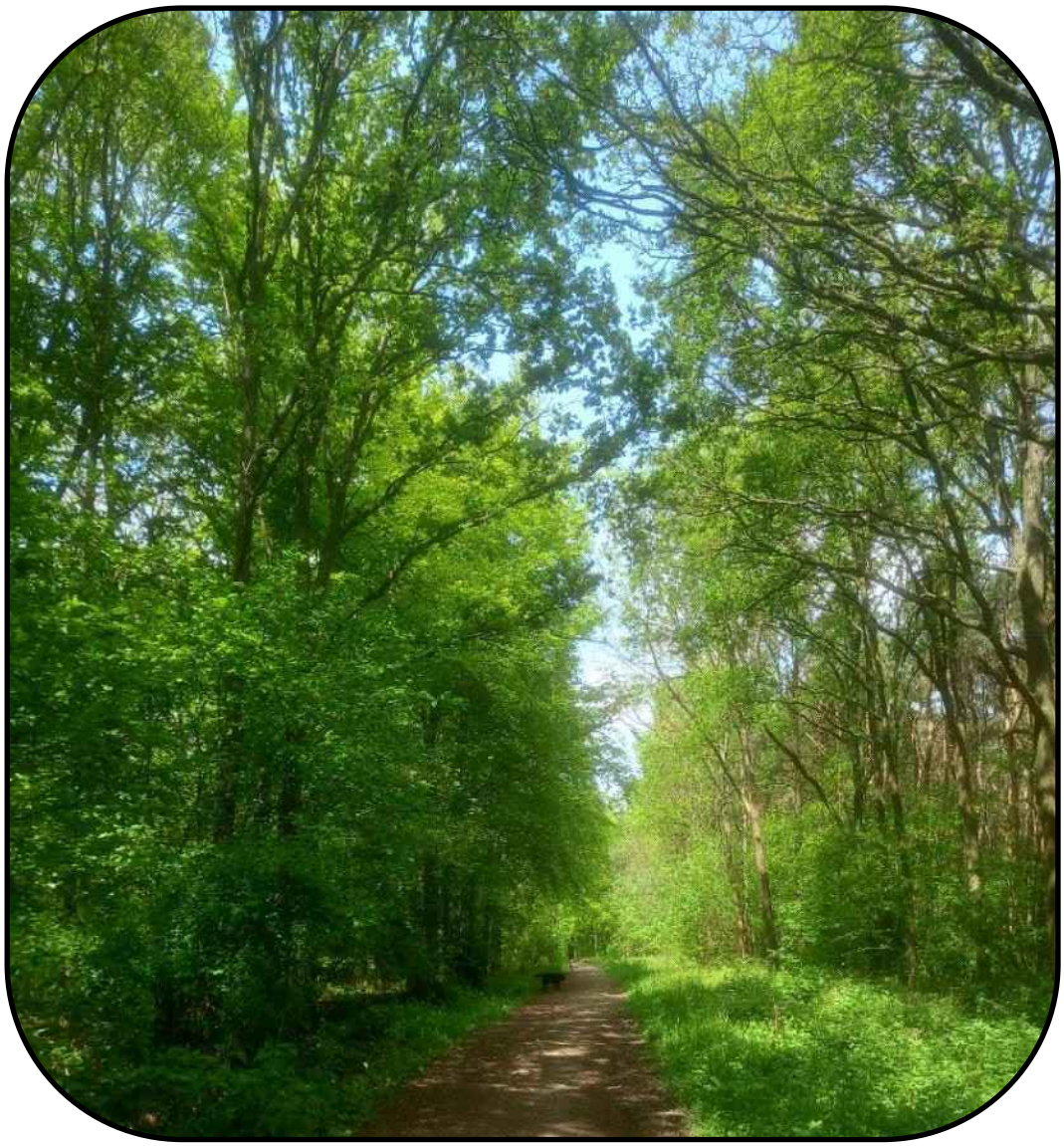


Berrygrove Woods

GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN

2025 - 2030

Countryside Management Service

Hertfordshire

OVERVIEW

Greenspace Action Plans

Greenspace Actions Plans (GAPs) are map-based management plans which specify activities that should take place on a site over a stated period of time; these activities will help to deliver the agreed aspirations which the site managers and stakeholders have identified for that site.

Public Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An initial engagement period was held for four weeks in June 2024, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement will be completed in June 2025, enabling stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An associated engagement response document, published online as an appendix to this plan, will summarise comments received, and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved
0		Draft	EA	AT	

CONTENTS

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 Site Summary

Site Name: Berrygrove Woods

Site Address: Berrygrove Woods, Otterspool Lane, Radlett, Watford, WD25 8AX

Grid Reference: TQ 13004 98430

Size: 45.15ha

Designations: Aldenham Conservation Area, Planted Ancient Woodland Site, Local Wildlife Sites: Berrygrove Wood 84/006, River Colne Near Bushey Hall Farm 84/014, Binghams Wood Wall Hall Estate 84/007, River Colne near Binghams Pumping Station 84/023, Wall Hall Estate Grassland 84/015/01, Abbey Wood Wall Hall Estate 84/047, Grade II Listed Parkland at Wall Hall.

Owner: Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)

1.2 Vision Statement

Berrygrove Woods is a popular location for the local community for dog walking and offers a tranquil place to visit. The future vision for the site is to provide a diverse and thriving woodland habitat created through habitat restoration and ongoing sustainable woodland management, whilst also creating a site that is welcoming and accessible, involving the local community in this process.

1.3 Policy Context

This plan is set in the context of several Council policies and strategies.

1.3.1 HCC Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy

Hertfordshire County Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and have since committed to make Hertfordshire cleaner, greener and more sustainable.

HCC want to:

1. Lead in their own operations

2. Enable sustainability with their programmes, policies and decisions

3. Inspire businesses and residents to take action

The ambitions of the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy include achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions before 2050, ensuring communities are ready for future climates and improving wildlife in our land and water by 20% by 2050. More information can be found here Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy 2022 (March 2023 revision)

1.3.2 HCC Tree and Woodland Strategy

Hertfordshire County Council Tree and Woodland Strategy sets out HCC's vision for Hertfordshire: a county where the benefits provided by trees and woodlands are shared by everyone who lives, works and plays here; both now and for future generations. To achieve this, we will work with partners to increase tree cover across the county, prioritising areas and approaches which will ensure the widest range of public benefits.

1.3.3 HCC Pollinator Strategy

HCC Pollinator Strategy sets out Hertfordshire County Council's commitment to helping conserve the UK's pollinators by seeking to protect and increase the amount and quality of pollinator habitat. The strategy has been developed to raise awareness of the plight of pollinators and collaborate with partners to deliver improvements to habitats for this purpose.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Introduction

Berrygrove Woods are a network of woodland blocks, located between Aldenham village and the eastern edge of Watford. Two major roads, the M1 and A41, are prominent features in the landscape, with sections of Berrygrove Woods providing a visual screening.

Several of the northern blocks of woodland previously formed part of the Grade II listed parkland at Wall Hall. Much of the surrounding parkland has now been turned to arable farming or become part of Aldenham Golf Course, however, historic mapping suggests the boundaries of the remaining woodlands have changed little over time.

The woodlands are largely mixed, with distinct blocks often dissected by paths. Both conifer plantation and broadleaf species are present, with varying densities and woodland structure. Historical mapping and aerial photography suggest the woodlands are well established in their current location, though the composition of the woodlands has likely changed significantly over the years with the various felling and restocking operations.

The majority of the woodland compartments have public footpaths running through or alongside them, particularly the main block of woodland which has several access points. The woodland blocks are spread out and some are connected by public footpaths or bridleways whilst other have no public access points. Some of the woodland compartments have vehicle access points, specifically the main block which has a surfaced woodland ride running through it.

The woodland blocks are surrounded by land which is HCC owned but tenanted and a map is included for context. The focus of this GAP document will be on land included within the Berrygrove Woods site boundary.

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

Location Plan

Legend

Site boundary

Berrygrove Woods
Grid Reference: TQ130983
Nearest Postcode: WD25 8AX

N

0 90,000 180,000 m

Scale @ A3
1:15,000

Date
March 2025

Rev
00

Countryside Management Service

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

Site Description

Dry hollow
Hollow feature within the woodland, not specifically visible on historic mapping

Drain feature
Wet ditch feature with relatively still water

Broadleaved Woodland
Woodland on a slope with a historic pond feature, age varies from 10-15 years to 100 years old

Cricket bat willows
Area along the river planted with willows for cricket bats

Broadleaved Woodland
Woodland compartments of broadleaved species, mostly around 20 years old. Split into compartments 6 and 7 by Otterspool Lane

Woodland entrance
Pedestrian gate, field gate and horse hop entrance

Otterspool Lane

Parking
Three parking spaces located here

Woodland replanting
Some of this area has been thinned and planted with hazel and oak

Fishing
Area with ash and willow along the river with private fishing rights

Field gate
Gate to access woodland from main ride

Main Ride
Surfaced track through the main block of woodland over the top of a water main

Broadleaved Woodland
Woodland compartment comprised of hazel coppice, ash and field maple

Wildflowers
Area along ride recently seeded with wildflowers

Pond feature
Historic woodland pond feature

Laurel
Laurel growing in this compartment

Bench location
Carved log bench

Mixed Woodland
Woodland compartment with challenging access and requires thinning

Mixed Woodland
Woodland block between the A41 and M1 with scots pine throughout

Site Access
Access to woodland compartment 5 from Berry Grove Lane

Fence
Post and rail fencing along side the M1

Field gate
Gate to access woodland from main ride

Field gate
Gate to access track which connects to main ride from Radlett Road

N

0 140 280 m

Legend

- Site boundary

Site features

- Directional Signage
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Access
- Path

Site habitat types

- Woodland ride
- Mixed woodland
- Coniferous woodland
- Broadleaved woodland
- Pond

