



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Preliminary Woodland Management Plans

Halsnead – Lickers lane

Prepared for: Your housing

Prepared by Simon Brain *Chartered arboriculturist*

21.10.2022

Version 1

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Appendix 1 - WMP areas

Woodland Management Plan

Prepared by ATC Ltd on behalf of Capita

Contact details for Owner/Occupier	Contact details for ATC Ltd	
Your Housing	Mr Simon Brain, Willow Hill Cottage, School Lane, Burwardsley, Chester, CH3 9NX. 01829 770075	
Date Woodland visited: 22 nd September 2022	Weather Conditions: Blustery sunshine	
Address of Wood	Approx Grid Reference	Revision status
Land to south of Lickers Lane	SJ 47270 90512	Version 1
Administrative Boundary	Total Area of woodland (app)	Area Soil type
Knowsley	2.5	Freely draining slightly acid but base-rich soils
Woodland Management Plan Period	Review dates	Public Access
Ten years to commence upon the start of development on site 4.	(2, 5 and 10 year intervals prescriptive).	Yes
Site Designations/Constraints LWS		
European Protected Species All EPS and priority 1 species require confirmation of absence or presence and impact / mitigation details if required before any tree works can commence.		

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Instruction

This preliminary Woodland Management Plan (WMP) has been prepared for Your Housing to support the management and development of the woodland areas located at Lickers Lane, Halshead as required by planning condition 31.

My name is Simon Brain; I have twenty years professional experience as an arboricultural and woodland consultant and have attained Chartered status with the Institute of Chartered Foresters.

2.0 Site location and description

2.1 Location

The site is located across the area of land as shown in Appendix one.

2.2 Descriptions

The total study area consists of approximately 2.5 and 1.5 acres of semi natural broadleaf woodland. The site consists generally of an even aged high canopy tree species dominated by Sycamore. Oak, Sycamore and Ash are also present in the high canopy and in addition; Lime, Horse Chestnut, and Thorn are all present in smaller numbers. Natural regeneration occurs in the area, occasional *Ilex aquafolium* (Holly) and *Corylus avellana* (Hazel) are present. There are several 'honorary' native species such as *Acer pseudoplatanus* (Sycamore) that have developed in the high canopy. An herb / ground vegetation layer is present exhibiting numerous woodland plants in both land parcels.

3.0 Woodland Survey – Species, Habitat, Landscape

3.1 Species

Those tree species listed below have been identified in the woodland.

Common Name	Botanical Name	Code	Group (Broadleaf, Conifer)
Alder	<i>Alnus</i> spp	AR	B
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	AH	B
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	BE	B
Birch (downy/silver)	<i>Betula pubescens/pendula</i>	BI	B
Bird cherry	<i>Prunus padus</i>	BCH	B
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	PSP	B
Common alder	<i>Alnus gultinosa</i>	CAR	B
Common lime	<i>Tilia europaea</i>	CLI	B
Elm	<i>Ulmus</i> spp	EM	B
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>	GWL	B
Hawthorn species	<i>Crataegus</i> spp	HAW	B
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	HAZ	B
Holly species	<i>Ilex</i> spp	HOL	B
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	HCH	B
Large-leaved lime	<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i>	LLI	B
Lime	<i>Tilia</i> spp	LI	B
Oak (robur/petraea)	<i>Quercus</i> spp	OK	B
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	ROW	B
Scots pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	SP	C
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	SBI	B
Sweet chestnut	<i>Castanea sativa</i>	SC	B
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	SY	B
Whitebeam	<i>Sorbus aria</i>	WHI	B
Wild cherry/gean	<i>Prunus avium</i>	WCH	B

3.2 Habitat

The following habitat types are present: woodland, scrub, standing deadwood (with cavities and other bat features). As a result of such habitat we anticipate several potential European Protected Species to be potentially present. This may include bats, nesting birds, overwintering amphibian/reptile. Priority species such as Badger may also be present.

