Bullens Green Wood

GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN

2025 – 2030

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 6 weeks in September 2023, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement ran for 4 weeks in June 2025 enabled stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site.

Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved
1	05/2025	Draft document	KW	AT	SA
2	07/2025	Final document	KW	AT	SA

CONTENTS

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 Site Summary

Site Name: Bullens Green Wood

Site Address: Bullens Green Lane, Welham Green, St Albans

Grid Reference: TL 21541 05901

Size: 10.8ha

Designations: None

Owner: Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)

1.2 Vision Statement

To enhance the biodiversity potential of Bullens Green Wood as it matures through a programme of woodland management, utilising sustainable forestry practices to benefit the form and health of individual trees. Through the creation of areas of space and light we aim to enhance the woodland species composition, create a succession of future generations of trees, and maintain good public access for recreation.

1.3 Policy Context

This plan is set in the context of several Council policies and strategies which relate directly to site management.

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 improve wildlife in our land and water by 20% by 2050 and 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 is 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

Planted in 1990 Bullens Green Wood is a 10.8ha woodland within Welwyn Hatfield Borough and forms a meeting point for the parishes of North Mymms, Colney Heath and Hatfield. The areas to the North, West and South are semi-rural and include the adjacent villages of Roestock and Colney Heath. Immediately to the East the A1(M) separates the woodland from the town of Hatfield. The woodland is easily separated into two distinct blocks with the area north of Redhall Lane being known as Redhall Wood, while the main block to the south is Bullens Green Wood.

The young woodland is composed of almost entirely broadleaved species, with a diverse range of native trees and has good potential biodiversity value. This mixed species selection contrasts with other local plantations of conifers previously managed solely for timber production where species of fast-growing pine are selected. However, as a young woodland planted at once the trees present are lacking in the structural diversity found in mature woods, with many of them similar in height and age.

Historically, the wood was part of an area known as Angerland Common which formed part of the areas wider common land now remaining only at Colney Heath. There is a network of rides and paths crossing the site that contain grasses and wildflowers more typically found in species rich meadows, a historical remnant of the habitats historically found on this former common land prior to its conversion to agriculture and eventual planting.

1. Brimstone Butterfly on bramble

Bullens Green

Greenspace Action Plan 25-30

Location Plan

Legend

Site Boundary

Bullens Green Wood
Grid Ref: TL 2154 0617
Easting: 521544
Northing: 206165

Scale @ A3
1:12,000

Date
April 2025

Rev
00

Countryside Management Service

N

0 240 480 m

Bullens Green Wood

Greenspace Action Plan

Site Description

Small area of scrub and young growth

Mixed broadleaf woodland planted several years after main block

Vehicle access and hardstanding for forestry works

Ash dominated areas of woodland with dense bramble growth

Young Ash in poor condition and overstood hawthron hedge

Small areas of more open glades and scrub understory

Open glade where several rides meet

Wide and bright 1 zone rides throughout this portion of the woodland

More recently planted hawthorn dominant boundary hedegrow

Historic boundary feature - sunken lane with former hedgrow containing the most mature hornbeam on site

Underpass of the A1(m) to Hatfield

Vehicle access gates to cross site and pedestrian entrance

Long ride with mature hedgerow and areas of bontanical interest

Area of woodland prone to flooding from road run off and topography

Boundary fence between blackthorn dominant slope from the slip road

Area which has undergone previous forestry work to create deadwood and monoliths

Timber stacking area with good vehicle access

1a 1b 2a 2b 2c 2d 2e 2f

Bullen's Green

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Bullens Green Compartments
- Mixed Woodland
- Hard Standing
- Rides and Paths
- Bench
- Interpretation Panel
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Entrance

Scale @ A3
1:3,409

Date
September 2023

Rev
00

Countryside Management Service

N 0 80 160 m

Johnson's Spring
Subway
Recn Gd
Depot
Meadow View
Angerland
Cemetery
Park and Ride
Junction 2
A1(M)
A1001
Dellsome Lane
Path
Hall
74m
76m

