider cycling access as part of the planned access hierarchy, especially where routes could contribute to local utility journeys, school/recreation trips, and connections between settlements.	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Consider equestrian access from the outset, particularly given the limited availability of safe off-road riding routes in many parts of the local area and the importance of avoiding conflict with road traffic.	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	No proposals for equine access	2
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	No proposals for cycling access	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Woodland layout should consider future access for low key recreation now so that future delivery can be achieved - at least 3m wide multi-user routes on C1-0024 and C1-0026 (proposed ATNP corridors - Twyford to Colden Common and Colden Common, Twyford, Owslebury)	3
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Design key management tracks and main access routes with future public multi-user access in mind, including appropriate width, gradients, visibility, drainage and surfacing where required.	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Route suggestion (multi-use) NE extremity of the land (Cockscomb Hill) with the Eastern End of Monarchs Way where it intersects with Mare Lane	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	SDNP Active travel initiative to establish an off-road route connecting Twyford / Shawford and Hockley -	4

	should these plans progress, the provision of bridleway access at Spitfire Forest could potentially enable cyclists from Colden Common off road/quieter route access to Winchester and a potential extension to include Marwell Zoo and Owslebury.	
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Include a dedicated, multi-user track from Tanglewood Equestrian Centre through Spitfire Forest to connect with Watley Lane	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Provide cycle access from Colden Common/Boyes Lane to Twyford/wider bridleway network	11
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Existing bridleway off Watley Lane is not well maintained - Monarchs Way was impassable last summer	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Concern about increased footfall on Watley Lane and impact of more users on the narrow bridleway	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Park Copse will not require deer fencing - could this be made available for enhanced access including bridleways?	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Explore opportunities for a wider network of accessible routes for pedestrians and cyclists running both north-south and east-west,	1
Bridleways, cycling, horse-riding, multi-use	Include an off-road route linking the villages of Twyford, Colden Common and Owslebury	3
Community involvement/engagement	Include an area for local people to dedicate trees to loved ones - managed by a voluntary organisation	1
Community involvement/engagement	Didn't receive a letter notifying me of the consultation	1
Community involvement/engagement	Purpose of consultation - cost and delays?	1
Community involvement/engagement	Tree planting and volunteering opportunities	3
Community involvement/engagement	Meet with Happy Hedgerows as part of community engagement activities	1
Community involvement/engagement	Include opportunities for forest education/outdoor classrooms, shelters etc	3
Community involvement/engagement	Engage with key stakeholder organisations in future consultations	1
Dogs and the new forest	Concern about an increase in dog walking and implications (fouling, bags in trees, lack of dog bins etc)	4
Entrances into the woodland	Access to open fields, including the water meadows area could become an attractive location for unauthorised encampments	1
Entrances into the woodland	Keep access gate to the open field closed whenever possible to avoid unauthorised encampments	1
Entrances into the woodland	Concern about increased unauthorised access to the new woodland and illegal encampments	1

Entrances into the woodland	Consider a controlled entrance system - similar to the one used at Royal Victoria Country Park	1
Entrances into the woodland	Provide access from the southern end of the village via (PC owned) Stratton Copse (next to Sandyfields) -	21
Entrances into the woodland	Provide access from Chalk Dell	4
Entrances into the woodland	Concern there is pedestrian access only shown on the plans from Colden Common	1
Environmental benefits and impacts	Explore the opportunity to reduce nitrates and phosphates in the river Itchen	1
Environmental benefits and impacts	Will the new woodland be available for offsetting carbon credits for development proposals	1
Environmental benefits and impacts	The development raises no environmental concerns for the Environment Agency	1
General supportive comments	Overarching supportive comment	55
History and archaeology	The dominant historical use of most of Park Farm was as one of the enclosed parks of the Bishop of Winchester; hence its name. Why is this not a central part of the new design ?	1
History and archaeology	Provide archaeological surveys - detailed forest design should not rely on just HER data - request to see surveys	1
History and archaeology	Is archaeological work proposed?	1
Other	Concern about food security and ensuring enough arable land is maintained for food production	1
Other	What additional surveys have been undertaken and are these available for the public to view	1
Other	Is there a more detailed map at 1 to 2500 scale showing precise boundaries	1
Parking	Concern about the potential use (parking/amenities) of open space towards the foot of the western side of the hill	1
Parking	Include a small car park off Woodland Drove	1
Parking	Lack of parking - concern visitors will use Hunters Park	1
Parking	Clarify what 'safeguard' means - include a timeline for implementation, add examples of strategic corridors	1
Parking	Supportive of no parking provision	1
Parking	Future proof for equestrian infrastructure - a formal long-term commitment stating that if any visitor parking is planned in the future, equestrian will be integrated into these plans from the outset	1
Parking	Concern - no proposals for carparking	5