Scale @ A3
1:6,000

Date
March 2025

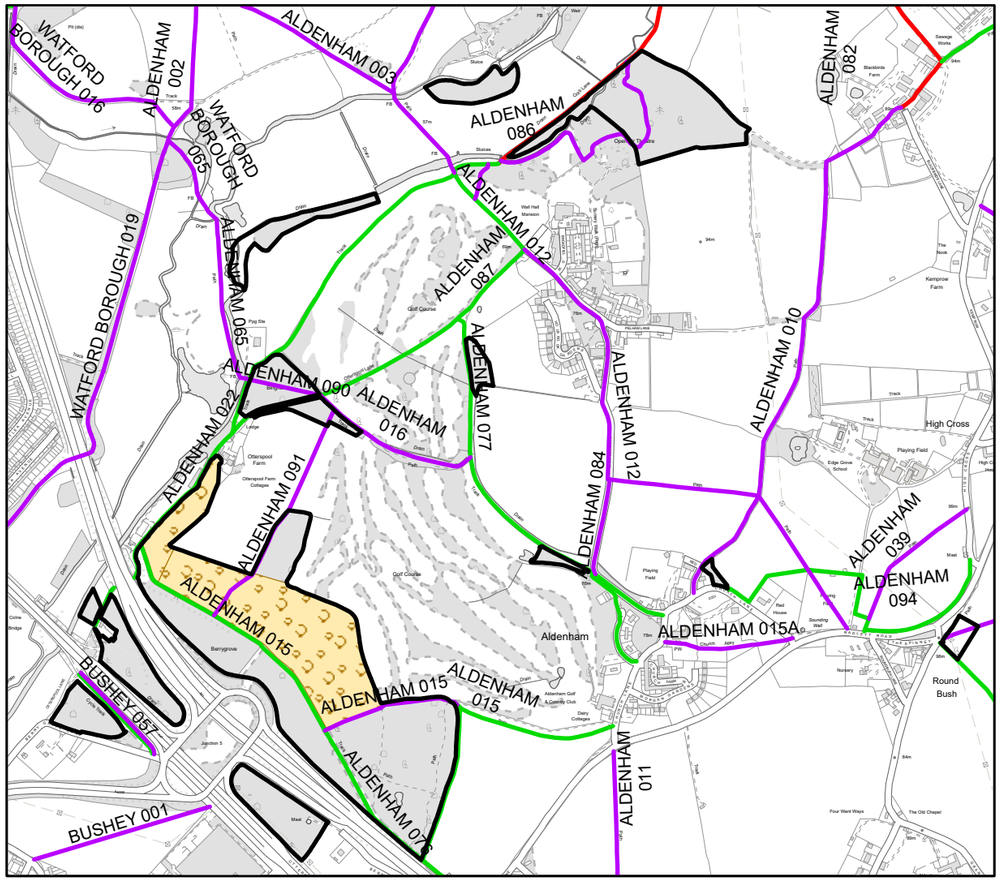
Rev
00

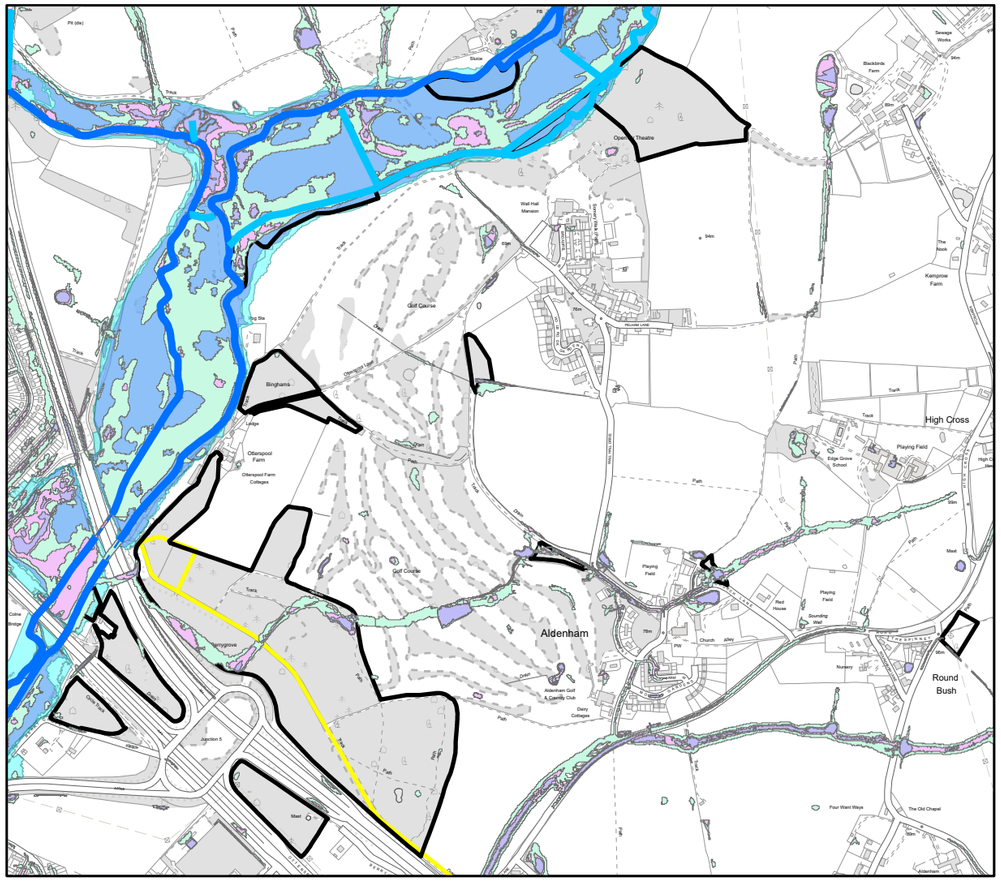
Countryside Management Service

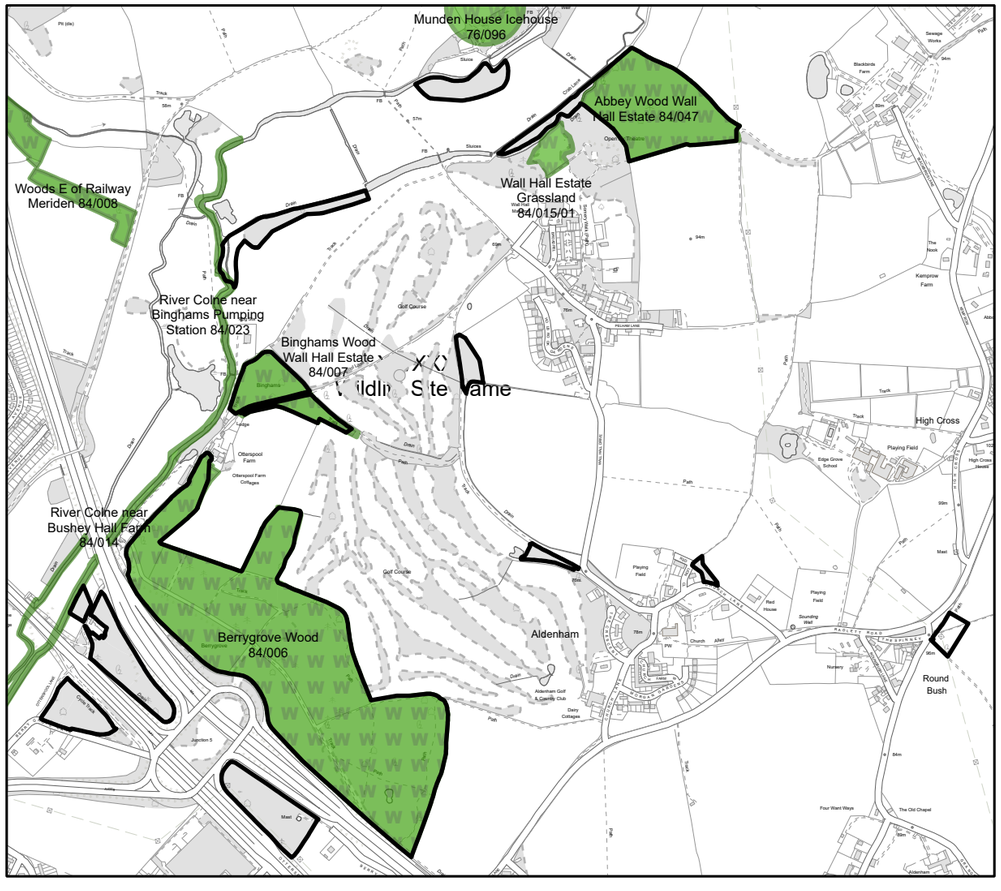
Berrygrove Woods

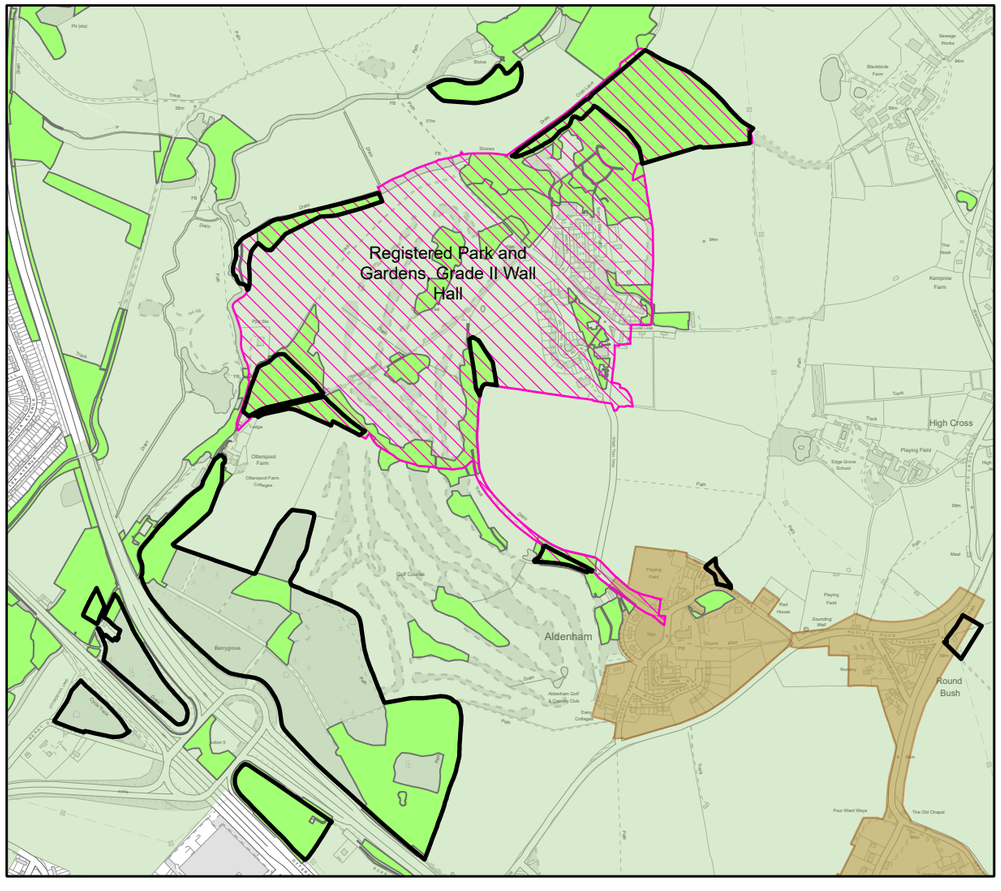
Greenspace Action Plan

Constraints Plan









Legend

- Site boundary

Public Rights of Way

- Byway Open to All Traffic
- Restricted Byway
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Temp Closed Footpath
- Temp Footpath
- Unmetalled UCR
- Water Main

Detailed River Network

River Type

- Culvert
- Canal
- Lake / Reservoir
- Primary River
- Secondary River
- Tertiary River
- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- RoFSW_Extent1in1000
- RoFSW_Extent1in100
- RoFSW_Extent1in30

Local Record Centre Sites

- Wildlife Site

Environmental Designations

- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)
- Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)
- Priority_Habitat_Inventory
- Greenbelt - November2016
- Conservation Areas
- Register of Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument

N

Scale @ A3

1:10,000

Date

March 2025

Rev

00

Countryside Management Service

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

Indicative Habitat Condition Score

Legend

- Site boundary

Berrygrove Woods Haitat Condition Score

- Good
- Moderate
- N/A - Other
- Poor

N

0 140 280 m

Scale @ A3

1:15,000

Date

March 2025

Rev

00

Countryside Management Service

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

HCC Ownership Context Map

Legend

- Site boundary
- HCC Tenanted Land

N

0 350 700 m

Scale @ A3

1:15,000

Date

July 2025

Rev

00

Countryside Management Service

2.2 Site Designations

2.2.1 Priority Habitats Inventory - Deciduous Woodland

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland includes woodland growing on the full range of soil conditions, from very acidic to base-rich, and takes in most semi-natural woodland in southern and eastern England, and in parts of lowland Wales and Scotland. The woods tend to be small, less than 20ha. Often there is evidence of past coppicing, particularly on moderately acid to base-rich soils; on very acid sands the type may be represented by former wood-pastures of oak and birch. Some of the woodland at Berrygrove Woods falls into this category for priority habitats.