Bullens Green Wood

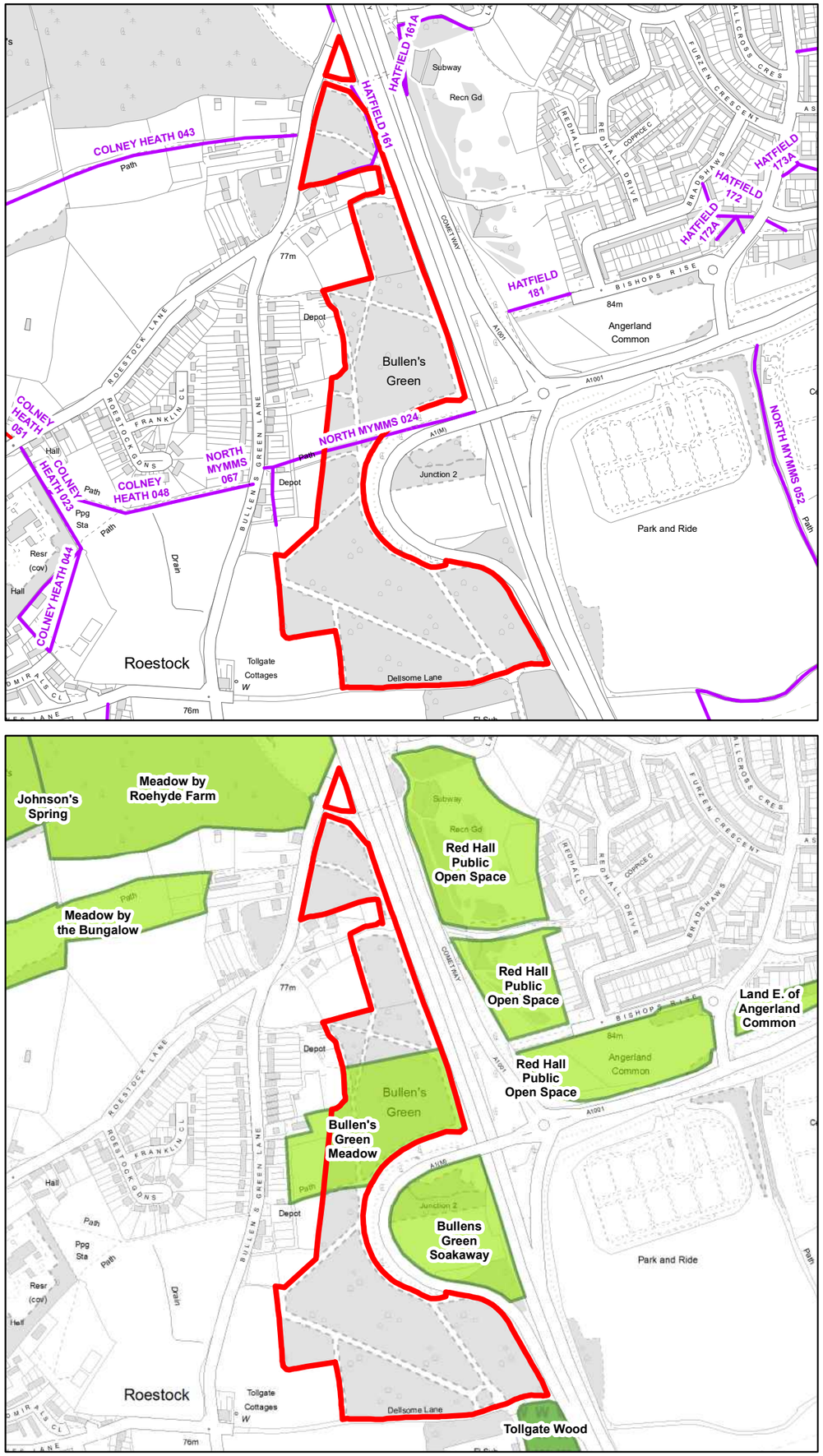
Greenspace Action Plan

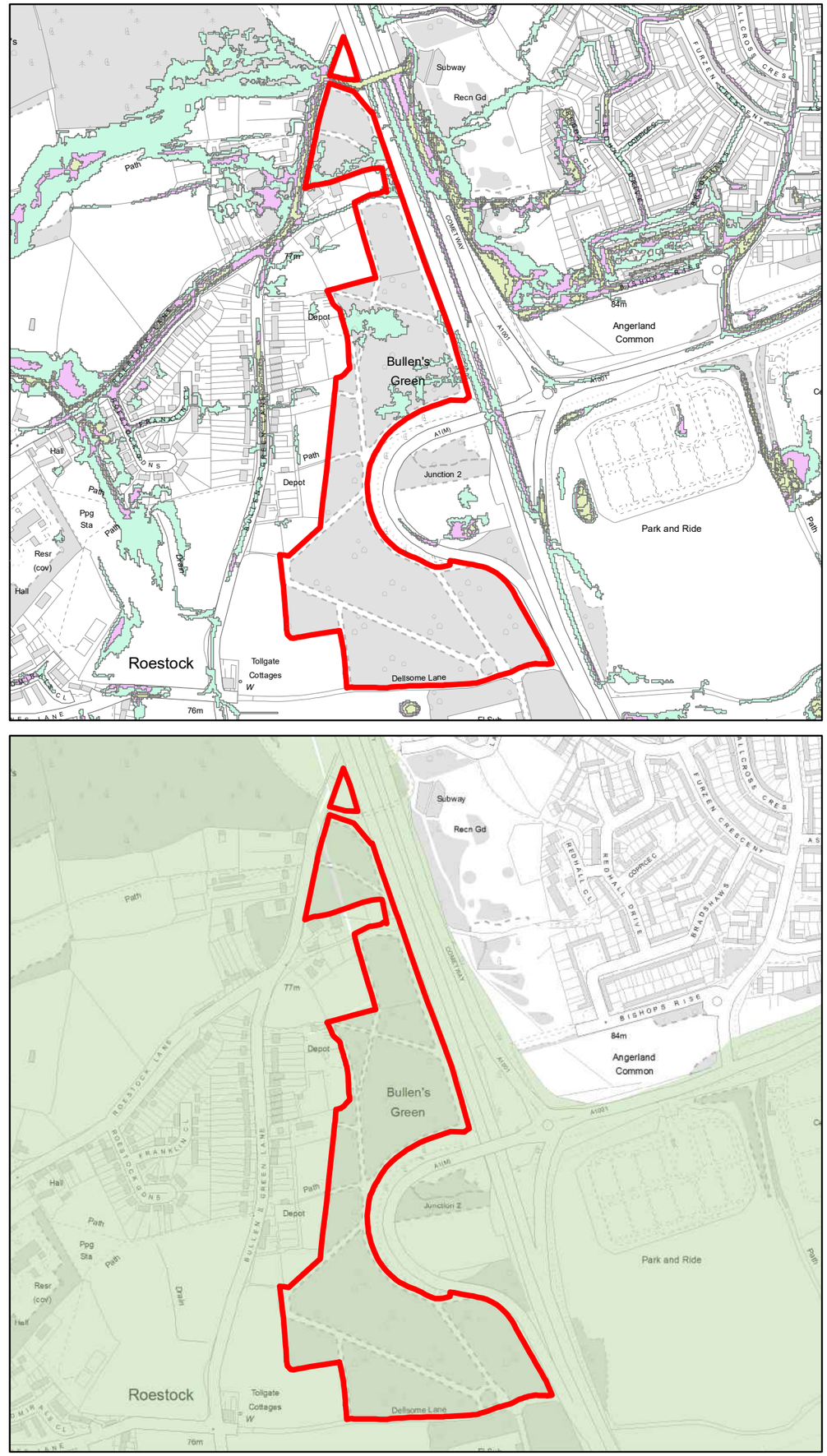
Constraints Plan

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Restricted Byway
- Footpath
- Greenbelt - November2016
- RoFSW_Depth1in30
- RoFSW_Extent1in100
- RoFSW_Extent1in1000
- Wildlife Site
- Ecosite

N





Scale @ A3
1:6,922

Date
October 2024

Rev
00

Countryside Management Service

2.2 Site Designations

There are no statutory site designations within the 11ha site boundary. However, Colney Heath LNR, designated as a locally rare example of acid grassland is less than 1km west of the site.

Immediately adjacent to the south of the site is Tollgate Wood Local Wildlife Site, a woodland not recorded as Ancient Woodland but believed to potentially be so through historical records. The ground flora found within this woodland demonstrates the species likely able to thrive within Bullens Green Wood as it matures.

There are two non-statutory Ecosites, non-classified areas of beneficial habitat, within or adjacent to the site. Although these are old records of grassland and do not reflect the current habitats present, they are indicators of what may be found in the created rides and glades.

The A1(M) is a physical barrier that separates the site from several further grassland Ecosites. While these were historically connected to the site and share similar characteristics this major road is a significant blockage for desired habitat connectivity.

