



Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Date: THURSDAY, 13 JULY 2023

Time: 11.00 am

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members:

Benjamin Murphy (Chairman)	The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor, Nicholas Lyons
Caroline Haines (Deputy Chairman)	Andrew McMurtrie (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Graeme Doshi-Smith	Deputy Philip Woodhouse
George Abrahams	Verderer Michael Chapman DL
Jaspreet Hodgson	Verderer William Kennedy
Alderman Vincent Keaveny, CBE	Verderer Paul Morris
Gregory Lawrence	Verderer Nicholas Munday

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Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

3. **MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting held on 15 June 2023.

For Decision
(Pages 7 - 10)

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

For Information

a) Action Log

Report of the Town Clerk.

Natural Environment

5. **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & LEAD MEMBER PROPOSALS**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 11 - 20)

6. **EPPING FOREST AND THE COMMONS MEDIA FORWARD PLAN**

Report of the Executive Director, Corporate Communications and External Affairs.

For Decision
(Pages 21 - 24)

7. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2022/23 - EPPING FOREST AND COMMONS**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

8. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 25 - 52)

9. **OPEN SPACES BUSINESS PLAN 2022/23 - YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

The Commons

10. **KENLEY REVIVAL PROJECT. A NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND (FORMERLY HLF) FUNDED PROJECT.**

Report of the Director of Natural Environment.

For Information

11. **THE COMMONS - ASSISTANT DIRECTORS UPDATE APR-MAY 2023**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

Epping Forest

12. **COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP 2023 APPLICATION FINAL DETAILS (SEF 14B/23)**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 53 - 114)

13. **EPPING FOREST - ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE APRIL - MAY 2023 (SEF 16/23)**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

14. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

16. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION: The following matters relate to business under the remit of the Court of Common Council acting for the City Corporation as charity Trustee, to which Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 public access to meetings provisions do not apply. The following items contain sensitive information which it is not in the best interests of the charity to consider in a public meeting (engaging similar considerations as under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) and will be considered in non-public session.

For Decision

17. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 June 2023.

For Decision
(Pages 115 - 116)

18. **MATTERS ARISING**

For Information

- a) Action Log
Report of the Town Clerk.

19. **LICENSING REQUEST**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

20. **REQUEST FOR THE PROVISION OF A DEED OF GRANT EASEMENT (SEF 19/23)**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 117 - 150)

21. **CORPORATE CHARITIES REVIEW SCOPING EXERCISE TO SUPPORT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES REVIEW**

Joint Report of Managing Director BHE & Natural Environment Director.

For Decision
(Pages 151 - 162)

22. **HISTORICAL INCOME REPORT (2017/18-2024) FOR EPPING FOREST.**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

23. **HISTORICAL INCOME REPORT (2017/18-2024) FOR ASHTEAD COMMON**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

24. **HISTORICAL INCOME REPORT (2017/18-2024) FOR BURNHAM BEECHES**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

25. **HISTORICAL INCOME REPORT (2017/18-2024) FOR WEST WICKHAM AND COULSDON COMMON**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information

26. **NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

27. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

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EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 15 June 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 15 June 2023 at
11.00 am

Present

Members:

Benjamin Murphy (Chairman)
Caroline Haines (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Graeme Doshi-Smith
Jaspreet Hodgson
Alderman Vincent Keaveny
Deputy Philip Woodhouse
Verderer Michael Chapman DL
Verderer Paul Morris
Verderer Nicholas Munday

Officers:

Emily Brennan	- Natural Environment Department
Jacqueline Eggleston	- Natural Environment Department
Ellen Fouweather	- Deputy Town Clerk's Department
Joanne Hill	- Natural Environment Department
Jo Hurst	- Natural Environment Department
Geoff Sinclair	- Natural Environment Department
Blair Stringman	- Deputy Town Clerk's Department
Ian Thomas CBE	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Thomson	- Natural Environment Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Gregory Lawrence and Verderer William Kennedy.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, the Public and Non-Public Summary of the meeting held on 18 May be agreed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4.1 Action Log

There were no comments on the action log.

5. **EPPING FOREST GOVERNANCE PROPOSALS**

The Committee was informed the item had been removed from the agenda.

6. **WANSTEAD PARK PROJECTS UPDATE (SEF 13/23)**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment, concerning an update on various projects taking place in Wanstead Park.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

7. **VISITOR SURVEY (SEF 11/23)**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment, concerning a visitor survey for Epping Forest that had recently been commissioned.

The following was raised by the Committee:

- Members noted the increase in the number of visitors to Epping Forest and praised the Forests international importance, it was noted that the Communications team was working on a way to celebrate this. Discussion was raised as to the sustainability of visitors and the risk factors this entailed such as damage that could be inflicted.
- Members discussed the various possibilities for members of the public to contribute donations to Epping Forest. It was noted that card readers had been piloted in other Open Spaces areas such as at West Ham Park, but scalability for this type of electronic donation could be an issue for Epping Forest.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

8. **REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EPPING FOREST CONSULTATIVE GROUP (SEF 08/23)**

The Committee was informed that the item had been deferred to the next formal meeting.

9. **EPPING FOREST - FUTURE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROPOSALS (SEF 12/23)**

The Committee was informed that the item had been deferred to the next formal meeting.

10. **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT LEARNING PROGRAMME AT EPPING FOREST**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment, concerning Natural Environment Learning Programme at Epping Forest.

The Deputy Chairman gave praise to the Environment Department for there hard work on the learning programme at Epping Forest. Members noted the importance of education and behaviour around the Forest for people, especially during the summer season.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

11. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no urgent business.

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That, the following matters relate to business under the remit of the Court of Common Council acting for the City Corporation as charity Trustee, to which Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 public access to meetings provisions do not apply. The following items contain sensitive information which it is not in the best interests of the charity to consider in a public meeting (engaging similar considerations as under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) and will be considered in non-public session.

14. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 18 May be agreed as a correct record.

15. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

15.1 **Action Log**

There were no comments on the action log.

16. **1-YEAR FBT PEGRUM RENEWAL URGENCY**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk.

17. **NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

One item of business was considered urgent and considered whilst the public were excluded.

The meeting ended at 11.35am.

Chairman

Contact Officer: Blair Stringman
Blair.Stringman@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 5

Committee(s): Epping Forest and Commons – For Decision	Dated: 13/07/2023
Subject: Stakeholder Engagement & Lead Member Proposals	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	9, 10, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N
Report of: Environment Executive Director	For Decision
Report author: Paul Thomson, Natural Environment Assistant Director, Epping Forest Geoff Sinclair, Natural Environment Assistant Director, The Commons	

Summary

The Epping Forest and Commons Committee (EF&CC) governance arrangements have remained largely unchanged for the past 25 years. In addition to six formal Committee meetings each year and four site visits, a number of further meetings take place to help prepare and progress Committee business and update and engage local stakeholders.

For the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, this includes bi-weekly meetings with the Executive Director, bi-weekly meetings with the Director, six briefings with the Assistant Directors, six agenda planning sessions, six Committee call-over meetings and annual bilateral reviews with the Chairman of Policy and Resources and Chairman of Finance.

In addition, a series of informal stakeholder consultation meetings take place, that currently supplement formal governance and reporting mechanisms. These annual meetings include six Epping Forest Local Authority Liaison Meetings with the four relevant Local Authorities, three Epping Forest Consultative Group meetings, three Coulsdon Commons and West Wickham and Spring Park Consultative Group meetings, three Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group meetings and three Ashted Common Consultative Group meetings.

The Epping Forest charity also introduced Annual Review reporting from 2020, with the four Commons charities due to follow suit this year and a stronger, more formalised, departmental reporting commitment on matters ranging from Finance to Risk has begun.

These responsibilities place a considerable burden on Members and Officers and this report is necessary to propose changes to the current stakeholder engagement and reporting mechanisms, designed to reduce the time commitments on individual Members, delegate chairing responsibilities based on the output of the 2023 Member skills audit and improve the overall effectiveness and scrutiny of the management and oversight of each charitable trust.

One of the outcomes of the Corporate Governance Review process was endorsement for the principle of a greater use of Lead Members (or ‘rapporteurs’) to help spread the burden of office placed upon the Chairman amongst the wider committee, whilst also making best use of talent available on the Committee.

Whilst action has been taken to consolidate or discontinue some meetings over the past year to mitigate resourcing implications from TOM Phase II, further action is proposed, as discussed at the Epping Forest & Commons Committee Away Day in February 2023.

Recommendations

Members are asked to approve the:

1. Retention of Epping Forest & Commons Committee (EF&CC) meetings on a bimonthly basis, holding six meetings each year, four quarterly meetings for primarily Committee business with updates from control and logistics functions, and two additional meetings focused on strategy and policy development, potentially also aligning to site visits.
2. Endorse the revision of Director and Assistant Director reporting to Members from narrative-based reporting to reporting focused on key performance indicators and project progress timetables which drive strategic priorities.
3. Endorse the provision of early drafts of business requiring decision or policy proposals to EF&CC prior to being considered by consultative groups, to allow Members to set the framework for consultation and ensure responses are fully considered prior to decision making.
4. Introduction of an Epping Forest bimonthly ‘surgery’ led by the Assistant Director (Superintendent) for Verderers to discuss issues raised by Commoners.
5. Endorse the retention of Epping Forest Local Authority Liaison Meetings, on a bi-annual basis, to allow local councillors to work together as one group to support each charity. These meetings will be Chaired by the Chairman or Deputy Chairman. Reflecting the dispersed character of The Commons arrangements will continue to embed Councillors into the relevant Charity Consultative Groups.
6. Change to arrangements of the Epping Forest Consultative Group as follows.
 - a. The Chairman to appoint a Verderer to Chair the meetings on a trial basis. The Chair will rotate between the Verderers.
 - b. Reduction from three meetings each year, to two subject to a Charity Review recommendation to introduce an annual review meeting to bring the total number of consultative meetings back to a total of 3).
 - c. Retaining the hybrid format of virtual and physical representation

- d. Replacement of detailed minutes with action logs, which would be made transparent to EF&CC
 - e. Commence work planning to improve the diversity and inclusion within the group.
 - f. Conduct a skills audit of group members to allow the experience and skills of individual members and organisations to be fully leveraged by the charity.
7. Changing the arrangements of The Commons Consultative Group as follows:
 - a. Reducing each area meeting from three to two per year
 - b. The Chairman to appoint a Member to Chair the meetings on a trial basis.
 - c. Retaining the hybrid format of virtual and physical representation
 - d. Replacement of minutes with action recording, which would be made transparent to EF&CC
 - e. Commence work planning to improve the diversity and inclusion within the group.
 - f. Conduct a skills audit of group members to allow the experience and skills of individual members and organisations to be fully leveraged by each charity.
 8. Refer consideration of an Annual Review Meeting, known under former Forest Law as a Regard, to the forthcoming Charity Review.
 9. Explore the best platform to house action logs and other relevant information for each charity consultative group, which is accessible to external members.
 10. Note that the Epping Forest and Commons Committee Management Plan Sub-Committee and the Land Registration Working Group (LRWG) was abolished by the Court of Common Council in December 2021. A final report on unresolved encroachments considered by the LRWG will be brought to EF&CC.
 11. Note that the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee was abolished by the Court of Common Council in December 2021. The Joint Agreement with the Field Studies Council will be amended to reflect this decision while scrutiny and budget setting of the licence will be added to the work of EF&CC.
 12. Regularise community liaison for major project management around time limited 'Task and Finish Groups', predominantly led by Officers to ensure continuous communication and improved stakeholder partnership.
 13. Continue with arrangements for the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (EFSAC) Mitigation Joint Steering Group meetings agreed by your Committee in November 2019.
 14. Creation of Lead Members, as proposed below aimed at helping spread the burden of office placed upon the Chairman amongst the wider committee, and also making best use of talent available on the Committee. . Proposals are made following the output of the Member Skills Audit in May 2023 and taking the same approach as the Policy and Resources Committee (September 2022) Lead Members will act as a point of contact or 'sounding board' for relevant officers, whilst ensuring that the boundary between governance (Members) and operational management (staff) remains clear.

Special Projects	Lead Member(s)
Charities Review	Chairman / Dep Chairman
Asset Review	Chairman / Dep Chairman
TOM, HR, Recruitment & Culture	Chairman / Dep Chairman
Visits, Events & Hospitality	Jaspreet Hodgson
Financial Performance & Efficiency (including charity budgets, Capital & Cyclical Works Programme settlements & central cost allocations)	Gregory Lawrence
Wanstead Park Waterscapes	Nicholas Munday

Strategy / Policy Areas	Lead Member
Conservation & Nature Recovery	Paul Morris
Charity Income & Governance	Philip Woodhouse Vincent Keaveny
Heritage and Culture	Michael Chapman
Visitors, Sports & Leisure	William Kennedy
Communications (incl. authorised spokesperson)	Chairman / Dep Chairman
Education & Learning	Caroline Haines
Risk, Health & Safety	George Abrahams
Deer Management Oversight & Animal Welfare	Nicholas Munday
Volunteer Strategy	Paul Morris
Digital Strategy	Graeme Doshi-Smith
Buffer Land Strategy	Nicholas Munday
Charity Compliance & Annual Reporting	Lead Member
Epping Forest – Charity # 232990	George Abrahams
Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common - Charity # 232987	Paul Morris
Ashtead Common - Charity # 1051510	Ben Murphy
West Wickham Common & Spring Park Wood – Charity # 232988	Caroline Haines
Coulsdon & Other Commons – Charity # 232989 Kenley Common, Farthing Downs & Riddlesdown	Andrew McMurtrie

Background

1. The management of Open Spaces saved for the benefit of Londoners, through funding provided by the Metage on Grain (Port of London) Act 1872, has always been guided by a dedicated City Corporation Committee. This work was originally led by the Coal, Corn and Finance Committee 1886-1966, taking its title from the goods levied by the enabling Metage Act, with the Committee being responsible for open spaces largely acquired through the Epping Forest Acts 1878 & 1880, City of London (Various Powers) Act 1878 and Highgate & Open Spaces Act 1886.
2. Following a reorganisation in 1966, the Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee (EFOS) superseded the Coal, Corn and Finance Committee. On the acquisition of Hampstead Heath from the London Residuary Body in 1989, The

Local Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989 saw Committee arrangements adapted to form the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park Committee (HHC), with responsibility for Highgate Wood and Queens Park moving from EFOS to the HHC. Consequently, a new Epping Forest and Commons Committee (EF&CC) was formed to manage Epping Forest, Epping Forest Buffer Land and The Commons.

3. Over 2020 and 2021, the Lord Lisvane was commissioned to conduct a review of all City Corporation Committees and, following extensive Member consultation, the final recommendations were agreed by the Court of Common Council in December 2021. With regard to open spaces, including Epping Forest, the impact involved the deletion of several defunct working parties, and the devolution of the administration of various Consultative Committees from the Governance and Members Services Team to the relevant local service Department(s).

Current Position

4. In addition to the formal Service Committee arrangements a series of supplementary engagement meeting arrangements have developed to enable greater consultation and make the best use of individuals and their expertise ahead of matters being reported to the formal Committee:

Epping Forest Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement Groups

- a. **Local Meetings:** The previous EFOS Committee met on a monthly basis between 1966 and 1989, and recognising the concerns of the Verderers Epping Forest business was discussed, but not determined, at six 'shadow' meetings on alternate months to Service Committee meetings. These meetings have traditionally been chaired by the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of EF&CC. The legacy of COVID-19 Lockdown arrangements and Target Operating Model (TOM) pressures on remaining Officer time has prevented the reestablishment of these meetings.
- b. **Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee (EFJCC):** A joint Committee of the City of London Corporation and the Field Studies Council to administer the management of the High Beach Field Centre built in 1972. The City of London Corporation Governance Review – the 'Lisvane Report' - recommended that this Committee should be abolished with work ceded to EF&CC.
- c. **Epping Forest Management Plan Sub-Committee:** A dedicated Committee with responsibility for the content of the Epping Forest Management Plan. This Sub-Committee had not met since 2016 and as such was abolished as part of the City of London Corporation Governance Review – 'the Lisvane Report' - with work ceded to EF&CC.
- d. **Epping Forest Land Registration Working Group:** Formed in 2013 to manage the registration of 1,400 deeds associated with the purchase of Epping Forest for public benefit. Essentially a 'Task and Finish Group' the

Working Group is awaiting a final report, which is being considered by the Comptroller & City Solicitor on determining encroachments before ceasing its activity.

