

Hundred Acre Wood, Bodiam, East Sussex

Ancient Woodland Site Condition Assessment (2006)

Property Information

Woodland Name: Hundred Acre Wood, Bodiam
Area: 30.1ha
Owner: The Belhurst Nature Conservation Trust

Location Designations

High Weald AONB
Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site
Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Woodland benefits and desired outcomes

Restore the areas of planted conifer on the site to native broadleaved woodland.
Protect sensitive ground flora along water courses.
Identify, map and protect remnants archaeological features.

Description

The 30.1ha woodland is an ancient woodland site, the boundaries of the woodland have not altered since at least the first edition OS map of 1875 (appendix 1). The OS Surveyors draft of 1800 (appendix 1) also shows the entire area of woodland as Bodiam Wood with a similar shape to what today is contains both Hundred Acre Wood and Bodiam Wood.

The underlying geology of the site is Wadhurst clay.

Between 1961 and 1962 areas of mixed conifers were established together with a small proportion (10%) of mixed broadleaves. In order to establish conifers the broadleaved woodland was felled and cleared.

The hurricane of 1987 caused considerable damage to the conifer plantation. Following the storm broadleaved trees including hornbeam, ash, birch and oak became established in the cleared areas (Figure 1).

In other compartments patchy establishment allowed broadleaved trees to become established alongside the conifers. As a result only small areas of pure conifer plantation remain. The majority of the property is now under either mixed stands or native broadleaves. The mixed composition of the canopy shows clearly on the aerial photo of 2001 (appendix 1). The darkest areas are Corsican and Scots pine, the Norway spruce can be distinguished by the linear planting.

A main ride runs the length of the property with an additional loop providing access to the eastern areas.

A number of watercourses are present. The watercourses are not steeply incised gills, but nevertheless they do hold remnants of woodland ground flora and large quantities of deadwood (Figure 4).

The woodland received an annual management grant for ride management from the Forestry Commission between 1996 and 2001.

Deer and grey squirrels

Grey squirrels have caused considerable damage by bark stripping both the crowns and the bases of many of the hardwoods on the property. There is a major badger sett within the woodland. Deer are present within the woodland and are controlled by a stalker. As clear felling and regeneration are not planned at this stage, the threat from deer to the established crop is limited.

Ancient Woodland Features

There are a number of relic ancient woodland features present. These include wooded gills, sawpits (Figure 3), external and internal woodbanks, ponds, earthworks and ancient woodland ground flora.

The remains of the tracks, internal and external boundaries and ponds shown on the OS Map of 1875 can still be seen in some places. The woodland ground flora changes from the drier upper slopes where NVC type communities W10 *Oak-hazel and bluebells* are present, to the moister bottom slopes where a flora associated with W8 *Ash-dogs mercury* occurs. The woodland ground flora is either absent or restricted to mosses and ferns in the areas where the canopy of conifers is most dense.

Public Access

There are no public footpaths or bridleways within the woodland. Hundred Acre Wood has nearly 300m of frontage with the public road. Public access is not planned as part of this proposal. However there is potential to provide access from the National Trail to the north.

Management Opportunities and Threats

1. Ride Improvements. Increase the width of the existing network of rides by felling trees adjacent to ride sides, and creating a series of scalloped glades at junctions along the ride network. The more open rides will benefit wildlife and should also dry more quickly.
2. Restore areas of conifer plantation to native broadleaved woodland by gradually thinning conifers. Broadleaved trees with sufficient crowns will be halo thinned.
3. Record and map archaeological features. Protect these areas during felling and woodland management operations.
4. Preserve canopy cover around gills not operating in these areas and leaving buffer zones on their sides.
5. Take care when undertaking extraction work during periods when the ground is wet, as the underlying clay becomes saturated very quickly.

Management Proposals

1. **Glade and Ride Management**
 - Cut vegetation along the 2km ride network with machine mounted flail to create a central grassy strip with a mixture of herbaceous and shrub zones along its edges.

- Fell 4 x glades to create 'box junctions' along the main ride (Felling licence required).
 - Thin 7 x 50m long scallops adjacent to the main ride for firewood (Felling licence required).
2. **Restoration of Conifer Plantations to Broadleaved Woodland**
- Apply for a felling licence to thin mixed conifers in 1a, 2a, 2b, 5b, 5d, 5e and 5f.
 - Thin those areas where conifers are currently dominant in the canopy and the ground flora is most threatened from dark conditions.
3. **Survey and map archaeological features.**
- Undertake a walkover survey for archaeological features on the property. Mark features on a map and provide copies to contractors undertaking operations.

Appendix 1.