2.3 Landscape Character

Within the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessments, the site is the joining point of two distinct character areas. The woodland falls mostly within the Mimmshall Valley area and is at the northern most extreme of this zone. Although similarly constrained as much of the area is by transport links, the flatter plateau of the woodland does not share many of the characteristics of the central and southern reaches. These more southerly parts of this Landscape Character Area consist of valley slopes, open farmland and meandering streams culminating in the acidic willow carr woodlands of Waters End.

While only the small section of Bullens Green woods at Redhall Wood falls within the Colney Heath farmland Landscape Character Area it is directly connected to this area without the barrier that the A1(M) creates. It joins the heathland and grassland of Colney Heath to the west with similarly flat topography and young habitats but lacks the disturbance of the gravel pits which are characteristic.

2.4 Geology and Hydrology

This area sits within the Northern Thames Basin National Character Area which is a diverse historic area that extends from Hertfordshire to the Essex coast and is bordered to the south by the Thames Estuary. The soil within this region varies from London Clay whilst alluvial deposits provide more fertile soils. Being within the central river valleys the slowly permeable clayey soils mostly have brown subsoils and lie over Tertiary clays, giving rise to seasonal waterlogging.

This seasonal waterlogging is clearly apparent within the woodland where a number of ditches and seepage lines cut through the site leading west to the River Colne. The streams and springs which rise throughout the various landscapes around are not present within the woodland, but this seasonal waterlogging is likely exacerbated by surface water runoff from the slopes of the adjacent A1(M).

2.5 History and Archaeology

It is a young woodland, planted through the Forestry Commission Woodland Creation Grant funding in the late 1990s. However, the wider ancient woodlands it joins in the landscape have a long history of management. This will have been through coppicing and pollarding, allowing for the sustainable collection of usable timber and creating a rich ground flora to develop alongside specialist deadwood invertebrates.

Prior to planting the area was open grassland. The 1883 Ordnance Survey map showing it as part of Angerland Common fringed by the small hamlets of Roestock and Bullens Green. The nearby Tollgate Wood is one of several ancient woodlands recorded on the same OS map as the common. Although this woodland is now reduced in size due to the electrical substation built within. The majority of this historic common land has been lost to the development of the A1(M) and the nearby University of Hertfordshire, but areas of open space do still exist in ‘Big Park’ and ‘Bunchleys Field’.

With the development of the A1(M) came the bisecting and eventual closing of both Dellsome Lane and Redhall Lane at either end of the woodland.

2.6 Habitats and Wildlife

Bullens Green Wood is a predominantly broadleaved woodland consisting of a varied species composition including Pedunculate Oak, Beech, Hornbeam, Field Maple, and Ash. Hazel and Hawthorn make up much of the limited understory and form the boundary hedgerows with small, isolated patches of Blackthorn nearer the roadside slopes where the A1(M) slip road passes the site.

2. A typical view of the woodland composition

The woodland can be separated into two main areas, with Redhall Wood north of Redhall Lane and the larger remainder to the south as Bullens Green Wood itself. Redhall Wood was planted at a slightly later date to the majority of the woodland, but they are predominantly similar in species composition. Bullens Green Wood contains a higher proportion of Ash throughout, planted before Ash Die back disease reached the country. Redhall Wood contains the only instance of non-native Rhododendron on site, potentially an escapee from private gardens. The field layer throughout the woodland is largely absent, although some limited scrub has formed inside the edges of rides where light is able to penetrate the dense canopy, with dense areas of common nettle, bramble, and cleavers.

There is a network of grass paths that cross the site mown frequently to allow for recreational access. As such these have little diversity within the sward. Where areas have been left uncut patches of Red Clover and Creeping Buttercup have developed. In isolated small patches of these rides there are Knapweed, Bird’s-foot Trefoil, and Red Campion. These are likely representatives of its previous history as meadow and pasture prior to woodland planting taking place.

3. Species found in the few glades and open areas

While there are no wetland features on the site there are areas within the woodland that become waterlogged throughout the winter resulting in pools and areas of boggy ground appearing. These seasonal features can be prohibitive to easy public access through the site but are also important habitats in their own right if able to eventually drain and not cause damage or disease of trees.

2.7 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure

Public Footpath North Mymms 024 crosses the middle of the wood running east to west to finish at the junction 2 off ramp of the A1(M). To the very north an underpass forming part of Public Footpath Hatfield 161 and allows access from the town. Public Footpath Hatfield 161 connects to Public Footpath Hatfield 161/Avia a footbridge that crosses over the A1(M) which then runs parrel to Redhall Wood North to South until meeting Redhall Lane.

There are several further pedestrian access points around the outskirts of the site including off of Dellsome Lane and Roestock Lane which allow residents of the nearby villages to access the woodland. Throughout the woodlands are several informal beaten earth paths which appear to receive regular use by dog walkers. While these are in poor condition in periods of wet weather it is hoped that the planned forestry works within this plan are enough that they do not require significant work to remain usable year-round. However, simple surfacing options may be explored in future if not shown to be sufficient.

There is little in the way of site furniture with only a single bench in the southern portion of the woodland near the entrance from Dellsome Lane and small entrance

signs to the woodland which are at times hidden behind vegetation. There is a single dated interpretation panel located in the centre of the woodland which details some of the history of the planting and species you might expect to find here.

2.8 Community and Events

Currently the site only sees informal use by for walking and dog exercise by the nearby residents and is somewhat separated from the wider population of Hatfield by the A1(M).

2.9 Site Management

The site is managed by Hertfordshire County Council's Rural Estates team by utilising internal resources.

The Rural Estate team have the responsibility for the following:

- Woodland 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.
- Production of specifications, procurement, and contract management for some management works.
- Running volunteer task days through mid-week volunteer group.

There has been limited thinning or harvesting in the recent past with tree works focused around maintaining access and tree safety issues. Several small areas of hornbeam have been pollarded at a low height, with the brash resulting from this operation stacked around the stools to prevent potential browsing of regrowth by deer.

Two areas have already been set up to allow timber storage and extraction easily from the woodland. These are located at the most northern and southern points of the woodland with road access to both areas. While the woodland itself is unable to support large, tracked vehicles in some areas these forwarding points will significantly aid future sustainable woodland management and the extraction of resulting timber.

3.0 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

3.1 A Welcoming Place

While the woodland has a good number of access points these are often overgrown and uninviting. At some points they are currently unsuitable for those who have limited mobility by either design or past erosion. Improving the structures and ground conditions at these entrances to allow access to all pedestrians should be a priority and key to address ahead of promoting the woodland to a wider range of users.