- e. **Deer Management Oversight Group:** Inaugurated in 2022 and focusing on the Deer Management Strategy Review to provide oversight of the management of deer in across the Epping Forest and Epping Forest Buffer Land. Due to Target Operating Model pressures on remaining Officer time this meeting has yet to meet formally. Any recommendations from the Working Group will be presented to EF&CC for decision as required.
- f. **Epping Forest Consultation Committee (EFCC):** Formed following the passage of the Open Spaces (City of London Corporation) Act 2018 to consult with various user groups on the management of Epping Forest. The City of London Corporation Governance Review – ‘the Lisvane Report’ - recommended that the Committee should be run locally as a Consultation Group from 2021. The revised Terms of Reference are proposed in an associated report.
- g. **Local Authority Liaison Meetings:** Given the need to work in partnership with Local Authorities within whose jurisdiction Epping Forest falls, since 2008 regular biannual meetings have been held between Ward or appointed Councillors from the London Local Authorities of Newham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest, together with Epping Forest District Council with Members from EF&CC. The meetings are supported by Microsoft Teams microsites to update Councillors on work undertaken in their Wards by the Charity.
- h. **Wanstead Park Steering & Liaison Groups:** Given the complex management challenges at Wanstead Park regarding High Risk dams; flood risk from the River Roding; Heritage at Risk Register entries for the Registered Park, Conservation Area and The Grotto and pressure on future water abstraction, a working party for the four Registered Park owners and Heritage England has been established to agree a joint Parkland Management Plan (PMP). The City of London Corporation Governance Review – the Lisvane Report – abolished this Group. Uniquely, a Liaison Group chaired by a Verderer has also been established to maintain discussions with the Friends Group, other key stakeholders and local Councillors, which has since been abolished and consolidated by the Epping Forest Consultative Group.
- i. **Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (EFSAC) Mitigation Committee:** Approved by your Committee of 18 November 2019 this joint Committee of six representatives of the nine Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) whose Zone of Influence (Zol) impacts on the EFSAC will continue to monitor the impact of additional recreational visits from new housing constructed within the Zol; assess the performance of Suitable Alternative natural Greenspaces (SANGs) and determine how dedicated ‘passported’ funds from section 111 Local Government Act 1972 agreements and

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) are invested at Epping Forest via the Strategic Access Management & Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS).

5. In response to the 2016 Service-Based Review, consultative group meetings of each of the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common and Ashted Common charities were reduced from three meetings to two per year. A further change in 2016 was that the consultative groups of the Coulsdon Commons and West Wickham and Spring Park charities were merged with two annual meetings. The City of London Governance Review – ‘the Lisvane Report – recommended that the consultative groups should be run as a Consultation Group from 2020. The agendas of these meetings focus on reporting on the past year’s activity, highlighting key site management works planned for the next year, and feedback and comments from stakeholders. In contrast to the EF Consultative Group, it is not standard for EF&CC papers to be consulted on as a matter of routine.
6. These supplementary meetings place a considerable extra burden of responsibility and commitment for City of London Corporation Committee Members including local elected Verderers, especially the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

Proposals

7. Wide-ranging Governance discussions at the Strategy Awayday of 17 February 2023 have been brought forward by the Chairman and Officers to provide the improvements listed in Recommendations above.

Service Committee – Epping Forest & Commons Committee

8. The frequency of EF&CC meetings should be retained at a bi-monthly arrangement of six meetings per annum previously based on January; March; May; July; September & November.
9. In future four meetings should be based around regular Committee business with the recently established Directors Report and the long-established Assistant Director (Superintendents) Report revised away from the current narrative and Key Performance Indicator (KPI) basis to provide Members with more formal metrics and aligned commentary on a quarterly basis, aligned with traditional quarter days, reporting where possible alongside quarterly internal data reporting periods.
10. The remaining two meetings would be split at six-monthly intervals to allow the Committee to have ‘deep dives’ into more strategic topic areas. These meetings can still be used for urgent issues requiring approval or debate, however, the new dashboard updates from control functions will not be included.
11. Members have also requested that early drafts of new decision or policy items are placed before EF&CC before being considered by EFCG, to allow Members the benefit of improved awareness and an early contribution to policy and topic issues.

12. The Epping Forest and Commons Committee meetings will be supplemented by an annual Strategy Away Day meeting. A specific action should be taken to create a plan to improve diversity and inclusion within the consultative groups.

Director & Assistant Directors Reports

13. The Director / ADs reports should be replaced by the charity level dashboards with trend commentary overlaid, alongside the charity level management plan commitments for the quarter (with RAG rating of completed or overdue, with commentary on overdue items) and what work is due to be completed over the next quarter. Any new items to be added to management plans should also be highlighted.

Risk Reporting

14. Standard Committee reporting should also include any proposed changes to each charity's risk register and each charity's financial report. The Town Clerk's Department will continue to retain the master copy of the action log which the Environment Department will routinely update to supplement the Committee minutes.

Epping Forest Consultative Group

15. EF&CC Consultative Group (EFCG) meetings should become more flexible in terms of membership, dependent upon the items being consulted upon. Meetings should remain in hybrid format, with a mix of virtual and physical participation to accommodate the widest possible audience. Minutes should no longer be taken for any consultative group meetings, replaced instead by action recording, which will also be reflected in the action log of the EF&CC.
16. The process of initially consulting the EFCG on new and policy change reports will be continued but only following initial EF&CC consideration of draft reports. Specific feedback on items being consulted upon should be fed back to the Town Clerk and will form part of the Committee Report for decision, to ensure our key stakeholder voices are being considered. A specific action should be taken to create a plan to improve diversity and inclusion within the consultative groups.
17. It may be beneficial to perform a skills audit of consultative group members to understand where pockets of expertise exist and can support the charity in its work. Consultative group meetings should move from a cycle of three annual meetings to a cycle of two times each, however, agendas should be proactively communicated to consultative group members four times per year to allow for contributions to EF&CC meetings.

Policy Implications

18. The Governance proposals are intended to improve the Corporate Plan commitment to **'Shape outstanding environments.'**
 1. We are digitally and physically well-connected and responsive.

2. We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration.
3. We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment.
4. Our spaces are secure, resilient and well-maintained.

Risk Implications

19. **Finance** – A reduction in the overall number of Committee meetings will save Member and Officer time. There may be new costs implications in hiring an external venue to support potential annual review meetings, subject to the Charity Review, which will be absorbed within Local Risk budgets.

20. **Human Resources** – The TOM Phase II proposals include provision for a Stakeholder Engagement Officer to support the administration of the new governance arrangements beyond the work of the EF&CC which will continue to be managed by the Town Clerks Department.

Conclusion

21. Following City of London Corporation 2020 Governance Changes recommended by Lord Lisvane agreed by the Court of Common Council in 2021, the Committee reporting and business arrangements for the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and associated consultative and liaison activity have been reviewed recommending changes that will enable Members to better monitor activity and progress, while providing stakeholders and beneficiaries greater opportunities to engage with the charity and its many beneficiaries.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – ‘Lead Member – Job Description’

Paul Thomson

Assistant Director (Superintendent)
Natural Environment Division - Epping Forest

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Geoff Sinclair

Assistant Director
Natural Environment Division – The Commons

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Lead Member – Job Description

Appointment

- Appointed annually by the Epping Forest and Commons Committee from amongst its membership. Appointments shall be considered on the basis of an annual skills audit and expressions of interest from amongst the Committee.

Overall Responsibilities

- To act as a policy lead for, and represent the views of, the Committee in respect of the relevant policy area for which they have been appointed Lead.

Main Tasks and Responsibilities

- To support the Chairman in the formation and delivery of the Committee and Corporation's policy goals (within the relevant policy area).
- To deputise for the Chairman at relevant engagements or hospitality events (in the absence of the Deputy Chairman).
- To act as a point of contact or "sounding board" for relevant officers, providing political steers in relaying the Committee's views, so as to inform implementation and prioritisation at the operational level.
- To act as the Member point of contact for colleagues interested in the policy area or project, assisting with information sharing and triaging of questions to relevant technical officers.
- To support and co-ordinate political decision making between relevant Committees across the Corporation.
- To lead on the collation of insight and expertise from Members across the wider Court with relevant knowledge or experience of the policy area.
- To work with colleagues outside of the formal meeting setting to share information / understanding, enabling Members to coalesce around the agreed policy decisions and implementation plans.

NB – these posts have no decision-making responsibility or powers and are purely advisory; post holders are expected to operate within the boundaries of the Member / Officer Protocol at all times and not be unduly involved in the operational aspects or delivery of the policy areas.

Agenda Item 6

Committee: Epping Forest and Commons Committee – For Decision	Dated: 13/07/2023
Subject: Epping Forest and The Commons Media Forward Plan	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Emily Tofield, Executive Director of Corporate Communications and External Affairs	For Decision
Report author: Ellen Fouweather, Media Officer, Town Clerk’s Communications Team	

Summary

Members of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee requested a media forward plan, which is presented below.

The communications objectives of this plan are to:

1. Support the delivery of business plans of the five charities which comprise Epping Forest and The Commons
2. Raise the philanthropic profile of the City of London Corporation as Corporate Trustee of Epping Forest and The Commons and the impact these open spaces have on the UK’s environmental health and wellbeing
3. Promote events, campaigns and topics to relevant audiences

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Agree the contents of this report.

Main Report

Current position

1. Members of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee requested a media forward plan, which is presented below. A forward plan of the events, campaigns, and topics which will be promoted via media and social media is

presented on the following page.

2. In addition to the items listed, the Town Clerk’s Media Team will continue to meet with the Assistant Directors of all sites and their teams to identify further stories. These will be prioritised by the Media Team on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Communications and External Affairs, the Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, and relevant Assistant Directors.
3. The Media Team is also responsible for handling reactive media enquiries for this committee. This responsibility is not accounted for in the forward plan.
4. The Media Team also reviews, approves, and submits a monthly column to the Epping Forest Guardian, which is drafted locally by the Epping Forest team.
5. In addition to this media plan, a strategic communications plan will be developed by the Media Team. It will be drafted in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Communications and External Affairs, the Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, the Director of the Natural Environment Division and their teams. The Town Clerk’s Media Team will be responsible for handling media relations. Epping Forest and The Commons officers will be responsible for delivering local stakeholder communications, local event marketing, and local social media feeds. The Corporate Communications Team will support these activities by providing messaging and content (Media Team), social media advice (Digital Communications Manager), website advice and training (Web Team) and political engagement advice (Corporate Affairs Team). This plan will support Epping Forest and The Commons strategic objectives and be presented for approval at a subsequent Epping Forest and Commons Committee, following the appointment of local communications officers.

Media forward plan

6. The following list of events, campaigns, and topics will be promoted via media and/or social media.

Date	Topic	Target audience
July 2023	Green Flag Awards at relevant sites	Local and regional communities, visitors, sector stakeholders
July 2023	Burnham Beeches Iron Age Hill Forts: Launch of augmented reality app	Local and regional communities and visitors
Consultation beginning Summer 2023 with work starting early 2024	Epping Forest 10-year Conservation Plan	Local and regional communities, visitors, sector stakeholders
Summer 2023	Fire safety awareness at relevant sites	Visitors

Autumn 2023	Parklife project to install artificial football pitches on Wanstead Flats	Local and regional communities and visitors
Autumn 2023	Farthing Downs inclusion in Surrey Hill Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Local and regional communities, visitors, sector stakeholders
Autumn 2023	Lord Mayor's Ancient Tree Fund for Epping Forest	Potential donors in local and regional communities
Autumn 2023	Warning against fungi foraging in Epping Forest	National, local and regional communities, visitors, sector stakeholders
Winter 2023	Coronation Tree Planting in Epping Forest	Local and regional communities, visitors, sector stakeholders
Winter 2023/2024	Consultation on Epping Forest and The Commons Strategy 2025-2030	Local and regional communities, visitors, sector stakeholders
Spring 2024	Warning against damaging bluebells in Epping Forest	Visitors
All year	Warning against fly tipping at relevant sites, to coincide with prosecutions	Local and regional communities and visitors

Corporate & Strategic Implications

9. Strategic implications: Open Spaces charities are reputationally important for the City Corporation. They provide positive stories which help us connect positively with local communities and other key stakeholders and offer opportunities to City of London residents, businesses and visitors to explore significant green spaces unavailable in or around the Square Mile.
10. Financial implications: None
11. Resource implications: None
12. Legal implications: None
13. Risk implications: Failure to adequately manage reputational risk could have financial and brand implications for the City Corporation.
14. Equalities implications: None
15. Climate implications: None
16. Security implications: None

Conclusion

17. This report outlines a prioritised forward plan of the events, campaigns and topics which will be promoted via media and/or social media

18. Members are asked to agree this report.

Appendices

19. None

Ellen Fouweather

Media Officer, Town Clerk's Department

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Agenda Item 8

Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	13 July 2023
Subject: Risk Management Update Report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 5, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Executive Director Environment	For decision
Report author: Joanne Hill, Business Planning and Compliance Manager	

Summary

This report is presented to provide the Epping Forest and Commons Committee with assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department are satisfactory and that they meet the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011. Risks are reviewed regularly within the Department as part of the ongoing management of the operations. They are also reviewed regularly by the management teams at Epping Forest and The Commons.

Your Committee is responsible for five Registered Charities: Epping Forest (charity number 232990), Ashted Common (charity number 1051510), Burnham Beeches (charity number 232987), Coulsdon and Other Commons (charity number 232989) and West Wickham and Spring Park (charity number 232988). In accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), Trustees are required to confirm in the charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. Using the Corporate Risk Register guidance, the management of these risks meets the requirements of the Charity Commission.

Each of the five charities holds a risk register which is summarised in the main body of this report and within the appendices.

The Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register includes risks which are managed by the Natural Environment Director at a higher, strategic, level. The Cross-Divisional risks are summarised in this report and at Appendix 6.

Recommendation

Members are asked to confirm, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the Summary Risk Registers appended to this report satisfactorily identify the key risks to each of the charities and that appropriate systems are in place to effectively identify and mitigate risks.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London's Risk Management Strategy, which forms part of its Corporate Risk Management Framework, requires each Chief Officer to report regularly to Committees on the risks faced by their department.
2. The Charity Commission requires Trustees to confirm in a charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. These risks are to be reviewed annually.
3. Each Committee to which the Natural Environment Division of the Environment Department reports receives an update on the risks of the charity or charities relevant to that Committee every quarter. Detailed risk registers are presented to Committees every six months. The two interim quarterly reports present summary risk registers, with individual risks being reported in detail by exception.
4. The Executive Director Environment assures your Committee that all risks held by the Natural Environment Division continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.
5. Each of the five charities for which your Committee is responsible holds a risk register. All risks are regularly reviewed by management teams, in consultation with risk owners, with updates recorded in the corporate risk management information system (Pentana). Risks are assessed on a likelihood-impact basis, and the resultant score is associated with a traffic light colour. For reference, the City of London's Risk Matrix is provided at Appendix 7.
6. The detailed risk registers for Epping Forest and each of the four Commons charities are summarised in the main body of this report and at Appendices 1 to 5. Two risks are reported in detail, by exception. For each risk, officers are undertaking a range of actions to mitigate the effects.
7. The Natural Environment Director maintains oversight of all risks and holds a Cross-Divisional Risk Register containing risks which are common to most or all Natural Environment sites: individual charities hold their own local risks on

these matters, and the Cross-Divisional risk consolidates them for oversight by the Director. This register also contains risks related to specific projects which are managed by the Director at a strategic level. The Cross-Divisional risks are summarised in this report, with the Summary Risk Register included at Appendix 6 for information. The Cross-Divisional risks were presented to the Natural Environment Board for decision on 10 July 2023.

Current Position

Epping Forest Risks

8. The Epping Forest Risk Register summarised below and at Appendix 1, contains seven RED and eight AMBER risks owned and managed by the Assistant Director, Epping Forest and his Management Team.
9. In addition, the Director owns the Wanstead Park Reservoirs (RED) risk which is managed jointly with the City's Building Control Service.
10. Since the date of the last report to your Committee, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system. None of the risk scores have changed.
 - **ENV-NE 007:** Wanstead Park Reservoirs (RED, 24)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 017:** Tree failure (RED, 32)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 004:** Decline in condition of assets (RED, 24)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 006:** Raised reservoirs (RED, 24)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 008:** Invasive non-native species (RED, 16)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 012:** Loss of forest land and buffer land/or concession of prescriptive rights (RED, 16)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 013:** Loss of knowledge in skilled staff/difficulties in recruitment (RED, 16)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 015:** Public behaviour (RED, 16)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 003:** Health and safety incidents/catastrophic health and safety failure (AMBER, 12)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 007:** Pathogens (AMBER, 12)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 010:** Development consents close to forest land (AMBER, 12)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 016:** Financial management and loss of income (AMBER, 12)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 005:** Declining Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC) condition (AMBER, 8)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 009:** Severe weather events (AMBER, 8)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 011:** Wanstead Park – Heritage at Risk Register (AMBER, 8)
 - **ENV-NE-EF 014:** Major incident resulting in prolonged 'access denial' (AMBER, 8)
11. Two of the above risks are reported in detail, by exception, at Appendix 1a, as follows:

‘ENV-NE-EF 017: Tree failure’. This risk remains at the maximum level of likelihood and impact (Red, 32 – likely / extreme) due to a single Poplar tree identified as dangerous close to the M25 and beneath high voltage power cables. The tree was due to be felled by a third party in May 2023 but, unfortunately, this had to be postponed due to external factors. Officers are continuing to negotiate with the responsible traffic and power organisations to determine a revised date for the felling. Following this work, the risk score will be reassessed and reduced if appropriate.

‘ENV-NE-EF 009: Severe weather events’. This risk is reported in detail due to its particular relevance during the summer season and to provide your Committee with additional assurance that appropriate action is being taken to address the heightened risk of wildfires during periods of hot, dry weather.

