8110 : GREAT WILSEY PARK, HAVERHILL

REDROW HOMES

Woodland Management Plan – Great Field Plantation

Version	Created By	Approved By	Date
vf4	Sam Wheeler	Rob Whitlock	30.05.25

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PROTECTED SPECIES

This report contains sensitive information relating to protected species. The information contained herein should not be disseminated without the prior consent of Ecology Solutions.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Ecology Solutions was commissioned by Redrow Homes in October 2018 to prepare materials to address the requirements of planning conditions for the development at Great Wilsey Park (reference: DC/15/2151/OUT).

1.2. Condition 7 requires that a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) be submitted and approved prior to commencement of development. The condition states:

No development shall commence within any phase or reserved matters application until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for that phase or reserved matters application has been submitted to and approved in writing by the loc planning authority. The content of the LEMP shall include the following.

a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed including all new and existing woodland and coppiced areas, trees, and shrub belts, field margin compensatory habitat, new and existing hedgerow margins with intended management regimes, those parts of the site that contain notable plant species recorded on the site, watercourse margins, attenuation ponds and associated features.
b) Ecological constraints on site and how these influence management.
c) Aims and objectives of management.
d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
e) Prescriptions for management actions.
f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period)
g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.
i) Strategy for the provision of information about sensitive habitats through a variety of outlets such as interpretation boards, new resident information packs.

The management plan for the existing Great Field Plantation woodland must include monitoring of public use of the woodland such that the design of pathways, fencing, hedging and other management operations are iterative, with the aim that woodland design reflects the needs of the new community. Control of litter and dog waste (within normal refuse collection) can be part of this iterative process. Th management plan should identify areas for coppicing to encourage understore development.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured and the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results fr monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved details.

The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved LEMP. All elements of the mitigation strategy shall be implemented in accordance with th approved details.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory development of the site and that wildlife habitats and protected species are considered as part of the design process and are not affected adversely by the development.

1.3. This Woodland Management Plan (WMP) addresses the long-term management of Great Fields Plantation only. Separate Landscape and Ecological Management Plans (LEMPs) are provided to address the management requirements of the individual Reserved Matters Applications (RMAs).

1.4. This report sets out the management prescriptions of Great Field Plantation and describes the wildlife enhancements and mitigation strategies to be implemented.

1.5. This WMP has been written with reference to published guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)[1] and in accordance with Natural England and other relevant guidelines for protected species.

[1] CIEEM (2018). *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal and Marine* version 1.2 – Updated April 2022. CIEEM, Winchester.

2. Description and Evaluation of Features to be Managed

2.1. This section sets out the inventory of existing woodland to be retained and managed, identifying features of particular interest or importance that will be priorities for management. This information is derived from work undertaken to inform the outline Environmental Statement (ES), as well as walkover surveys undertaken by Ecology Solutions between 2018 and 2025.

2.2. Existing Woodland

Great Field Plantation

2.2.1. Activity Great Field Plantation consists of two distinct areas, designated as W5 and W7 in the ES. The western compartment (W5) has a number of mature specimens including Austrian Pine *Pinus nigra*, Common Larch *Larix decidua*, Grand Fir *Abies grandis*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, English Elm *Ulmus procera*, Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Scots Pine *Pinus sylvatica*, Oak *Quercus robur*, Norway Spruce *Picea abies* and Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*.

2.2.2. The eastern compartment (W7) has a higher proportion of coniferous trees such as Common Larch, Grand Fir and Norway Spruce, which are more regularly spaced.

2.2.3. Ground flora in both compartments consists of Ivy *Hedera helix*, Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*, False Brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, Hemlock *Conium maculatum*, Wood Dock *Rumex crispus* and Dog's Mercury *Mercurialis perennis*. The understorey is limited but includes species such as Holly *Ilex aquifolium* and Hazel *Corylus avellana*. The woodland was well trodden with footpaths and showed signs of regular human disturbance from the presence of fires, dens and litter.