2.2.2 Planted Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS)

A small proportion of the site is classified as PAWS which is where previous ancient woodland was felled and replanted with woodland plantations. Funding can be available through Countryside Stewardship Agreements to restore such areas of woodland. The woodland compartments within this PAWS area are, 1d, 1i, 1g, 1k, 1l, and 1n.

2.2.3 Conservation Area

A small part of the woodland falls within a conservation area which means conservation area consent is required for woodland thinning operations in these areas. Woodland compartments within the conservation area is 13 and 14.

2.2.4 Registered Park and Garden

Registered parks and gardens are those which are registered for their specific historic interest in England. For Berrygrove Woods compartments 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 are within the Registered Parkland and gardens of the Wall Hall Estate.

2.3 Landscape Character

The site sits within the Northern Thames Basin National Character Area which is a diverse historic area that extends from Hertfordshire to the Essex coast and to the south is bordered by Thames Estuary.

Hertfordshire's landscape character assessment describes the variations in character between different types of landscape within Hertfordshire. It sets out strategies and guidance for the protection, management and planning of the landscape whilst also providing an evidence base for Local Plans. It fits into the context of National Character Areas set out by Natural England. The site sits within two different Hertfordshire Landscape Character areas which are:

1. Ver/Colne River Valley (Area 17) – A narrow river valley corridor which skirts a mosaic of settlements, parkland, farmland and both active and restored mineral workings. The modest River Ver and upper Colne occupy a

meandering floodplain which is grazed by livestock at a number of locations. Riparian willow plantations line the rivers along part of the course whilst south of Park Street restored wetland mineral workings provide recreational opportunities. A number of distinctive features punctuate the river landscape, including parkland, mills and fords. The valley is visually contained by side slopes and vegetation which generally conceal the presence of the adjoining settlements.

2. Aldenham Plateau (Area 16) – This area lies between Radlett and Watford. It is an area of predominantly arable gently undulating arable farmland interspersed with a number of villages. Also, areas of woodland are located close to the M1 and Aldenham Country Club golf course. These include oak/hazel, e.g. Berrygrove, which reflects the acidic and relatively wet ground conditions, although these ancient woods now also contain areas of conifers

2.4 History and Archaeology

Woodland compartments 6-8 and 10-11 form part of the Grade II Scheduled Parkland of The Wall Hall Estate. The parkland has largely been subsumed into a golf course and arable farming, but the woodland positions and shapes do not appear to have altered significantly in the course of time. Other features that have been identified in a Historic Environment Record Check are the following:

1. Fishpond (X,Y coordinates: 513299 198057) - the pond in the main woodland block was recorded as a fishpond and described as post medieval having a clay and gravel base. The extent of the pond has reduced from the 1871 OS map.
2. Pillbox (X,Y coordinates: 512600 198395) – the site of a pillbox beside Otterspool Lane which was likely destroyed during the construction of the A41. This would have followed the natural line of defence of the River Colne.
3. Berrygrove Wood also has strong signs that at least part of it was once heathland with probable wood pasture.

2.5 Habitats and Wildlife

2.5.1 Woodland

The woodlands, located to the east of Watford, have largely been established pre-1940 as aerial photos indicate, but their structure and species composition has changed with various felling and planting operations during the intervening years. Set in the vicinity of Aldenham village, the woodlands provide an important recreational resource to local residents whilst also providing an important habitat.

Most of the woodlands are on freely draining and slightly acid loam soils, with a small number on loam/clay floodplain soils. The terrain is predominantly level, however in the vicinity of the M1/A41 junction, earthworks have led to artificial embankments. In

these locations, soil profiles have been altered during excavation works, and some plantations appear affected by the soil condition.

Overall, the woodlands are mixed with pockets of coniferous woodland and also areas of broadleaved woodland. The more recent lack of thinning does have implications on tree form and condition, but this is balanced against a necessity to provide trees as screening for major roads. The woodland compartments are described below but more detail can be found in the Forestry Commission approved Woodland Management Plan in Appendix B.

2.5.1.1 Compartment 1a - Broadleaved woodland compartment, mix of oak, sweet chestnut, silver birch and hornbeam. Some thinning work has been carried out in this compartment previously. There is a good shrub layer in some areas of this compartment and there is also a good level of ground flora. Good levels of deadwood throughout. The woodland area has a very high amenity value. Laurel and bramble present in the understorey. On the eastern flank, hazel has been coppiced successfully.

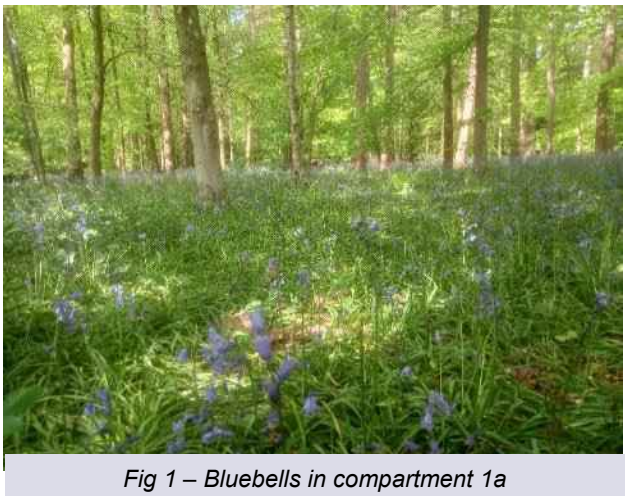


Fig 1 – Bluebells in compartment 1a

2.5.1.2 Compartment 1b – Mixed broadleaves (beech and oak) and European larch in this compartment. The plantation is set out with three rows of larch followed by three rows of beech and oak. Trees on average as 6ft centres. Trees do not appear to have been thinned significantly since planting and as such have become very drawn up and of poor girth particularly the larch. The oak and beech are, in areas, heavily squirrel damaged and may require selective felling or judicious thinning. Small amounts of laurel found in the understorey and good levels of dead wood following wind blow of larch.

Fig 2 – Compartment 1b, mixed plantation

2.5.1.3 *Compartment 1c* – The southern part of this compartment is dominated by Scots pine with an understory of holly and bramble. Small amounts of birch oak and beech line the edges of the compartment. In the centre of the compartment lies an area of Corsican pine and wild cherry, ash and oak. An area of mature Scots pine in the north of the compartment with good levels of standing and fallen deadwood.

Fig 3 – Compartment 1c, Scots pine, holy understory

2.5.1.4 *Compartment 1d* – A Scots pine plantation, with trees around 40 years old. The compartment does not appear to have been thinned and requires 20-25% thinning. On the eastern fringe of the woodland is oak, ash and birch with an understory of hazel and bramble. Hazel in this compartment has been coppiced and is regenerating well. Good levels of deadwood present within the compartment. The western edge of the compartment is beech, ash and cherry.

Fig 4 – Compartment 1d, unthinned

2.5.1.5 *Compartment 1e* – Oak and Scots pine plantation with dense clusters of ash regeneration which has been thinned previously. Few of the ash are mature, though signs of ash dieback are evident in the ash regeneration.

Fig 5 – Compartment 1e, oak and Scots pine plantation

2.5.1.6 Compartment 1f – Stand of early mature wide spaced oak with wild cherry with an understory of yew and hazel.

Fig 6 – Compartment 1f, oak and yew

2.5.1.7 Compartment 1g – Mixed pole stage plantation of beech, birch, oak and larch. It has been thinned historically but requires further intervention.

Fig 6 – Compartment 1g, mixed plantation

2.5.1.8 *Compartment 1h* – A spur off the main woodland, this is formed of mature Corsican pine with beech and oak. Corsican pine particularly dominates the perimeter of the woodland where it forms a screen to the golf course to the east and the farmland to the west and to the north. The interior is dominated by mature beech with small amounts of oak and small groups of birch regeneration . The understory is formed of bramble, bracken, light holly and some hazel coppice. Trees aged approximately 65-70 years old. Corsican pine is likely to soon enter a period of decline.

Fig 7 – Comp 1h, large Corsican pine

2.5.1.9 *Compartment 1i* - Stand of mature pole stage Scots pine with occasional oak. This appears to have been under thinned historically, but it has larger stems compared to nearby stands of Scots pine, and oak is of good condition.

Fig 8 – Compartment 1i, oak and Scots pine plantation

2.5.1.10 *Compartment 1j* – Very dense stand of mature Corsican pine which would benefit greatly from thinning. No evidence of red needle blight.

Fig 9 – Compartment 1j, very dense Corsican pine

2.5.1.11 *Compartment 1k* – Stand of mature larch previously thinned. Small amounts of suppressed oak found in the understory. Some windblow of larch evident and there are moderate levels of dead wood. The understory is comprised mainly of bracken and bramble.

Fig 10 – Compartment 1k, mature larch

2.5.1.12 *Compartment 1l* – Cleared stand of hardwood, now restocked at 2m x 3m centres with predominantly oak, with some ash, hazel and birch regeneration. Some examples of mature holly and hazel retained. Bracken dominates the understorey, and plant height appears supressed by this. Plants currently protected in 0.6m spiral guards, and many plants indicate deer browsing.

Fig 11 – Comp 1l, restocked with oak and hazel

2.5.1.13 *Compartment 1m* - Comprising of mid pole stage larch, birch, ash and oak. At very high density as per the motorway screening. Large number of windblown trees throughout particularly larch.

Fig 12 – Comp 1m, very high-density larch and birch

2.5.1.14 *Compartment 1n* - Plantation of predominantly beech with scattered ash, approximately 40-50 years old which has previously been thinned. Trees at approximately 4-5m centres and of moderate to good form. A very light understory of bramble and some sycamore and ash regeneration all of which has evidently been browsed. The perimeter has good example of oak, oak coppice, larch and dense groves of holly. There is a good level of largely fallen dead wood throughout the compartment. The western flank is a steep bank leading down to an access road which has dense groves of holly and some hazel. The southern end of the compartment has more ash and oak with a hazel understory.

Fig 13 – Comp 1n, beech, ash and oak

2.5.1.15 *Compartment 2* - A waterside plantation of ash with a small number of cricket bat willow lining the river. A fishing club also utilises the site. Ash plantation appears to be of 20-25 years of age which has been pruned up. Condition generally good although risk of ash dieback is high.