Map 1. Compartments and Areas (OS Master Map)

Map 2. Aerial Photo (2001)

Map 3. Historic Map (OS Epoch 1: the first County Series cc 1875)

Map 4. Historic Map (OS Surveyors draft circa 1800)

Table 1. Compartment Details

Figures

Figure 1. Natural regeneration of hornbeam in the straight lines of what was previously a larch plantation. This area was cleared following the storm of 1987. The result of the clearance and regeneration is restoration of broadleaved woodland.

Figure 2. Norway spruce being thinned in compartment 5f (September 2006) to open up the crowns of the broadleaved trees (oak, ash and birch). Hopefully the increased light levels will improve conditions for woodland ground flora

Figure 3. Sawpit in compartment 5f. The sawpit is in a line that has been felled, in order to prevent damage during timber extraction a barrier of fallen trees will be placed either side of the pit to protect the feature.

Figure 4. Wooded gill in compartment 5f (June 2006). A native woodland ground flora is present and deadwood is accumulating in the watercourse.

Hundred Acre Wood; Compartment Details

Cpt.	Operation	Area (ha)	Species	Notes
1a	T	4.44	Hornbeam, oak, birch, larch	Water pipe, Natural regeneration, gill
1b	T	2.95	Larch, ash, birch, alder	Winblown larch in gill
2a	T	2.71	Poplar, ash, birch	
2b	T	0.61	Corsican pine	Crop approaching maturity. Small number of hemlock present
3a		0.72	Native broadleaves	Large badger sett
4a		2.91	Norway spruce	Woodbanks on external boundaries
5a		0.89	Corsican pine	Crop approaching maturity, brambles present.
5b	T	3.04	Norway spruce, native broadleaves	Failed plantation, large proportion of broadleaves, gills.
5c	T	1.78	Corsican pine	Woodland ground flora developing under open canopy.
5d	T	1.06	Norway spruce	Pure conifer area
5e	T	0.66	Oak and birch	Semi-natural stand of broadleaved regen.
5f	T	8.01	Mixed conifers and broadleaves	Very varied stand, canopy opening required in dense areas.
6a		0.85	Native broadleaves	Native woodland adjacent to road, some fly tipping
	Total	30.63		

Table 1. Hundred Acre Wood, Compartment Details 2006



Figure 1. Natural regeneration of hornbeam, birch and oak in the straight lines of what was previously a larch and Scots pine plantation. This area was cleared following the storm of 1987. The result of the clearance and regeneration is broadleaved woodland.



Figure 3. Sawpit in compartment 5f. The sawpit is in a line that has felled, in order to prevent damage during timber extraction a barrier of fallen trees will be placed either side of the pit to protect the feature.



Figure 4. Wooded gill in compartment 5f (June 2006). A native woodland ground flora is present and deadwood is accumulating in the watercourse.

High Weald PAWS Project; Woodland Owner Attitude Survey

Summary

The High Weald has the highest concentration of ancient woodland sites in the country. In spite of government grants to encourage positive action, much of the area of plantations on ancient woodland sites remains unmanaged. The High Weald PAWS project aims to provide woodland owners with advice and assistance with appropriate management. The results from the survey will be used to guide and target this advisory service.

Owner Attitude Survey

The purpose of this survey is to investigate the reasons why some areas of plantation are unmanaged, and discover what would encourage owners to initiate positive action within their woodland. The survey will investigate and obtain information about: what woodland owners in the High Weald want from their woodland, what they do with their woodland and get from woodland ownership, what prevents them doing more and what might help them overcome these barriers.

What will we do with this information?

The information that we hope to gather from the survey will be used in order to:

- plan the direction of future woodland advice programmes
- arrange future workshops
- advise policy makers and grant providers
- better understand the aspirations of woodland owners in the High Weald

Contact Information

For further information on the survey, or the Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites Project contact:

Mike Chapman (Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites Officer)

High Weald AONB Unit
Woodland Enterprise Centre
Hastings Road, Flimwell
East Sussex, TN5 7PR

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1. Woodland owner objectives

How important to you is each of the following objectives for owning woodland?

(High, Medium, Low)

	High	Medium	Low
Generating an income			
Annual expenditure should be covered by income			
Producing timber			
Producing firewood			
Encouraging wildlife			
Protecting ancient woodland			
Protecting archaeological remains			
Maintaining or enhancing privacy			
Walking and recreation			
Preserve or improve scenic beauty			
Increasing property value			
Replacing conifer plantations with native woodland			
Passing on a legacy			

2. Woodland owner activities

Have you undertaken any of the following activities?

(I have done on my land, I hope to do so on my land, I will not do so on my land, I haven't decided)

	I have done on my land	I hope to do so on my land	I will not do so on my land	I have not decided
Produced a management plan for the woodland (in the last ten years)				
Produced a map of the woodland (recording habitats and other features)				
Boundary work (fencing, maintenance etc)				
Invasive/exotic plant control or eradication				
Coppicing				
Thinning				
Felling and replanting				
Ride Management				
Wildlife habitat improvement (bird boxes, ponds, etc)				
Clearing paths and PROWs				
Clearing dead and fallen trees				
Clearing rubbish				
Searched the internet for information about the woodland				

3. Woodland owner attitudes

Some landowners have given the following reasons for hesitating to manage their woodland. How much does each reason apply to you?