The Commons Risks

A separate risk register is held for each of the four Commons charities to enable effective site-specific management and assessment.

12. Since the date of the last report to your Committee, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system. None of the risk scores have changed.

Ashtead Common

13. The Ashtead Common Risk Register contains five AMBER and two GREEN risks as shown below. The Summary Risk Register is presented at Appendix 2.

- **ENV-NE-AC 004:** Local planning issues (AMBER 8)
- **ENV-NE-AC 009:** Maintenance of buildings and other structures (AMBER, 8)
- **ENV-NE-AC 005:** Tree diseases and other pests (AMBER, 6)
- **ENV-NE-AC 006:** Climate and weather (AMBER, 6)
- **ENV-NE-AC 008:** Water pollution (AMBER, 6)
- **ENV-NE-AC 001:** Budget reduction and income loss (GREEN, 4)
- **ENV-NE-AC 010:** Industrial action by emergency services (GREEN, 3)

Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

14. The Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Risk Register contains four RED, four AMBER and one GREEN risk. The Summary Risk Register is presented at Appendix 3.

- **ENV-NE-BBSC 002:** Damage to sites (RED, 16)
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 005:** Tree diseases and other pests (RED, 16)

- **ENV-NE-BBSC 007:** Rural Payment Agency Grants (RED, 16)
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 009:** Maintenance of buildings and other structures (RED, 16)
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 001:** Budget reduction and income loss (AMBER, 12)
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 004:** Local planning issues (AMBER, 12)
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 006:** Climate and weather (AMBER, 12)
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 008:** Pollution (AMBER, 8)
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 011:** Industrial action by emergency services (GREEN, 3)

Coulsdon and Other Commons

15. The Coulsdon and Other Commons Risk Register contains one RED, six AMBER and one GREEN risk. The Summary Risk Register is presented at Appendix 4.

- **ENV-NE-COC 009:** Maintenance of buildings and other structures (RED, 16)
- **ENV-NE-COC 002:** Damage to sites (AMBER, 12)
- **ENV-NE-COC 004:** Local planning issues (AMBER, 8)
- **ENV-NE-COC 005:** Tree diseases and other pests (AMBER, 8)
- **ENV-NE-COC 008:** Pollution (AMBER, 8)
- **ENV-NE-COC 001:** Budget reduction and income loss (AMBER, 6)
- **ENV-NE-COC 006:** Climate and weather (AMBER, 6)
- **ENV-NE-COC 011:** Industrial action by emergency services (GREEN, 3)

West Wickham and Spring Park

16. The Wickham and Spring Park Risk Register contains one RED, five AMBER and one GREEN risk. The Summary Risk Register is presented at Appendix 5.

- **ENV-NE-WWSP 009:** Maintenance of buildings and other structures (RED, 16)
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 002:** Damage to sites (AMBER, 12)
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 004:** Local planning issues (AMBER, 8)
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 005:** Tree diseases and other pests (AMBER, 8)
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 001:** Budget reduction and income loss (AMBER, 6)
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 006:** Climate and weather (AMBER, 6)
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 010:** Industrial action by emergency services (GREEN, 3)

Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risks

17. The Cross-Divisional Risk Register of the Natural Environment Division contains top-level risks, such as those on specific projects. Other risks on the register are those which are common to most or all sites: individual charities hold their own specific risks on these matters, and the Cross-Divisional risk consolidates them for oversight by the Director.

18. The Cross-Divisional risks are owned by the Natural Environment Director and they have been recently reviewed in collaboration with the Natural Environment Senior Leadership Team.
19. On 10 July 2023, the Natural Environment Board received a report on the nine Cross-Divisional risks summarised below (the Summary Risk Register is provided at Appendix 6 of this report for information).
 - **ENV-NE 003:** Operational Property: Repair and maintenance of buildings and structural assets (RED, 24)
 - **ENV-NE 001:** Health and Safety (RED, 24)
 - **ENV-NE 007:** Wanstead Park Reservoirs (RED, 24)
 - **ENV-NE 004:** Pests and diseases (RED, 16)
 - **ENV-NE 002:** Extreme weather and climate change (AMBER, 12)
 - **ENV-NE 005:** Impact of development (AMBER, 12)
 - **ENV-NE 011:** Recruitment and retention of staff (AMBER, 12)
 - **ENV-NE 010:** Budget pressures (AMBER, 8)
 - **ENV-NE 009:** Failure to implement the Charity Review (AMBER, 6)
20. As the Wanstead Park Reservoirs risk (ENV-NE 007) is specifically relevant to your Committee, it is included in the Epping Forest Summary Risk Register at Appendix 1. This risk is managed jointly with the City's Building Control Service. A detailed report on the project was presented to your Committee in January 2023.

Risk Management Process

21. Across the Environment Department, risk management is a standing agenda item at the regular meetings of local, divisional and departmental management teams.
22. Between management team meetings, risks are reviewed in consultation with risk and action owners, and updates are recorded in the corporate risk management information system (Pentana).
23. Regular risk management update reports are provided to this Committee in accordance with the City's Risk Management Framework and the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Identification of New Risks

24. New and emerging risks are identified through several channels, including:
 - Directly by Senior Management Teams as part of the regular review process.
 - In response to ongoing review of progress made against Business Plan objectives and performance measures, e.g., slippage of target dates or changes to expected performance levels.

- In response to emerging events and changing circumstances which have the potential to impact on the delivery of services.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

25. Effective management of risk is at the heart of the City Corporation's approach to delivering cost effective and valued services to the public as well as being an important element within the corporate governance of the organisation.
26. The risk management processes in place in the Environment Department support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, our Departmental high-level Business Plan, local Management Plans and relevant Corporate Strategies, including, but not limited to, the Climate Action; Cultural; Sport and Physical Activity; and Volunteering Strategies. Risks are also being taken into consideration as part of the development of the Natural Environment and City Operations Divisions' emerging strategies.
27. Risks which could have a serious impact on the achievement of business and strategic objectives are proactively identified, assessed and managed in order to minimise their likelihood and/or impact.

Conclusion

28. The proactive management of risk, including the reporting process to Members, demonstrates that the Natural Environment Division of the Environment Department is adhering to the requirements of the City of London Corporation's Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Epping Forest Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 1a – Epping Forest Detailed Risks (reported by exception)
- Appendix 2 – Ashted Common Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 3 – Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 4 - Coulsdon and Other Commons Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 5 – West Wickham and Spring Park Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 6 - Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 7 – City of London Corporation Risk Matrix

Contact

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Epping Forest - Summary Risk Register

Generated on: 13 June 2023











































Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE 007	Wanstead Park Reservoirs	24		8			

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE-EF 017	Tree failure	32		12			No history: added to register in April 2023
ENV-NE-EF 004	Decline in condition of assets *	24		24			
ENV-NE-EF 006	Raised reservoirs	24		4			
ENV-NE-EF 008	Invasive Non Native Species (INNS)	16		12			
ENV-NE-EF 012	Loss of forest and buffer land and/or concession of prescriptive rights	16		12			

Appendix 1

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE-EF 013	Loss of knowledge in skilled staff / Difficulties in recruitment	16		6			
ENV-NE-EF 015	Public behaviour *	16		16			
ENV-NE-EF 003	Health and Safety incidents / Catastrophic Health and Safety failure *	12		12			
ENV-NE-EF 007	Pathogens *	12		12			
ENV-NE-EF 010	Development consents close to forest land *	12		12			
ENV-NE-EF 016	Financial management and loss of income *	12		12			
ENV-NE-EF 005	Declining Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Condition *	8		8			
ENV-NE-EF 009	Severe weather events *	8		8			
ENV-NE-EF 011	Wanstead Park – Heritage at Risk Register *	8		8			
ENV-NE-EF 014	Major incident resulting in prolonged 'Access Denial' *	8		8			

* **N.B.** Risks with an identical current and target score are those which we have mitigated to the lowest level possible at present. However, we continue to undertake a range of actions to maintain them at their current score, keep them under continual review, and seek opportunities to reduce the level of risk.



Epping Forest – Detailed risks (reported by exception)

Report Author: Joanne Hill

Generated on: 13 June 2023

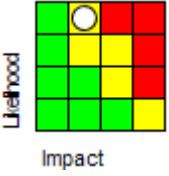
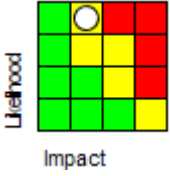
Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
P 2023-03-31 35 V-NE-EF Tree failure	<p>Cause: Large numbers of older, more vulnerable trees throughout Epping Forest which require regular inspection and works to prevent failure. A rise in tree disease combined with extreme weather conditions due to climate change exacerbate the risk. Staff shortages due to the Target Operating Model (TOM) process have resulted in insufficient staff resources to complete necessary works.</p> <p>Event: More frequent tree failures. Greater risk during high winds, particularly when accompanied by heavy rainfall, and when trees are in leaf.</p> <p>Effect: Public safety - people (serious injury/death) and property; loss of trees; loss of habitat; insurance claims; reputational damage.</p>		32	<p>This risk is actively managed with regular inspections of trees according to Forest-wide risks zones as well as the Severe Weather Protocol which is implemented in the event of large storms/high winds.</p> <p>As at 24 March 2023, the risk score was set to the maximum (likely/extreme) due to a single Poplar tree identified as dangerous in close proximity to the M25 and beneath high voltage power cables. Negotiations with traffic and power responsible organisations have produced a plan for felling of the tree by a third party in May 2023 which unfortunately had to be postponed. Following that action, the risk score will be reassessed and lowered if appropriate.</p>		12	31-Mar-2024	

<p>20-Apr-2023 Paul Thomson</p>			<p>A hazardous tree survey was completed in 2022 but works arising, particularly at the amber zones, have not been completed due to recruitment restrictions and larger numbers of hazardous trees being identified. These works are unlikely to be completed this year. Red zones are being prioritised. The situation will be kept under review. We are supplementing our teams with the use of specialist contractors to help address deadlines until such time as we are able to recruit staff on a permanent basis.</p> <p>12 Jun 2023</p>			<p>Reduce</p>	<p>Constant</p>
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Page 36

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE-EF 017a	Carry out tree safety survey and works.	A tree safety survey has been completed but staff shortages have meant that arboricultural works are significantly delayed, and many actions have slipped out of time - we now aim to complete them by the end of 2024. Contractors have been engaged to carry out a section of high priority roadside works and bids for further resource are likely to be lodged during 2023. Following a rise in Massaria and sooty bark disease infections, and severe storms, it is anticipated that new surveys will result in circa 800 new tasks to be completed, adding substantially to the backlog of works. We have been unable to employ more staff and have had to increase contractor works to reduce the backlog.	Paul Thomson	12-Jun-2023	31-Dec-2024
ENV-NE-EF 017b	Continue to enforce the Severe Weather Protocol as appropriate and keep it under regular review.	A Severe Weather Protocol is in place which details planning and response, in particular to high winds. We are unable to 'close' the Forest during such events but social media and staff broadcast messages to warn members of the public to avoid the Forest, and serious or large scale events are followed by a programme of walking trails and paths to find and action resulting dangers such as hanging tree limbs.	Paul Thomson	12-Jun-2023	31-Mar-2024

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<p>ENV-NE-EF 009 Severe weather events</p> <p>19-Aug-2015 Paul Thomson</p>	<p>Cause: Severe gale and storm events; prolonged precipitation/increased precipitation events; restricted precipitation increasing fire severity. Event: Severe weather events including periods of drought; flooding; gales; and increased fire severity. Effect: Risk of injury or death to staff, visitors, contractors and/or volunteers; loss of habitat/public access and intensification of visitor pressure on other areas of Forest; damage/loss of rare/fragile habitats and species; incidents increase demand for staff resources to respond to maintain public and site safety; temporary site closures; increased costs for reactive management.</p>		<p>8</p>	<p>Incident management plan has been updated to incorporate wildfire planning and the JESIP protocols for joint action across authorities. The London Fire Brigade, Fire and Rescue Services have signed off wildfire plans both in London and Essex. There are site visits with Essex Fire and Rescue Service at the end of July / early August to confirm infrastructure is satisfactory. In London, two additional sites are having wildfire response plans prepared.</p> <p>Several large storms during 2022 led to the Severe Weather Protocol being implemented.</p> <p>The current risk score remains at Amber 8 (likely; serious) due to dry summers increasing the risk of wildfires and driving sooty bark disease of maples, bleeding canker of horse chestnuts, and Massaria disease of London Plane. We have implemented mitigating actions to maintain the risk at its current level but are unable to reduce it any further for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>12 Jun 2023</p>		<p>8</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Constant</p>

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE-EF 009h	Reduce the impact of grass and heathland fires.	Nine site-specific wildfire response plans have been signed off by the respective Fire and Rescue Services. Site inspections by fire officers have been completed at the London sites. Further work is required with Essex Fire Brigade.	Paul Thomson	12-Jun-2023	01-Nov-2023
ENV-NE-EF 009i	Maintain fire access zones.	All fire access zones are cut twice per year. Drought limits grass growth but growth recommences quickly when wetter conditions develop. Fire experience during Summer 2022 showed that these fire access zones have been an effective barrier.	Paul Thomson	12-Jun-2023	30-Sep-2023

Ashtead Common – Summary Risk Register

Generated on: 13 June 2023



Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE-AC 004	Local planning issues	8		6			
ENV-NE-AC 009	Maintenance of buildings and other structures	8		6			
ENV-NE-AC 005	Tree diseases and other pests *	6		6			
ENV-NE-AC 006	Climate and weather *	6		6			
ENV-NE-AC 008	Water pollution	6		2			
ENV-NE-AC 001	Budget reduction and income loss *	4		4			
ENV-NE-AC 010	Industrial action by emergency services *	3		3			

* **N.B.** Risks with an identical current and target score are those which we have mitigated to the lowest level possible at present. However, we continue to undertake a range of actions to maintain them at their current score, keep them under continual review, and seek opportunities to reduce the level of risk.

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Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common – Summary Risk Register

Generated on: 13 June 2023



Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE-BBSC 002	Damage to sites	16		12			
ENV-NE-BBSC 005	Tree diseases and other pests *	16		16			
ENV-NE-BBSC 007	Rural Payment Agency grants	16		12			
ENV-NE-BBSC 009	Maintenance of buildings and other structures	16		12			
ENV-NE-BBSC 001	Budget reduction and income loss	12		6			
ENV-NE-BBSC 004	Local planning issues *	12		12			
ENV-NE-BBSC 006	Climate and weather *	12		12			
ENV-NE-BBSC 008	Pollution *	8		8			
ENV-NE-BBSC 011	Industrial action by emergency services *	3		3			

* **N.B.** Risks with an identical current and target score are those which we have mitigated to the lowest level possible at present. However, we continue to undertake a range of actions to maintain them at their current score, keep them under continual review, and seek opportunities to reduce the level of risk.

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Coulston and Other Commons – Summary Risk Register

Generated on: 13 June 2023



Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE-COC 009	Maintenance of buildings and other structures	16		12			
ENV-NE-COC 002	Damage to sites *	12		12			
ENV-NE-COC 004	Local planning issues	8		6			
ENV-NE-COC 005	Tree diseases and other pests	8		6			
ENV-NE-COC 008	Pollution *	8		8			
ENV-NE-COC 001	Budget reduction and income loss *	6		6			
ENV-NE-COC 006	Climate and weather *	6		6			
ENV-NE-COC 011	Industrial action by emergency services *	3		3			

* **N.B.** Risks with an identical current and target score are those which we have mitigated to the lowest level possible at present. However, we continue to undertake a range of actions to maintain them at their current score, keep them under continual review, and seek opportunities to reduce the level of risk.

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West Wickham & Spring Park – Summary Risk Register

Generated on: 13 June 2023

Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE-WWSP 009	Maintenance of buildings and other structures	16		12			
ENV-NE-WWSP 002	Damage to sites *	12		12			
ENV-NE-WWSP 004	Local planning issues	8		6			
ENV-NE-WWSP 005	Tree diseases and other pests	8		6			
ENV-NE-WWSP 001	Budget reduction and income loss *	6		6			
ENV-NE-WWSP 006	Climate and weather *	6		6			
ENV-NE-WWSP 010	Industrial action by emergency services *	3		3			

* **N.B.** Risks with an identical current and target score are those which we have mitigated to the lowest level possible at present. However, we continue to undertake a range of actions to maintain them at their current score, keep them under continual review, and seek opportunities to reduce the level of risk.

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Natural Environment Cross-divisional Risks – Summary Risk Register

Generated on: 13 June 2023

Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE 001	Health & Safety	24		12			
ENV-NE 003	Operational Property: Repair and maintenance of buildings and structural assets *	24		24			
ENV-NE 007	Wanstead Park Reservoirs (formerly CR32)	24		8			
ENV-NE 004	Pests and diseases	16		12			
ENV-NE 002	Extreme weather and climate change	12		6			
ENV-NE 005	Impact of development	12		6			
ENV-NE 011	Recruitment and retention of staff	12		4			
ENV-NE 010	Budget pressures	8		6			
ENV-NE 009	Failure to implement the Charity Review	6		3			

* **N.B.** Risks with an identical current and target score are those which we have mitigated to the lowest level possible at present. However, we continue to undertake a range of actions to maintain them at their current score, keep them under continual review, and seek opportunities to reduce the level of risk.