Fig 14 – Comp 2, a waterside plantation of ash trees

2.5.1.16 *Compartment 3* – A mixed block of woodland located between the M1 and A41. Tree species include Scots pine, poplar, ash, sweet chestnut, hazel and beech. An internal access track runs from the road up to the final third of the wood and set to the north of this track is a belt of ash and poplar. Ash has regenerated quite freely and shows no signs of disease. The central area is predominantly hazel coppice with a dense bramble understory and a small covering of mature beech, ash and Scots pine. This area appears to have been coppiced previously but has partially successfully regenerated.

Fig 15 – Comp 3, Scots pine, ash, hazel

2.5.1.17 *Compartment 4* - A small triangular woodland located south of the A41 road, with the A4008 marking its southern border, and a public bridleway running parallel to its northern border. It comprises a mature plantation of larch and beech although many trees of poor or weak form. Larch are becoming windswept and over stood and liable to wind throw. Many beech showing signs of decay. Some selective felling appears to have been undertaken 20 years ago, but again tree form is moderate. As an isolated woodland this site does not appear to have been thinned previously.

Fig 16 – Comp 4, larch and beech

2.5.1.18 *Compartment 5* - This is a mixed *compartment*, dominated by a young plantation of mixed broadleaves and Scots pine. Broadleaves include oak ash and wild cherry. The entire southwestern side is dominated by a National Grid wayleave under which vegetation is predominantly regenerating birch with bramble. This is a small landscape amenity woodland with no public access whose primary purpose is screening and interventions in here are merely for tree safety reasons.

Fig 17 Comp5 Scots pine & broadleaves

2.5.1.19 *Compartment 6* – This compartment is a young re-stocked woodland approx. 20 years of age. Set out at 2m x 3m centres predominant species is ash with some wild cherry, hornbeam, oak, field maple and beech. Trees of variable form although all have been successfully high pruned.

Fig 18 – Comp 6, young woodland

2.5.1.20 Compartment 7 is separated from adjoining compartment 6 by Otterspool Lane. A permissive footpath marks its eastern boundary. The southern part of the woodland is a young area of restocking (approximately 20 years of age) comprising predominantly ash with oak, cherry and larch and an understory of bramble.

Fig 19 – Comp 7, secondary woodland

2.5.1.21 *Compartment 8* - A narrow plantation of pole stage ash trees which have been pruned. A small Pill Box is found on western tip. The canopy is close to being closed and some thinning of the ash is needed. Cricket bat willows are also found on the southern tip of this compartment.

Fig 20 – Comp 8, a narrow plantation of ash trees

2.5.1.22 Compartment 9 - is a compartment of poplar and horse chestnut and within this compartment are a number of dead stems. The understory is of grasses, bramble and privet.

Fig 21 –Comp9 poplar and horse chestnut

2.5.1.23 *Compartment 10* - The southwestern tail of the woodland is a narrow strip of land set between a footpath and Crab Lane bridleway. The ground formation suggests this was a pond historically and the perimeter of this is marked by an over story of ash, Austrian pine, a mid-story of yew and laurel and an understory of dead wood with dense ivy coverage. Small amounts of very poor sycamore regeneration have succeeded in places where light allows. Other mature examples around the pond formation include oak and hazel coppice which have grown into maturity. The main body of the woodland is set on a slope, and comprises a mix of oak, ash, larch, spruce and sycamore. Age varies considerably from 10-15 years up to 100 years.

Fig 22 – Comp 10 Mixed woodland

2.5.1.24 *Compartment 11* - Bounded by a section of mature lime and oak trees this is a field corner woodland, planted with wild cherry, oak, and hornbeam. The understory is comprised of dense bramble, and it would be advisable to maintain this, if possible, to allow access to trees for ongoing management. The north end of compartment marked by grove of holly and yew with clusters of elm.

Fig 23 – Comp 11, lime, oak and cherry

2.5.1.25 Compartment 12 – This compartment is set alongside the eastern side of the golf course this is a small triangular plantation lined with mature oak and beech trees pre1900. Some rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) is present within this compartment. A small amount of felling and replanting has taken place at the northern end of the compartment (wild cherry, beech, red oak, and hornbeam). This replanting has had some damage caused by squirrels.

Fig 24 – Comp 12, Woodland close to the golf course

2.5.1.26 *Compartment 13* – A narrow broadleaf belt situated adjacent to a domestic property. Comprising mature broadleaves on the roadside and field edge and an interior of wild cherry, beech, oak and sycamore with a shrub layer of holly.

Fig 25 – Comp 13, Small wooded area on Church Ln

2.5.1.27 *Compartment 14* – Small woodland compartment on the perimeter of Round Bush. The site is marked by a National Grid pylon which sits on the western corner and has hazel coppice maintained on either side of it to a height of approx. 5m. On the eastern flank is a small woodland plantation comprising ash with field maple, wild cherry and oak. Trees originally at 2m x 2m centres and a small amount of thinning has been undertaken.

Fig 25 – Comp 14, Pylon within comp

2.5.2 Tree health issues

2.5.2.1 Ash Dieback (ADB)

Ash dieback is fungal disease affecting the common ash tree (Fraxinus excelsior) and other Fraxinus species. It is caused by a fungus called Hymenoscyphus fraxineus which is native to eastern Asia. The disease was first identified in England in 2012, although research has shown that it is likely to have been present since at least 2005. Ash trees can be found throughout Berrygrove Woods but it does only make up a small proportion of the tree species. ADB is known to be present on site and it is managed by tree safety survey of the main paths and parking areas and tree safety work is carried out where required.

2.5.2.2 Dothistroma needle blight (DNB)

Dothistroma needle blight (DNB) is a fungal disease which affects conifer trees, impacting mostly pine trees. It causes needle defoliation resulting in loss of timber yield and in severe cases it can cause trees to die. Infected trees tend to develop yellow and tan spots on their needles which then turn a red/brown colour. Red needle blight has been seen on site, specifically within compartment 1. Ongoing monitoring of the condition of trees and presence of the disease should be carried

out and thinning operations of coniferous plantation can increase airflow and limit the impacts.

2.5.2.3 Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) is a species where the caterpillars infest oak trees and can cause defoliation. The hairs from OPM caterpillars and their nests can cause irritation and can be a hazard to human and animal health. OPM was first identified in London in London in 2006 and is present throughout southern Hertfordshire. OPM is a regulated quarantine pest and regulated under official control measures with specific management zones present across the country.

Berrygrove Woods as of August 2024 is within the Established Area for OPM control. OPM is managed by a risk-based approach on this site meaning that where OPM nests are located in areas deemed high risk to the public they are removed. Signage is also used to alter and warn the general public to the presence of OPM.

2.5.2.4 Eight-toothed spruce bark beetle (Ips typographus)

The eight-toothed spruce bark beetle (*Ips typographus*) is considered a serious pest on spruce in Europe and has recently been found in the wider environment in England as part of routine plant health surveillance activity.

The beetle is mainly a secondary pest, preferring stressed or weakened trees. However, under the right environmental conditions, beetle numbers can increase enough to result in attacks on healthy trees.

Spruce trees are present on site, and it is within the demarcated area which means that there are restrictions on: the felling and stacking of spruce, the methods of forest operations and the planting of spruce within this area. Site managers should remain vigilant for signs of *Ips typhographus* and report any sightings if the pest. More information can be found here Eight-toothed spruce bark beetle (Ips typographus) - GOV.UK

2.5.3 Wet features

2.5.3.1 Ponds

There is one pond feature present within the main block of woodland in compartment 1a. It is present on the 1871 OS map as a fishpond, when it was larger than its current area of around 300m^2. The pond retains water throughout the year. It provides a good habitat for amphibians, dragonflies and bats and acts as a water source for a whole host of animals. It is surrounded by trees on all sides and would benefit from some de-shading work. There is another wide ditch feature which runs along the edge of and through compartment 10.

Fig 26 – Pond in the main woodland block, comp 1a

2.5.3.2 River Colne

The river Colne, a tributary of the river Thames, runs to the northwest of the main block of woodland. The river Colne is a chalk river and as such a habitat type of national and global importance. Chalk rivers at their best are characterised by clear water, a diverse aquatic flora and a corresponding diversity of invertebrates and fish. The section of the river Colne through this area (close to Berrygrove Wood) mostly retains its natural sinuosity but is likely to be impacted by pollution from surrounding farmland. Some of the woodland compartments sit alongside the river channel, specifically compartments 8 and 9 which have cricket bat willows within them which require the moist soil conditions created by proximity to the river Colne.

2.5.4 Species

2.5.4.1 Flora

Parts of the site have a good mix of woodland flora, with ancient woodland indicators including bluebell, dog's mercury, wood anemone and wood sorrel. Much of the understory of the woodland compartments are dense with bramble and bracken. The main woodland ride provides an opportunity for other flowering species to grow such as common vetch and selfheal and this would be further enhanced by cutting scallops at appropriate locations along this main ride and other rides.

Fig 27 – Wood avens and red campion

2.5.4.2 Bats

The site provides ideal habitat for a range of bat species including foraging habitat and some larger trees suitable for roosting. Also, the pond in the largest woodland area provides an important feature for bats to feed around. Some of the smaller linear woodland features play an important role in providing a corridor for bats to travel along.

2.5.4.3 Birds

The site provides an important habitat for a wide range of bird species. Species such as great spotted woodpecker, goldcrest, chiffchaff, blackcap, dunnock and buzzard have been recorded locally within the woodland. The habitat works carried out in compartment 1a and 1l have created a more varied structure within the woodland with areas of scrub and bramble and tree saplings. In these compartments it has created more nesting and feeding opportunities for a range of birds.

2.5.4.4 Reptiles and Amphibians

The pond in the largest area of woodland and other seasonal wet areas provide important habitat for amphibians. Smooth newt and grass snake have been recorded locally.

2.5.4.5 Invertebrates

The woodland is noted for the diversity of butterflies recorded and the pond is a good habitat for dragonflies. Butterfly species recorded locally include orange tip, brimstone, small tortoiseshell, speckled wood, comma and red admiral. Less common butterfly species have also been recorded on the site since 2000 including, silver-washed fritillary, purple hairstreak, and rarely brown argus. Management of habitat on the site will have to be managed with these species in mind. Deadwood has been retained where suitable, including both standing and fallen deadwood. This helps to provide habitat for a range of invertebrates and therefore food for other species.

Fig 28 – Deadwood

2.5.4.6 Mammals

The site is home to a range of different mammals including foxes, badgers, hedgehogs, muntjac deer and small mammals (rabbit and common shrew). Deer are an issue in some of the woodland compartments because of their grazing of tree saplings. This should continue to be monitored and some areas of regeneration may need to be protected to allow them to establish. Water voles have been recorded along the River Colne close to Bushey Hall Farm and Binghams Pumping Station.

2.6 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure

Berrygrove Woods is a site which is popular with local residents for dog walking, running and horse riding.

2.6.1 Site entrances

There are several points of access onto the site for both vehicles and pedestrians. There is access to the site via locked gates for vehicles for site managers and contractors from Hartspring Lane (B462) and Otterspool Lane. With other smaller blocks of woodland vehicle access for contractors would be via various access points. Pedestrian access to the site is via public footpaths and bridleways listed below.