	Very much	Some	Not at all
I don't have enough information about what I should do			
I want to protect the landscape			
Woodland management is expensive			
The trees aren't worth enough to harvest			
I don't have time			
I have no interest in management of my woodland			
The woodland already meets all my needs/ desires			
I don't have the technical assistance			
Woodland management has a negative effect on wildlife			
Trees should not be felled for income			
Access to the woodland is very difficult			
Would like to undertake work if grants were available			

4. Woodland owner involvement with grant schemes and local activities

A number of woodland programmes have been undertaken in the past, have you been involved local woodland schemes and projects in the past?
(Yes, no, unsure, not familiar)

	Yes	No	Unsure	Not Familiar
Are you familiar with the concepts of ancient woodland or plantations on ancient woodland sites?				
If no would you be interested in finding out more in the future?				
Have you had contact in the past with the Forestry Commission or the High Weald AONB?				
If no would you be interested in making contact with them in the future?				
Have you received grant aid for woodland management in the past ten years (WGS, Stewardship)?				
If no do you hope to apply in the future?				
Do you receive Woodlots, the free magazine for woodland owners and contractors in the south east?				
If not would you like to receive this publication in the future?				
Have you cooperated with neighbours for woodland management purposes?				
If not do you hope to in the future?				
Do you make a conscious effort to buy locally grown/manufactured products?				
If not do you hope to do so in the future?				

5. Woodland Information Resources

Where do you get information and advice about woodland management?

	Tick
Have never sought woodland advice	
Forestry Commission Woodland Officer	
Private woodland consultants	
Conservation organizations (BTCV, Woodland Trust, RSPB)	
Friends and family	
Neighbours	
Specialist woodland magazines	
Specialist woodland management books	
Newspapers	
Internet	
Television	

6. Workshop/Information note topics

How interested would you be in the following workshop topics?

(Interest level; High, Medium, Low)

	High	Medium	Low
Identifying and protecting special woodland wildlife habitat			
Restoring native woodland habitats in conifer plantations			
Silviculture and growing timber			
Making maps and management plans for your property			
Identifying and protecting woodland archaeology			
Managing woodland rides for wildlife			
Controlling invasive species			
Seeing what other woodland owners have done with their woodland			
How to produce and sell firewood			
Timber valuation and sales			

7. Information Sources

Would you take advantage of the following sources of information if they were available?

	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Unlikely
Information brochure and publications			
Brochure with woodland related classified advertisements			
Internet Websites			
Email bulletins			
Guest speakers			
Field Trips/Demonstration Events			
One on One site visits by a forestry advisor			
Woodland owner meetings			

8. Landowner Demographics

What is your age?

Age	
18-35	
36-50	
51-65	
66-80	
>80	

9. For how many years have you owned your woodland?

Number of Years	
<5	
06-10	
11-20	
>30	

10. How many ha's of woodland do you own?

11. What is the your woodland called, its location, (PAWS id #)?

12. Do you have internet access?

Yes	No
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13. Do you use the internet to search for information about trees, forest and your land?

Yes	No
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14. How often do you use email?

(Regularly, occasionally, not at all)

Regularly	Occasionally	Not at all

Thank You for Your Cooperation

High Weald PAWS Database (2008)