Stour Brook Tributary

2.2.4. The Stour Brook Tributary is further discussed within the LEMP for the Infrastructure RMA, but as there is overlap with Great Field Plantation it is also discussed within this WMP.

2.2.5. The Stour Brook Tributary runs along the southern edge of Great Field Plantation and on to the southeast. The watercourse is sheltered by a woodland corridor, with species including Crack Willow *Salix fragilis* and Alder *Alnus glutinosa*, with an understorey of Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, Elder, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*.

2.2.6. The plantation presents a habitat suitable for providing opportunities for a wide range of faunal species such as bats, birds, Dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius*, [redacted] and invertebrates.

2.2.7. Great Field Plantation is a core component of the green infrastructure within the site, both in terms of biodiversity value and recreational interest. Its connectivity to the existing network of hedgerows and woodland parcels

across the site and the wider environs will be bolstered through ne
hedgerow and tree planting.

3. Aims and Objectives of Management

3.1. This section sets out the vision and conservation objectives for the woodland management plan.

> *The vision for the strategy is to provide a framework for enhancement and manageme of Great Field Plantation, which will – through appropriate management - protect and enhance the existing biodiversity within the woodland, whilst providing a semi-natural environment for the new residents in conjunction with the wider landscape proposals.*

3.2. Defining the Conservation Objectives

3.2.1. Defining a set of objectives is central to the effectiveness of this strategy, given that it is intended to provide a framework that will safeguard existing nature conservation interest and provide guidance on enhancement and future management.

3.2.2. The nature of these objectives has been guided by the principles set out in UK and European wildlife legislation, notably the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017. Furthermore, the formulation of these objectives has also been influenced by national and local biodiversity and conservation targets, as set out in the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework and the Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

3.2.3. The principal objective for Great Field Plantation is to promote greater habitat diversity, whilst providing a place of recreation for residents.

3.2.4. The overarching objectives for nature conservation are as follows:

Objective 1

To safeguard species important in the national and local context, and to maintain or enhance their conservation status as appropriate.

Objective 2

To ensure that the site continues to support a similar complement of species to that already existing.

Objective 3

To enhance the biodiversity of the site, where this is compatible with the above objectives.

3.3. Achieving the Objectives

3.3.1. Information on the existing woodland regarding features of ecologica interest and the presence of protected species has been collated as part of the preparation of this document, and it is upon this foundation that the specific enhancements and management prescriptions to follow are based.

3.3.2. The Woodland Management Plan, and the various measures described in the following section, are illustrated on Plan ECO1.

3.3.3. Maintenance measures for species provisions such as hibernacula and bird and bat boxes are detailed below.

4. Description and Evaluation of Features to be Managed

4.1. Great Field Plantation

4.1.1. Overall, while Great Field Plantation does offer opportunities to wildlife, it is of limited intrinsic nature conservation interest. The understorey is virtually absent, and the field layer is very impoverished, with little light penetrating to the woodland floor in some areas. The aims of management are therefore to facilitate a gradual conversion to a more naturalistic woodland with greater structural diversity, focusing on native species as opposed to introduced conifers.

Conversion of Even-aged Plantation to Uneven-aged System

4.1.2. The principal advantage of the phased removal of conifers and introduction of native broadleaves is that disruption to wildlife is minimised. A phased approach is therefore favoured over a clear-fell approach, which would have an adverse effect on protected and notable species and is, in any case, unacceptable from a landscape and visual standpoint.

4.1.3. The management company will be responsible for the removal of non-native conifers. Removal will be completed over a period of 10 years, with 10 percent of the trees removed each year. Existing broadleaved species will b encouraged to grow to maturity, and new native canopy tree planting undertaken to replace removed non-native species.

4.1.4. The northeastern portion of the plantation where most of the coniferous species are located, and where the majority of the felling will be centred, is currently heavily shaded with little light able to penetrate the woodland floor. Post-felling of non-native conifers, broadleaved species will be planted at approximately 50 percent of the total of removed trees to ensure that the woodland floor does not once again become heavily shaded and th understorey and ground flora is allowed to develop.