- Aldenham 015 (bridleway)
- Aldenham 092 (bridleway)
- Aldenham 022 (bridleway)
- Aldenham 077 (bridleway)
- Aldenham 091 (footpath)
- Aldenham 090 (footpath)
- Aldenham 086 (footpath)
- Aldenham 085 (footpath)

2.6.2 Walking routes

The main ride through the largest block of woodland close to the M1 is the main walking route through the site and is a bridleway. This route is surfaced and follows a high-pressure water main. In recent years the high-pressure water main has sprung a leak which needed repairing and the woodland ride allows access for these repairs to be carried out. There is also an unofficial walking route which passes around the woodland. Three routes have been identified in the countryside surrounding the Wall Hall Estate, some of which pass through woodland compartments of Berrygrove Woods. These have been compiled in a leaflet and are suitable for walking, cycling or horse riding. Routes follow public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and roads. You can find the leaflet by following this link wall-hall-estate-leaflet.pdf.

Fig 29 – Photo of the main ride

2.6.3 Parking

Some parking is available off Otterspool Lane in a small area which is limited to three cars.

2.6.4 Interpretation and signage

The site has some signage which is mostly directional way markers and rights of way signs. An existing interpretation panel is located at the entrance to the woodland from Aldenham village direction. There is also current signage advising motorcyclists not to use the paths around the site for riding motorbikes. There is some entrance signage but it is not obvious when you are visiting the site.

Fig 30 – Photo showing pedestrian entrance and sign

2.6.5 Benches

There is a bench made from a felled tree on the edge of a woodland path located in the main block of woodland. This is the only bench which is present on site and it is off the main walking route through the site.

Fig 31 – Existing bench located in the woodland

2.7 Community and Events

The site is important for the local community to relax and get close to nature.

2.7.1 Community engagement and volunteering

Current community engagement is limited to when there is an issue on site or the immediate local community. The production of this Greenspace Action Plan will be part of the community engagement process for the site, and will establish opportunities for the local community to engage with practical conservation volunteering tasks.

2.8 Site Management

2.8.1 Management structure

Berrygrove Woods is owned by Hertfordshire County Council and managed by the Rural Estate team who are responsible for implementation of the plan. The Rural Estate management team have the responsibility for the following:

- Management works carried out by in-house Countryside Works team and also where needed external contractors.
- Administration and budget management.
- Acting as signatory for grant applications and claims.
- Member involvement and reporting.

The Countryside Management Service (CMS) advises on management, particularly where it relates to nature conservation and community involvement. They are responsible for:

- The production of Greenspace Action Plans for the woodland including engagement with partners and subsequent monitoring.
- Production of specifications, procurement and contractor monitoring for some management works.
- Running volunteer task days through mid-week volunteer group.

2.8.2 Agreements and grant funding

Identification of opportunities for funding for site management activities is important. Previously we have applied for Countryside Stewardship for various work on site but were unsuccessful. The main reason why this application was unsuccessful was because the Forestry Commission would not approve the agreement without confirmation that deer control would be carried out. It is unlikely that a future Countryside Stewardship application would be successful without a programme of deer control, which is impractical on such a public site.

2.8.3 Environmental management and sustainability

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has a strong commitment to the environment and environmental sustainability. Work at Berrygrove Woods will contribute towards many of HCC’s sustainability targets though enhancing the habitats on site.

3.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

Aims

To improve the value of woodland habitats within Berrygrove Woods for wildlife, whilst providing an accessible greenspace which is a welcoming place to visit for gentle exercise and to enjoy nature.

Objectives

A. A welcoming place – *To provide a welcoming green space to regular visitors and site users.*

A1 Design, produce and install welcome signage, directional signage and interpretation at major entrances.

A2 Improve provision of seating and maintain seats in a consistent style.

B. Healthy, safe and secure – *To ensure that visitors to Berrygrove Woods feel safe and able to enjoy the site.*

B1 Respond proactively to anti-social behaviour any misuse of the site.

B2 Undertake tree safety surveys and carry out reactive tree work to address safety issues.

C. **Well maintained and clean –** *To ensure the standard of maintenance is upheld and relevant.*

C1 Maintain site infrastructure, e.g. car park, gates, fencing, benches, steps, and surfaced paths.

C2 Maintain ease of access by managing vegetation encroaching paths and entrances.

C3 Carry out regular small-scale vegetation management and litter picking and remove any fly-tipping.

D. Sustainability - *To ensure compliance with the council's environmental policies and seek sustainable activities and solutions.*

D1 Ensure management activities contribute to delivering the aims of HCC's Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy and Tree and Woodland Strategy.

D2 Ensure ongoing management costs are financially sustainable.

D3 Seek funding to finance delivery of woodland management works.

D4 Carry out management according to environmental best practice, using sustainable woodland management practices.

D5 Market produce from forestry operations to increase the financial viability of woodland management.

E. Biodiversity, Conservation and Heritage – *To deliver works outlined in the Forestry Commission-approved Woodland Management Plan to conserve and enhance key habitats.*

E1 Manage woodland habitats to improve value for wildlife and increase long-term resilience to disease and climate threats.

E2 Enhance woodland structure through creation of temporary and permanent open space, including through ride creation and enhancement.

E3 Monitor and control invasive non-native species and eradicate where possible.

E4 Maintain and enhance ponds.

F. Community Involvement – *To develop an informed, involved and enthusiastic local community.*

F1 Provide an opportunity for stakeholders to influence the new GAP through a structured engagement process.

F2 Encourage the local community to become involved in the management of the site in a structured and supported way and ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the objectives of the GAP.

G. **Marketing –** *To promote awareness and interest in Berrygrove Woods.*

G1 Promote and celebrate projects that improve the site.

4.0 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

4.1 A1 Interpretation and signage

The main block of woodland would benefit from additional interpretation panels to describe the habitats present, provide information about the history of the site, help visitors to navigate their way around and provide an opportunity to inform visitors about future work and ongoing projects. These interpretation panels would be best placed at the main entrances. Additional entrance signage such as oak monoliths would allow visitors to understand that they were passing onto a site owned and managed by Hertfordshire County Council and create a welcoming entrance. Directional signage could be used to direct visitors around the main block of woodland and any future suggested walking routes. The existing interpretation panel at the entrance to the woodland from Aldenham village direction is shown below.

A specific interpretation panel setting out future woodland work and how the site might change could be useful to engage with visitors prior to the work taking place, similar to the example below from the SSSI grazing compartment at Broxbourne Wood.

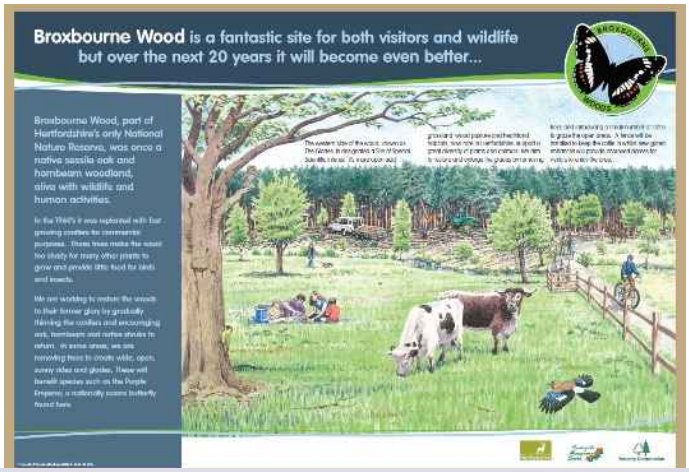


Fig 33 – Example habitat management interpretation panel

4.2 A2 Seating

Installation of benches would enhance the visitor experience, particularly along the main ride of the main block of woodland. This would also provide a place to stop and rest, for those that need to do so regularly on a walk. The benches should be of a rustic style to fit in with the site similar to the example below.

Fig 34 – Example bench in Broxbourne Wood

4.3 B1 Anti-social behaviour

There have been some isolated incidents of anti-social behaviour, which will continue to be monitored. The main issues on site are illegal riding of motorbikes around the woodland and building of woodland camps. Ongoing liaising with the local police and local residents will continue to try to reduce the occurrence of such instances. Where access can be adjusted to restrict access for motorbikes this should be looked into. The photo below shows a sign to inform visitors what to do if they see motorbikes riding around the woodland illegally.

Fig 35 – Sign, off road vehicles not allowed

4.4 B2 Tree Safety Works

Tree safety works are to be carried out around the site as set out in the Tree Management Strategy. Reactive tree works are also carried out as required.

Fig 36 – Safety work completed on ash

4.5 C1 Maintenance of site infrastructure

Site infrastructure includes signage, benches, pedestrian entrances, vehicle gates and surfaces rides. Those pieces of infrastructure to be installed should be of good quality and require minimal maintenance to keep them in good condition because Rural Estates have limited resource for additional maintenance. Suggested walking routes of different lengths around the main block of woodland and wider blocks of woodland could be achieved through low-cost methods like adding way marking disks (example below) to existing directional marking posts and installing a few additional posts where needed, with installation by volunteers.

Fig 37 – Example way marking disk

4.6 C2 Manage vegetation along access routes

Vegetation alongside the main ride and other paths should be cut back annually to ensure that these routes are able to be accessed by visitors. The introduction of 3 zone ride management along the main ride in the main block of woodland would enhance the habitat and species diversity and improve access for forestry works. This could be carried out through the existing ride side maintenance and adjusting increase the areas cut in some places, to create scalloped rides. Some of the woody vegetation in these ride areas could be managed through volunteer works. Some of the rides will require widening, which can be integrated with other woodland management works.

Fig 38 – Example of existing ride site maintenance

4.7 C3 Litter picking and fly-tipping

Litter is not currently a big issue on the site but it is worth continuing to monitor the situation and litter picking should be carried out as required. Fly-tipping is also not currently a big issue on site, though is present in some places. Any fly-tipping noted on site should be reported to HCC. Maintenance of security gates and bollards should be prioritised so that the site remains secure.

4.8 D1 HCC's Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy Aims

The items set out in this Greenspace Action Plan will enable the council to work towards the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy aims. The proposed woodland work on site will enhance the habitats for wildlife, increasing biodiversity and resilience of the woodland against climate change. The woodland work will aim to increase diversity of species and structure both of which will improve the resilience of this habitat. Regenerating the woodland structure will allow it to sequester more CO2 long term. The other aspects of this plan which set out community engagement and involvement will provide a channel to communicate this good work to residents of Hertfordshire.

4.9 D2 Financial sustainability

All works carried out on site should be delivered either using external funding, internal funding or recouping costs through timber sales. Contractors should be appointed based on HCC procurement guidelines to ensure value for money and good quality work is completed. Woodland thinning works are planned to be funded through a Sustainable Hertfordshire Central Fund Application.

4.10 D3 External funding

Where possible external funding sources will be identified for work on site. Currently none of the proposed works have associated external funding identified but this is something that will be monitored going forwards.

4.11 D4 Sustainable practices

Contractors will be selected to carry out works that have shown sufficient knowledge of sustainable practices and shown the required experience through previous projects. Rural Estate and CMS officer knowledge of sustainable practices will be used to ensure that works carried out by officers or volunteers are in keeping with the site and are sustainable.