WOODLAND	OWNER	CONTACT	VISIT	REPORT	Area (ha)
Hayden Wood	1	1	1	1	29.75
Hundred Acre Wood	1	1	1	1	30.62
Sugarloaf Wood	1	1	1	1	13.11
Furnace Wood	1	1	1	1	36.41
Broadgrove Wood	1	1	1	1	11.88
Causeway Wood	1	1	1	1	14.45
Church Wood	1	1	1	1	10.78
Moor Wood	1	1	1	1	27.12
Little Iwood	1	1	1	0	14.54
Oxpasture Wood	1	1	0	0	42.23
Southover Wood	1	1	1	0	19.71
Pookwell Wood	1	1	0	0	4.45
Stumble Wood	1	1	1	0	0.97
New Park Wood	1	1	0	0	26.75
Piping Wood	1	1	1	0	11.66
East Wood	1	0	0	0	13.24
Newtye Hurst	1	1	1	0	22.62
Robins Land	1	1	1	0	17.55
Rusell's Wood	1	1	1	0	31.65
Stonewall Wood		0	0	0	4.94
Courtland Wood		0	0	0	2.33
Frienden Gill		0	0	0	8.02
Birchcopse Shaw		0	0	0	2.21
Bilton's Gill		0	0	0	9.55
Moor Wood	1	1	0	0	5.21
Park Wood	1	1	0	0	4.98
Beech Wood	1	1	0	0	7.07
Burrs Wood	1	1	0	0	10.28
Reynolds Wood		0	0	0	2.43
Jules Wood	1	1	1	1	44.39
Marsh Green Wood		0	0	0	2.19
Lord's Land Wood		0	0	0	0.58
Jone's Wood		0	0	0	1.50
Curzon Wood		0	0	0	14.76
Steadleaze Wood		0	0	0	9.81
Paupersdale Wood		0	0	0	5.42
Paupersdale Wood		0	0	0	4.96
Paupersdale Wood		0	0	0	1.34
Pollard Wood		0	0	0	0.84
Highams Wood		0	0	0	1.60
Collingsbush Wood		0	0	0	1.29
Hazel Wood	1	1	0	0	4.31
Minepit's Wood	1	1	0	0	0.83
Weir Wood		0	0	0	3.52
Wheelers Wood	1	0	0	0	20.98
Wheelers Wood		0	0	0	13.66
Round Wood		0	0	0	3.06
Stripes Wood		0	0	0	1.92
Small's Wood	1	0	0	0	8.76
Enholm's Wood		0	1	0	12.43
Swithe Wood		0	1	0	7.07
Cowstocks Wood		0	0	0	2.67
Pepper Wood		0	0	0	0.83
Furzefield Wood		0	1	0	9.79

High Weald PAWS Database (2008)

Press Ridge Warren		0	0	0	39.78
Minepit Wood		0	0	0	3.76
Oldlands Wood West		0	0	0	8.86
Oaky Wood	1	1	1	0	6.83
The Rough		0	0	0	4.44
Medleys Plantation		0	0	0	0.66
Coneyburrow Wood		0	0	0	2.20
Colliers Wood		0	0	0	3.18
Great Iwood		0	0	0	10.73
Wet Wood		0	0	0	2.63
Allen's Wood		0	0	0	1.61
Horse Wood		0	0	0	3.88
Barnfield Wood		0	0	0	16.00
Well Wood	1	0	0	0	17.31
Spitlye Wood		0	0	0	3.51
Great Wallis Farm		0	0	0	0.91
Brick Kiln Wood		0	0	0	1.39
Sliding Field Wood		0	0	0	3.07
Sliding Field Wood		0	0	0	2.49
Sliding Field Wood		0	0	0	2.08
Coalpit Wood		0	0	0	8.01
Hawksden Park Wood	1	0	1	0	2.94
Great Calem Wood	1	0	0	0	3.42
Mab's Wood		0	0	0	7.32
Down Wood		0	0	0	4.78
Frankham Wood	1	0	0	0	3.20
Great Pell Wood		0	0	0	9.18
Little Pell Wood		0	0	0	6.42
Mill Wood		0	0	0	5.36
Wet Wood		0	0	0	3.52
Hounsell Wood		0	0	0	13.61
Eastland Wood		0	0	0	12.31
Hatches Wood	1	1	1	1	8.65
Carr's Wood		0	0	0	14.79
Rigg Wood	1	0	0	0	8.18
Hollybridge Wood		0	0	0	7.55
Hollybridge Wood		0	0	0	4.46
Keyward's Wood	1	0	0	0	1.25
Middle Wood	1	0	0	0	10.55
Middle Wood		0	0	0	4.49
Stock's Wood	1	1	1	0	35.24
Ashour Wood	1	0	0	0	3.71
Buck Hurst		0	0	0	11.88
Banky Wood	1	1	1	1	4.18
Hawksden Park Wood	1	0	1	0	2.11
Newnham Park Wood	1	0	0	0	34.08
Big Millhole Wood	1	0	0	0	7.82
Park Wood	1	0	0	0	34.50
Little Millhole Wo		0	0	0	9.79
Coalpit/Birchden W		0	0	0	8.48
Castlehill Wood	1	1	0	0	28.69
The Grove		0	0	0	18.96
Redleaf Wood		0	0	0	5.71
Sandyden Wood		0	0	0	3.69
Turner's Wood		0	0	0	3.76
Horse Wood		0	0	0	5.41

High Weald PAWS Database (2008)