Parking	Concern - horseboxes travelling to area to access any new bridleways - parking along BBoyces Lane already limited	1
Parking	Include parking/why no car park proposed?	4
Public rights of way and permissive routes	Ensure existing public rights of way and current permissive routes remain open to the public	1
Public rights of way and permissive routes	Clearly distinguished public footpaths from permissive routes. This is important to avoid confusion about access rights, particularly as public footpaths cannot be used by cyclists or horse riders.	1
Public rights of way and permissive routes	Concern no improvements to PROW and provision of accessible paths	1
Public rights of way and permissive routes	Link woodland access with the existing footpath network	1
Public rights of way and permissive routes	Integrate the woodland access network with the existing public rights of way network from Twyford, Colden Common and the surrounding area, so that the woodland contributes to wider route continuity rather than functioning only as an isolated local greenspace.	2
Public rights of way and permissive routes	Should new paths be created for horses to access the woodland - make them permissive bridleway intended primarily for local access rather than destination horse-riding	1
Public rights of way and permissive routes	Not all permissive routes are included in your maps - will all permissive paths be retained? what will happen to these routes in the future?	3
Renewable energy	Include renewable energy/solar panels on site	5
Tree species and planting	Inclusion of exotic tree species - what is the purpose of the woodland - carbon capture or commercial timber?	1
Tree species and planting	Explore the introduction and restoration of native woodland as a preference to timber production	1
Tree species and planting	Planting of native trees financially justified by the offset with the nitrate neutrality objectives	1
Tree species and planting	Conifer plantations create dense and dark areas and make nearby footpaths dark and gloomy	2
Tree species and planting	Conifers are not part of the south downs landscape - their taller growth will dominate the skyline	1
Tree species and planting	Safety of lone walkers and runners in the dark areas of the woodland	1
Tree species and planting	Rather than planting in blocks, divided by lanes, provide a more contiguous arrangement so that the	1

	whole area is covered in woodland, which could then be punctuated by smaller paths	
Tree species and planting	No conifer	1
Tree species and planting	Include trees species for foraging - e.g. apple, chestnut and elderberry	1
Tree species and planting	Concern about the inclusion of conifer trees/planting conifer in large blocks	2
Tree species and planting	Follow the example of Micheldever Forest and plant large blocks of Beech Trees - they allow light to filter through	1
Tree species and planting	Include Aspen blocks in the mix	1
Tree species and planting	Assurance planting will include sessile oak as favoured over common oak and other non-native species such as redwood and red oak	1
Tree species and planting	Extract existing conifers over time from Park Copes to encourage broadleaf regeneration in the ancient woodland	1
Tree species and planting	Explore natural regeneration to build ecological resilience - especially in sensitive areas such as woodland buffers	1
Tree species and planting	Inclusion of Juniper welcomed - ensure local conditions are appropriate. Plantlife with Forest Research and others have experience and expertise in restoring characteristic juniper scrub in downland landscapes	1
Tree species and planting	Balancing proportions of woodland/tree planting to open field systems in this agricultural downland mosaic landscape.	1
Wildlife and deer	Concern about deer culling - safety risk to woodland users	2
Wildlife and deer	Presence of deer on site	1
Wildlife and deer	Will deer fencing limit public access to major parts of the woodland?	1
Woodland design and views	Concern that the impact on views will change the existing character of the western end of the south downs national park	1
Woodland design and views	Include Taylors Copse in the scheme given the ancient trees it contains	1
Woodland design and views	Retain existing hedgerows and mature trees	3
Woodland design and views	Consider how close you plant to nearby properties	1
Woodland design and views	Protect views	1
Woodland design and views	Uses planned access design to support nature recovery, by directing people onto robust and legible	1