4. Access into woodland from Redhall Lane

While the one interpretation board in the centre of the woodland is of a good design and details the creation of the woodland it can be updated to a new fresh design. New information provisions should be installed at entrances depicting the habitats and associated species found within them as well as a simple site map to orient visitors. It should also look to inform visitors of future work and ongoing projects and outline the aims and achievements of active woodland management. Other than updating the central interpretation panel, additional panels and signage at site entrances, or key path junctions would allow visitors to understand they are visiting a site owned and managed by HCC and create a more welcoming entrance.

5. Current interpretation panel

6. Example interpretation panel - Broxbourne Woods

The woodland is utilised locally by the immediate residents of the nearby villages of Roestock and Bullens Green but is largely an unknown asset to the wider population. This is of note in Hatfield which is geographically close to Bullens Green but difficult for visitors to access from with its separation by the A1(M). With good road links to Dellsome lane and a clear timber area already set aside at the southern end of the woodland there is potential to invite those less mobile or from further afield to visit, by constructing a small parking area. This would be subject to sourcing external funding, obtaining the relevant permits and engagement with stakeholders before commencing works.

Currently there are limited opportunities to rest and sit within the woodland. While the noise from the A1(M) can make areas of the woodland undesirable to spend long periods of time, other more sheltered areas offer a quiet and peaceful point to stop. Providing additional seating at key locations, such as along light airy rides, would further benefit users in their enjoyment of the woodland.

6. Example bench in Broxbourne Wood

3.2 Healthy, Safe and Secure

The site does not appear to suffer from anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping or motorbike use. However, boundary features such as hedges and fences should be suitably maintained to ensure the site is safe, secure and welcoming. This includes any upgraded site entrances to prevent easy access to these types of behaviours.

With many of the young Ash trees impacted by Ash Dieback disease this is of particular importance, especially along the boundary with the A1(M). 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.

This disease is known to be present on site and it is managed by tree safety survey of the main paths and along roadsides. Tree safety work is carried out when required by the Rural Estates team or appropriate contractor and should be continued alongside active woodland management. Some of these safety issues when identified can be dealt with through careful tree selection during the wider work programme.

7. Area of woodland with Ash impacted by Dieback

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 2006 and is present throughout southern Hertfordshire. OPM is a regulated quarantine pest under official control measures with specific management zones present across the country.

Bullens Green Wood 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 alert and warn the public to the presence of OPM.

8. Likely sighting of OPM in a woodland setting with the typical grey mass on the side of the tree

3.3 Well Maintained and Clean

Site furniture, access and paths should be kept in good condition through a regular inspection routine to ensure safe usage. While litter and fly tipping is not a major issue on site any reported issues should be dealt with in a timely manner to prevent a build-up, particularly overflow from the nearby A1(M).

The path network is currently managed by regular mowing but can become very wet and waterlogged throughout the winter months. Many of the paths are directly under the drip line of the trees which adds to any runoff as water moves towards the River Colne in the west. Improving the rides through an ongoing programme of widening and scallop creation in key locations will help to resolve some of these issues. This will allow the implementation of a 2-zoned management approach for many of the rides which can be carried out through volunteer activities, further improving access and biodiversity and facilitate forestry operations.

3.4 Sustainability

All woodland work should adhere to the UK Forestry Standard as published by the Forestry Commission to ensure best practice. Open and regular communication with the relevant FC Woodland Officer should continue so as to receive up-to-date advice and guidance.

Woodland improvement works should be undertaken given the benefits of increased carbon storage, better biodiversity and more pleasing appearance of managed woodlands. These works are typically undertaken by contractors due to the skilled labour and specialised equipment required, which can make small-scale, bespoke operations costly. While the age of trees limits the potential for offsetting costs through sales, by working on a larger scale but using a measured Continuous Cover Forestry approach, costs can be minimised.

Ride management, minor areas of coppicing and any replanting required post forestry work are suitable activities for volunteers to undertake. HCC in working with volunteers aids in the management of a wide variety of sites throughout the county and will offer potential to encourage the local community to become more engaged in their local greenspace.

All works carried out on site should be financially sustainable 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.

Contractors will be selected to carry out works that have shown sufficient knowledge of sustainable practices and shown the required experience though case studies of 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

3.5 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

The young woodland planted together in the 1990s has had little management intervention since its creation. This has resulted in an even aged woodland, with little structural diversity in either canopy height, the age of trees and dense clustered growth. There is limited associated woodland ground flora or natural regeneration due to the closed canopy blocking out light. Initially, the woodland would benefit from an irregular light thin throughout the compartments of approximately 20% and look to target those individuals already in poor condition. The aim of this operation is to diversify the woodland structure following a programme of continuous cover forestry operations.

Continuous cover forestry is not a specific measure but rather an approach to sustainable forest management. CCF is sometimes known as “close to nature” forestry as it seeks to replicate natural processes, accelerating the development of structurally diverse woodland without the need of planting and plastic tubes often seen. Bullens Green Wood would naturally develop over many hundreds of years into a dynamic mosaic of differing species, age and sizes of trees. However, in the short term many of those trees currently within the woodland are in poor condition as they attempt to compete for light and resources. This produces many tall, thin, and sparse individuals at risk from disease, damage and poor health, limited in their ability to reproduce.

9. Typical dark areas of dense, dark, woodland with limited understory

In a mature woodland this natural process of competition produces the strongest future generations. As trees mature these far older veterans undergo ‘retrenchment’ a process whereby they reduce their crown in their later years. This is a slow process whereas these old trees die and fall they create brightly lit temporary glades and space where there are opportunities for fresh growth. Much like a gardener and their vegetable patch, it is possible to selectively thin to assist this process by selecting the trees with the best potential, creating irregular, structurally diverse woodlands in decades rather than centuries.

Academic research shows that managed, structurally diverse woodlands capture more carbon (both in woody biomass and the soil) and support a greater range of species than unmanaged woodlands. CCF managed woodlands are more resilient to climate change and tree disease. It is also observed that the woodlands managed using a CCF approach are better at intercepting airborne pollutants which is particularly beneficial in urban and suburban areas. Structurally diverse woodlands support a wider variety of wildlife and are more pleasant for visitors as they are lighter with a more diverse range of trees and a constant buzz of wildlife.

