



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.

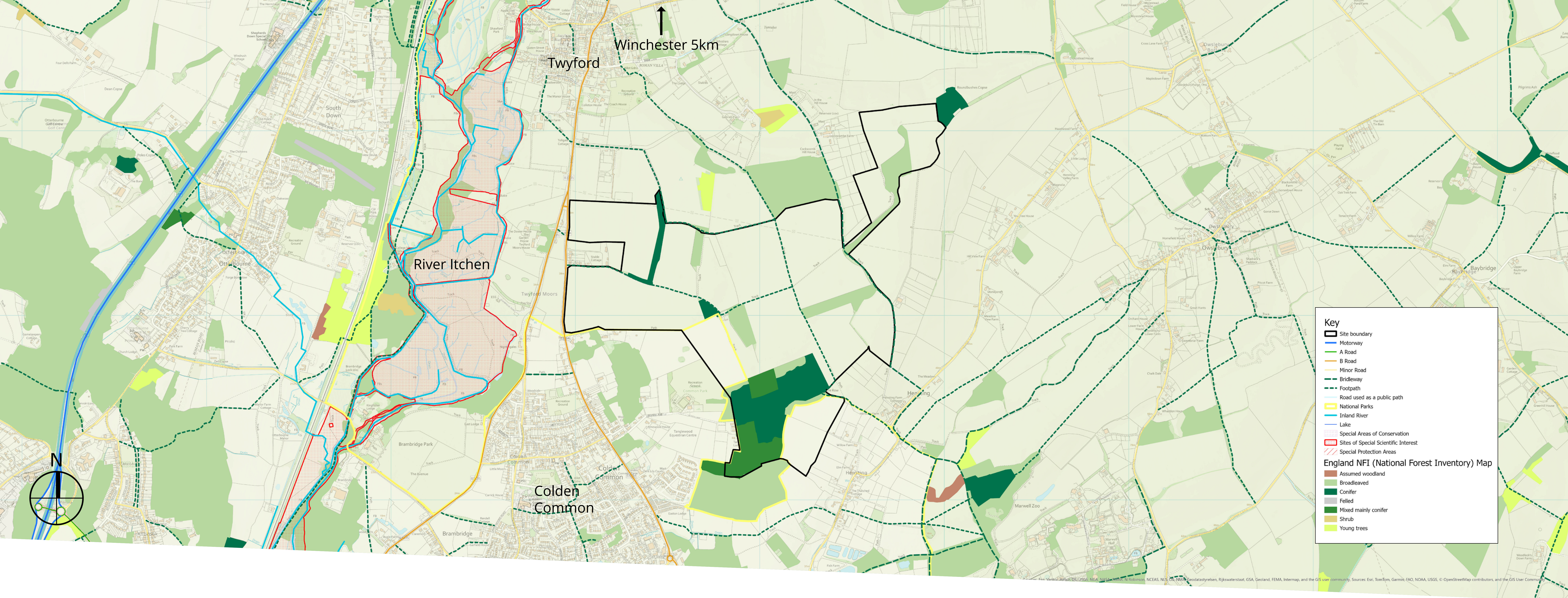
In time, each new woodland will provide sustainable timber, contributing to the rural economy. And they'll have wider environmental benefits including absorbing carbon, improving soil health, air quality and water management.

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

Scan the QR code to find out more:

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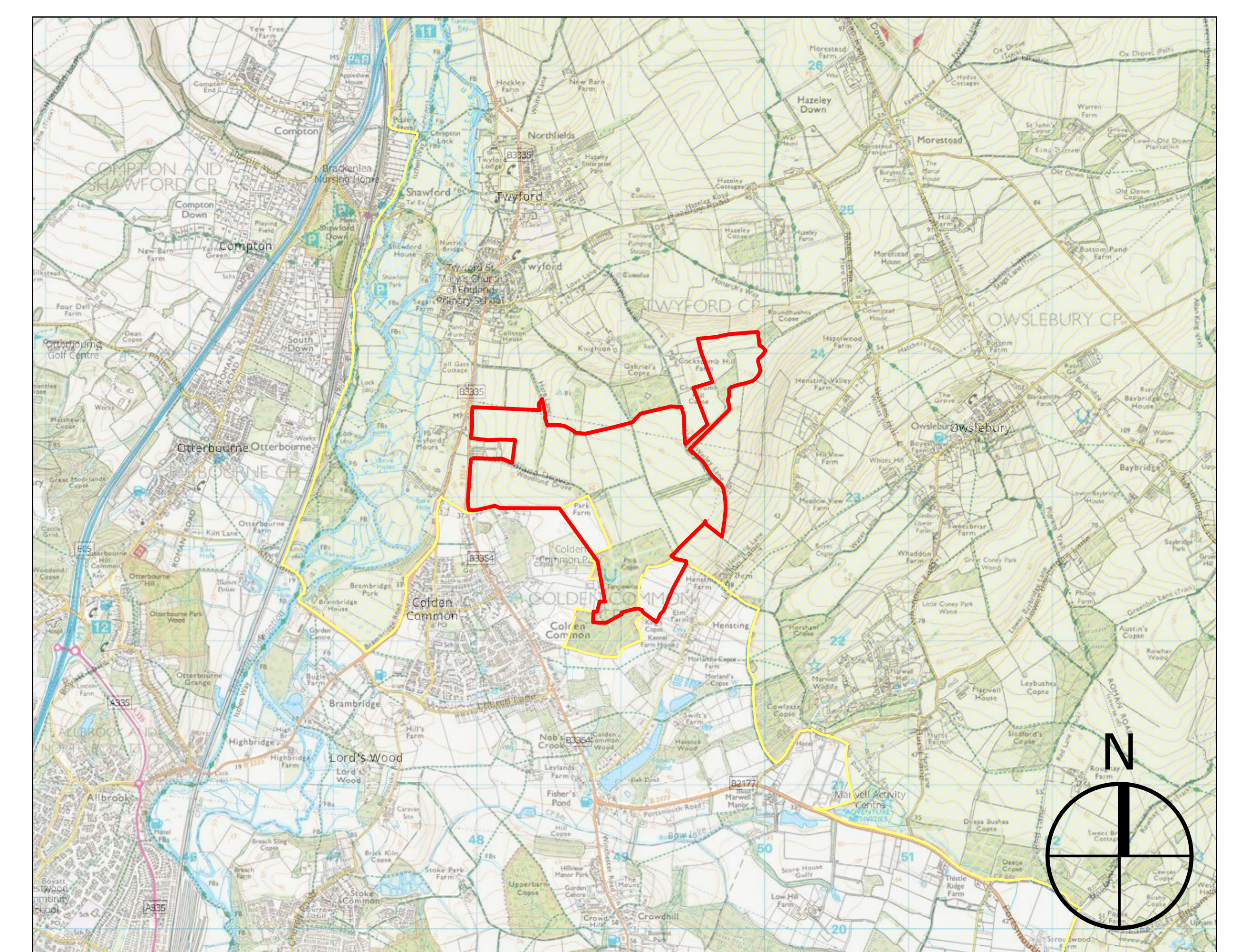




Site location & context

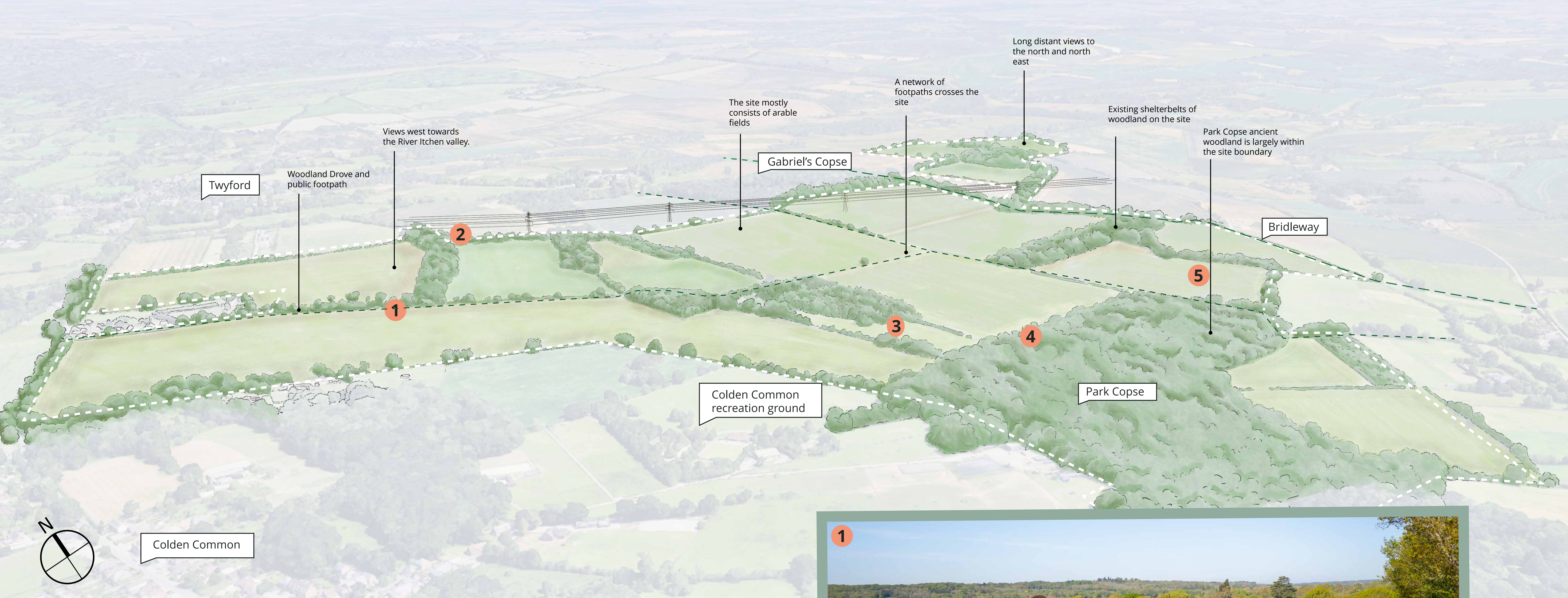
The site is located at Park Farm, south-east of Twyford, north-east of Colden Common and approximately 5km south of Winchester. The majority of the site is within the western edge of the South Downs National Park. The River Itchen and its valley are about 600m to the west of Park Farm.