4.1.5. Elsewhere within the plantation, the canopy cover will be assessed post-felling of coniferous species, but it is expected that no additional planting will be required.

4.1.6. Two glades will be established in the woodland by felling conifer species and smaller self-seeded specimens. Each glade will measure approximately 400m^2 and will be established in the first year of adoption of the woodland by the assigned management company.

4.1.7. Felled timber will be cut into logs and set into ‘loggeries’ and more informal log piles to encourage saproxylic invertebrates. Felled trees will not be shredded or mulched.

4.1.8. Some of the existing dead wood will be left as is, with other made into log piles.

4.1.9. New understorey planting will be undertaken using native species. New planting will be established across the plantation floor at a density of approximately 1 plant per 1m^2 as to not overcrowd and encourage natural regeneration.

4.1.10. New planting will exclusively be locally native species e.g. Oak; Hazel, Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*; Field Maple *Acer campestre*, Holly, Guelder Rose *Viburnum opulus*; Hawthorn; Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*; Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, Dog Rose *Rosa canina*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Wild Cherry *Prunus avium*, Bird Cherry *Prunus padus*, Crab Apple *Malus sylvestris* and Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*. The aim will be to encourage st growth of these species to canopy and understorey layer as appropriate.

4.1.11. Tree tubes will be used to protect young tree and scrub planting until it has established. The management company will monitor the growth of new planting and remove tubes at an appropriate time before the new planting outgrows the tubes. This is likely to be three to five years after planting, or when the base of the tree reaches 3 to 3.5 inches in diameter.

4.1.12. New planting will also be monitored for evidence of damage, such as bark stripping from deer.

Coppicing

4.1.13. Existing Hazel stools will be coppiced on a 15-year rotation, to encourage greater structural diversity, and layered to produce new coppice stools and expand the understorey. Coppicing will begin in the first year of adoption of the woodland by the assigned management company.

4.1.14. The existing Hazel stools are limited in number but well distributed across the plantation, with greater numbers in the southern portions. The woodland will be divided into three zones (northeast, southeast and southwest) with each zone being subject to coppicing on a 5-year rotation starting in the southeast and working anti-clockwise). Rotational coppicing will allow for coppiced areas to re-establish prior the removal of the next zone and ensure that an understorey comprising Hazel is always present.

4.1.15. Hazel stands will be coppiced in winter or early spring before they come into active growth. Stands will be cut to approximately 5cm above the ground.

4.1.16. Through coppicing, the Hazel present in the understorey of the woodland will be greatly increased to the benefit of Dormice and other wildlife. Cut wood will be used to diversify the habitat through establishment of wood piles.

Ground Flora

4.1.17. The effects of habitat management on the ground flora will be monitored. Though the intention will be to encourage natural regeneration, if this proves difficult consideration will be given to the introduction of plug-planted locally native species.

Wildlife Opportunities

4.1.18. It is expected that the habitat enhancements will generate greater wildlife interest. Additional opportunities will be established by providing a series of bat, bird, Dormouse, Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* and invertebrate boxes, as well as hibernacula and log piles.

4.1.19. [redacted]

Public Use and Recreation

4.1.20. The management company will monitor public use of the woodland, focusing on any new desire lines that have been created and any inappropriate use of the woodland. Management operations will be adapted where necessary. Generally, it is envisaged that fencing will be avoided. [redacted] this will be by means of dead hedging or planting thorny species. If fencing must be used it will be suitable for the area, e.g. natural woven Willow *Salix* sp. or Hazel hurdles.

4.1.21. Several trees with damaged branches and / or trunks are located throughout the woodland, including some in close proximity to existing desire lines and new paths. These will require pruning / felling due to health and safety concerns. None were noted to support potential roost features for bats.

4.1.22. Desire lines have already been established linking the southeastern and southwestern boundaries of the woodland, in addition to intersecting northwards through the centre of the woodland. The pathways to be established will follow these existing routes, which will be better defined through the removal of deadwood on the ground and overhanging limbs.