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City of London Corporation Risk Matrix (Black and white version)

Note: A risk score is calculated by assessing the risk in terms of likelihood and impact. By using the likelihood and impact criteria below (top left (A) and bottom right (B) respectively) it is possible to calculate a risk score. For example a risk assessed as Unlikely (2) and with an impact of Serious (2) can be plotted on the risk scoring grid, top right (C) to give an overall risk score of a green (4). Using the risk score definitions bottom right (D) below, a green risk is one that just requires actions to maintain that rating.

(A) Likelihood criteria

	Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Likely (4)
Criteria	Less than 10%	10 – 40%	40 – 75%	More than 75%
Probability	Has happened rarely/never before	Unlikely to occur	Fairly likely to occur	More likely to occur than not
Time period	Unlikely to occur in a 10 year period	Likely to occur within a 10 year period	Likely to occur once within a one year period	Likely to occur once within three months
Numerical	Less than one chance in a hundred thousand (<10-5)	Less than one chance in ten thousand (<10-4)	Less than one chance in a thousand (<10-3)	Less than one chance in a hundred (<10-2)

Page 51

(B) Impact criteria

Impact title	Definitions
Minor (1)	Service delivery/performance: Minor impact on service, typically up to one day. Financial: financial loss up to 5% of budget. Reputation: Isolated service user/stakeholder complaints contained within business unit/division. Legal/statutory: Litigation claim or find less than £5000. Safety/health: Minor incident including injury to one or more individuals. Objectives: Failure to achieve team plan objectives.
Serious (2)	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption 2 to 5 days. Financial: Financial loss up to 10% of budget. Reputation: Adverse local media coverage/multiple service user/stakeholder complaints. Legal/statutory: Litigation claimable fine between £5000 and £50,000. Safety/health: Significant injury or illness causing short-term disability to one or more persons. Objectives: Failure to achieve one or more service plan objectives.
Major (4)	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption > 1 - 4 weeks. Financial: Financial loss up to 20% of budget. Reputation: Adverse national media coverage 1 to 3 days. Legal/statutory: Litigation claimable fine between £50,000 and £500,000. Safety/health: Major injury or illness/disease causing long-term disability to one or more people Objectives: Failure to achieve a strategic plan objective.
Extreme (8)	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption > 4 weeks. Financial: Financial loss up to 35% of budget. Reputation: National publicity more than three days. Possible resignation leading member or chief officer. Legal/statutory: Multiple civil or criminal suits. Litigation claim or find in excess of £500,000. Safety/health: Fatality or life-threatening illness/disease (e.g. mesothelioma) to one or more persons. Objectives: Failure to achieve a major corporate objective.

(C) Risk scoring grid

		Impact			
		Minor (1)	Serious (2)	Major (4)	Extreme (8)
Likelihood	X				
	Likely (4)	4 Green	8 Amber	16 Red	32 Red
	Possible (3)	3 Green	6 Amber	12 Amber	24 Red
	Unlikely (2)	2 Green	4 Green	8 Amber	16 Red
	Rare (1)	1 Green	2 Green	4 Green	8 Amber

(D) Risk score definitions

RED	Urgent action required to reduce rating
AMBER	Action required to maintain or reduce rating
GREEN	Action required to maintain rating

This is an extract from the City of London Corporate Risk Management Strategy, published in May 2014.

Contact the Corporate Risk Advisor for further information. Ext 1297

October 2015

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Committee(s): Epping Forest Consultative Group – For Information	Dated: 21 June 2023
Epping Forest & Commons – For Decision	13 July 2023
Subject: Countryside Stewardship 2023 Application Final Details (SEF 14b/23)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	11, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Yes - Revenue
If so, how much?	£147k over 2024-2026
What is the source of Funding?	Epping Forest Local Risk (cost of work £1.911m less CS grant of £2.058m)
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Yes
Report of: Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director of Environment	EF CG - For Information
Report authors: Sally Gadsdon & Andy Froud Epping Forest, Environment Department	EF&CC – For Decision

Summary

This report is necessary to seek final approval of a new financial initiative not currently included in the Epping Forest Local Risk budget. It relates to a Countryside Stewardship (CS) application for grant support covering part of Epping Forest for 2024-2033 which was provisionally approved by your committee on 11 July 2022 for preparation and consultation, subject to your Committee’s further final approval of the final application. This funding would secure income to support management of internationally and nationally important habitats, nationally important heritage features and enable improvements for visitor access in line with ‘London’s Great Forest a strategy and management plan for Epping Forest’. In accordance with your Committee’s decision, the development of the proposals to be contained in the grant application has progressed in consultation with Epping Forest Commoners, the public and government agencies. The proposals have been revised in response to consultation. Minor proposal changes are presented and your approval to the final stage application is sought.

The first stage application was submitted in April 2023. The final stage application will be submitted by the end of August 2023, there may be further changes to the application before then due to further discussions with government agencies. The total annual payments over 10-years for habitat management and education contributions are estimated at £709,000. Additional funding for one-off works and infrastructure would contribute to a significant proportion to these costs estimated to be around £1.202 million. Therefore, the total potential grant could be around £1.911 million over 10 years. The habitat works are proposed to be delivered mostly by contractors and volunteers with a small amount undertaken by in-house staff to

balance costs. Therefore, to meet contractors' costs these proposals are estimated to require an additional £147,000 over 10 years from Epping Forest Local Risk budget in addition to the grant. This would be around £49,000 a year during years 1-3 and then the budget is estimated to be cost neutral. Without this proposed minor input from in-house teams the budget request would have been around £650,000 over 10 years.

There will be an increase in contractor delivery over 2023-2024 of the existing Countryside Stewardship grant on the remaining area of Epping Forest to give the in-house arborist teams more capacity to deal with tree safety works. In the situation that their capacity for delivering this grant work doesn't become available again before the end of the grant in 2029, it has been estimated that the expected grant income over this time should be sufficient to deliver the remaining work. This situation will be reviewed next year.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the changes to the proposals.
- Approve the proposals and related Countryside Stewardship final grant application as outlined in paragraph 32 (detailed in Appendix 1), subject to any changes resulting from engagement with government agencies.
- Delegate authority to the Executive Director Environment to agree any further such changes to the proposals in this report in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Epping Forest & Commons Committee.
- Delegate authority to the Director of Environment to sign the grant award offer, agreement and associated paperwork.
- Approve the increased use of contractors for deliver of the existing Countryside Stewardship grant.

Main Report

Background

1. Around half of Epping Forest is already covered by an existing DEFRA Countryside Stewardship (CS) habitat grant for Epping Forest, worth £1.89m across 2020-29, this will be referred to in this report as "Forest 1". This report concerns the CS grant application (SEF 17b-23) in respect of proposals covering the remaining part of Epping Forest, provisionally approved for preparation and consultation by your Committee at its meeting on 11 July 2022. The application seeks funding towards management of the most important habitats across part of Epping Forest, educational visits and the installation of visitor welcoming structures, this CS application will be referred to as "Forest 2". The proposals are detailed in Appendix 1 and summarised in paragraph 35. This grant would be for 10 years (2024-2033).
2. Following your Committee's approval in July 2022, the following actions have been undertaken:

- a. Consultation with all commoners on the Register of Commoners to ask whether they had any plans to exercise their rights during 2024-2033 over the land subject to the application so they could be taken into account when developing proposals.
 - b. Public consultation on the proposals for habitat work to be delivered through the grant:
 - i. The consultation was publicised by: sending to 277 key stakeholders; posting on Epping Forest webpage and social media accounts; sending to 6 local councils; putting up on-site posters in places of proposed key change; promotion by Epping Forest Heritage Trust; local media articles.
 - c. Liaison with government agencies Natural England, Rural Payments Agency, Forestry Commission, Historic England, Environment Agency over the proposals.
 - d. Submission of the first stage application in April 2023.
 - e. Development of the project plan.
3. Your committee's authority of July 2022 in respect of two further CS grant applications outlined in SEF 17/b-23 included proposals for the Buffer Lands (largely Copped Hall) and Wanstead Park. These applications are on hold due to insufficient staff resource to complete their development. With the implementation of the new Epping Forest staff structure these applications will be restarted at a later date.
 4. Part of the delivery of Forest 1 was being done by in-house arborists. They now need to divert largely on to tree safety work for 2023 and 2024. The work they would have done will now need to be undertaken by contractors. This situation will be reviewed in 2024.
 5. In the case that contractors are needed to deliver the work that would have been done by in-house arborists until 2029, a budget analysis (Appendix 2) has been completed to determine if there would be any additional financial requirement from Epping Forest Local Risk to cover contractor costs.

Current Position

Forest 2 Application Update

6. Results of the Commoners' Consultation: Whilst many commoners on the Register consented to be sent the consultation information no individuals confirmed they had definite intentions to exercising their grazing rights during 2024-2033.
7. Results of the Public Consultation: 60 responses were received from individuals or organisations. There was a mixture between general support for all the proposals and opposition against some specific proposals, some responses contained a mixture of positive and negative comments. Many responses were commentary, neither supportive nor opposing, or were making additional requests or suggestions. A significant number of comments were not relevant to the consultation topic.
 - a. 24 responses contained general support for the proposals as a whole or supportive of site specific proposals.
 - b. 25 responses were against site-specific proposals or elements. The most notable disagreement with proposals were about the:

- i. Reintroduction of grazing at Lords Bushes
 - ii. Introduction of grazing at Sheppard's Meadows (Epping)
 - iii. Habitat proposals at Epping Thicks
 - iv. Proposal for more signage (though an equal number supported more signage)
8. Through a combination of feedback from the public consultation and liaison with the government agencies, the proposals have been refined. These are the main changes:
- a. Speakman's Pond – This is no longer a proposal at the current time because the grant does not offer sufficient funding.
 - b. Lords Bushes and Sheppard's Meadows – Grazing will be reconsidered here. It will not be part of the grant application. This will give us flexibility to continue to explore if and how grazing could be undertaken on site.
 - c. Selvage Wood – This site will not be worked as the habitat benefits were not considered considerable enough.
 - d. Canada Plain – One block of wood pasture will be restored rather than two, with the block that will realise greater biodiversity benefits being chosen.
9. The habitat works in Epping Thicks will be retained because they are located in former open areas around ponds and former rides. The public objections were about the removal of thick vegetation, but these areas will largely remain, with a very small amount of holly being removed.
10. The proposals contain new signage for the Forest, so this public feedback will be met. Signs will largely be located on Forest edge locations so as not to detract from the 'natural aspect' which is a concern for visitor who do not like the visual intrusion of signage.
11. The consultation documentation presented proposals at a high-level. It is worth noting the following sites where the degree of tree felling may result in negative public reaction. These are listed here:
- a. Sheppard's Meadows – felling of young oak on the grassland edge to restore lost grassland area and encourage an expansion of flower diversity that is being lost on the site.
 - b. Ambresbury Banks – felling of young and semi-mature trees to reduce the tree cover over this Iron Age Scheduled Monument to limit further damage to the historic site from tree roots.
 - c. Long Running East – felling of birch and young oak to restore this area of heathland and prevent it from being lost, in order to promote an expansion of heathland species.
 - d. Theydon Plain – felling of young oak on the edge of the grassland to restore the grassland towards the Plain's former size and prevent further loss of grassland.
 - e. Lords Bushes & Knighton Wood – felling of young scrub and trees along the Rowan Trail and in patches across Lords Bushes to widen the ride for management purposes and introduce a greater element of open habitat in some locations and contribute to wood pasture restoration.
 - f. Leyton Flats – felling of holly and young trees mostly in the north of the site (between Snaresbrook car park and the north of Hollow Ponds) to open up the habitat and encourage ground flora re-establishment and create a more welcoming environment for visitors.

12. Site-specific public and local stakeholder engagement will be undertaken before these works commence to inform local communities of the changes to be expected.
13. An addition to the previous proposals is a new phase of partnership working with the Field Studies Centre to undertake educational visits on the Forest which is fundable through CS up to a maximum of 25 visits a year which would be a total of £7950 per year which would be passed on to the Field Studies Centre.
14. This report is to be presented to the Epping Forest Consultative Group on 21 June 2023 and any feedback from the Group will be reported to your Committee to ensure it can be taken into account in your Committee's decision.
15. The first stage application has been submitted to Natural England for consideration and there may be further changes to the proposals following discussion with them or other government agencies over summer 2023. Delegated authority is sought to incorporate any such changes to ensure that the application can be submitted in August 2023.
16. The proposed delivery plan for Forest 2 has been produced which balances contractor costs with time required from in-house teams. The plan is based on works being undertaken mainly by contractors and volunteers to relieve time pressures on in-house operational teams. Minor elements of work that is more cost effective to be done by in-house teams is proposed in order to reduce the overall cost of the project. A time analysis has demonstrated the feasibility of remaining work being undertaken by volunteers.
17. The project budget (Appendix 3) shows the grant is estimated at £1.911m over 10 years with an associated project delivery cost of £2.058m. It is hoped the grant will cover around 93% of the project costs but this is dependent on discussions with Natural England and the Rural Payments Agency over summer 2023. Approximately £49k will be required from Epping Forest Local Risk per annum, amounting to a total of £147k between 2024-2026, to meet contractor costs. Thereafter, until 2033, the budget is estimated to be cost neutral. No contingency has been included in these figures. The use of in-house operational teams for delivering some elements of work would save approximately £500k in contractor costs over 10 years.

Balancing Delivery and Costs of Forest 1 and Forest 2

18. The Forest 1 budget (Appendix 2) shows that if required contractors could be commissioned to deliver the rest of the larger-scale Forest 1 work with the key assumption that a few key operational tasks are still delivered in-house. There is therefore no expected request for additional funds from Local Risk to deliver Forest 1, though there is no contingency included.
19. Tender prices are due to be received shortly for 2023-4 Forest 1 work and this will help to align estimations, and any significant issues in funding delivery will be flagged thereafter.
20. There is the option to request additional grant for Forest 1 for eligible work, this will be explored to ease any budgetary pressures on Forest 1 costs.
21. It is proposed in-house operational teams deliver a small element of Forest 2 where there is a significant cost saving over the use of contractors with a low time requirement (see Appendix 3). If there are in-house capacity issues contractors may need to undertake some of this work.
22. The volunteer work will largely be done by the Epping Forest Heritage Trust and Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers, with additional support from other

smaller volunteer groups. The contribution from volunteer groups is critical and the grant cannot be delivered without them. It is estimated that approximately 450 tasks will be required over the 10 years, whilst this is difficult to approximate to a financial value the same work would cost several tens of thousands of pounds if done by contractors.

Proposals

23. The full revised proposals are presented in Appendix 1.
24. The proposed delivery plan for Forest 2 is through contractors and volunteers with minor elements of work done by in-house teams to balance the project cost. The budget is presented in Appendix 3; approximately £147k would be required from the Epping Forest Local Risk budget over 2024-2026.
25. The proposals will be finalised in August 2023 by the Conservation Team in discussion with Natural England and other government agencies. It is proposed that authority for any resulting changes be delegate as set out at recommendation 3.
26. It is proposed that delegation of authority to sign the final stage application is given to the Director of Environment.
27. The delivery of Forest 1 in 2023 and 2024 will largely be done by contractors and volunteers. In-house arborist teams should make sufficient progress on tree safety works before 2029 to allow them to transition back before this date to Forest 1 delivery; in this situation less money will be spent on contractors and any remaining grant funds will be used to contribute to staff costs within Epping Forest Local Risk.
28. The Forest 1 and 2 budgets do not include an amount for contingency. There will need to be a proportionate degree of tolerance in these financial requests to make allowances for unstable economic factors.

Key Data

29. In the area of Epping Forest proposed to be included in the CS application there are three SSSI units in Unfavourable No Change condition and one in Unfavourable Declining out of the 38 SSSI units in total. It is hoped that the work within the grant will move these Unfavourable units to 'Unfavourable – Recovering' status.
30. Funding is sought for management of a variety of habitats and endeavours:
 - a. 117 hectares of wood pasture restoration with the creation of over 700 new pollards
 - b. 51 hectares of grassland management and restoration
 - c. 12 hectares of heathland management
 - d. Sensitive management of 421 veteran trees
 - e. 4 hectares of ancient scheduled monument heritage features
 - f. 2 new cattle corrals to support wood pasture and heathland management through grazing
 - g. Removal of 0.5 hectares of rhododendrons to protect beech woodlands from Ramorum disease
 - h. Management of 3 ponds

- i. 432 new items of visitor infrastructure (information and interpretation boards, way-markers)
 - j. Up to 25 educational visits a year run by the Field Studies Council on Epping Forest to explain the link between farming, food and the countryside.
31. The Countryside Stewardship scheme is a valuable funding stream. Part of Epping Forest already receives around £170,000 in annual payments until 2029 (increase from £150,000 in last report due to rise in CS grant rate rise) in addition to over £200,000 for one-off work.
32. The current estimated income from the proposals above would be additional annual payments of around £71,000 for Epping Forest. In addition, funding for one-off works would provide significant proportion of these costs, with some works funded at a high percentage between 60-100%.
33. This government grant is not designed to cover the total cost of works, but rather incentivise landowners. The grant is estimated to cover around 93% of the cost of the project. It is estimated the grant will be around £1.911m, with an associated project cost of £2.058m. The remainder of the costs are proposed to be funded through the Epping Forest Local Risk budget.
34. The final stage application will be made in August 2023 for the grant to start in January 2024 and would run for 10 years, finishing in 2033.
35. The existing Epping Forest CS grant will finish in 2029. The government's new Environmental Land Management grant schemes should provide a continuity of funding after the end of these CS grants.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

36. City of London Corporate Plan 2018-2023: (11) We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment; (12) Our spaces are secure, resilient and well-maintained.
37. The proposed action supports the Natural Environment division's Vision of enriching people's lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.
38. The proposed action meets the Natural Environment division's objective of 'Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible'. It would also contribute to the Department's performance measures of the condition of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest, active ancient tree management and income generation.
39. The grant would deliver work to contribute to the government's 25 Year Environment Plan targets.