Eight Acre Wood		0	0	0	2.50
Standgrove Wood		0	0	0	6.92
Bishop's Wood	1	0	0	0	3.06
Rawlinson Gill	1	1	1	0	3.73
Winser Gill	1	1	1	0	1.08
Bridge Lake Wood		0	0	0	1.69
Wyland Wood		0	0	0	3.67
Starveswood Bank		0	0	0	5.48
Captains Wood		0	0	0	4.68
Reed Wood		0	0	0	4.45
The Avenue		0	0	0	7.46
Streaks Gill		0	0	0	1.17
Ashgarth		0	0	0	0.94
Groombridge Gill		0	0	0	0.82
Alder Wood		0	0	0	3.13
Broomden Wood		0	0	0	3.76
Pashley Pits Wood		0	0	0	1.31
Boarzell Wood		0	0	0	2.06
Lodgefield Wood	1	1	1	0	11.79
Yellow Coat Wood		0	0	0	4.77
Park Wood		0	0	0	6.18
Holmans Wood		0	0	0	10.60
Spring Wood		0	0	0	1.96
Little Crabdean Wo		0	0	0	3.30
Crowhurst Wood		0	0	0	54.08
Goldspur Wood	1	0	0	0	130.17
Kemp's Wood		0	0	0	7.91
Rowland Wood	1	1	0	0	31.67
Holman's Wood		0	0	0	7.16
Waldron Gill		0	0	0	12.09
Selwyn's Wood/Whit	1	0	0	0	19.56
Selwyn's Wood	1	0	0	0	1.30
Round Wood		0	0	0	6.34
Heaven Wood		0	0	0	2.85
Northland Wood		0	0	0	4.86
Hoth Wood	1	1	1	1	19.31
Mill Wood	1	1	0	0	9.18
Mill Wood (North)	1	1	1	0	5.15
Heathfield House E	1	1	0	0	69.89
Clapland Wood	1	0	0	0	34.49
Ashen Wood		0	0	0	9.46
Holming Wood	1	1	1	1	8.93
Martinland Wood	1	0	0	0	14.59
Park Corner Heath	1	1	1	0	3.33
Sandpit Wood	1	1	1	0	34.88
Upper Vert Wood	1	1	1	0	73.77
Bowen Wood	1	0	0	0	14.20
Lower Vert Wood	1	0	0	0	6.16
Lower Vert Wood	1	0	0	0	8.41
Banky Wood		0	0	0	0.49
Lower Vert Wood	1	0	0	0	12.33
Lower Vert Wood	1	0	0	0	8.11
Laughton Common Wc	1	1	1	0	43.47
Brickhurst Wood	1	1	1	0	20.39
Vicarage Wood	1	0	1	0	1.47
Quarry Wood	1	1	1	1	14.73

High Weald PAWS Database (2008)

Long Wood	1	1	1	1	5.93
Bodiam Wood	1	1	1	0	2.34
Skents Wood a		0	0	0	2.60
Skent's Wood b		0	0	0	3.36
Long Wood		0	0	0	0.98
Broadwater Warren	1	1	1	0	112.78
Pond Wood		0	0	0	10.31
Stumblott's Wood		0	1	0	8.32
Blackbrooks	1	1	1	0	69.39
Ringden Wood	1	1	1	0	5.37
Ringden Wood	1	0	0	0	6.60
Dome Wood	1	0	0	0	1.57
Dovetail Wood	1	0	0	0	9.61
The Pheasantry		0	0	0	12.25
Hermitage Farm		0	0	0	24.57
Larch Wood	1	0	0	0	3.99
Cherry Wood	1	0	0	0	1.97
Edinburgh Wood	1	0	0	0	4.29
Sluts Wood		0	0	0	3.57
Coney Wood		0	0	0	9.02
Rowland Wood		0	1	0	7.51
Bushby Shaw		0	0	0	14.60
Great Sowden Wood		0	0	0	28.74
Bois du Saussac		0	0	0	5.42
Snathurst Wood		0	0	0	25.86
North Wood		0	0	0	11.47
SteePhill Wood		0	0	0	13.53
Hazel Wood		0	0	0	3.82
Gorse Field Shaw		0	0	0	4.29
Dean's Wood		0	0	0	6.91
Mill Wood		0	0	0	5.42
Pond Wood		0	0	0	1.72
Well Wood		0	0	0	8.82
Broadlands Wood	1	0	0	0	5.72
Wellhead Wood	1	1	0	0	105.67
Brick Kiln Wood	1	1	1	1	20.95
Brick Kiln Wood	1	1	1	1	0.50
Cinderhill Communi	1	1	1	0	19.08
Fowlbrook Wood	1	0	0	0	16.50
Fowlbrook Wood (NW)	1	0	0	0	3.12
Fowlbrook Wood (E)	1	0	0	0	1.66
Barnsnap Wood	1	1	0	0	2.40
Old Copse	1	0	0	0	6.32
Old Copse (N)	1	0	0	0	5.73
Old Copse	1	0	0	0	5.79
Old Copse	1	0	0	0	6.03
Coalbank Wood	1	0	0	0	9.54
Wallhurst Copse		0	0	0	3.05
Ashen Wood		0	0	0	1.49
Hookland Copse		0	0	0	1.06
Elsley's Wood	1	0	0	0	1.92
Alder Copse	1	0	0	0	1.95
High Beeches	1	0	0	0	21.87
Plaw Wood		0	0	0	41.92
Mayes Wood		0	0	0	11.20
Nailard's Wood	1	0	1	0	14.87