4.1.23. Two new informal paths will be established in the north of the plantation, running from east to west, where it is expected that desire lines would otherwise form once the new houses are occupied. These paths will link the housing parcels to the east and the west of the plantation, [redacted]

4.1.24. Additionally, a short path will be created to link the existing southern desire line to the eastern boundary of the plantation.

4.1.25. During the early years, an early season cut of the field layer will be undertaken where necessary to keep paths clear until they have become more established.

4.1.26. The paths will connect the two glades and access points in and out of the woodland on the eastern and western boundaries.

4.1.27. Benches will be provided in woodland glades and will make use of larger fallen or felled trees from within the plantation.

4.1.28. Existing litter and debris that otherwise degrades the visual appeal of the plantation will be removed. Litter and dog waste bins will be provided at the entrances of the plantation.

4.1.29. An information board will be provided at the southeastern access point into the plantation, setting out the wildlife interest of the site.

Boundary Hedgerow

4.1.30. A defunct hedgerow is present on the eastern boundary of the plantation. This will be bolstered with native species planting. Additionally, a new native hedgerow will be established on the northwestern boundary of Great Field Plantation to diversify the habitat and regulate public access, while facilitating specific access points.

Table 4.1. Native hedgerow species list.

Native Hedgerow Species
Field Maple *Acer campestre*
Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*
Hazel *Corylus avellana*
Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*
Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*
Holly *Ilex aquifolium*
Wild Privet *Ligustrum vulgare*
Crab Apple *Malus sylvestris*

Native Hedgerow Species
Wild Cherry *Prunus avium*
Dog Rose *Rosa canina*
Guelder Rose *Viburnum opulus*

4.2. Stour Brook Tributary

4.2.1. Generally, the woodland along the watercourse is more semi-natural than that of the plantation, with mature broadleaved trees and a good understorey and field layer. At this stage it is considered that minimal intervention is necessary. Enhancements will focus on the provision of dead wood piles for habitat diversification. The existing footbridge will be replaced to facilitate safe public access and recreation.

5. Initial Aftercare and Long-term Management and Maintenance

5.1. Trees

A less rigorous approach to management and maintenance will be applied to the woodland than elsewhere in the landscaped areas within the site, due to a reduced need for visual amenity and a desire to create a more naturalised setting;

Watering during periods of drought for no less than the first three years after planting to ensure satisfactory establishment;

Trees inspected every six months for the first two years to ensure that they are healthy and not diseased, damaged, or dead. After first two years, trees can be inspected annually if found to be establishing well;

Failed trees within first five years replaced and maintained for subsequent five years. Tree replacement to occur in early spring or late autumn; and

Checks in March and September each year to ensure all stakes and ties properly adjusted. Stakes may be removed in years 3-5 once trees establish and roots firm.

5.2. Understorey Shrubs

Inspection every six months to ensure planting is healthy, not diseased, damaged, or dead. Failed species removed and replaced with the same species and size;

Watering during periods of drought for no less than the first three years after planting to ensure satisfactory establishment; and

Removal of litter, debris and other harmful material that may affect growth is to be removed by hand.

5.3. Hedgerows

Hedgerows to be cut over winter on a three-year rotation, so that not all are cut in any one year. This will encourage greater availability of winter forage for birds;

Hedgerows laid over winter on rotation by an experienced contractor to encourage greater structural diversity;

Watering during periods of drought for no less than the first three years after planting to ensure satisfactory establishment;

Inspection every six months for the first two years to ensure planting is healthy, not diseased, damaged, or dead. After the first two years, hedgerows can be inspected annually if found to be establishing well;

Failed species will be removed and replaced with the same species of the same specification. Replacement will occur in early spring or late autumn;

All hedgerows are to be maintained substantially free of undesirable weeds. Weeding will be carried out by hand, machine, via the application of a suitable herbicide, or by a combination of all three of these methods consistent with the other management requirements; and

Emptying of the litter and dog waste bins will be the responsibility of the appointed management company. All litter and dog waste bins to inspected and emptied weekly.