Financial implications

40. Under City of London Corporation Financial Regulations 2.11(d) it is necessary for the Chief Officer to seek prior approval of new financial initiatives not currently included in the Epping Forest Local Risk budget.
41. It is estimated that £147k would be required from Epping Forest Local Risk between 2024-2026 to meet required contractor costs for Forest 2.
42. The capital works are funded at 60-100% of actual costs. During the application process the percentage funding would be made known and a decision would be taken whether to retain any elements funded under 100% where the remaining costs would need to be funded through Local Risk.
43. Through the preparation of the application the eligibility criteria for the proposals above would be determined; some features may not be eligible for funding. This would affect what is included in the final application. Any proposals that are not eligible for funding would not go ahead within this CS grant application.

Resource implications

44. The preparation of the Forest 2 application will continue to require significant amounts of the Environmental Stewardship and Biodiversity Officer's time until early autumn 2023.
45. The management of any awarded grant for Forest 2 and its delivery would be shared by the Estate & Conservation Teams and Business Development teams at Epping Forest. Some of the delivery would also be undertaken by volunteer groups in liaison with Epping Forest officers. This would also require significant staff resource.
46. The delivery of Forest 1 by contractors during 2023-2024 will result in a greater workload for the Conservation Team.

Legal implications

47. Historic England's consent is required for Ambresbury Banks and Purlieu Banks under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
48. Planning permission is required for a small part of the works in Leyton Flats (London Borough of Redbridge) and installation of visitor infrastructure within Bell Common Conservation Area (Epping Forest District Council). A Flood Area Permit is required from the Environment Agency for those sites close to rivers. SSSI consent will be sought from Natural England through the CS application process.
49. As required for the purposes of Countryside Stewardship grant, the City, as Conservator of Epping Forest, commits, by the terms of the Countryside Stewardship Agreement, to take all reasonable steps to engage with any Commoners known to them and understanding their future commoning intentions in relation to the Countryside Stewardship proposals and ensuring it is compatible for its continuation. The CS

Agreement includes conditions applicable to the exercise of rights of common (such as regarding infected or troublesome animals and meeting the rules of the CS scheme). Part of the documentation required for the CS Agreement is a document, called an Internal Agreement in the CS scheme, that lays out how any active commoners exercising their rights would carry them out so that the CS Agreement conditions are complied with. Whilst there are currently no active commoners, anyone becoming an active commoner in the future will be asked to sign this document and abide by these terms. This document encapsulates various safeguards for the compliance with the CS agreement provided by various legal acts and regulations.

50. The signing of the CS award offer is a legally binding agreement. There are options to cease the grant once it has started, but it would mean pulling out of the whole grant. There are no options to pause/postpone works, nor to modify the grant contents.

Risk implications

51. The risk rating is low because there is limited in-house involvement, although there is a large reliance on contractors and volunteers.
52. Some sites may attract negative responses, the ones that may attract more negative reactions are listed in paragraph 7. Local community engagement will be undertaken but this work is essential for preserving habitats and the necessary loss of trees will always be unpopular.

Equalities implications

53. An Equality Analysis Test of Relevance has been carried out on the proposals. The habitat works are not deemed to have any equality impacts. The accessibility of the proposed new signage will be optimised with QR codes to be used with smartphones that can adapt the information according to need.
54. The signs will have a net positive impact by making these open spaces more welcoming and denoting these are public spaces and identifying who the landowner is. The signage will help our visitors understand the Forest better and help them to have a better experience and help us look after the Forest. The signs are likely to have a net positive effect by increasing awareness in the community of the availability of these spaces for use by the public, and these may be able to reach groups that are currently less likely to visit.

Climate implications

55. The management of the habitats supported by the CS grant would increase the resilience of the habitats to environmental and biological changes brought about by climate change as well as increasing the resilience of populations of some species found in these habitats. The work complements the aims of the Climate Action Strategy of the City Corporation for both climate adaptation and biodiversity enhancement.

Security

None.

Charity implications.

56. Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity

Conclusion

57. A first stage Countryside Stewardship application has been submitted for Epping Forest. Commoners, the public and government agencies were consulted on the proposals and have been modified to a minor extent. There may be further changes to the proposals through discussion with government agencies. This grant would provide 10 years of funding to support the management of important habitats, heritage features and improvement of visitor access. The proposal is to deliver the works largely using contractors and volunteers with a limited amount being undertaken by in-house teams. An estimated £147k would be required from the Epping Forest Local Risk budget, in addition to the £1.911m grant, to deliver the works. The final stage application will be completed by the end of August 2023, and the grant should start January 2024.
58. More of the delivery for the existing Countryside Stewardship grant on the other part of Epping Forest will be done by contractors in 2023-2024 to allow the in-house arborist greater capacity to deal with the tree safety works. A budget analysis indicates that if this in-house capacity is not made available to deliver any further works on this grant before 2029, the expected grant income should be sufficient to commission contractors to undertake the larger-scale work, although this will result in greater work for the officers delivering the project. Volunteers will continue to be critical in delivery of this grant.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Updated detailed proposals
- Appendix 2 – Forest 1 Budget Summary
- Appendix 3 – Forest 2 Budget Summary

Background Papers

SEF 17-22 and 17b-22 Countryside Stewardship Grant 2023 Application Proposals

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Epping Forest
Proposals for Habitat
Conservation for the 2023
Countryside Stewardship
Application

June 2023



Epping
Forest

Registered Charity

This document has been designed to allow viewing as two pages side by side.

Introduction

Epping Forest is a site of nationally and internationally important habitats and this is recognised in its designations of Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation. The largest habitat type is wood pasture which has been present probably for at least a thousand years or more. Wood pasture is a patchwork of habitats such as grasslands, heathlands, ponds, bogs and scrub throughout an area of trees, which are often pollards. Pollards are trees that have been worked by cutting the stems at head height to produce a crop of wood, this was repeated on each tree around every 15 years, this kept the trees short. This pollarding practice encourages vigorous tree growth and tends to prolong the tree's lifespan. Whilst some old pollards become very big, some pollards remain small, but they are both very old and are called veteran or ancient pollards depending on their age. Worked pollards allow a greater amount of light to reach the Forest floor where different plants can grow, this is the 'pasture' part of wood pasture, which allow animals to graze. This makes Epping Forest an ancient, worked landscape.

At the end of the 19th century the working of pollards stopped, and over the 20th century commoners' grazing gradually ended. As the pollards were not being re-cut every 15 or so years, the stems on the pollards carried on growing. On some trees these stems have grown as big as young trees, so that one pollard can have a cluster of tree-sized stems growing on its trunk. This puts a lot of stress on the tree and they can fall apart. The Forest has about 50,000 veteran or ancient pollards mostly oak, beech or hornbeam.

The veteran pollards of the Forest are rich in biodiversity because they have more complex structures than trees that have grown naturally. This allows the pollards to provide more habitats within the tree and therefore host a larger number of species. Pollards tend to live longer than other trees and therefore allow species that are slow to move around to colonise other pollards. Epping forest is particularly rich in insects and fungi that are associated with wood pasture. Wood pasture therefore makes Epping Forest extremely important for nature conservation.

The cessation of working the pollards and decline of cattle grazing allowed the open habitats of the Forest to become infilled with young trees and scrub increasing the shade around pollards and shading out the Forest floor plants, ponds, bogs and reducing the size of the ancient plains, heaths and grasslands. What is required is to open the habitats back up to promote grazing across their areas. The veteran pollards need to continue to be managed to prolong their lives whilst new pollards are made to become veteran pollards of the future.

In 2020 the first phase of a new conservation habitats programme was started across some parts of Epping Forest. This work builds on decades of conservation habitat work started in the late 1980s, which saw the veteran pollards being managed consistently for the first time since the Victorian period. Since that time conservation work has expanded and has delivered sensitive management of the grasslands, heathlands, scrub, ponds and wood pasture covering hundreds of hectares, which included the start of conservation grazing and the development of an Epping Forest cattle herd.

A second phase of conservation habitat management is presented here as proposals. Alongside this are proposals to help improve how visitors are welcomed to the Forest and how they can find their way around. Welcome signs, information boards, signs to give directions are proposed throughout a wide area. This will encourage visitors to explore other parts of the Forest and improve their visit by providing more information about Epping Forest.

The proposals would be partly funded through a Defra Countryside Stewardship grant for which an application is being prepared.

These proposals are part of the [Epping Forest Management Strategy](#) which meets part of the City of London Corporation's [Corporate Plan](#). It also contributes to the government's [25 Year Environment Plan](#).



New pollards in an area of restored wood pasture



Veteran hornbeam pollard that hasn't been recut for over 100 years wood pasture that has become shady

Lower Forest, Epping – Also known as Wintry Wood

This area is quite different to the rest of Epping Forest because of the abundance of tall straight oak trees. It has a different ground flora to the rest of the Forest because of its different soil type. This area used to be much more open wood pasture, and oak and hornbeam pollards remain. There are two main rides which meet in the middle of Lower Forest, here wildflowers such as Primroses, Wood-Sorrel, Betony and Violets can be seen. The proposed work in Lower Forest would focus on these two main rides and two ponds.

The rides will be opened up (A285) to give more space for a greater diversity of plant species including wildflowers. There will also be increased light for the veteran oak and hornbeam pollards which will encourage their growth and improve their vitality. Some of the veteran trees will receive pruning work to help increase their longevity and improve their health and stability, and interspersed through the area new pollards will be created to become veteran pollards of the future. The area at the intersection of the two main rides will be opened up to increase the size of the glade towards its former size.

At the northern end of the north-sound ride the area of open grassland, called Thornwood Common (A289), will be expanded to start to restore the area back to its former size. This will benefit the wild plants here such as Violets and ferns as well as a variety of different grass species.

Tree cover has increased around the main lake during the 20th century and this has resulted in the loss of pond plants. This loss of plants and increase in shade has resulted in a reduction in pond wildlife. The area around the lake will be opened up to encourage the return of these plants and hopefully an increase in wildlife. One species that used to be recorded here was the Downy Emerald dragonfly which is scarce in Epping Forest. On the other side of the road, a smaller pond will be opened up. By improving the condition of more than one pond in the area it will help to strengthen local populations of species that rely on healthy ponds.

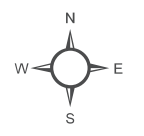
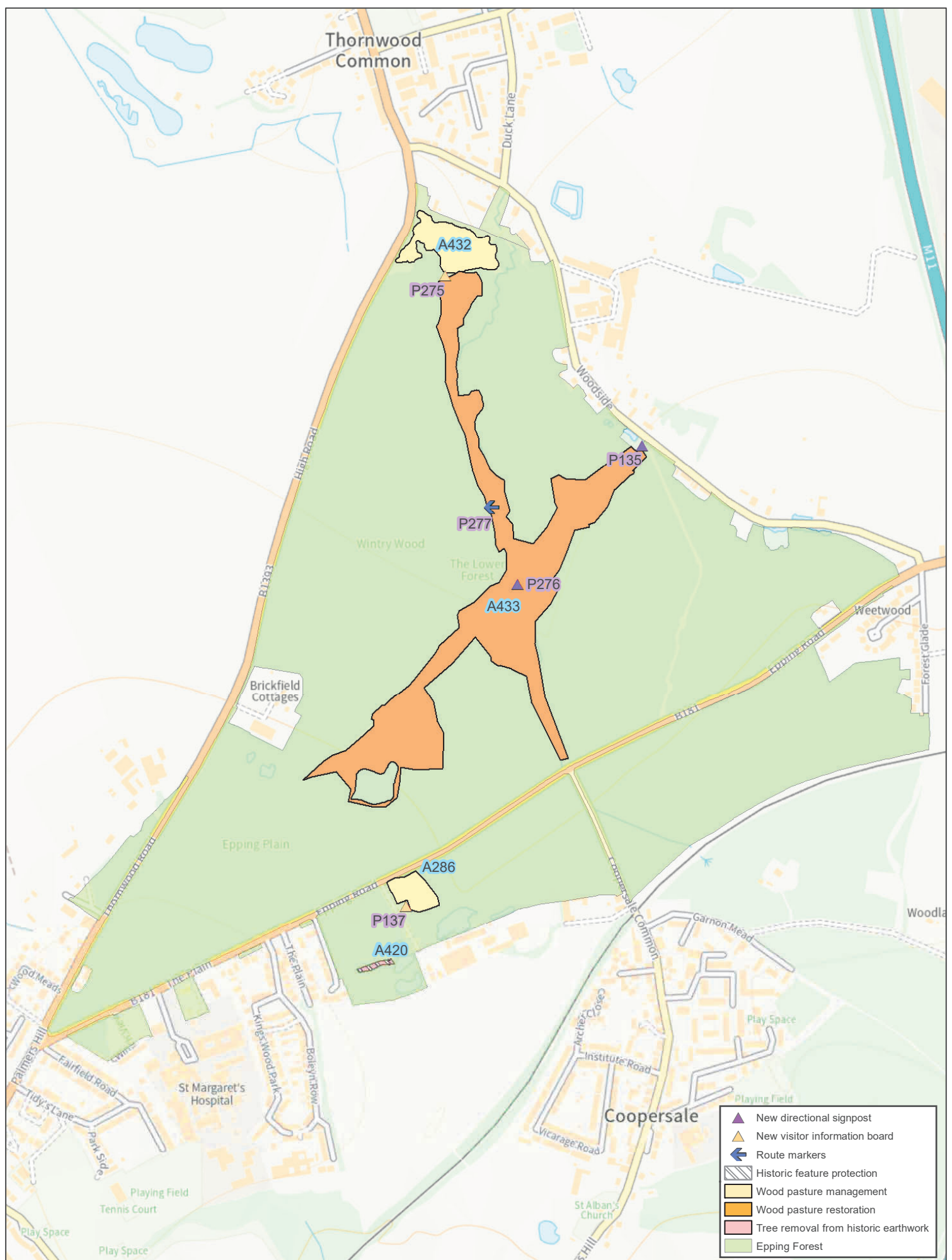
The glade by the car park (A286) will be opened up to allow the grassland to be better managed to benefit the plant species. By making sunny glades across Lower Forest there will be more areas for wildlife that need these habitats and this will help to increase the local biodiversity.

There is also a short section of the Medieval Purlieu Bank (A420), an earth mound that was used to denote the boundary of the historic royal Forest. The best preservation of earthworks is to prevent any damage or disturbance of their structures. Tree roots disturb the soil of earthworks, so the bank will be cleared of woody vegetation and kept open to preserve this structure for longer.