High Weald PAWS Database (2008)

Sippetts Wood	1	1	0	0	2.25
Lower Vert Wood	1	0	0	0	3.30
Lower Vert Wood	1	0	0	0	4.55
Lower Vert Wood	1	0	0	0	11.12
Lower Vert Wood	1	0	0	0	19.80
Bressenden Wood	1	1	1	1	45.26
Flatropers	1	0	0	0	83.46
Whorne Wood	1	1	0	0	54.01
Flatropers Wood	1	1	0	0	35.04
Tellis Coppice	1	1	1	1	40.37
Rounden Woods	1	1	1	0	108.40
Spring Wood	1	1	1	1	22.85
Five Hundred Acre	1	1	1	1	308.93
Batts Wood	1	1	0	0	25.32
Little Calem Wood	1	0	0	0	25.62
Callice Wood	1	1	1	0	7.18
Lower Morgay Wood	1	1	1	1	29.41
Dens Wood	1	1	0	0	12.88
Redgate Mill	1	0	0	0	34.00
Knelle Wood	1	1	0	0	80.44
Badland Wood	1	1	1	1	10.52
Brede High Woods	1	1	1	1	15.92
South Elephant Woo	1	0	0	0	2.86
Wellhead Wood East	1	0	0	0	10.48
Wellhead Wood East	1	0	0	0	32.33
Wellhead Wood East	1	0	0	0	6.22
Old Park Wood	1	0	0	0	2.86
Old Park Wood	1	1	1	0	4.54
Larkin's Hollow	0	0	1	0	2.38
Larkins Rise	1	1	1	1	5.89
Staplecross Ransom	1	0	1	0	1.72
	131	72	62	25	3691

A Quick Clearfell and a Gradual Thin; Approaches to Woodland Restoration on an Ancient Woodland Site. Brick Kiln Wood, Great Trodgers Farm, Mayfield (5th October 2007)

Owner: Simon Tindall
Forester: Andy Groombridge
Agent: Jonathan R Webb

Forestry Commission Woodland Officer: Richard Everett

Woodland Description

Brick Kiln Wood is an ancient woodland site, located north of Mayfield in the High Weald AONB. The majority of the woodland (broadleaved at that stage) was felled in the late 60's, the stumps were poisoned and the area planted with conifers in 1970. Some areas of semi-natural woodland were left, located in the sweet chestnut coppice, in the ghylls and around the southern edge of the wood. The underlying strata is Wadhurst clay. The woodland fits the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type for *Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland with bluebells*. Archaeological features associated with a Wealden ancient woodland site are present.

Background

When the wood came into the current ownership in 2000, Brick Kiln Wood was 'a mess'. The new owner's objective for the woodland was: ***'Restore the woodland to natural but managed woodland, typical of the Weald, with glades open spaces and ponds'***. The crop of conifers planted in 1970 was dark, unmanaged since establishment and in need of work. The chestnut coppice was overstood and rhododendron was established and beginning to spread. There were no glades and rides were 'basic'. Following five years of careful and dedicated management, a strong vision for the future of the woodland and assistance through the Forestry Commission's Woodland Grant Scheme the picture is now much improved. 5ha of conifers have been clearfelled and restocked with planted broadleaves and natural regeneration, conifers thinned to encourage remnant broadleaves trees, chestnut coppice cut, rides improved and a cutting and mowing cycle initiated. The woodland condition is improving as habitats develop and the ecology responds to management activity. A plan for the next five years work is being finalised to continue the good work and develop the owner's vision further.