While the timber felled through these works will aid financial sustainability by offsetting contractor costs approximately 20% of felled timber should remain on site as either standing or fallen deadwood. Deadwood is a key habitat in a woodland setting able to support a completely different unique set of species to living trees. These range from fungi to invertebrates and birds such as Woodpecker and Owl. The brash, the unusable top branches and stems of felled trees should be kept on site where possible in the woodland to keep vital soil nutrients and bacteria. This can be used in conjunction with temporary fencing to protect coppiced trees from browsing, spread across the woodland floor or stacked as habitat piles suitable for nesting birds.

10. Fresh growth in temporary glade after coppicing

Alongside this management of the trees within the woodland the network of grass paths that run through the site provide an opportunity to further create a diverse woodland ride structure. Alongside the creation of temporary open space, managed open space in a woodland brings increased structural and floral diversity, provides permanent favourable conditions for birds and invertebrates (especially butterflies), as well as creating a welcoming open aspect for users of the site. The existing tree line at specific locations can be pushed back into the woodland block by several metres in scallops, retaining any feature trees. The centre of the rides can be mown frequently to provide good access and short grass suitable for basking butterflies. The ride edges throughout should be allowed to grow long and develop a tall slightly scrub like sward and cut on a three-year rotation. Shrubby species such as hazel, hawthorn and elder should also be coppiced on a five-year rotation as part of these scallops.

11.(left) Path through woodland with trees close on both sides (Right) Wider path similar to a zone 2 ride but with the drip line overhanging.

12. Example of wider 2- zoned ride

3.5.1 Biodiversity Net Gain

A formal habitat and condition assessment survey has not been undertaken as part of the development of this management plan. However, indicative current and potential habitat types and conditions for the main habitats within Bullens Green Wood are provided in the tables below.

Table 1: Area habitats

Main habitat type	Area (ha)	Biodiversity metric habitat type	Current habitat condition	Potential habitat condition	Potential biodiversity net gain (biodiversity units)
Woodland	9.8	Other woodland: broadleaved	Moderate	Good	35.4
Grassland (rides)	1	Other neutral grassland	Poor	Moderate	3.1

Table 2: Linear habitats

Main habitat type	Length (m)	UKHab current habitat type	Current habitat condition	Potential habitat condition	Potential biodiversity net gain (biodiversity units)
Native Hedgerow	150	Native Hedgerow	Moderate	Good	3.67

The main improvements to the habitats of Bullens Green Woods lies in the woodland itself. The woodland will increase in biodiversity potential as it ages and matures but this alone is unable to go up a class in habitat condition from moderate to good for decades or centuries. The lowest scoring areas of the woodland aside from the age of the trees are the lack of understory and field layer diversity, signs of disease, limited open space and a lack of deadwood. These can all be improved through a programme of selective thinning and the creation of wider and more varied rides throughout.

In order for Bullens Green Wood to be put forward as an offsetting site for biodiversity net gain, a detailed survey of habitat type and condition would need to be carried out to confirm the habitat baseline, and a biodiversity net gain habitat management plan would need to be produced. This is not intended for implementation under this plan, where funding is available through alternative

sources but provides an example of the value that can be achieved through active woodland management at this site.

3.6 Community Involvement and Marketing

It is vital to involve the local community in the site and keep them informed of operations and the reasoning behind this work. This will be done through informing visitors and the local community about work planned through notices on site, online and also by providing opportunities for them to get involved with practical volunteer work.

Stakeholder engagement is additionally highly important and begins with the draft Greenspace Action Plan. Future stakeholder engagement will be during this final version of the document at review and in further management plans as they are produced. Once an interpretation panel/notice board is installed this can be used to engage with visitors to the site.

4.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

Aim

Undertaking active woodland management to improve the value of woodland habitats within Bullens Green Wood for wildlife, whilst providing an accessible, welcoming greenspace 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 and interpretation at major entrances.

A2 Improve site entrances to allow access to a wide range of visitors while restricting potential anti-social behaviour.

A3 Install additional benches in key locations to provide additional seating for site visitors.

A4 Encourage local residents to visit the site with directional signage on nearby cycle routes and footpaths

B. Healthy, safe and secure – *To ensure that visitors to Bullens Green Wood feel safe and able to enjoy the site.*

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

B2 Plan active woodland management alongside reactive tree work to address safety issues where there may be risk.

B3 Enhance path conditions throughout through ride management and forestry work

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

C1 Maintain site infrastructure, e.g. 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, litter picking and removal of 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.

D2 Ensure ongoing management costs are financially sustainable and supported by external funding where possible.

D3 Carry out management according to environmental best practice, using sustainable woodland management practices.

D4 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 and management of temporary open space with targeted thinning.

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

E4 Bring the majority of ride management into a 2-zoned approach.

E5 Creation of standing and fallen deadwood habitat through woodland management works

E6 Enhance woodland rides through widening, creation of scallops and collection of arisings from cutting of species rich margins.

F. Community Involvement and Marketing – *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.

F3 Look to promote the site as a destination, share its project aims and successes and encourage the usage of the wood by those who currently have limited access to suitable greenspace.

5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

Abbreviations: CMS – Countryside Management Service; CRoW – Countryside and Rights of Way; Con – Contractor; FC – Forestry Commission; HCC – Hertfordshire County Council; RO – Rural Estates; Vols – Volunteers; GM – Grounds Maintenance

5.1 ANNUAL AND REGULAR ACTIONS

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.01	Carry out reactive tree safety inspections and undertake recommended remedial works	B2	Ongoing	HCC RE	Contractor	HCC RE tree budget	N/A		
0.02	Keep entrances clear and open from vegetation	A2, C2	Biannual, summer	HCC RE	HCC RE	HCC RE site budget	N/A		
0.03	Mow along central portion of zone 1 rides	C2	Biannual summer	HCC RE	HCC RE	HCC RE site budget	N/A		
0.04	Cut and collect or rake wider part of zone 2 rides as mapped	E4, B3	Sept/Oct	HCC RE	HCC RE/ CRoW	HCC RE site budget	N/A		
0.05	Maintain site infrastructure as required	C1	Ongoing	HCC RE	HCC RE	HCC RE site budget	N/A		
0.06	Remove any graffiti and fly tipping from site	B1, C3	Ongoing	HCC RE	HCC RE	HCC RE site budget	N/A		
0.07	Carry out reactive tree works as required	B2	As needed	HCC RE	HCC RE	HCC RE tree budget	N/A		