Route markers and signage will be installed at a couple of locations to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

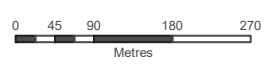
- Improve the condition of the habitats in these areas and make them better connected
- Increase the health and longevity of the veteran trees
- Create new pollards which will become veteran pollards of the future
- Increase the area of restored wood pasture and old plains
- Encourage the spread of Epping Forest scarce species as well as plants of the Forest floor in general
- Increase the amount of deadwood habitat, thereby encouraging and increasing the population of species that rely on dead wood
- Create the conditions to promote an increase in biodiversity in the area
- Protect a remnant of the Medieval Purlieu Bank
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 1 Page 68
Lower Forest / Epping

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Gifford's Meadow, Upshire

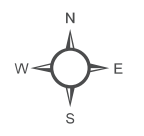
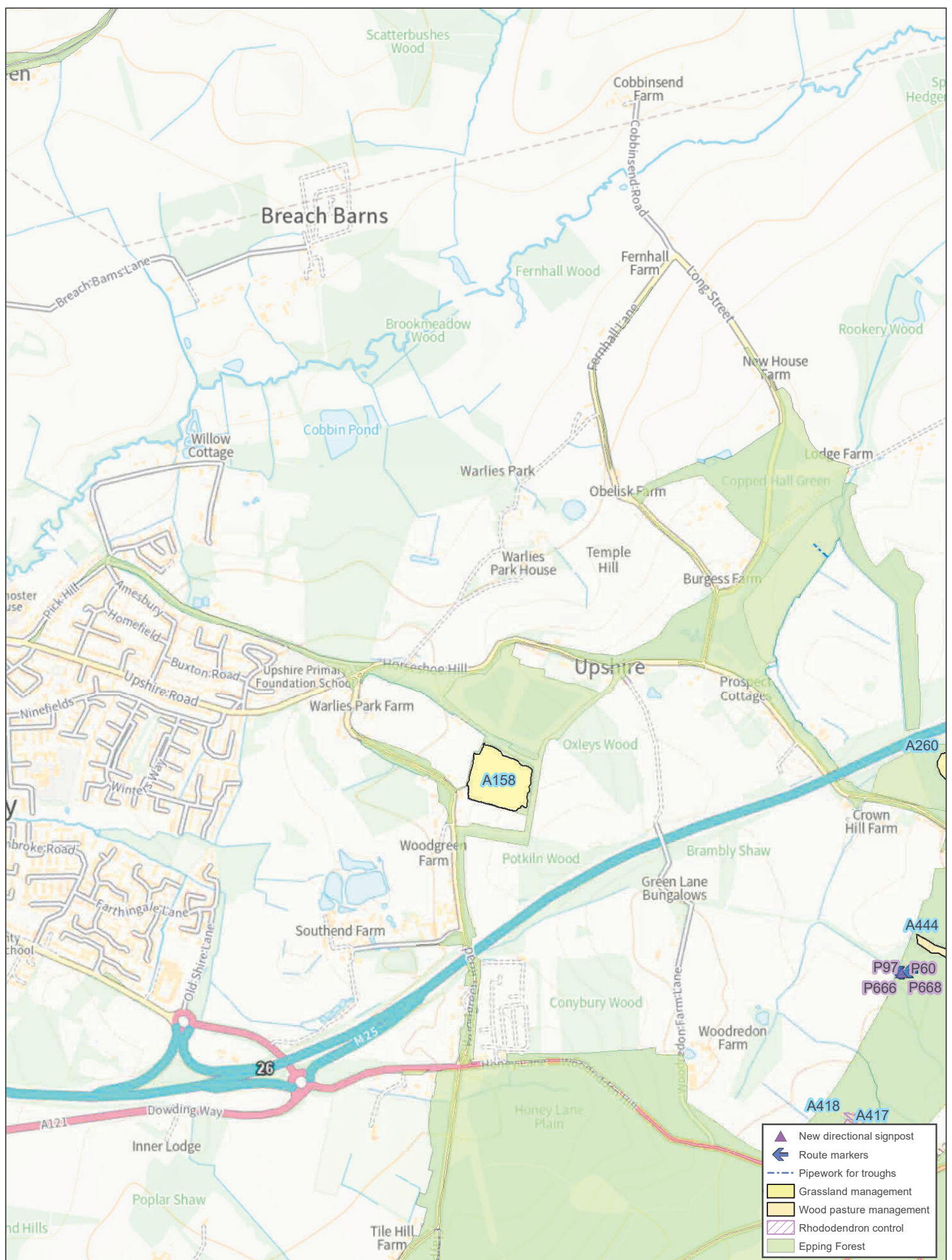
Giffords Meadow (A158) is one of three fields that are the newest addition to Epping Forest with the two fields to the north which were made into Gifford Wood.

This meadow contains a good diversity of grassland plants including flowers such as Sneezewort, Knapweed and Birds' Foot Trefoil. It also has anthills and a boundary of mature trees and scrub. A good diversity of wildlife is found in the meadow such as the Marble White butterfly, grasshoppers and mammals. It is proposed to manage the grassland for its plant species and keep as an open meadow which will be good for wildlife and complement the adjacent ancient green lane and new woodlands to the north.

A new welcome board (P75, A274) will be installed near to one of the entrances of Gifford's Meadow to help direct visitors.

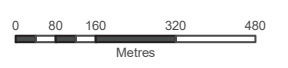
Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- To manage Gifford's Meadow to keep it open and preserve the grassland and its plant diversity and associated wildlife
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 2 Page 70
Uphire / Waltham Abbey

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Epping Thicks & Sheppard's Meadows, Epping

Work will be targeted to the areas that can provide the best potential biodiversity improvements, which are two ponds and an area of hornbeam pollards around the Victorian Ride.

The area around the Hawcock and Pizzle Pit South ponds (A401) will be opened up to increase light to these ponds and help them improve their condition and encourage a return of a range of aquatic plants. It is hoped this will encourage wildlife such as amphibians and dragonflies to return, Great Crested Newts and Downy Emerald dragonflies used to be recorded at Pizzle Pits South Pond.

The area in between the ponds will also be opened up to increase the light and encourage the re-establishment of Forest floor plants, and new scattered pollards will be created. The adjacent Kemp's Lawn, a remnant of a former grassland that once used to stretch from the Ivy Chimneys Road to Ambresbury Banks, will continue to be managed to keep this old damp grassland open.

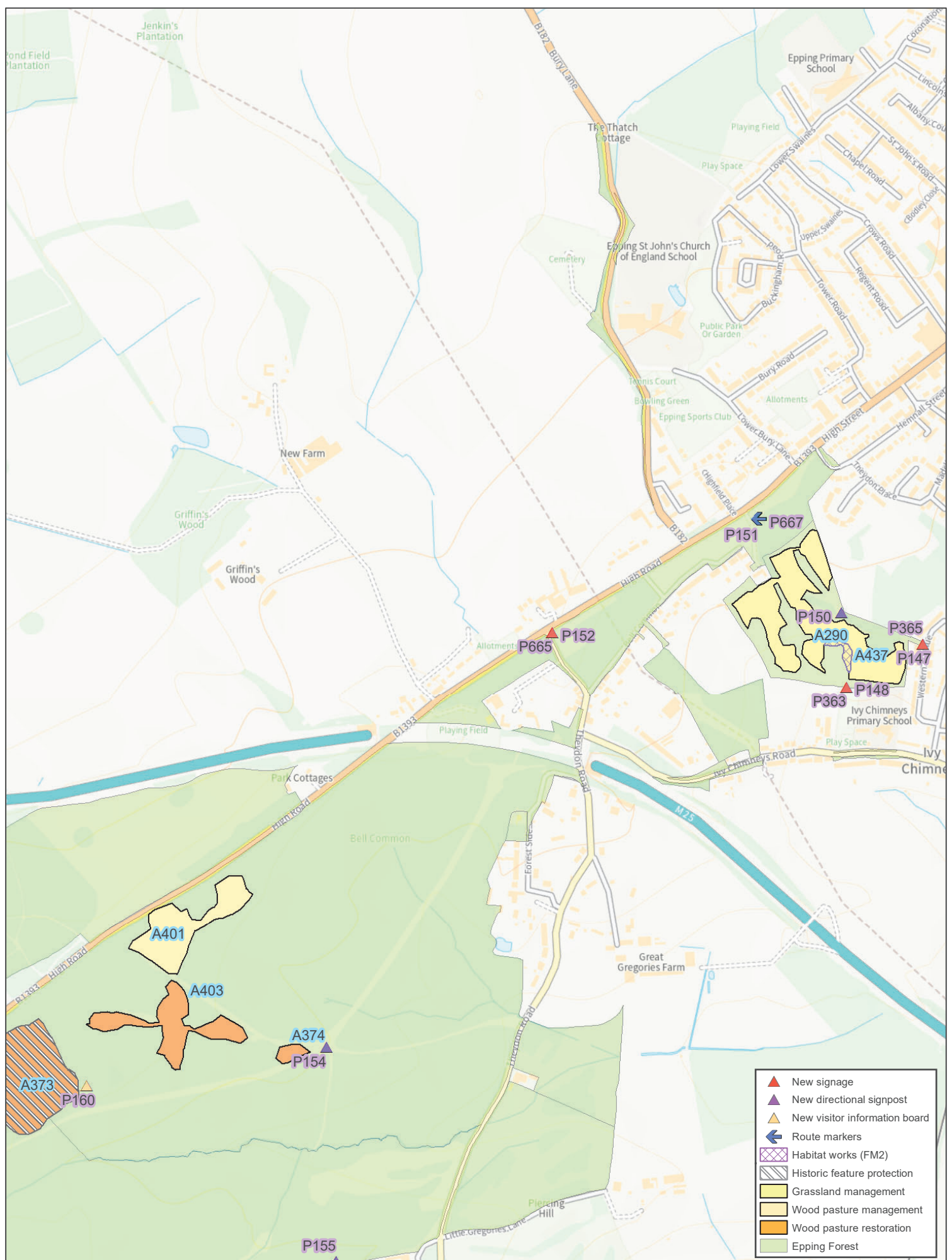
On the south side of the Victorian Ride (A403 and A374), work will open the areas up around many old pollards, both hornbeam and beech. The increase in light to these veteran trees will help to promote growth and therefore increase their lifespans. Some trees will receive sensitive pruning to reduce their canopies and improve their stability, thereby decreasing the chance of them collapsing. Scattered across the area new pollards will be created that will succeed these old trees as veterans for the future, and other young pollards will be reworked thereby keeping them in the pollarding cycle. The area alongside the rides and the connecting areas will also be opened up to encourage development of Forest floor plants.

At the southern end of Epping town is Sheppard's Meadows (A290), added to the Forest in 1991. It has very important flora including the nationally scarce Corky-fruited Water Dropwort, a plant in the carrot family. Other flowers found across these four small meadows are Ladies Bedstraw, Creeping Jenny, Devil's Bit Scabious, Sneezewort and Pignut. The grassland will be managed to preserve this floral diversity, this will be done by removing the encroaching young trees and scrub which are gradually reducing the size of the grassland, as well as continuing to mow the grassland.

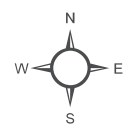
Route markers and signage will be installed at a couple of locations to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Improve the condition of the habitats in these areas and make them better connected
- Increase the vitality and longevity of the veteran trees
- Create new pollards which will become veteran pollards of the future
- Increase the area of restored wood pasture and old plains
- Increase the light for flowering scrub which are favoured by insects, birds and mammals
- Improve the condition of ponds which will encourage key groups such as dragonflies and amphibians
- Increase the amount of deadwood habitat, encouraging species that rely on dead wood
- Encourage the re-establishment of Forest floor plants
- Maintain, and ideally increase, the plant diversity of Sheppard's Meadows and increase the wider diversity of all species
- Create the conditions to promote an increase wider biodiversity in the area
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site

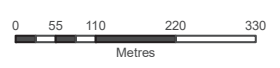


- ▲ New signage
- ▲ New directional signpost
- ▲ New visitor information board
- ← Route markers
- ▨ Habitat works (FM2)
- ▨ Historic feature protection
- Grassland management
- Wood pasture management
- Wood pasture restoration
- Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 3 Page 72
Epping Thicks and Bell Common / Epping

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St Thomas' Quarters, South of Epping

This part of the Forest is dominated by large veteran beech pollards. The area also contains bogs and a stream complex which support important plant and moss species not found anywhere else in the Forest or in Essex. Therefore, the focus of the work will be to carefully manage a number of beech pollards and manage the area around the bogs and stream to improve their condition and promote their plants.

The bogs (A295, A296, A298) are of great conservation importance supporting notable species such as Bog Pondweed, Cotton-grass, Sundews and Sphagnum mosses. The bogs exist because a road was constructed in ancient times across spring lines causing the bogs to form as the water was dammed. Around the bogs and the stream, the area will be opened up to increase the light and reduce the number of trees drawing water from them thereby helping to prevent them drying out. In addition, some dams will be created to help retain water in the bogs. This may allow an increase in the cover of the Sphagnum bog mosses. An increase in light along the stream corridor will encourage plants to colonise its banks and increase the diversity of species.

Also along the stream (A297) veteran hornbeams, that were last pollarded in the 19th century, will be pollarded once again to increase their lifespans and restore the relict wood pasture which was once open across the local landscape.

Some of the beech pollards (A424) will be chosen to have their canopies very gently reduced in size to improve their stability and vitality. By prolonging the life of these old trees, it will allow the young pollards to age and develop the important characteristics that are found in veteran trees which make them so valuable for biodiversity, such as nooks and crannies, as well as deadwood they hold in their canopies.

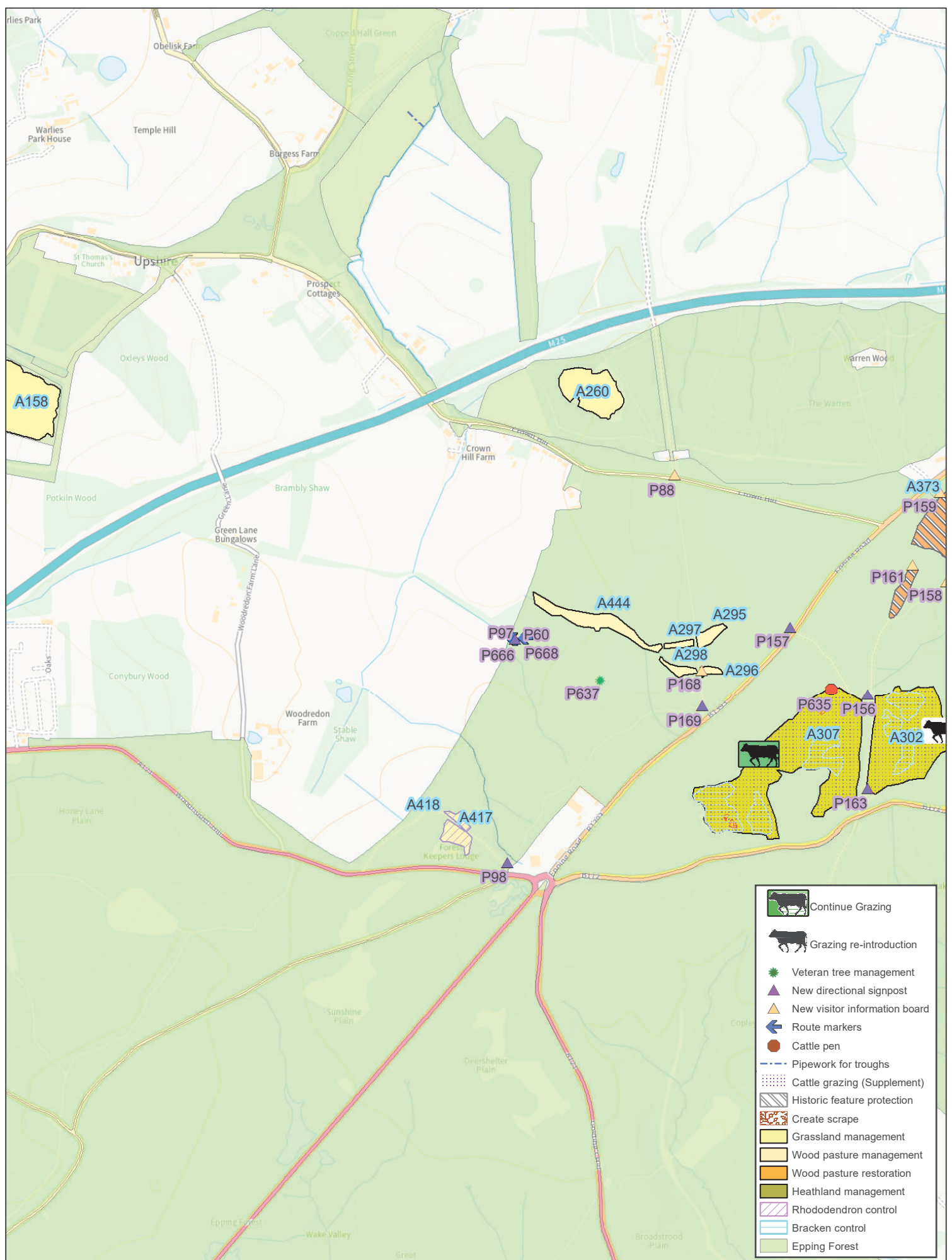
Rhododendrons (A124, A417, A418) will be removed because Ramorum disease was discovered in 2016 in the nearby Warren plantation, immediately to the north. This disease lives on a variety of trees and shrubs and was found growing on rhododendrons in the Warren Plantation. It can spread to beech trees. With so many very old beech pollards in St Thomas' Quarters an outbreak of Ramorum disease here could cause tree death and is therefore a threat to such a valuable population of important trees. One of Epping Forest's most important habitats is its beech woodlands. Therefore, these rhododendrons will be removed as a disease prevention measure.















Stag beetles have been recorded in the area in the recent past and an increase in deadwood will help encourage these insects.

Welcome boards, route markers and directional posts will be installed at a couple of locations to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Improve the condition of the habitats in these areas and make them better connected
- Increase the vitality and longevity of the veteran trees
- Create new pollards which will become veteran pollards of the future
- Restore an area of wood pasture
- Improve the condition of the bogs and the stream corridor and encourage key species such as bog plants
- Increase the amount of deadwood habitat, thereby encouraging an increase in species that rely on dead wood, particularly insects
- Encourage the re-establishment of Forest floor plants
- Create the conditions to promote a wider increase of biodiversity in the area
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site

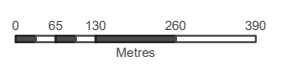


-  Continue Grazing
-  Grazing re-introduction
-  Veteran tree management
-  New directional signpost
-  New visitor information board
-  Route markers
-  Cattle pen
-  Pipework for troughs
-  Cattle grazing (Supplement)
-  Historic feature protection
-  Create scrape
-  Grassland management
-  Wood pasture management
-  Wood pasture restoration
- Heathland management
- Rhododendron control
- Bracken control
- Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 4 Page 74
St. Thomas' Quarters / Waltham Abbey

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Long Running, West of Theydon Bois

Long Running (A307) is the biggest area of heathland in Epping Forest, it is a wet heathland, which means it tends to be waterlogged in winter and be damp throughout most of the rest of the year. It therefore contains more mosses and different plant species compared to dry heathlands such as those found on Warren Hill or Furze Ground. Long Running has two types of heather and also contains other heathland plants such as Creeping willow, Tormentil and Cotton-grass.