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.



Site Location 1:25,000

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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.



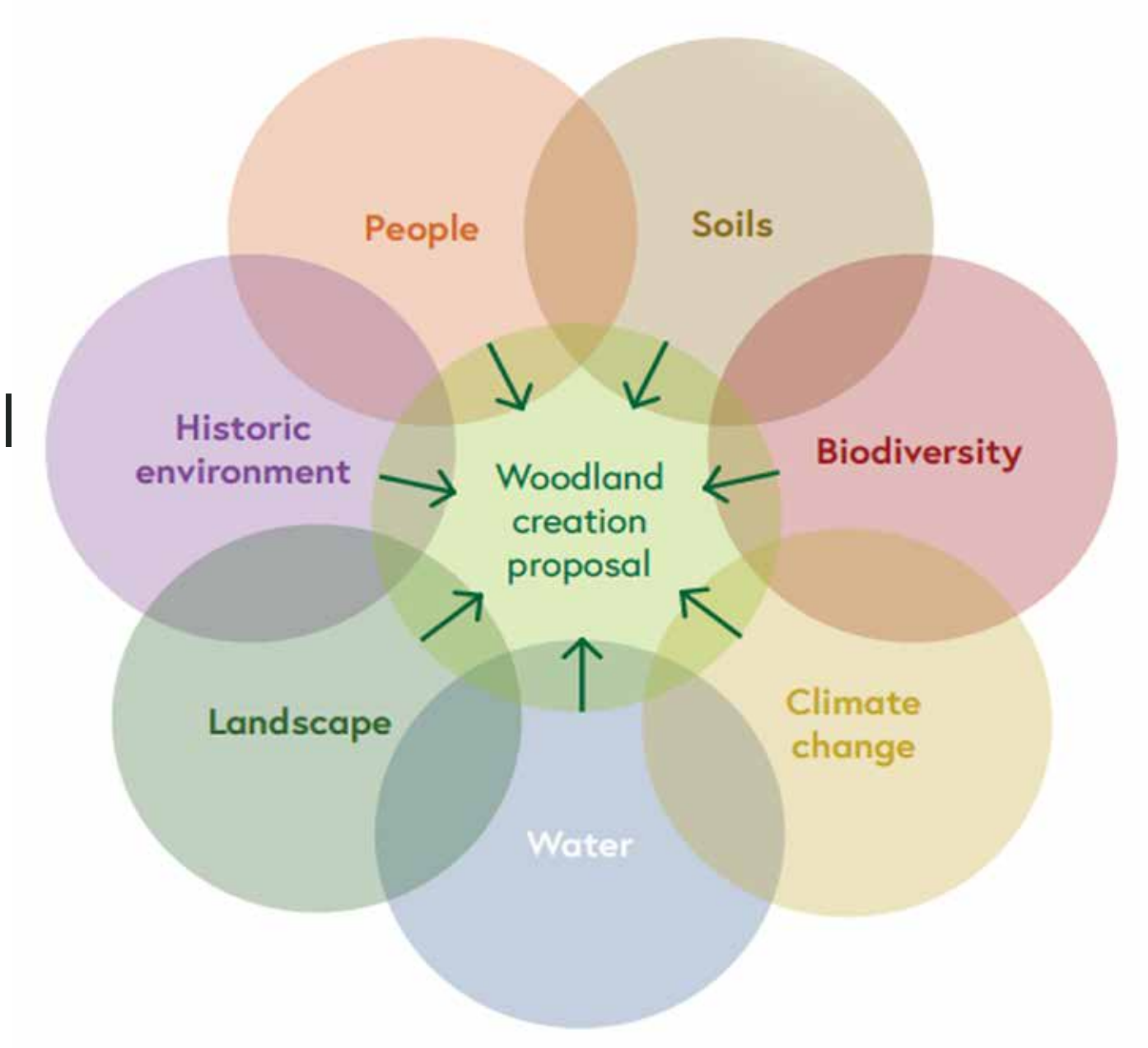
Draft design

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

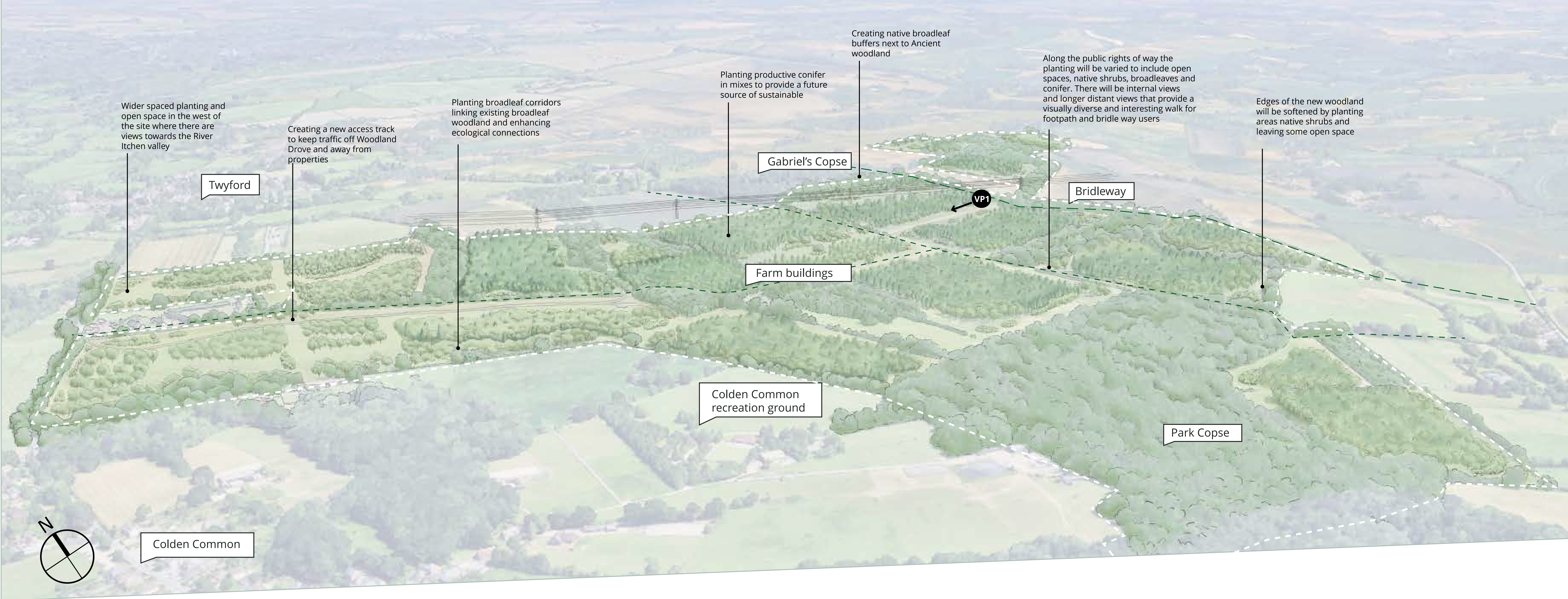


Objectives for the new woodland

- 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.

Tree species we could plant

1 Shrubs including hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and juniper	2 Black walnut in mixes with tulip tree, wild service tree and whitebeam	3 Sessile Oak in mixes with beech, sycamore and hornbeam	4 Douglas fir in mixes with western red cedar, Italian alder and sycamore	5 European larch in mixes with radiata pine and silver birch	6 Radiata pine in mixes with Macedonian pine, Scot's pine and sessile oak	7 Coast redwood in mixes with giant redwood and red oak	8 Red oak in mixes with sweet chestnut, common walnut, whitebeam and common alder



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.