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.08	Coppice and clear selected scallops	E2, E6	October - December	HCC CRoW	HCC CRoW	Vols	N/A		
0.09	Review and update action plans	F1, F2	Mar	HCC RE/ CRoW	HCC RE/ CRoW	Officer Time	Officer Time		
0.10	Implementation of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) risk-based approach to management.	B2	Ongoing	REO	RE/Contractor	GM Budget	N/A		
0.11	Share management operations online and on site before and after works	F1, F2	Ongoing	CRoW	CRoW	N/A	Officer Time		

Bullens Green Wood

Greenspace Action Plan

Year 1 Action Plan (25/26)

Task Responsibility

- Estate led
- CMS led

Officer/Contractor delivered

- District led
- CMS led

Volunteer delivered

Creation of informal circular path during thinning works

Clear vegetation growth along RoW

Create small 0.1ha glades

Install welcome signage and improve site access at entrance

Improve access from Red hall Lane

Carry out 20% thin of woodland utilising a CCF approach

Produce and install updated interpretation signage

Create and manage scallops along path network

Install 3 no benches

Clear vegetation from RoW and improve access point

Install welcome signage and improve site access at entrance

Carry out 20% thin of woodland utilising a CCF approach

Produce and install updated interpretation signage

Clear vegetation from site entrance and improve access

Legend

- Hard Standing
- Hedgerow
- Mixed Woodland
- Newer Plantation
- Paths and rides
- Bench
- Interpretation Panel
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Entrance

Year 1 Actions

- Coppice and Thin
- Glade
- New Path
- Scallop
- Woodland Thinning

Annual Management

Rural Estates

Tree safety inspections and reactive works
Strim site entrances
Mow central portion of rides
Maintain site furniture and fencing
Remove graffiti and fly tipping
Review GAP with CMS officer

Volunteer tasks

Cut and rake zone 2 areas of rides
Rotational coppice and clear of scallops
Informal litter picking as required

N

0 110 220 m

Scale @ A3
1:3,410

Date
April 2025

Rev
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Countryside Management Service

5.2 YEAR 1 2025-26

5.2 YEAR 1 2025-26

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
1.1	Woodland management work to be carried out in the highlighted area on year 1 map	E1, E2, E5, D1, D4	Oct – Feb	CMS	Contractor	HSHCF Bid	£12000		
1.2	Design and produce new interpretation and entrance signage	A1. A2, F3	Autumn 25	CMS	Contractor/ Vols	HSHCF Bid	£5000		
1.3	Improve entrance points for public accessibility	A2, C2,	Summer 25	CMS/RE	RE/ Vols	Internal	£500		
1.4	Install a further 3 benches at highlighted locations	A3	Summer 25	CMS	Vols	External	£750		
1.5	Remove Rhododendron from Redhall Wood	E3	Nov – Feb	CMS	Vols	N/A	Officer Time		
1.6	Encourage local residents to visit the site with signage in the wider area	F3, A4	Ongoing	CMS/ RE	CMS	External	£500		
1.7	Scallop creation on key areas of rides through a combination of contractor and volunteer activities	D3, E6	Oct - Feb	CMS/RE	Contractor/ Vols	HSHCF Bid	£3000		
1.8	Coppicing of pockets of hazel and hornbeam	E1, E2, E5	Oct – Feb	CMS	Vols	N/A	Officer Time		
1.9	Promote the site and volunteer activities to the wider community	F1, F2, F3	Ongoing	CMS	CMS	N/A	Officer Time		
2.0	Open pathway through Redhall Wood during management works to create a circular walk on site	C2	Oct – Feb	CMS/RE	Contractor/ Vols	Internal	N/A		
2.1	Review year 1 GAP actions	F1	March 26	CMS/RE	CMS/RE	N/A	Officer Time		

Bullens Green Wood

Greenspace Action Plan

Year 2 Action Plan (26/27)

Task Responsibility

- Estate led
- CMS led

Officer/Contractor delivered

- District led
- CMS led

Volunteer delivered

Identify potential seasonal ponds and scrapes to channel water from path network

Coppice hazel and boundary hawthorn

Carry out 20% thin of woodland utilising a CCF approach

Create small 0.1ha glades

Create and manage scallops along path network

Legend

- Hard Standing
- Hedgerow
- Mixed Woodland
- Newer Plantation
- Paths and rides
- Bench
- Interpretation Panel
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Entrance

Year 2 Actions

- Coppice and thin
- Glade
- Carpark
- Scallop
- Woodland Thinning

Annual Management

Rural Estates

Tree safety inspections and reactive works
Strim site entrances
Mow central portion of rides
Maintain site furniture and fencing
Remove graffiti and fly tipping
Review GAP with CMS officer

Volunteer tasks

Cut and rake zone 2 areas of rides
Rotational coppice and clear of scallops
Informal litter picking as required
Maintian site entrances clear of vegetation

N

0 110 220 m

Scale @ A3
1:3,410

Date
April 2025

Rev
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Countryside Management Service

5.3 YEAR 2 2026-27

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
2.1	Woodland management work to be carried out in the highlighted area on year 2 map	E1, E2, E5, D1, D4	Oct – Feb	CMS	Contractor	HSHCF Bid	£12,500		
2.2	Create small scrapes and seasonal ponds within year 2 woodland management areas	E1, E2, B3	March - Oct	CMS	Contractor/ Vols	HSHCF Bid	£3000		
2.3	Scallop creation on key areas of rides through a combination of contractor and volunteer activities	D3, E6	Oct – Mar	CMS	Contractor/ Vols	HSHCF Bid	£2000		
2.4	Open areas of dense bramble to encourage more diverse species mix	E1	Oct – Mar	CMS	Vols	N/A	Officer Time		
2.5	Monitor area of Rhododendron to prevent spread into woodland	E3	Ongoing	CMS/ RE	CMS/ RE	N/A	Officer Time		
2.6	Review year 2 GAP actions	F1	March 27	CMS/ RE	CMs/ RE	N/A	Officer Time		

Task Responsibility

- Estate led
- CMS led

Officer/Contractor delivered

- District led
- CMS led

Volunteer delivered

Bullens Green Wood

Greenspace Action Plan

Year 3-5 Action Plan (28/30)

Review woodland work after year 3 and look to identify potential future veterens for halo thinning in year 4

Identify areas opened through woodland management where further understory clearance can aid natural regen

Identify potential seasonal ponds and scrapes to channel water from path network

Create small 0.1ha glades

Carry out 20% thin of woodland utilising a CCF approach in year 3

Create and manage scallops along path network

Legend

- Hard Standing
- Hedgerow
- Mixed Woodland
- Newer Plantation
- Paths and rides
- Bench
- Interpretation Panel
- Pedestrian Entrance
- Vehicle Entrance