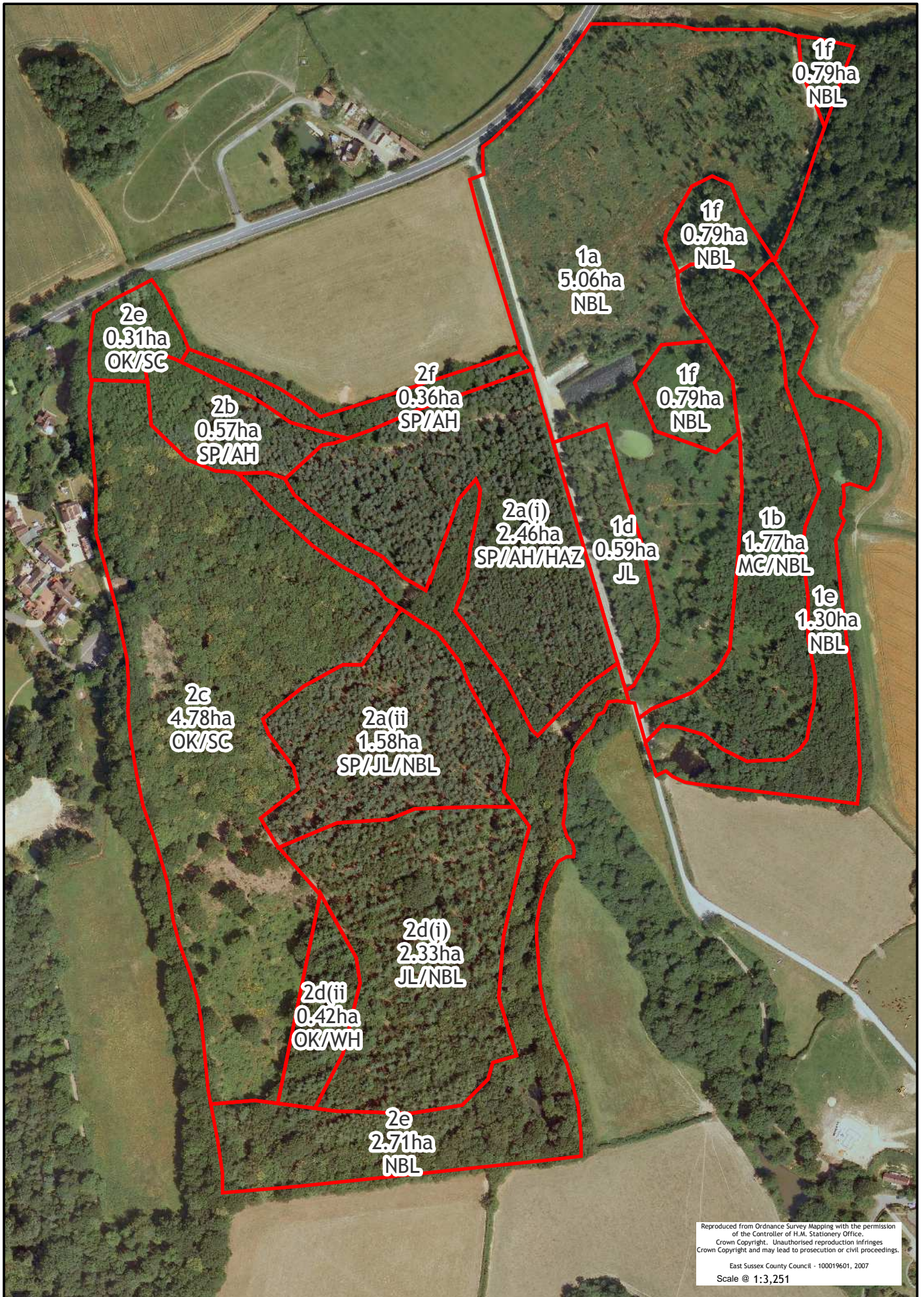
1. A Quick Clearfell (Cpt 1a)

In the late sixties the broadleaved woodland was felled, the stumps treated and the site prepared for planting. Scots pine was planted in 1970 and established successfully across most of the area. The crop was left unthinned until the decision was taken to clearfell the stand in order to regenerate broadleaved trees. In 2001 a harvester was used to fell 5ha, and the brash was mulched to prepare the site for planting. 3ha of the area was replanted with a mixture of oak, ash and a minor component of shrubs planted around the edges and along the rides. The planted trees were protected from voles and rabbits in 0.6m shelters. Natural regeneration was anticipated on the remaining 2ha. Rides and open space have been maintained. *Regeneration methods; Was planting worth the effort? What sort of woodland will develop?*

Effects of clearfelling; Has sensitive woodland ground flora been lost? Will woodland recover? Is further input required?

Brick Kiln Wood, Great Trodgers Farm
Aerial Photo 2006

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2. A Gentle Thin (Cpt 2a)

The recent history of this stand was the same as compartment 1a until 2001. Instead of a clearfell, a programme of gradual thinning was initiated in order to reduce the number of trees, open up the crowns of broadleaved trees, widen the rides and increase the light level within the woodland. This uneconomic work has been possible by running a series of chainsaw training courses. The results of thinning operation has been positive; broadleaved trees have developed in the canopy, an understorey of hazel and ash has pushed through bramble, remnants of the woodland ground flora have been maintained and the rides reinstated.

Length of time to restore; How long is restoration going to take? What will the wood look like?

Value for money; Expensive and time consuming to undertake repeated uneconomic thinning, is it worth the effort?

3. Felled Timber Extraction (Cpt 2a)

The equipment was paid for with a Harvesting and Processing Grant from the Forestry Commission, it is owned by the contractor. Roundwood felled and left on the ground for a year or more is now being supplied to the Eridge Estate, the dry timber is chipped and supplied to the biomass boiler at Crowborough Beacon School.

4. Next Steps Woodland Restoration (2dii)

A small stand of mature oaks underplanted with rows of Western hemlock and oak. Western hemlock casts a particularly dark shade and regenerates profusely under some conditions. In the next plan period all of the hemlock will be felled to open up the remaining oak. A regeneration grant from the Forestry Commission is available for the work.