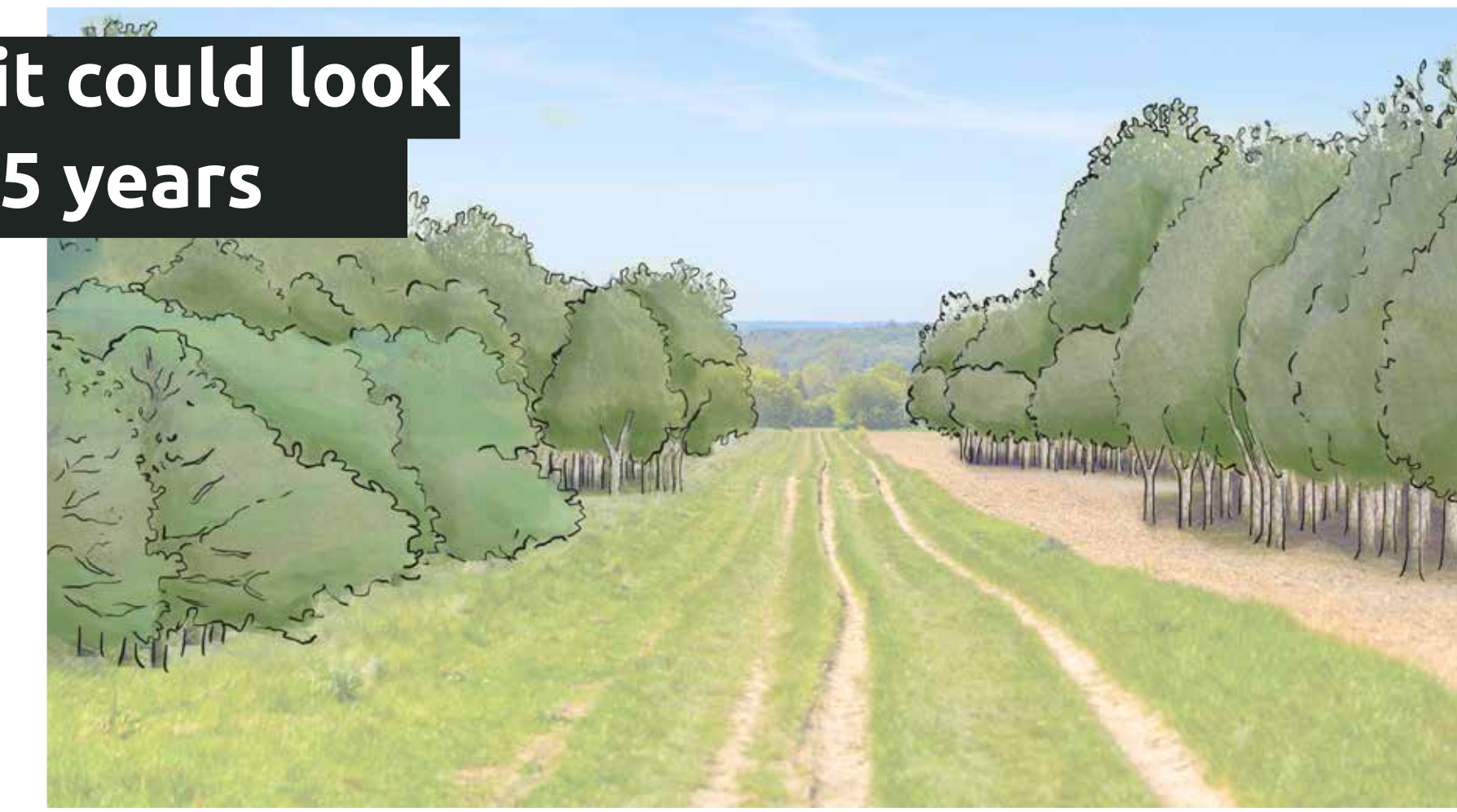
- Enhance the surrounding Ancient Woodland by planting native broadleaf buffers or leaving open space.
- Use shrubs, open space and different types of woodland along footpaths and tracks to create interesting views and wildlife corridors.
- Soften the more visible woodland edges by using a mixed planting 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





Key

- Site boundary
- Operational access point
- Pedestrian access points
- Forest road
- Loading bay
- Local wildlife sites (SINCS)
- Water pipeline
- Powerlines
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Road used as a public path
- Permissive path
- Ephemeral pond
- Heritage features
- Ancient woodlands
- National Parks
- Inland River
- Special Areas of Conservation
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Nature Improvement Areas
- World Heritage Site
- Country Parks
- Listed Buildings
- Scheduled Monuments

Proposed woodland

- Low density broadleaf planting
- Conifer dominant woodland
- Broadleaf dominant woodland
- Mixed broadleaf and conifer
- Native broadleaf woodland
- Native shrub mix

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



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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





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 pets in sight and close by at all times in the new woodland, following our Forest Dog Code¹

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 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.

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