5.4. Wildlife Enhancements

5.4.1. Bat boxes will be checked periodically (once per year in March) for the first five years following installation by a suitably experienced and licensed ecologist to ensure that they are still in situ and are not damaged. Boxes will be replaced if found to be damaged. Further details on bat box models and locations can be found in section 12 of the Environmental Implementation Strategy (EIS) for the infrastructure RMA.

5.4.2. Dormouse nesting boxes will be checked periodically (at least once a year in March) for the first five years following installation by a suitably experienced ecologist to ensure that they are still in situ and are not damaged. Boxes will be replaced if found to be damaged. Further details on nest box locations can be found in section 14 of the EIS for the infrastructure RMA.

5.4.3. Hedgehog hibernation boxes will be checked periodically (at least once a year) for the first five years following installation, by a suitably experienced ecologist to ensure that they are still in situ and are not damaged. Boxes will be replaced if found to be damaged. Further details on hibernation box models and locations can be found in section 15 of the EIS for the infrastructure RMA.

5.4.4. Bird boxes will be checked periodically (at least once a year in March) for the first five years following installation by a suitably experienced ecologist to ensure that they are still in situ and are not damaged. Boxes will be replaced if found to be damaged. Further details on bird box models and locations can be found in section 16 of the EIS for the infrastructure RMA.

5.4.5. Hibernacula will be checked annually for the first five years followir installation by a suitably experienced ecologist to ensure that they are still in situ and are not damaged. Hibernacula will be replaced if found to b damaged. Further details on hibernacula and locations can be found in section 17 of the EIS for the infrastructure RMA.

5.4.6. Invertebrate nesting aids will be checked annually for the first five years following installation by a suitably experienced ecologist to ensure that they are still in situ and are not damaged. Nesting aids will be replaced if found to

be damaged. Further details on invertebrate nesting aids can be found in section 19 of the EIS for the infrastructure RMA.

6. Work Schedule and Ten-year Plan

6.1.1. The table below provides a schedule of work for the first ten years following establishment.

Habitat	Action	Timing
Great Field Plantation	Diversification of age structure	Establish glades in Year 1. Selective felling of conifer species outside nesting bird season. Any trees witl roosting potential or known bird nest sites retained.
	Tree and Understore planting	Year 1 growing season onwards.
	Tree and Understore inspection	Every six months for first two years to check for dam and disease. Replaced if failing.
	Tree and Understore inspection	Annually from years two to five and biennially from year five onwards if establishing well.
	Stakes and ties	March and September annually. Between Years 3-5 stakes will be removed if trees are established.
	Log piles	Using felled timber from Year 1 onwards; replenished wi further woodland management.
	Coppicing	Hazel stools coppiced on 15-year rotation from Yea onwards. Each zone to be coppiced once in 5 years.
	Layering	Establishing new Hazel stools with this technique du planting season from Year 1 onwards.
	Boundary hedgerow planting and gappi up	Year 1 growing season.
	Boundary hedgerow watering	Where required during first three years, in per drought.
	Boundary hedgerow inspection	Every six months for first two years to check for dam and disease. Replaced if failing.
	Boundary hedgerow inspection	Annually from Years two to five and biennially from y five onwards if establishing well.
	Boundary hedgerow pruning	Between January and March as required.
	Boundary hedgerow cutting	Over winter on three-year rotation, so only one third cut i any one year, unless adjacent to public right cycleway or pedestrian route.
	Boundary hedgerow laying	Hedgerows laid in rotation by experienced contractor, ove winter period.
	Litter and Dog Was Bins	Existing litter will be removed and disposed c beginning of Year 1. To be inspected and emptied weekly