On the west of the ride is Long Running East (A302), this is a dry heath with numerous former gravel pits, but this has a smaller area of heather because over the 20th century trees grew up and shaded out the heathland species and wildlife that live there.

Long Running has been managed for many years to keep the heathland open and maintain the plant diversity. Management techniques include grazing, tree removal, bracken management and stripping away competitive vegetation to increase the space for delicate heathland plants. It is proposed to continue the grazing with a small number of cattle and continue to keep the heathland free of invading trees and undesirable scrub. Heathland species will be encouraged to expand by removing some of the dominant Molinia grass and bracken in small areas (A311, A306) to give room for germination of other species. More widely, bracken will continue to be managed, to prevent this species from expanding and shading out important heathland plant species.

At Long Running East the area of heathland will be expanded by reducing the number of trees to allow the heather and other heathland plants to colonise and expand. In addition, some trees will be made into new pollards. Cattle grazing will be reintroduced to this area, the action of hooves can help to lightly disturb the ground and encourage the germination of plant species, and the dung will increase the local insect population.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Improve the condition of the existing heathland and increase the area of heathland at Long Running East, thereby increasing wildlife that live on heathlands
- Increase the number of heathland plants, thereby making their populations more sustainable in the long-term
- Reintroduce grazing to Long Running East to help increase the biodiversity of this area
- Create new pollards

Ambresbury Banks

This site is an Iron Age hill fort, just north of Long Running. It was once an open site but became covered in trees when it stopped being used as a hill fort.

Ambresbury Banks (A373) supports a large number of ancient beech trees which have potentially been worked over a thousand years. Therefore, the cultural heritage and biodiversity value of these trees is extremely high and they require protecting. However, these trees pose a risk to the Iron Age earthworks from root growth and trees uprooting. Ancient trees require very slow and sensitive management over decades to help them cope with pruning, this careful management is proposed at this site. The ancient trees will be managed until the ends of their natural lives. There are a large number of mixed-aged birch on the site as well. These trees also pose a threat to the earthworks and will need to be removed carefully in

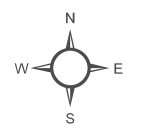
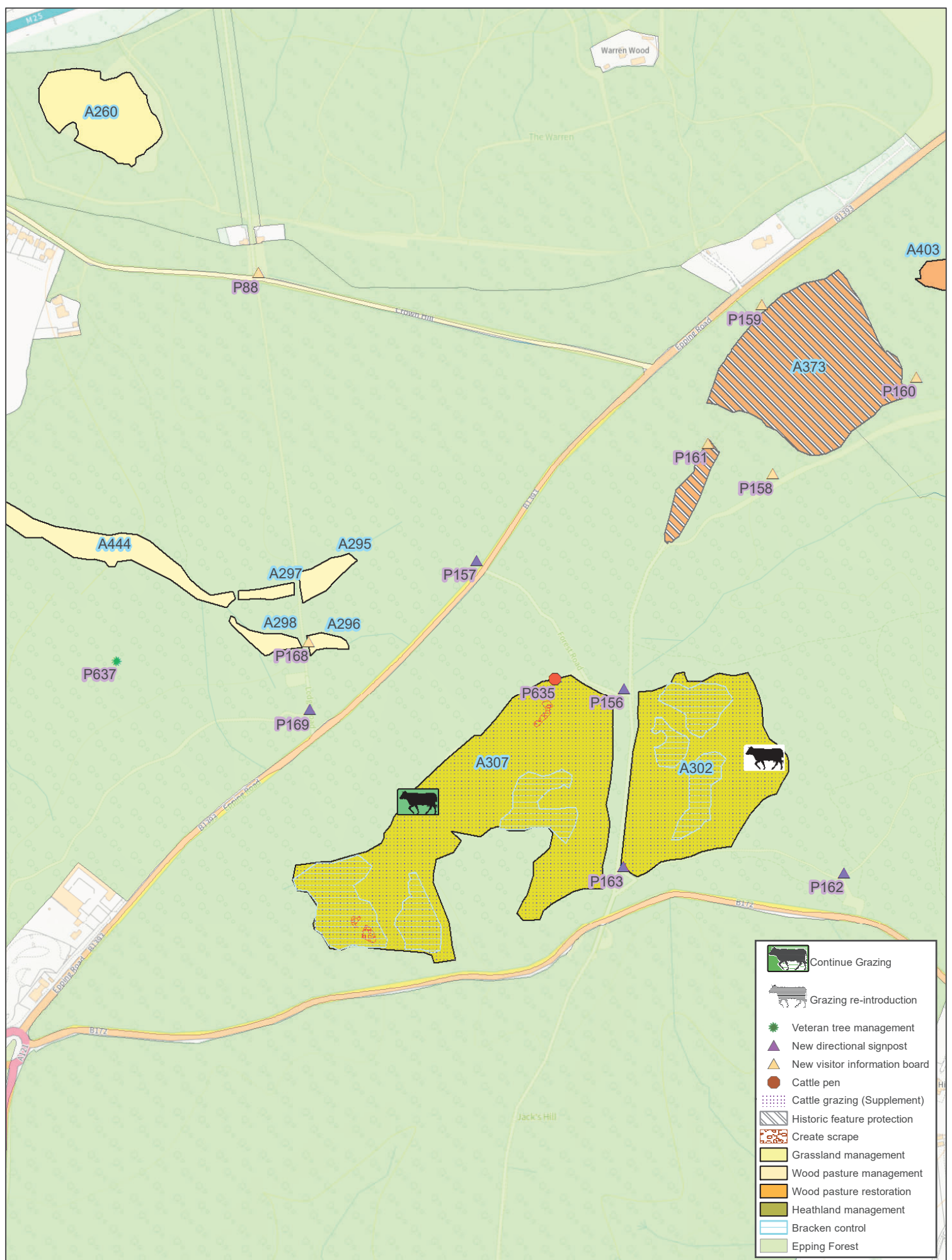
stages over the next couple of decades. Over many decades a grassy sward will develop over the hillfort which will help reduce erosion of the earthworks.

Welcoming Visitors

Route markers and signage will be installed at a couple of locations to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way. This includes better interpretation at Ambresbury Banks to explain the importance and history of this hill fort.

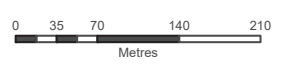
Overall, the aims of the work here are to:

- Stabilise the ancient beech trees on the site to reduce the risk of their damaging the Iron Age hill fort earthworks
- Start a decades-long programme of careful tree removal in small stages with the aim of encouraging a grassy sward to develop over the earthworks to maximise their protection
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around and understand the site



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 5 Page 77
Long Running and Ambresbury Banks /Theydon Bois/Epping

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Theydon Plain, Theydon Bois

Theydon Plain (A312) is one of the old grasslands of the Forest, it is an acid grassland which means that the plants grow in a low nutrient soil and this favours some species. This grassland also has a small area of anthills which are small earth mounds ants make to live in. These anthills are of high ecological importance as the mounds create a microclimate around them which allows different species to live here compared to the open grassland. These are good not only for ants but for other wildlife.

Over time new trees have continued to grow on the edges and the grassland has become smaller. In addition, some of the anthills have become shaded out and this will cause ants to abandon them.

The proposal is to increase the grassland on the east side and continue the existing grassland mowing regime. This will reveal some of the old anthills which will hopefully be colonised again.

Directional posts and an information board will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Increase the area of acid grassland
- Protect the anthills and encourage other species associated with them
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



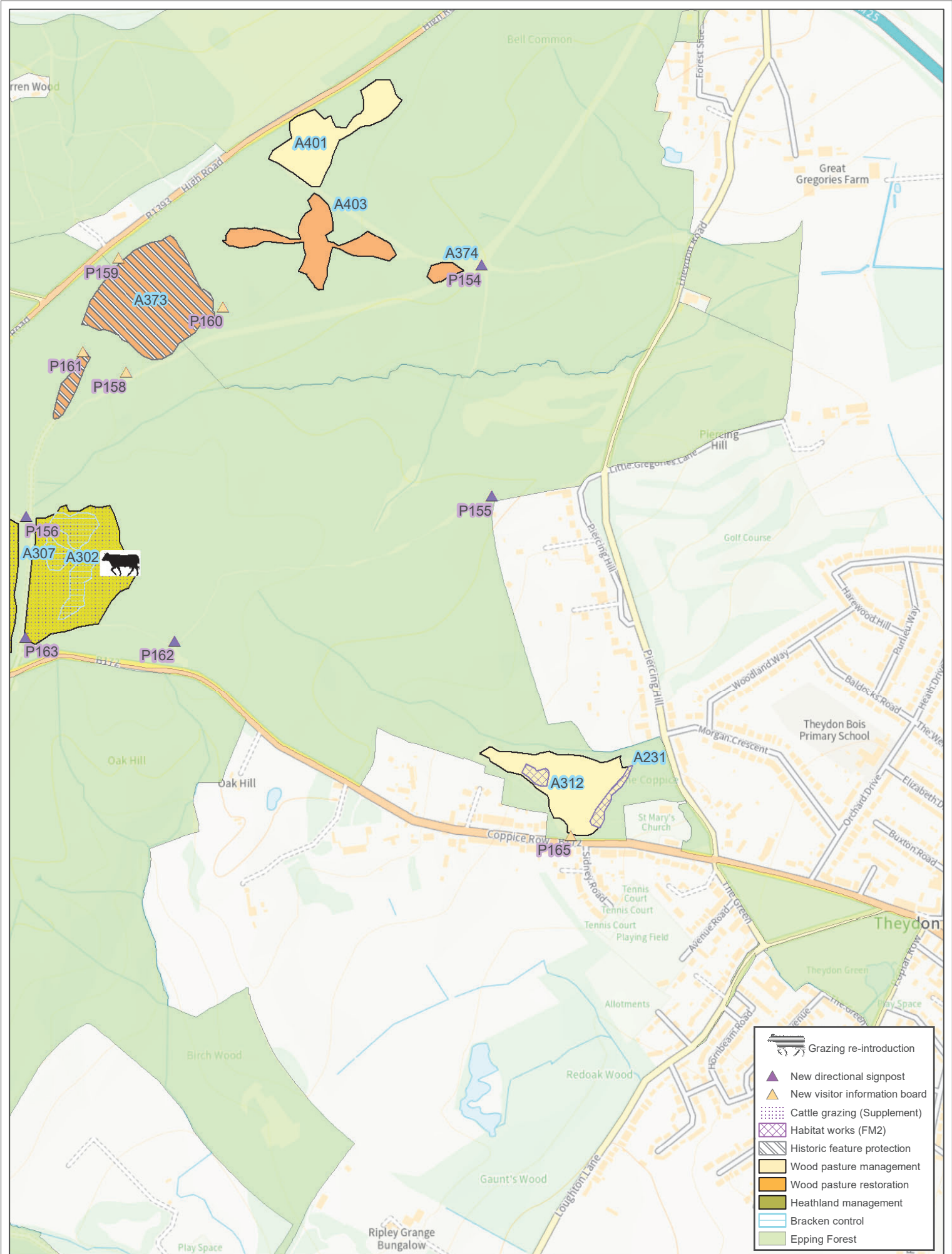
Aerial photo of Theydon Plain in the late 1940s

showing a larger area of grassland

[\(National Library of Scotland\)](#)



Theydon Plain in 2022

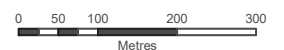


	Grazing re-introduction
	New directional signpost
	New visitor information board
	Cattle grazing (Supplement)
	Habitat works (FM2)
	Historic feature protection
	Wood pasture management
	Wood pasture restoration
	Heathland management
	Bracken control
	Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 6 Page 80
Genesis Slade / Theydon Bois

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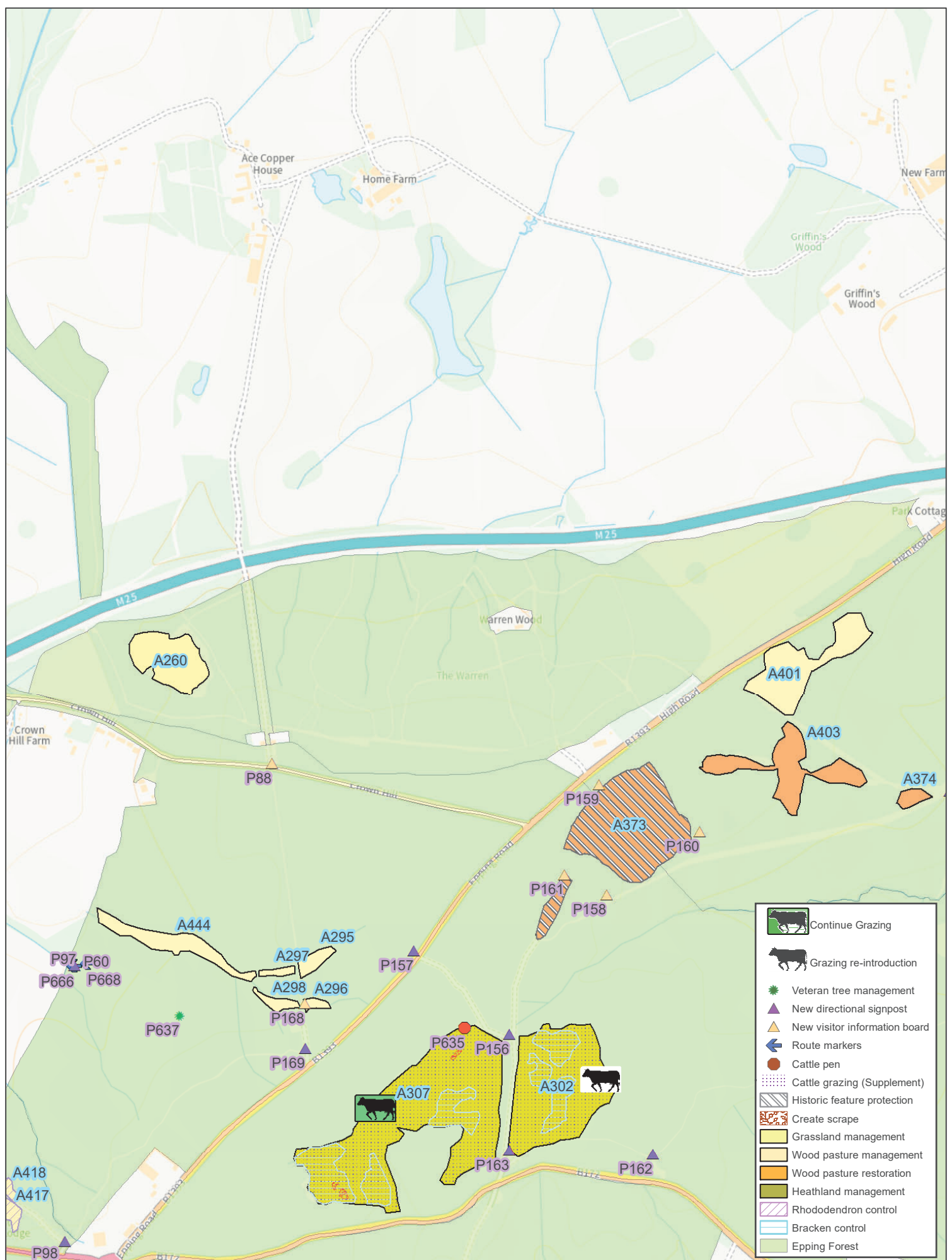
Deer Pond Field, Upshire


















This part of Epping Forest was formerly part of Copped Hall and was incorporated into Epping Forest in 1993.