4.12 D5 Sale of timber from forestry operations

Forestry operations within the woodland that would include thinning will create timber that could be sold as roundwood, or wood chip. It is likely that much of the timber from the woodland will not be suitable for sale as roundwood because of the diameter or form of trees which require thinning. The sale of timber will help to offset the cost of the thinning works but it will also be limited because of the form and size of trees. Extraction and removal of timber from the main block of woodland would require a stacking location with good access to the road network. The photo below shows timber stacked along the main ride at Broxbourne Wood where the ride was widened to improve access.

Fig 39 – Example of wood stacked on a main ride

4.13 E1 Manage woodland for wildlife value and long-term resilience

To be able to carry out the long-term woodland management the infrastructure around the woodland needs to be improved before any woodland management is carried out. This would include improvements to the entrance off Hartspring Lane to allow a timber lorry to drive in and turn around and also timber to be stacked alongside the track. This would require the track from Hartspring Lane to have the surface improved and widened, a length of approximately 500m. A turning area will also need to be created to allow timber lorries to turn around.

Fig 40 – Entrance off Hartspring Lane

Fig 41 – Track to Hartspring Lane

Once this infrastructure work has been completed the woodland thinning work can begin. This work will improve the woodland for wildlife whilst also increasing biodiversity and the resilience of the woodland. This woodland work will involve some work in most compartments across the whole woodland and will include a mixture of halo thinning around specific trees, glade creation, ride widening and more general thinning. Work will be carried out in accordance with the Forestry Commission approved Woodland Management Plan included in Appendix B. It will be carried out sensitively and selectively with goat willow and honey suckle retained where possible. Woodland ride widening is a crucial management practice aimed at enhancing biodiversity and improving access. By increasing the width of rides, more

sunlight can penetrate the woodland floor, promoting the growth of a diverse range of plants and supporting a variety of wildlife. Trees selected for removal will be firstly coniferous species with native broadleaved species retained where possible. Wider rides also help maintain better surface conditions, making them accessible year-round. Ideally ride width should be up to 20-30m to allow space for a herbaceous zone and a shrubby zone either side of a woodland path/track. The width of rides should vary, so as not to be straight and uniform corridors. Woodland ride widening is not specifically mentioned in the Woodland Management Plan but some of this work can be accomplished through existing thinning works, communication with the Forestry Commission on this would be beneficial prior to the work taking place. The priority for this ride widening work should be along the main ride. The table on the next page sets out the timescale for woodland works following completion of forestry infrastructure.

Fig 42 – Example comp that needs thinning

Figure 42 shows one of the compartments that requires thinning to reduce the density of stems and open up the canopy. Figure 43 below shows a ride which had had some widening completed to create spaces where light can reach the ground and increase the diversity of species. More information on ride maintenance can be found in the specification and appendix C.

Fig 43 – Example of ride-side scallops

4.14 Table of planned woodland thinning works

Comp number	Description of work	Year	Who by?
1a	Light thin of birch, ride widening, halo thinning around oak, scallop creation, Laurel control	2026-27	Contractor/Volunteers
1b	15-20% thin across the compartment of all species, widening of ride between 1b and 1c, laurel control, halo thinning around oak	2027-28	Contractor/Volunteers
1c	Selective thinning of broadleaves, and 30% thin of pines	2027-28	Contractor
1d	Thin Scots pine by 15% and thin Corsican pine by 20-25%, initially remove trees of poor form, scallop creation	2026-27	Contractor
1e	Thinning by 20-25%	2027-28	Contractor
1f	No work required	N/A	N/A
1g	30% thin of primarily Larch and poor form trees, scallop creation along ride	2026-27	Contractor
1h	Light thinning across the woodland including Corsican Pine and Beech	2026-27	Contractor
1i	25% thinning of compartment focusing on removing Scots pine to release oak trees, ride widening and scallop creation	2027-28	Contractor
1j	Removal of 30% standing volume primarily focusing on species of poor form	2026-27	Contractor
1k	Maintain 5-year thinning rotation	2026-27	Contractor
1l	Removal of old tree guards as required	2025-26	Volunteers
1m	30% thinning of all crop focusing on Larch and Ash	2027-28	Contractor
1n	Continue 8 year thinning cycle, no more than 25% of stems at one time	2026-27	Contractor
2	30% thinning of Ash and pruning of cricket bat willow	2025-26	Contractor
3	Thin section of Scots pine by 20-25% and thin larch and ash across the woodland block	2026-27	Contractor
4	Felling of larch and replanting if natural regeneration is not good enough to prevent the woodland deteriorating further	2026-27	Contractor/Volunteers
5	Within the plantation the Scots pine would benefit from a 20-25% thin. Within the broadleaves emphasis must be on the removal of ash to favour better oak. This work should be carried out using hand techniques rather than with large machinery	2027-28	Contractor
6	Thin in year 1 if possible	2025-26	Contractor
7	Thin a percentage of the ash and control sycamore regrowth	2025-26	Contractor/Volunteers
8	Thin ash by 35%	2025-26	Contractor
9	Possible future thin poplar and plant with alder and willow	N/A	N/A
10	Thinning of ash and conifer, halo thinning around oak.	2027-28	Contractor
11	Guard removal when needed, thinning of squirrel damaged trees	2026-27	Volunteers
12	Very light selective thinning to remove poor quality stems	2025-26	Volunteers
13	Undertake light thinning programme	2025-26	Contractor
14	Hazel coppicing to be maintained, wider thinning of the rest of the compartment, suggested laying of the boundary hedge that runs parallel with Radlett Road.	2025-26	Contractor/Volunteers

4.15 E2 Enhanced woodland structure

The woodland structure can be enhanced through the planned woodland works. Planned woodland work will help to improve the species and structural diversity of all woodland compartments. Large scale woodland works are to be carried out by a contractor or possibly volunteers for smaller scale works. Work will be carried out in early autumn when ground conditions are at their driest to prevent damage to soil structure. This work would include the retention and creation of standing deadwood and fallen deadwood which is a vital habitat for a invertebrates. In addition, some of the woodland blocks are isolated, so hedge planting in between the woodland blocks would allow wildlife to move between them. This might involve working with adjacent landowners, HCC tenants, or planting hedgerows on HCC land. This should be investigated further over the course of this management plan.

4.16 E3 Invasive non-native species

Cherry laurel is an invasive species which is present in some woodland compartments and should be controlled where possible. This could involve cutting it down and removing or treating roots with herbicide where possible. This work could be carried out by volunteers or contractors, and contractors where chemical treatment is required. Rhododendron is also present in isolated areas and should be removed where possible.

Fig 44 – Cherry laurel in comp 1a

4.17 Pond works

The pond in the main woodland block is fairly shallow and a little overshaded. Removal of some of the trees that are creating shade around the pond would be useful to create a more diverse habitat. This would also reduce the potential leaf litter dropping directly into the pond. Some of this work could be carried out by volunteers or contractors. An eDNA test should be carried out to determine if Great Crested

Newts(GCN) are present, as this may impact works as GCNs are protected by law. Also, suitable locations for additional pond creation should be investigated.

4.18 F1 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is important and begins with this draft Greenspace Action Plan. Further information will be shared with stakeholders on significant forestry contracts and other site improvements, when arranged. Posters on site will be used to inform local visitors about this GAP engagement and other specific engagement.

Fig 45 – Example poster, GAP engagement

4.19 F2 Community involvement

It will be important to involve the local community in the site and work planned. This might be done through informing visitors and the local community about work planned through notices on site and also opportunities for people to get involved with practical work.

4.20 G1 Promotion of the site

Promotion of the site and the work carried out will be important to inform the local and wider community about what work is being carried out and the reasoning behind this. The site can become an example of best practice management for other HCC sites and in a wider context. This promotion could be done through local channels e.g. newsletters, via Facebook or on the HCC website.

5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

Abbreviations: CMS – Countryside Management Service; Con – Contractor; FC – Forestry Commission; HCC – Hertfordshire County Council; RE – Rural Estates; Vols – Volunteers; SHCF – Sustainable Herts Central Fund

5.1 ANNUAL AND REGULAR GAP ACTIONS

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.1	Tree safety surveying and associated work completed as required.	B2	As required	RE	Con	Tree Safety	N/A	1	
0.2	Cut 0.5m-1m of either side of the main ride to retain access.	C2, E2	Annually	RE	RE	Countryside Works	N/A	2	
0.3	Maintenance of scallops on rides around the main block of woodland through cutting.	C2, E2	Annually	RE	RE	Countryside Works	N/A	2	
0.4	Woodland walk loop vegetation management.	C2	June & Sept	RE	RE	Countryside Works	N/A	1	
0.5	Monitor invasive species across all woodland compartments.	E3	Ongoing	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer time		
0.6	Monitor and maintain all site furniture (signs, interpretation and benches).	C1	Annually	RE	RE	N/A	Officer time		
0.7	Develop a programme of fixed-point photography and monitoring of woodland.	E1	Annually	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer time		
0.8	Promote volunteer events.	F2	As required	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer time		
0.9	Publicise management activities using social media and on site.	F1, F2	As required	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer time		
0.10	Implementation of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) risk-based approach to management.	B2	Ongoing	RE	Con	Tree Safety	N/A	1	
0.11	Monitor regrowth of compartments following woodland management works.	E1	Annually	CMS	CMS/Vols	N/A	Officer time	6	
0.12	Carry out maintenance of main ride surface as required.	C1	As required	RE	Con	N/A	N/A	12	
0.13	Volunteers to carry out zone 2 ride management during the winter months.	F2, G1	Sept - Feb	CMS	Vols	N/A	Officer time	2	

5.2 YEAR 1 GAP ACTIONS 2025-26

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
1.1	Design and produce three new interpretation panels using existing designs and create entrance signage.	A1	2025 – 2026	CMS	Con	SHCF	£8,000	9	
1.2	Design a walking route around the site using existing route which is to be formalised.	C2, F2	2025 -2026	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer time		
1.3	Install additional way marking posts and way marking disks for walking route as needed.	C2, F2	2025 -2026	CMS	Vols	N/A	£300	10	
1.4	Obtain permissions for improving the track from Harspring Lane for timber extraction by a timber lorry, once plans have been agreed.	D2,D5E 1,E2	July - Nov 2025	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer time		
1.5	Carry out laurel removal in compartment 1a and 1b.	E3	Sept 2025 – Feb 2026	CMS	Vols	N/A	Officer time	1	
1.6	Contractor to treat laurel stumps with herbicide in compartment 1a and 1b,	E3	After vol work	CMS	Con	SHCF	500		
1.7	Removal of old tree guards from compartments 1l.	E1, E2	As required	CMS	Vols	N/A	Officer time		
1.8	Installation of two benches along the main ride.	A2, C1	2025 - 2026	CMS	Vols	Rural Estates	£300		
1.9	Woodland work to be carried out according to the Woodland Management Plan, detail in the table on pg 41 and woodland compartments map (Comp 2, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 and 14).	D2,D5 E1,E2	Sept 2025 – Feb 2026	CMS	Con/ Vols	SHCF	£15,500	1, 2, 3, 4	
1.10	Review year 1 actions.	N/A	March 2026	CMS	CMS/RE	N/A	Officer time		