A baseline ecological survey has been compiled to support the reserved matters planning application and it must be adhered to before any woodland

management works can be implemented to ascertain the extent of European Protected Species and or Priority species. In addition, this can identify aims and objectives that shall guide the implementation of management plans.

Species and Habitat - Significance

All these habitats contribute to the current level of species abundance and richness across the site. Each will contribute to niche habits of plants and animals associated with the woodland such as land mammal's connection to the woodland itself and bird and bat species also being attracted by the habitat diversity.

4.0 Proposed development

4.1 Description

Reserved matters approval to include layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping in relation to the erection of dwellings on the site.

5.0 Stakeholder engagement and woodland protection

5.1 Stakeholder / interested party engagement

It is envisaged that there shall be a number of operations available to interested parties such as tree planting, brash and timber stacking, bat/bird box installation, small tree felling and wildlife monitoring (passive and static animal and plant surveys). It is hoped that local species-specific bodies can be approached such as the South Lancs Groups, Mammal Groups to include badger groups.

5.2 Woodland protection - Threats to the Woodland

Plant Health

The only notable tree disease present in the woodlands is Ash dieback. This is a disease that is defoliating several Ash trees across the UK and specific management of dying ash trees is required over the management plan length. In addition, *Pseudomonas syringae* pv *aesculi*, is also present even though the

number of *Aesculus hippocastanum* trees present in the study area is very limited.

Mammal predation, particularly Grey Squirrels is however a significant threat to the extent of natural regeneration. Planting is therefore required for the future sustainability of the woodland. Tree damage from predation is present throughout the woodland and a control programme is preferred to maintain the viability of introduced woodland trees and plants. A control programme of Grey Squirrels needs to consider a ratio of <5 per Ha, prior to April which is maintained by trapping or poisoning in baited cages throughout the active period when damage is caused (Apr-Jul).

Detrimental environmental change caused by pollution; flooding / soil erosion is considered unlikely. There was no evidence of anti-social behaviour across the site.

Invasive species have been found to be present on the sites (JPW) although it is located outside woodlands it is important it is not accidentally introduced to the W1 areas.

Climate change has proven to very recently challenged traditional forest management techniques largely due to the identification of an extensive list of new tree disease and pest outbreaks in the UK (FC England Managing Risk Fig 9)

Practical advice to combat climate change in this woodland shall consist of:

- Planting a wider range of species for future tolerance of climate change but also to reduce a reliance what is a small species range in the UK (72% of hardwood forest are reliant on five species FC Managing Risk 2014)
- Tree species selection capable of resilience based on future climatic predictions

6.0 Outline Woodland Management Plans

6.1 Aims and Objectives.

The following outline objectives shall apply:

- To engage the landowners and local community in active woodland management
- Improvement of species abundance and species richness within those areas of unaffected semi natural woodland
- Accounting for the needs of species associated (or potentially associated) with the woodland that require a mosaic of habitats
- Acknowledgement of the role played by native and non-native conifer species in the areas landscape character and history
- Maintenance of a woodland that is suitably safe for pedestrian access
- Maximise woodland structure by selective intervention

The following specific aims shall apply:

- Maintenance and enhancement of existing Conifer stock across the site but also specifically for native species in the locality and landscape area profile
- Arboricultural management for individual trees to create niche habitat
- Control of undesirably invasive species throughout the site
- Development and protection of veteran trees
- Tree planting using species to create woodland structure throughout the site
- Progressively re-structuring of the even aged areas to achieve an improved range of age classes
- Re-structuring by coupe felling, this shall apply to selected areas of low-quality natural regeneration.
- Establish monitoring intervals to allow repeatable data gathering to allow analysis for change in local distribution of species
- Maintain stakeholder partnership programme and volunteer involvement

The techniques by which these specific aims shall be delivered are:

- In areas where existing conifer stock is present it is ensured through felling that the better specimens, particularly of *P. Abies* or *P. nigra* are identified and retained. The thinning (Halo thinning) of those scrub trees growing within the immediate vicinity of such dominant Pine and Fir shall be applied. This shall be progressive and be completed over a number of years so as to gradually release the tree as an individual.
- Natural regeneration of sycamore predominately covers the woodland scrub layer. Such regeneration shall be removed in the initial year of works in and replanted with suitable native plant species in order to create a graduated strip of vegetation providing eco tones and niche habitat.
- The Control of undesirably invasive species throughout the site shall focus on the monitoring of these species for the WMP duration.
- Veteran trees are to be created in the woodland and they shall undergo individual management aimed at improving the longevity of these trees and their contribution to biodiversity. Many exhibits arboricultural defects such as deadwood, cavity, decay etc and because of non-intervention exhibit subsiding limbs, deadwood and broken parts that require removal / management for safety. All such works require consultation with ecologists and cannot be undertaken until formal permission from the ecologist has been approved. The installation of bird and bat boxes is provided on veteran trees.
- Woodland structure shall be reinforced and improved by installing suitable plants that form an intermediate layer in the woodlands structure such as *Sorbus*, *Corylus* and *Crataegus*.

- The review dates for the woodland management plans are year 4 and year 8 following implementation of the WMP.
- A stakeholder partnership with the local community is envisaged in the form of volunteer assistance during the implementation of aspects of the works, for example tree planting.
- Introduction of native bulb plants

7.0 Outline Woodland Management Plans

7.1 Outline Management Strategy details.

W1 Woodland – Individual woodland work programme

Activity, scope and Specification	1	2	3	4	5	6-10	10+
Monitor of undesirably invasive species	Yes		Yes monitor			Yes monitor	
Progressive re-structuring of honorary native species such as Sycamore to create wider glade areas. This shall consist of a 10% thinning ratio of all standing trees. Halo thinning for any existing conifer. Remove and replace low quality regeneration with native trees and shrubs		Yes			Yes 10%	Yes 10%	
Tree planting shall be undertaken as follows: In areas dominated by Sycamore intermediate layer species shall be introduced at approximate 2m intervals with adequate rabbit and stem protection and Beech and Oak will be planted at 5m intervals throughout the Woodland. Native conifer shall be planted throughout and intermediate layer planting of hazel, mountain ash and thorn The planted areas shall be inspected and 'beaten up' / failed trees replaced		Yes Yes		Yes (monitor) Yes (monitor)		Yes (monitor) Yes (monitor)	
Development and protection of veteran trees There are no veterans in the woodland however several large over mature trees are suitable for veteranisation techniques. For example, has several examples of trees that are likely to be lost over the next twenty years due to their condition but if pruned the deadwood resource could be extended significantly. Where veteran trees can be identified halo thinning shall be undertaken around the tree very gradually and throughout the WMP		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (monitor)	
Coupe felling. It is intended that several small areas (20m square) can be created by coupe felling a cluster of tree stems. Given the resultant development of ground vegetation bulb introduction of native plants shall be paused until year 5	Yes	Yes (monitor veg. types)		Native bulb planting	Yes (dep on monitoring result)		
Removal of natural regenerating, suppressed and malformed trees throughout of woodland areas (max 20% of overall woodland to include 10% standing tree thinning)	Yes	Yes			Yes (monitor)		
Volunteer involvement in planting, supervised tree felling's, timber stacking, vegetation and animal surveys and habitat improvements. Bird and Bat boxes to be installed in trees in accordance with local bat/bird group advice.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

8.0 Funding

- 8.1 A residential management company would be established by the developer whom shall be solely responsible for the funding of the WMP for the lifetime of the development.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The woodland area is small being only 2.5 acres in total. It is an even aged semi natural broadleaf woodland containing a small number of conifer species. It exhibits good levels of natural regeneration, scrub, and field layers with a variety of woodland plants growing within the study areas. It has attained a some conservation value status by virtue of size, species, and habitat range as well as for its significant wider amenity value in the landscape.
- 9.2 As a result of the existing high levels of biodiversity it is generally accepted that minimal intervention will be used as a management strategy. Such minimal intervention is aimed at increasing the overall biodiversity of the woodland through simple woodland management techniques as expressed in section 6

Appendix 1 - WMP areas