Year 3-5 Actions

- Glade
- Scallop
- Woodland Thinning

Annual Management

Rural Estates

Tree safety reactive works
Strim site entrances
Mow central portion of rides
Maintain site furniture and fencing
Remove graffiti and fly tipping
Review GAP with CMS officer

Volunteer tasks

Cut and rake zone 2 areas of rides
Rotational coppice and clear of scallops
Informal litter picking as required
Keep entrances clear of vegetation

N

0 110 220 m

Scale @ A3
1:3,410

Date
April 2025

Rev
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Countryside Management Service

5.3 YEAR 3-5 2027-30

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
3.1	Woodland management work to be carried out in year 3 in the relevant area highlighted on the year 3-5 map	E1, E2, E5, D1, D4	Oct – Feb	CMS	Contractor	Internal	£8000		
3.2	Monitor and assess the impact of woodland management work in years 4 and 5 ahead of renewed GAP.	F1	Ongoing	CMS/ RE	CMS/ RE	Officer Time	N/A		
3.3	Scallop creation and continued widening of rides in key locations	D3, E6	Oct – Mar	CMS/ RE	CMS/ RE	Internal	£4000		
3.4	Look to identify potential future veteran trees within the woodland and halo thin around them in year 4	E1, E2, E5	Oct – Mar	CMS/ RE	Contractor	Internal	£5000		
3.5	Review GAP annual and at end of 5-year plan	F1	Ongoing	CMS/ RE	CMs/ RE	Officer Time	N/A		

6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

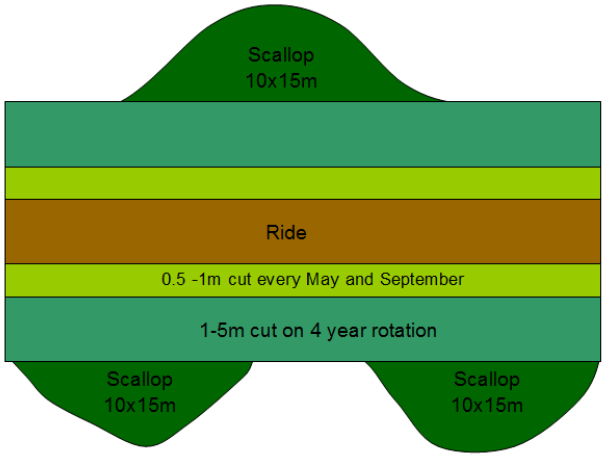
Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF)	
Purpose	To accelerate natural processes; improvements to woodland structure benefit wildlife and carbon storage. In the context of Bullens Green Wood the CCF approach will be achieved using thinning, halo-releasing, regeneration felling and coppicing: 1. **Thinning –** Simulates the outcomes of natural competition by breaking up even-aged or single species stands while maintaining canopy cover. Dappled sunlight promotes natural regeneration, leading to a more age-varied and species diverse woodland. 2. **Halo-releasing –** Promotes existing or potential veteran trees (middle aged trees with some ancient features ideal for wildlife) by gradually removing lesser competitive specimens (one major or two minor competing trees). The assisted development of ancient trees is important due to their incredible wildlife supporting potential. 3. **Regeneration Felling –** Similar to the thinning process above, with more trees being removed to enable greater regeneration. At Bullens Green this will be used to tackle the stands of Ash clustered together near pathways. Natural regeneration will be supplemented by planting to compensate for the vigorous regeneration or ash. The aim is to transition from an ash stand to a mixed species woodland. 4. **Coppice with standards** – "Standards" or larger trees provide continual cover while the understory is coppiced or

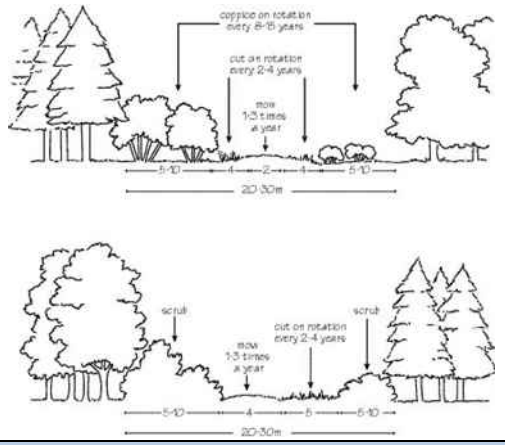
	cut on rotation. This traditional approach generates product for activities such as hedge laying while providing temporary light and warm areas in the woodland. Forest operations should allow the creation of deadwood piles; important as around 20% of woodland species rely on deadwood at some point of their lifecycles. Increased levels of deadwood should allow woodland compartments on site to approach the UK Forestry Standard recommended 20m^3/ha. Brash is defined as the non-saleable product of woodland activities, typically branches under 70mm diameter. It does not offer the same value as larger deadwood in terms of supporting wildlife but has an important role to play in retaining woodland soil fertility and structure.
Method	1. **Thinning –** 1 in 5 trees or stems of an even-aged stand (see action maps) are marked for felling in an irregular fashion. Felling is to occur from September to February with timber extracted and sold to offset the cost of the work. 2. **Halo-releasing –** A maximum of three competitive stems are marked and felled as above to assist the development of veteran trees. This work is typically undertaken simultaneously to thinning. 3. **Regeneration felling –** 1 in 2 ash felled in stands exhibiting ash dieback. If natural regeneration not observed mixed range of native hardwood whips to be under planted at a rate of 550 stems per hectare over the felled area.

	4. **Coppice with standards –** All stems to be felled and stools left in the conventional manner with final cuts sloping away from centre. Suitable brash is to be woven into protective guards around freshly cut stools to prevent deer grazing. 20% of the timber produced by the above operations should be left in deadwood piles no higher than 1m. FC research suggests deadwood has the highest wildlife value the concentrated in “high value areas” such as wet areas, sunny areas and woodland edges. In line with the UK Forestry Standard, fresh brash should be used as “brash mats” to limit the ground damage of extraction vehicles. Outside of this context, brash should be processed using a chainsaw to approximately 2m lengths then spread evenly throughout the woodland floor of the work area, though not covering coppice stools. An exception should be made for conifer brash which can be unsightly due to its mass. This should again be processed to 2m lengths then placed in neat windrows no higher than 1.5m along the edge of the working area.
Who	▪ CMS officer to mark trees and deadwood pile locations ▪ Contractor to fell and extract for general CCF work ▪ Qualified CMS officers may undertake some halo-release work ▪ CMS volunteers or Friends of Great Ashby to carry out hazel coppicing

Future management	Non-native regeneration to be controlled.