5.3 YEAR 2 GAP ACTIONS 2026-27

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
2.1	Improve the surface of the track and the entrance off Hartspring Lane and create a suitable stacking and turning area *details to be confirmed*.	D2, E1,E2	Spring 2026	CMS	Con	SHCF	£15,000	12	
2.2	Woodland work to be carried out according to the Woodland Management Plan, more detail set out in the table on page 41 and woodland compartments map (Comp 1a, 1d, 1g, 1h, 1j, 1k, 1n, 3, 4 and 11).	D2,D5 E1,E2	Sept 2026 – Feb 2027	CMS	Con/ Vols	SHCF	£51,500	1, 2, 3, 4	
2.3	Ride creation/enhancement to be carried out as part of woodland thinning operations.	D2,D5 E1,E2	Sept 2026 – Feb 2027	CMS	Con/ Vols	SHCF	Included in the figure above	1, 2, 3, 4	
2.4	Installation of signage and interpretation.	A1	As required	CMS	Vols	N/A	£500	9. 10	
2.5	Carry out de-shading of pond.	E4	Sept 2026 – Feb 2027	CMS	Vols/Con	N/A	Officer time	5	
2.6	Pond creation investigation of any suitable locations.	E4	March 2027	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer time	5	
2.7	Investigate possible hedge planting between woodland compartments to better connect them.	E2	March 2027	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer time		
2.8	Obtain and carry out and eDNA test on the pond to determine if Great Crested Newts are present.	E1 E4	April to June 2026	CMS	CMS	SHCF	£300		
2.9	Review year 2 actions.		As required	CMS	CMS/RE	N/A	Officer time		

5.4 YEAR 3-5 GAP ACTIONS 2027-30

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
2.1	Woodland work to be carried out according to the Woodland Management Plan, more detail set out in the table on page 41 and woodland compartments map (Comp 1b, 1c, 1e, 1i, 1m, 5, and 10).	D2,D5 E1,E2	Sept 2027 – Feb 2028	CMS	Con/ Vols	SHCF	£45,000	1, 2, 3, 4	
2.2	Ride creation/enhancement to be carried out as part of woodland thinning operations.	D2,D5 E1,E2	Sept 2027 – Feb 2028	CMS	Con/ Vols	SHCF	Included in the figure above	1, 2, 3, 4	
2.3	Review Woodland Management Plan progress with Forestry Commission.	D2,D5 E1,E2	2028	CMS	CMS/FC	N/A	Officer time		
2.4	Pond creation once a suitable location has been identified.	E4	By March 2028	CMS	Con	External	TBD		
2.5	Hedge planting to connect woodland blocks once opportunities have been identified.	E1 E2	By March 2028	CMS	Vols/Con	External	TBD		
2.6	Review year 3 and 4 actions.		As required	CMS	CMS/RE	N/A	Officer time		
2.7	Review year 5 actions and write a new Greenspace Action Plan.		2030	CMS	CMS/RE	N/A	Officer time		

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

Annual Actions

Task Responsibility

- HCC RE led — Officer/Contractor delivered
- CMS led — Officer/Contractor delivered
- HCC RE led — Volunteer delivered
- CMS led — Volunteer delivered

Monitor regrowth of compartments following woodland management works

Promote volunteer events

Publicise management activities using social media and on site

Develop and carry out a programme of fixed point photography

Implementation of OPM risk-based management approach

Monitor and maintain all site furniture

Monitor regrowth compartments following woodland management works

Woodland walk loop walk vegetation management

Maintenance of surface of main ride as required

Maintain scallops on main rides around the woodland through annual mowing according to woodland compartments plan

Tree safety surveying and carry out associated work as required

Cut a 0.5-1m strip either side of the main ride annually

Monitor invasive species across woodland compartments

Volunteers to carry out zone 2 ride management of woody vegetation

Legend

- Site boundary

Site features

- Directional Signage
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Access
- Path

Site habitat types

- Woodland ride
- Mixed woodland
- Coniferous woodland
- Broadleaved woodland
- Pond

N

0 270 540 m

Scale @ A3

1:8,000

Date

March 2025

Rev

00

Countryside Management Service

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

Year 1 Actions

Task Responsibility

- HCC RE led
- CMS led

Officer/Contractor delivered

- HCC RE led
- CMS led

Volunteer delivered

Organise a volunteer day on site led by CMS to carry out various works

Woodland work to be carried out according to works set out in planned thinning works table (compartment 2, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 and 14)

Design a walking route around the site using existing route which is to be formalised

Installation of a bench along the main ride

Install additional waymarking posts and disks as required

Review year 1 actions

Removal of old redundant tree guards from compartment 1l

A contractor to treat laurel stumps in compartments 1a & 1b

Removal laurel in compartments 1a and 1b

Design and and produce new interpretation and entrance signage

Obtain permissions to improve the access track and create a turning circle for timber lorries

Installation of a bench along the main ride

Legend

- Site boundary

Site features

- Directional Signage
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Access
- Path

Site habitat types

- Woodland ride
- Mixed woodland
- Coniferous woodland
- Broadleaved woodland
- Pond

N

0 270 540 m

Scale @ A3

1:8,000

Date

Aug 2025

Rev

00

Countryside Management Service

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

Year 2 Actions

Task Responsibility

- HCC RE led
- CMS led

Officer/Contractor delivered

- HCC RE led
- CMS led

Volunteer delivered

Investigate possible suitable new pond locations

Investigate possible hedge gapping-up between woodland compartments to better connect them

Installation of interpretation and signage

Review year 2 actions

Ride widening to be carried out as part of woodland thinning operations focusing on the main woodland ride

Woodland work to be carried out according to works set out in planned thinning works table (compartment 1a, 1d, 1g, 1h, 1j, 1k, 1n, 3, 4 and 11)

Carry out deshading of pond edges

Obtain and carry out eDNA test on the pond to determine presence/absence of Great Crested Newts

Improve the surface of the track and the entrance off Hartspring Lane and create a suitable stacking and turning area *details to be confirmed*

Legend

- Site boundary

Site features

- Directional Signage
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Access
- Path

Site habitat types

- Woodland ride
- Mixed woodland
- Coniferous woodland
- Broadleaved woodland
- Pond

N

0 270 540 m

Scale @ A3

1:8,000

Date

Aug 2025

Rev

00

Countryside Management Service

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

Year 3-5 Actions

Task Responsibility

- HCC RE led
- CMS led

Officer/Contractor delivered

- HCC RE led
- CMS led

Volunteer delivered

Carry out pond creation once a suitable location is identified Yr3

Hedge planting to connect woodland blocks once identified

Ride widening to be carried out as part of woodland thinning operations focusing initially on the main woodland ride

Review year 3 and 4 actions

Woodland work to be carried out according to works set out in planned thinning works table (compartment 1b, 1c, 1e, 1i, 1m, 5 and 10) Yr 3

Review year 5 actions and write new Green Space Action Plan

Review Woodland Management Plan progress with Forestry Commission

Legend

- Site boundary

Site features

- Directional Signage
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Access
- Path

Site habitat types

- Woodland ride
- Mixed woodland
- Coniferous woodland
- Broadleaved woodland
- Pond

Scale @ A3

1:8,000

Date

Aug 2025

Rev

00

N

0 270 540 m

Berrygrove Woods

Greenspace Action Plan

Woodland Compartments

Legend

- Woodland Work 2025-26
- Woodland Work 2026-27
- Woodland Work 2027-28
- Site boundary

9: No planned works

1f: No planned works

Scale @ A3

1:3,500

Date

March 2025

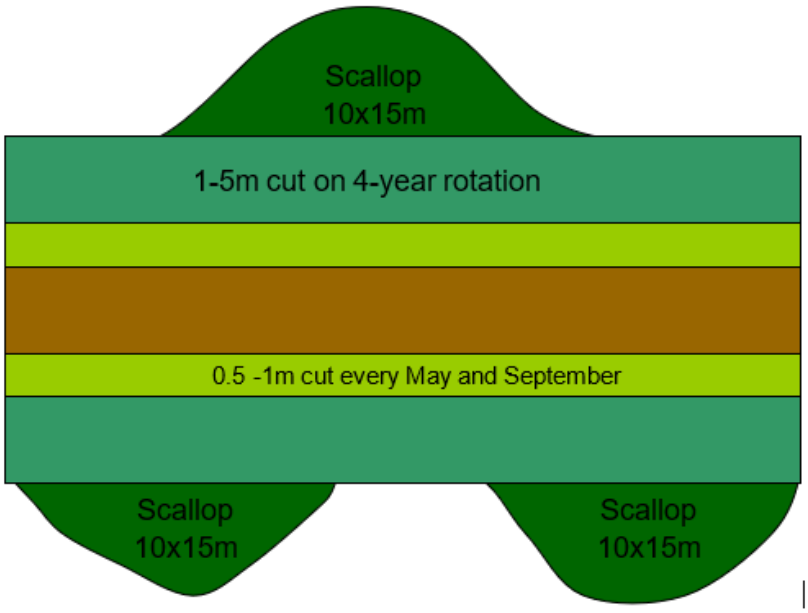
Rev

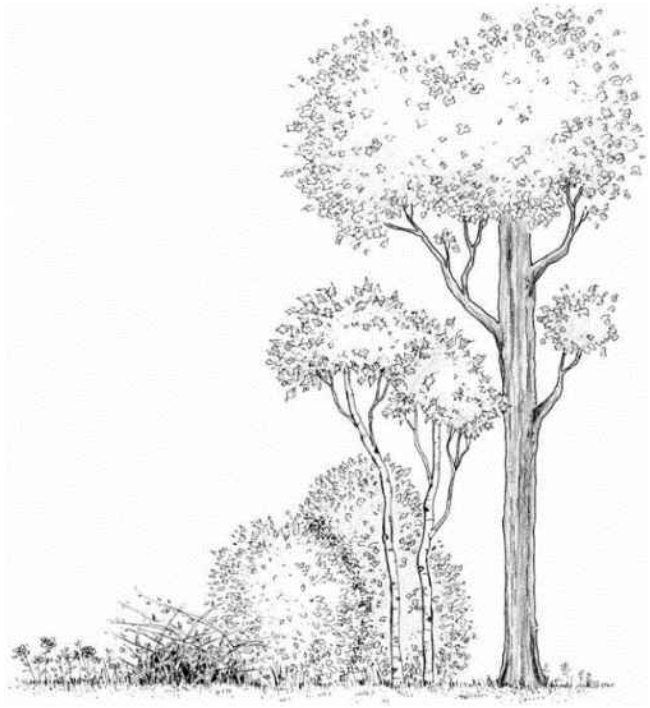
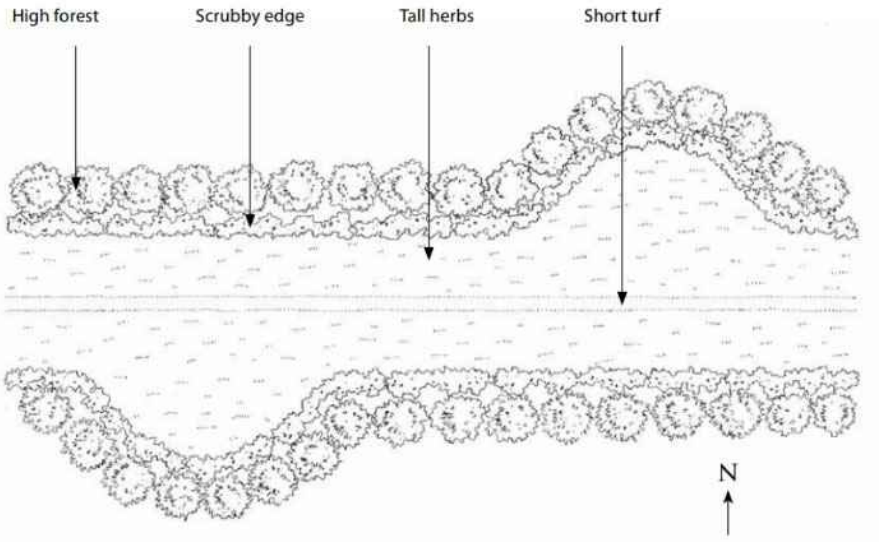
00