Alternative approaches; Why not thin the hemlock? Will the oaks suffer shock as a result of the change?

5. An Introduction to Archaeological Features in an Ancient Woodland Site (2e)

Ancient woodland sites contain undisturbed soil profiles that preserve evidence of previous landuse and human activity. Interest in woodland archaeology is increasing and methods for survey of previously unrecorded features are being developed. A book about woodland archaeology has been compiled and will soon be available. The concentration and range of features is within this corner of Brick Kiln Wood is impressive; Yew trees on an early woodbank, a pond bay providing a head of water to the iron furnace, a clay pit, an ancient track system, the remains of a brick kiln and a series of sawpits.

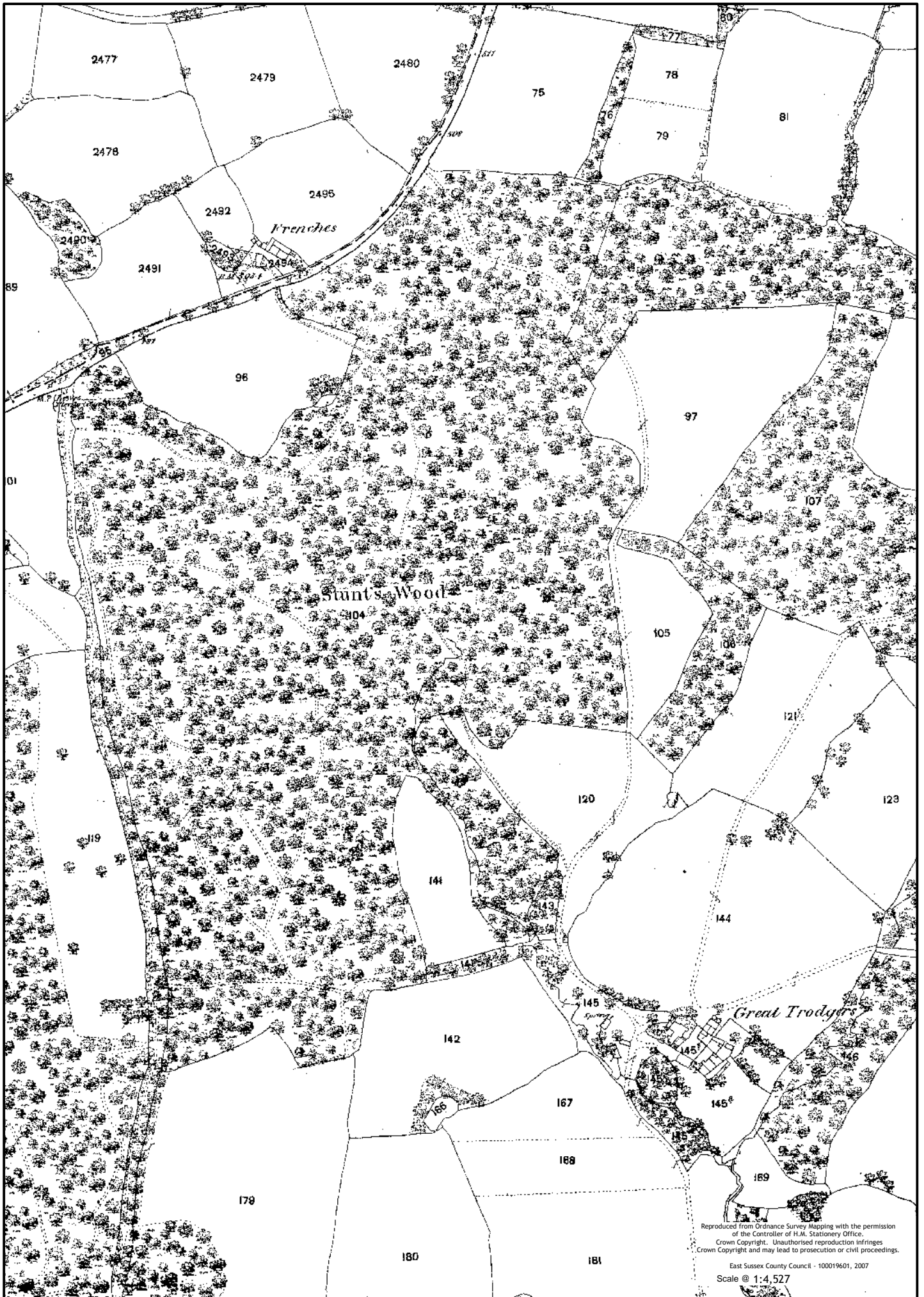
Best practice; How should these features be recorded? How should forestry be planned to preserve and enhance features? Archaeology is expensive, who pays?

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