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Plans

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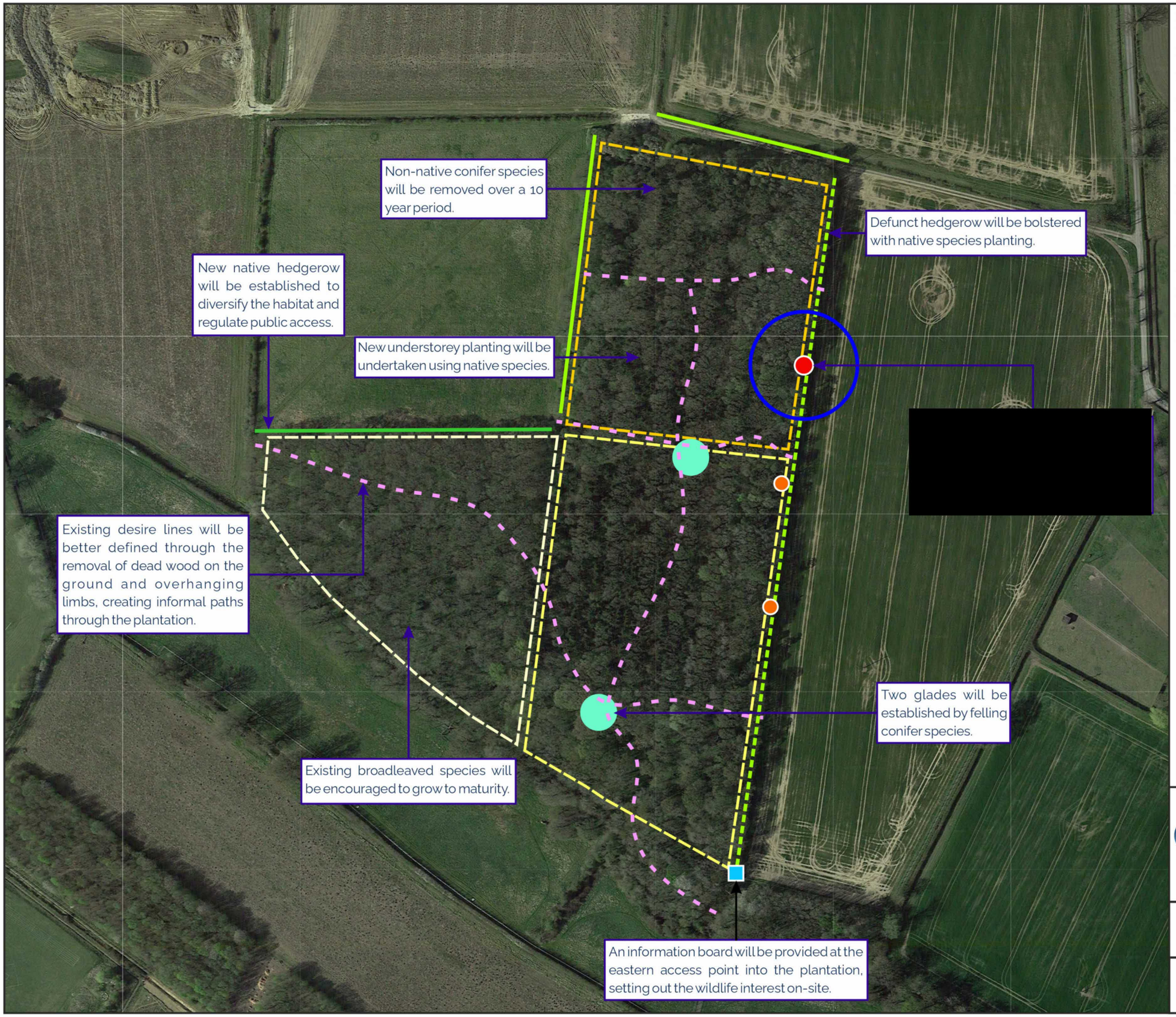
PLAN ECO1

Woodland Management Plan



KEY:

- INFORMAL PATH
- WOODLAND GLADE
- EXISTING NATIVE HEDGEROW
- EXISTING DEFUNCT NATIVE HEDGEROW
- NEW NATIVE HEDGEROW
- INFORMATION BOARD
- COPPICING ZONE 1
- COPPICING ZONE 2
- COPPICING ZONE 3
- ACTIVE BADGER SETT
- INACTIVE BADGER SETT
- 30M CONSULTATION ZONE

Scale 50m

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8110: GREAT WILSEY PARK, HAVERHILL

PLAN ECO1: WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Rev: B

May 2025

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