	routes, reducing the risk of unmanaged desire lines, disturbance, trampling, soil compaction and conflict between users.	
Woodland design and views	Ensuring landscape history, character and evolution continue to be readable, seen in views and experienced in the woodland	1
Woodland Drove	Concern about the increase in vehicles on Woodland Drove and their potential impact on existing PROW	2
Woodland Drove	Any new operational track next to Woodland Drove should be designed to direct runoff away from Woodland Drove and prevent it from reaching Main Road.	1
Woodland Drove	Clarify and enforce the access rights up Woodland Drove and enforce using the existing gate (beyond the access to Moorlands)	1
Woodland Drove	Future plans for the site should be managed carefully to avoid a significant increase in traffic on Woodland Drove and the surrounding area	1
Woodland Drove	Concern that Woodland Drove will eventually be used as an entrance or exit point for access to the new woodland	1
Woodland Drove	Water run-off from Park Farm onto Woodland Drove and Main Road after heavy rain and assurance from Forestry England, as the new owner of the land at Park Farm will take steps to mitigate the problem	2
Woodland Drove	Stop cars using Woodland Drove	2
Woodland Drove	Pleased Woodland Drove not being used for vehicles	1
Woodland maintenance/farm buildings	Consider using local people to manage the new woodland	1
Woodland maintenance/farm buildings	Provide information on how habitat and path damage from forestry operations will be minimised?	2
Woodland maintenance/farm buildings	Timber should contribute to the local economy - local processing, jobs, products	1
Woodland maintenance/farm buildings	Through the design the farm loses its agricultural context and becomes less readable as a result - what will the role of the retained farm buildings and yards under the new management regime	1
Woodland maintenance/farm buildings	How will the ancient woodland be maintained - in particular Park Copse which appears to be in a neglected state?	1
Woodland maintenance/farm buildings	What will the existing park farm buildings be used for? Planning permission for a dwelling?	1

Woodland name	Naming of the new woodland should have formed part of the consultation process	1
Woodland name	Reconsider the name of Spitfire Forest to something more suitable/historical	2
Woodland Name	Concern about the name Spitfire Forest - based on anecdotal/undocumented evidence/links with 'fire' - the woodland name should reflect the location/historical context	5

Appendix F: Stakeholders contacted

Parliamentary MP
Winchester Constituency
South Downs National Park
Elected representative - Councillor Jerry Pett Officers - Historic Environment Team - Public Rights of Way - South Downs Local Access Forum - Conservation/ecology/tree officers - Planning
Winchester City Council
Elected representatives - Colden Common and Twyford Ward Councillors Officers - Historic Environment - Water validation
Hampshire County Council
Elected representatives - Bishops Waltham Ward Councillor Officers: - Public Rights of Way - Highways planning - County Archaeology - Hampshire Access Forum
Parish Councils
- Colden Common Parish Council - Twyford Parish Council - Owslebury Parish Council
Statutory consultees
- Environment Agency - Historic England - Natural England
Utilities
- Southern Water - National Grid
Wildlife and special interest groups
- Butterfly Conservation - Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust - Hampshire Ornithological Society