Ride management	
Zone 1	The edges of the new ride will be cut twice a year May and September 0-1m from path edge, to maintain a clear path for visitors.
Zone 2	The next zone, 2-4m from ride edge will be cut on a 4 year rotation to maintain vegetation in a manageable state whilst providing valuable scrub habitat. This should be staggered so that a quarter of the full length of zone 2 is cut each year (155m of ONE SIDE of the ride each year)
Zone 3	The 5-10m zone will be cut rotationally on a long cycle. Every year scallops (approx 10x15m arcs) will be cut into the woodland edge to increase the width of the ride at certain points. The scallop will then be left to re-grow providing a succession of habitats from scrub back to woodland into the future. 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.



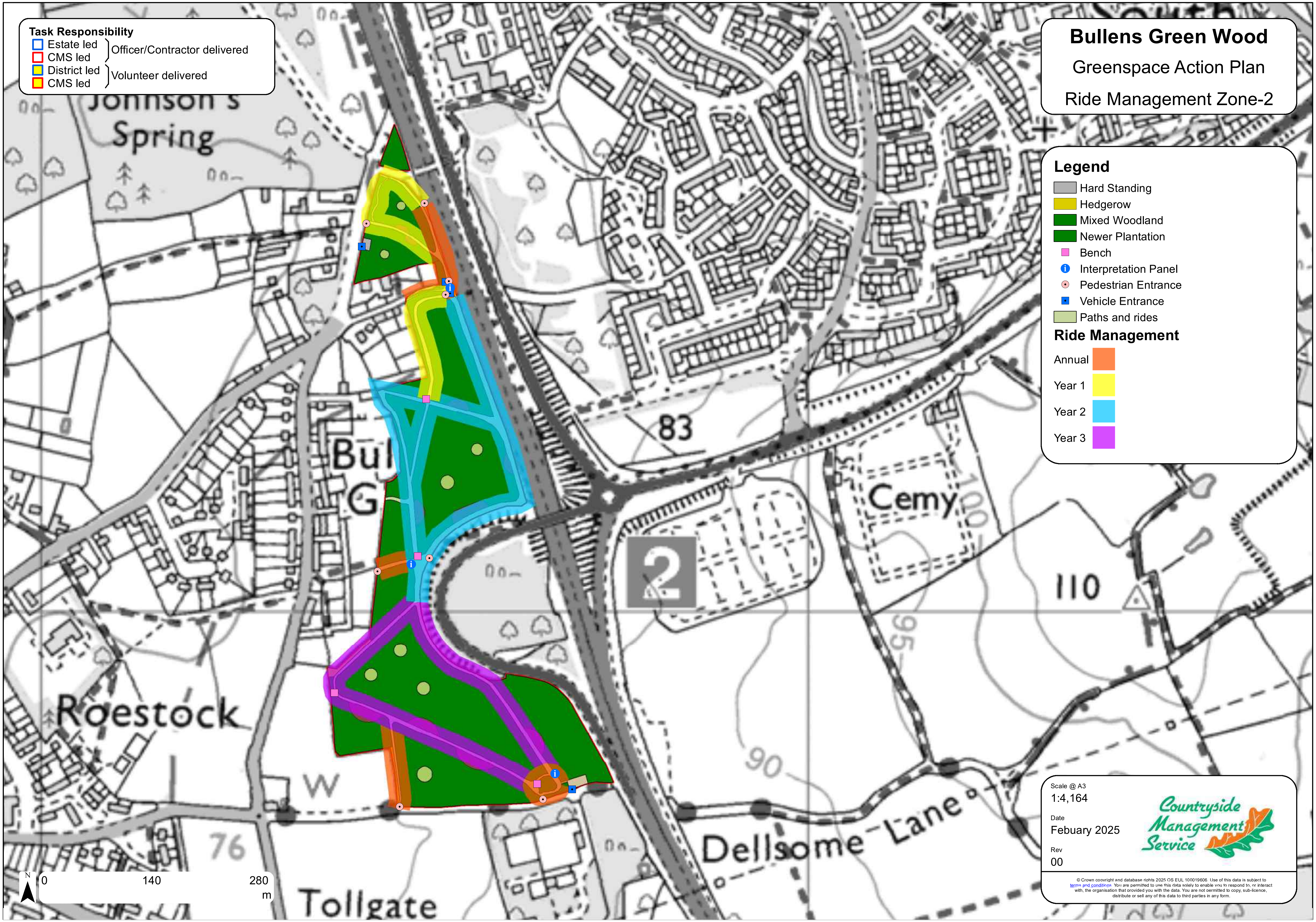


Installation of benches	
Method	▪ The woodland bench type should be in keeping with the existing style of furniture currently used throughout other HCC Woodland and Parks. ▪ Type 1 Woodland bench in green oak with a back rest, this type could also be used for the donated seats scheme and should be sited in the more well used areas of the site. ▪ Type 2 is a more rustic, simple timber bench, for use in quieter, less accessible parts of the site.

	  Type 1 Type 2
Who	▪ Volunteers
Future management	Annual inspections to ensure the benches are fit for purpose and have not been subject to vandalism.
Interpretation	
Purpose	The site would benefit from some information panels
Method	▪ Determine the best locations for interpretation panels and what they might show e.g. history, future work, wildlife highlights, and a map of the site. ▪ 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 A3 lectern or notice board combination structure for the panels to sit in.
Who	CMS to lead, contractor to design and produce interpretation, volunteers to install.
Future management	Ensure that the interpretation uses materials that have good resilience to outdoor conditions and other pressures and will require minimal maintenance.

7.0 APPENDICES



Bullens Green Wood
Greenspace Action Plan
Ride Management Zone-2
Task Responsibility
Estate led
CMS led
Officer/Contractor delivered
District led
CMS led
Volunteer delivered
Legend
Hard Standing
Hedgerow
Mixed Woodland
Newer Plantation
Bench
Interpretation Panel
Pedestrian Entrance
Vehicle Entrance
Paths and rides
Ride Management
Annual
Year 1
Year 2
Year 3
Johnson's Spring
Roestock
Cemy
Dellsome Lane
Tollgate
83
110
2
0
140
280
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Scale @ A3
1:4,164
Date
Febuary 2025
Rev
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Countryside Management Service