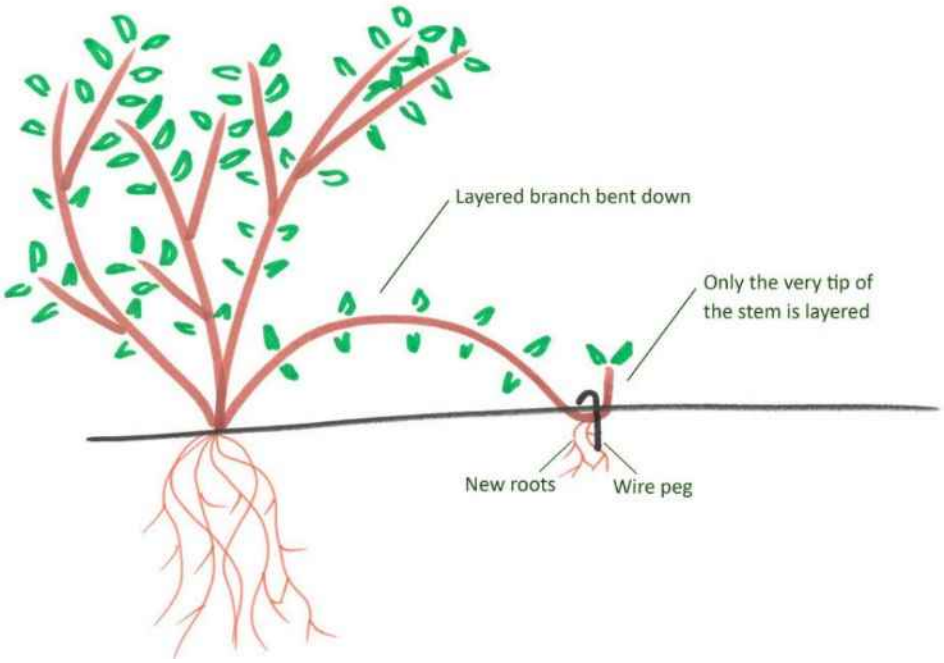
6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

Contents

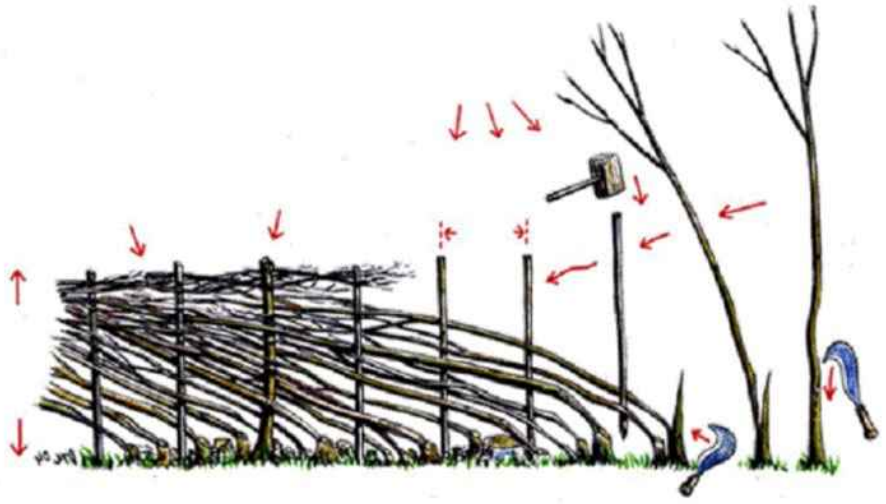
	1 General prescriptions relevant to all operations
Woodland work	▪ **Honeysuckle** to be retained wherever practical, in particular shaded groups. This may require a tree or patch of trees to be retained if a particularly good area of honeysuckle is found. ▪ Significant **oak** trees to be retained along with goat willow where possible. ▪ Retain all standing and fallen **dead wood** where it is safe so to do, and take opportunities to increase dead wood provision. ▪ Thinning works to be carried out according to the Woodland Management Plan and they should lead to a greater diversity of species and structure within the woodland.
Visitor Safety	▪ Members of the public to be kept a safe distance from active tree works with signs and or banks men. Access routes may require temporary closure. ▪ Where site boundaries may be compromised by tree removal, stumps are to be left higher or timber to be rolled into position to prevent unauthorised vehicular access.
Timing	▪ Unless otherwise stated, all habitat management work will be undertaken between 1st September and 28th February. ▪ All woodland management work will be undertaken between 1st September and 30th November to minimise damage to soils and tracks.
	2 Ride side management
Zone 1	The edges of the main ride at Berrygrove Woods (0.5-1m), will be cut once a year as required to maintain a clear path for visitors.
Zone 2	The next zone, 1-5m wide from ride edge will be cut on a 4 year rotation to maintain vegetation in a manageable state whilst providing valuable scrub habitat. Larger trees within this zone are to be retained, where they have not been coppiced previously.
Zone 3	The 5-10m zone will be cut rotationally on a long cycle (at least 25 years). Every year scallops (approx 10x15m arcs) will be cut into the woodland edge to increase the width of the ride at certain points. The cut scallop area will then be left to re-grow providing a succession of habitats from scrub back to woodland into the future. Each year new scallops will be cut so that there is a mosaic of growth stages across the woodland. This is essential for birds, butterflies and other invertebrates.

	
	3 Ride widening
Purpose	Some of the rides are still very narrow and would benefit from being widened as part of the woodland compartment thinning works. The sections of ride to be widened are marked on the ride management map in appendix C.
Method	• Remove selected trees along the woodland edge to widen to 1 and a half times the average height of tallest trees. • Rides should be widened so that they don't become straight, and some pinch points should be retained. • Ride widening will also allow better access for forestry machinery.

	 *Ride side vegetation structure (source: Managing your woodland for wildlife)*  *Top-down view of ride structure (source: Managing your woodland for wildlife)*
Who	CMS/Contractor
Future management	Continue to carry out ride maintenance
	4 Hazel coppice
Purpose	To manage hazel stools within the woodland compartments during woodland thinning operation and increase the number of hazel stools through layering.
Method	▪ Cut hazel stems near to ground level sloping upwards towards the centre of the hazel stool.

	▪ Arisings can be used for hedge laying or for deer fencing of groups of stools if deer browsing requires this. ▪ Coppice hazel stools on a 7-year cycle in groups to allow enough light to the cut stems to promote regrowth. ▪ If hazel stool density needs to be increased use a layering technique to pin some long bendy branches in the ground to promote root growth (see diagram below). 
Who	Volunteers
Future management	Cyclical management of hazel stools in line with other woodland management on site.
	5 Pond maintenance
Purpose	To ensure that the pond remains its habitat value for a range of wildlife.
Method	• Cut back vegetation around pond edges, particularly on the southern end of the pond. • Clear 1/3 of vegetation growing within the pond. Volunteers likely to carry out this work.
Who	Volunteers
	6 Woodland regrowth monitoring
Purpose	To determine if underplanting of thinned woodland blocks will be required.
Method	▪ Observe regrowth of woody species in woodland compartments in the year immediately following thinning operation. ▪ Note any woody species observed.

	▪ Install small deer exclusion fenced plots within thinned compartments to determine the impact of deer browsing through comparison between fenced and unfenced plots.
Who	CMS Officer/Volunteers
Future management	If regrowth is not sufficient 2 years after thinning operation it may be necessary to supplement the regrowth with some additional tree planting.
	7 Bracken control
Purpose	Bracken is present throughout the woodland compartments but not a major issue throughout.
Method	• Where control is needed it should be through bracken rolling. • A contractor may need to be used to carry out this work. • Continued monitoring of bracken should be carried out to inform the need for future management.
Who	Contractor
	8 Litter management
Purpose	Litter is not a big issue within Berrygrove Woods but occasional litter can be found.
Method	• Volunteers to carry out litter picking where needed. • Signage and engagement with visitors to encourage them to take litter home
Who	Volunteers/Rural Estates Officers
	9 Interpretation
Purpose	The site would benefit from some information panels
Method	▪ Three interpretation panels to be produced in A1 size showing a map of the site and using the illustration from the current interpretation panels. ▪ All walking routes to be added to the map (including existing Wall Hall Estate routes) ▪ Appoint a company to design and manufacture the interpretation panels. ▪ For each panel, provide proof of black and white illustration before colouring. ▪ For each panel, provide two proof stages of full colour design in hard copy and PDF format. Supply 3 upright wooden A1 map and illustration panels.
Who	CMS to lead, contractor to design and produce interpretation, volunteers to install.
Quality control	Ensure that the interpretation uses materials that have good resilience to outdoor conditions and other pressures and will require minimal maintenance.

	10 Directional signage
Purpose	There is currently only footpath way markers on site and not directional signage. Directional signage on defined routes around the site would benefit visitors.
Method	▪ Define a trail around the woodland using existing paths and the main ride. ▪ Determine where directional signage needs to be positioned. ▪ External contractor to produce large directional signs for the route.
Who	• CMS to lead, contractor to design and produce signage.
Quality control	• Ensure that the signage is constructed out of material that are durable for outdoor installation.
	11 Hedge laying
Purpose	Hedge laying to be carried out in a Midland or conservation style to hedgerows where needed. It is a good way to manage hedgerows because it encourages thick regrowth from the base of shrubs.
Method	• Trim top and sides of hedgerow to remove excessively long branches. • Lay individual stems by cutting through 90% of each stem close to the ground and lay over at a shallow angle. • Add in steaks to the hedge to prevent the laid stems from falling over. • Add binders to the top of stems to increase structural rigidity. 
Who	Volunteers
Future Management	Trimming or re-laying if needed.

	12 Ride surfacing
Purpose	The ride through the main block of woodland is the main access route into the site and important for extraction of timber and access. It also is the route of a high-pressure water main.
Method	• Add additional surfacing material to the main ride. • Widen the track if necessary by scraping back edges of the track and adding additional material. • The entrance to the ride off Radlett Road may will need to be improved to allow for better access of timber lorries. • Awareness of the need to engage with water company when carrying out maintenance because of the presence of the high pressure water main.
Who	Rural Estates/Contractor

7.0 APPENDICES