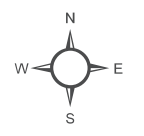
Deer Pond field (A260) is located in the western part of this area and has a good diversity of plant species. It has been managed by cutting every year and this is proposed to continue.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Maintain and ideally increase the diversity of plants in Deer Pond Field

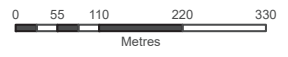


-  Continue Grazing
-  Grazing re-introduction
-  Veteran tree management
-  New directional signpost
-  New visitor information board
-  Route markers
-  Cattle pen
-  Cattle grazing (Supplement)
-  Historic feature protection
-  Create scrape
-  Grassland management
-  Wood pasture management
-  Wood pasture restoration
-  Heathland management
-  Rhododendron control
-  Bracken control
-  Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
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Warren Plantation / Uphire

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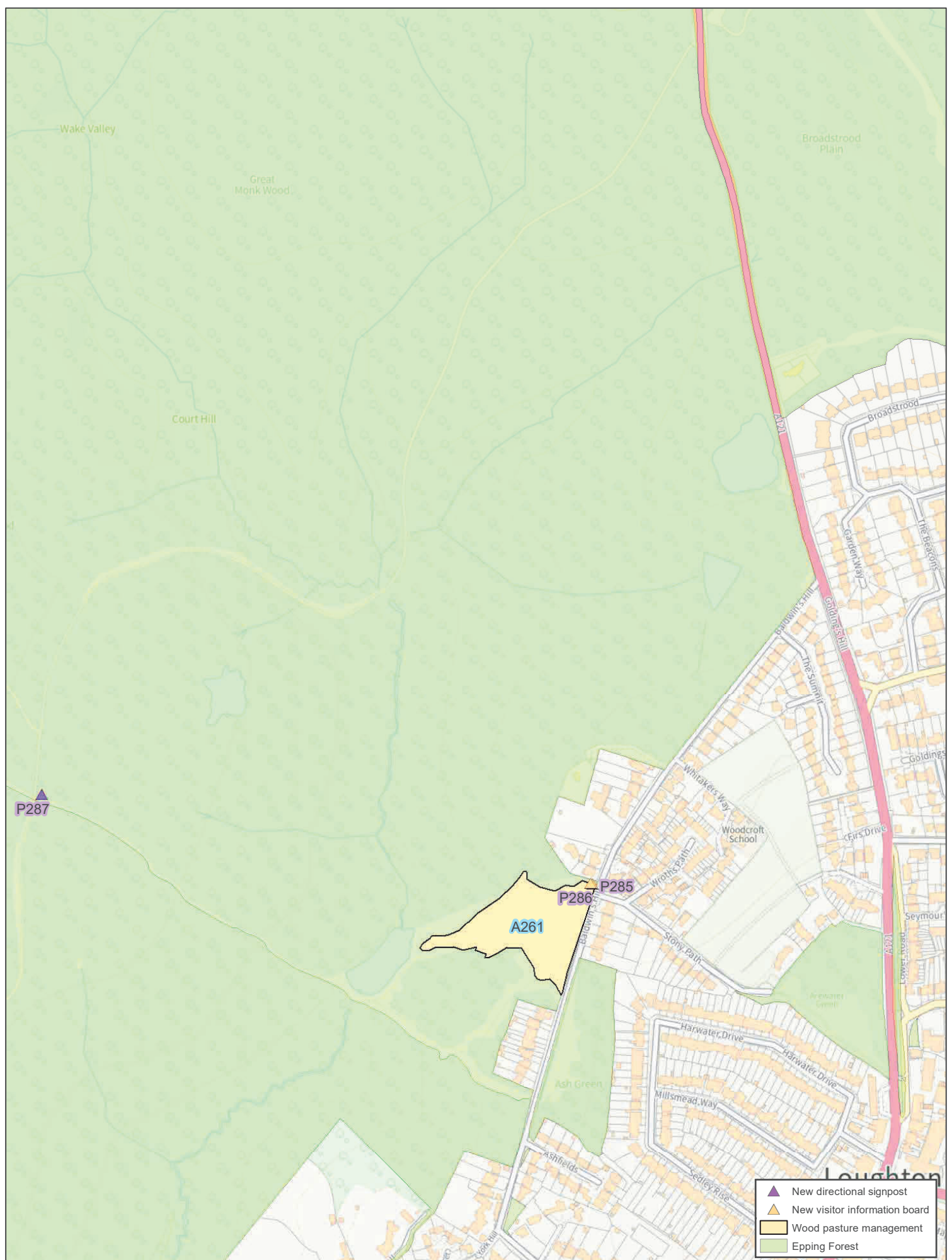
Baldwins Hill, Loughton





On the slopes of Baldwins Hill is the Baldwins Hill grassland (A261) which sits above Baldwins Pond. This is one of the small grasslands that are dotted around the Forest. It is smaller than it used to be and it is important to keep this grassland open to prevent it from being lost altogether by invading trees. It will continue to be mown annually.

A directional post and information boards will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- To keep the area of Baldwins Hill grassland open
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



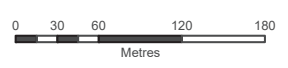
-  New directional signpost
-  New visitor information board
-  Wood pasture management
-  Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 8 Page 84
Baldwins Hill / Loughton

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Trueloves and Fernhills, High Beach

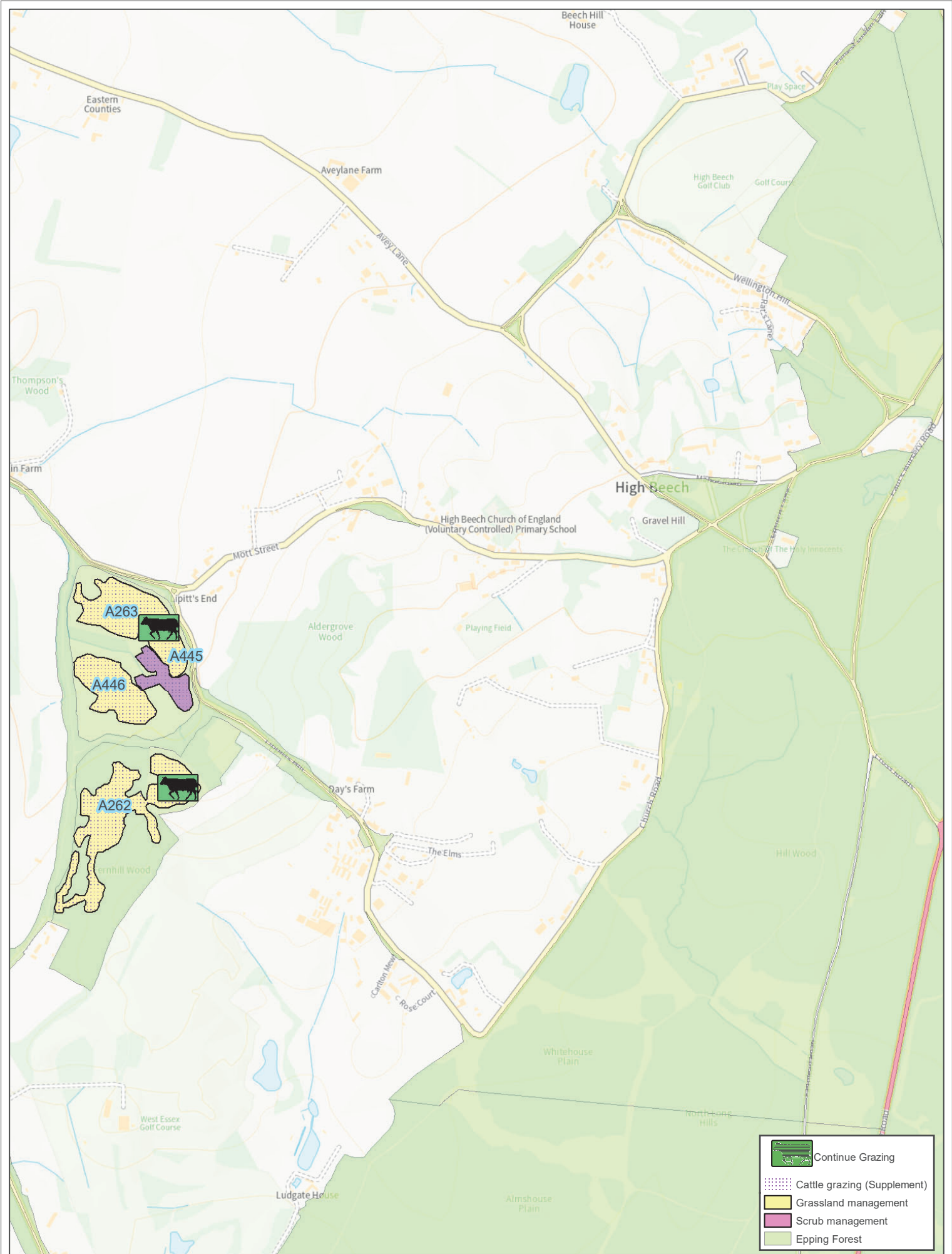
These are two botanically interesting grasslands were added to Epping Forest in the 1990s. Trueloves (A263) lies at the bottom of Lippitt's Hill and is a naturally wetter grassland which contains a good diversity of wildflowers such as Fleabane, Ragged Robin, Black Knapweed and Ox-eye Daisy. The site is managed by a combination of cutting and grazing to encourage a diversity of plant species. Located on the more rural side of the Forest, the site is sometimes visited by Barn Owls and other birds of open grasslands and farmlands.

Fernhills (A262) is adjacent to Trueloves and is up the slope of Lippitt's Hill. Like Trueloves, the grassland here supports a good diversity of plants including species scarce in Essex such as Adder's Tongue fern. There is more scrub here which is valuable for birds, mammals and insects. There are also some large old trees within and around the site. This site is managed by a combination of cutting and grazing.

It is proposed to continue the management of Trueloves and Fernhills for the benefit of plant species as these two sites contain species not found elsewhere in the Forest or only one other Forest location.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

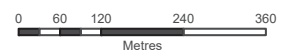
- Continue to manage the site by cutting and grazing to encourage a diversity of plant species and the associated wildlife of open grasslands and mixed scrub
- Improve the condition of the habitats in these areas
- Encourage the spread of Epping Forest scarce species such as Fleabane, Ragged Robin, Black Knapweed and Ox-eye Daisy as well as grassland plants in general



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 9 Page 86
Fernhills and Trueloves, High Beach

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Staples Hill and Woodbury Hollow, Loughton

Staples Hill is known as the last place in the Forest that pollarding took place before the Epping Forest Act came in and pollarding only resumed in the 1940s, although only temporarily. It has a mixture of the three main pollarded trees in Epping Forest: hornbeam, beech and oak.

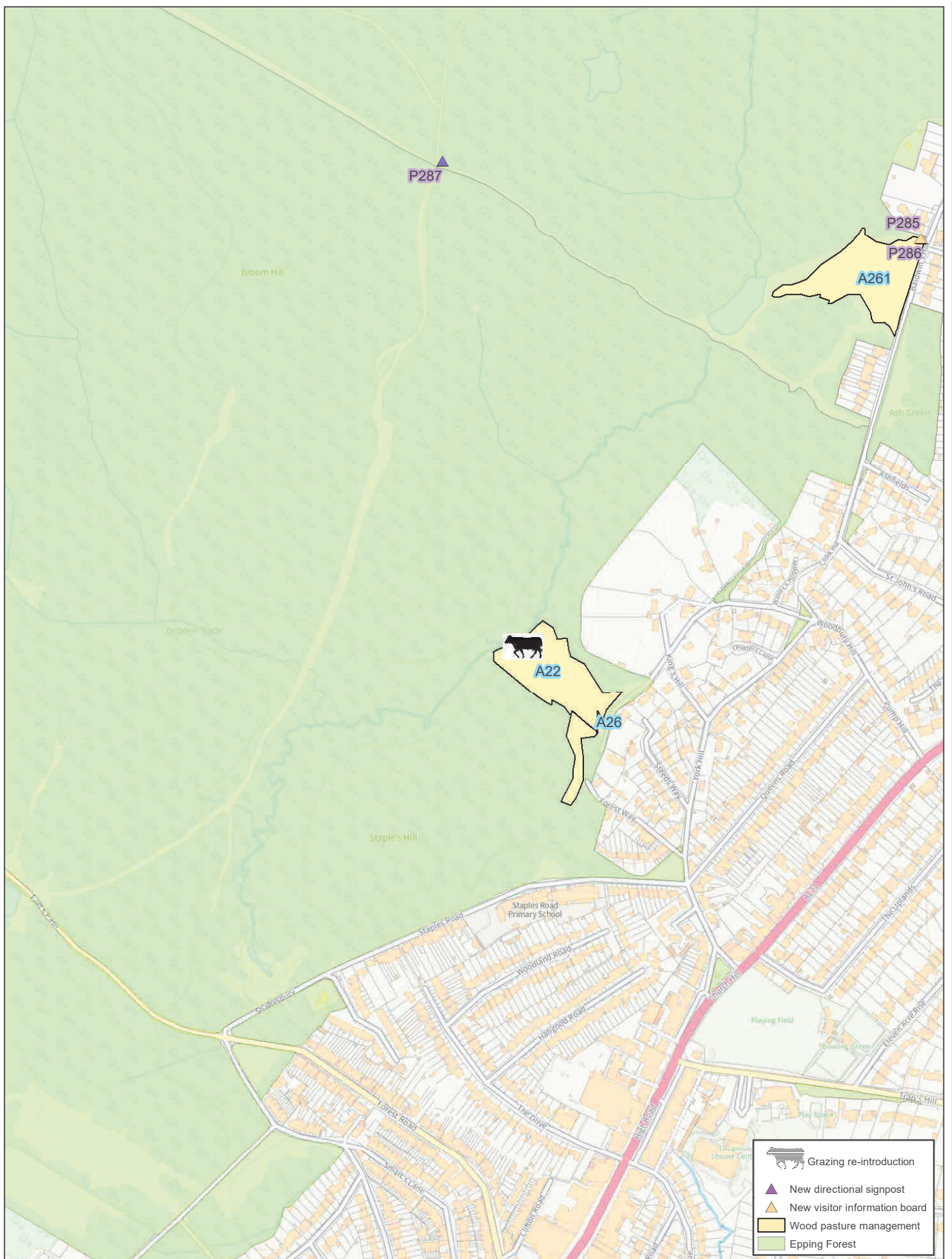
Facing west is the steep slope of Woodbury Hollow grassland (A22) that is important for a small group of scarce plants which are now struggling to survive under the encroachment of competitive grasses, scrub and trees. It has been historically cleared of trees in the past which have regrown because the access to the site and the steepness of the slope make management very difficult. Cattle have grazed there in the last 10 years, but this is also made difficult for the same reasons.

It is proposed to restore a corridor (A26) of wood pasture on Staples Hill, this will reduce the shade to some of the veteran pollards and some young trees will be made into new pollards to become veterans of the future. This same corridor can be used by tractors to access Woodbury Hollow to manage the grassland in the long term which will hopefully allow the important plant species to increase. In addition, some young trees that are invading Woodbury Hollow from the edge will be removed to increase the size of the grassland as it used to be much larger, and scrub will be removed from the middle.

If possible, cattle grazing will be reintroduced at Woodbury Hollow.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Continue to manage the site by cutting and grazing to encourage a diversity of plant species and associated wildlife of open grasslands
- Improve the condition of the habitats in these areas and make them better connected
- Increase the vitality and longevity of the veteran trees
- Create new pollards which will become veteran pollards of the future
- Increase the area of restored wood pasture and old grasslands
- Encourage the spread of Epping Forest scarce species such as Heather, Devil's Bit Scabious, Wood Anemone, and Cow-wheat as well as other grassland plants
- Increase the amount of deadwood habitat, thereby encouraging an increase in species that rely on dead wood

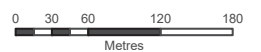


	Grazing re-introduction
	New directional signpost
	New visitor information board
	Wood pasture management
	Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 10 Page 88
Staples Hill / Loughton

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Barn Hoppitt and Whitehall Plain, Chingford

Nearly all of this compartment is former grazing plain, mostly in the form of open wood pasture, and has one of the most important groups of ancient oak pollards within Epping Forest. Over time considerable invasion of younger trees and scrub has changed this once open wood pasture habitat into a more darkened closed-canopy habitat resulting in the loss of Forest floor plants. The most significant nature conservation feature of this compartment is the population of ancient oak pollards, all more than 500 years old. These important old trees have become overshadowed by younger more vigorous trees which is negatively impacting on the health of these ancient oaks.

Between 2008 and 2018 the first phase of wood pasture restoration was completed which opened up many of these biodiverse rich trees and started sensitive tree pruning to prolong their lives. The second phase is now proposed (A264) which will continue this work to open up the area towards its once former open nature to increase light within the habitat. This will benefit not only the old trees but also the new pollards that will be created to become the veteran pollards of the future, as well as encourage the re-establishment of plants on the Forest floor. A new group of veteran trees will start to be pruned to improve their health and lifespan. By prolonging the lives of these old trees, this will give time for the new young pollards to develop the features that make pollards rich for biodiversity such as holes and bowls, natural splits and cracks all of which allow a range of different species such as birds, bats, insects and fungi to live in and on these trees.

Scattered grasslands and glades (A265-7, A269-72) will be managed by cutting and grazing to keep these open, which are important for plants that grow in open grassland and wildlife that favour these open habitats. Many of these grasslands have gotten smaller over time so there will be selected tree removal to open them up again.

Alongside this, the recently reintroduced cattle grazing will continue to help develop the restoration of wood pasture and grasslands. The cattle lightly disturb the soil with their hooves which can encourage germination of plant species. They also leave dung which is highly valuable for insects, which birds, bats and mammals feed off. To allow continued grazing of the site, a new small cattle pen (P102) would be installed to ensure safe handling of the animals.

Through the work, there will be an increase in the amounts of valuable deadwood habitat on site which will support key insect and fungi species that are found in Barn Hoppitt. This is a site of key importance for the rare bracket fungus, Oak Polypore, which requires open wood pasture habitat with open-grown Oaks to allow this fungus to reproduce. Similarly, this restoration work should enhance conditions for the rare Zoned Rosette fungus another specialist of ancient trees in wood pasture which grows on the site.

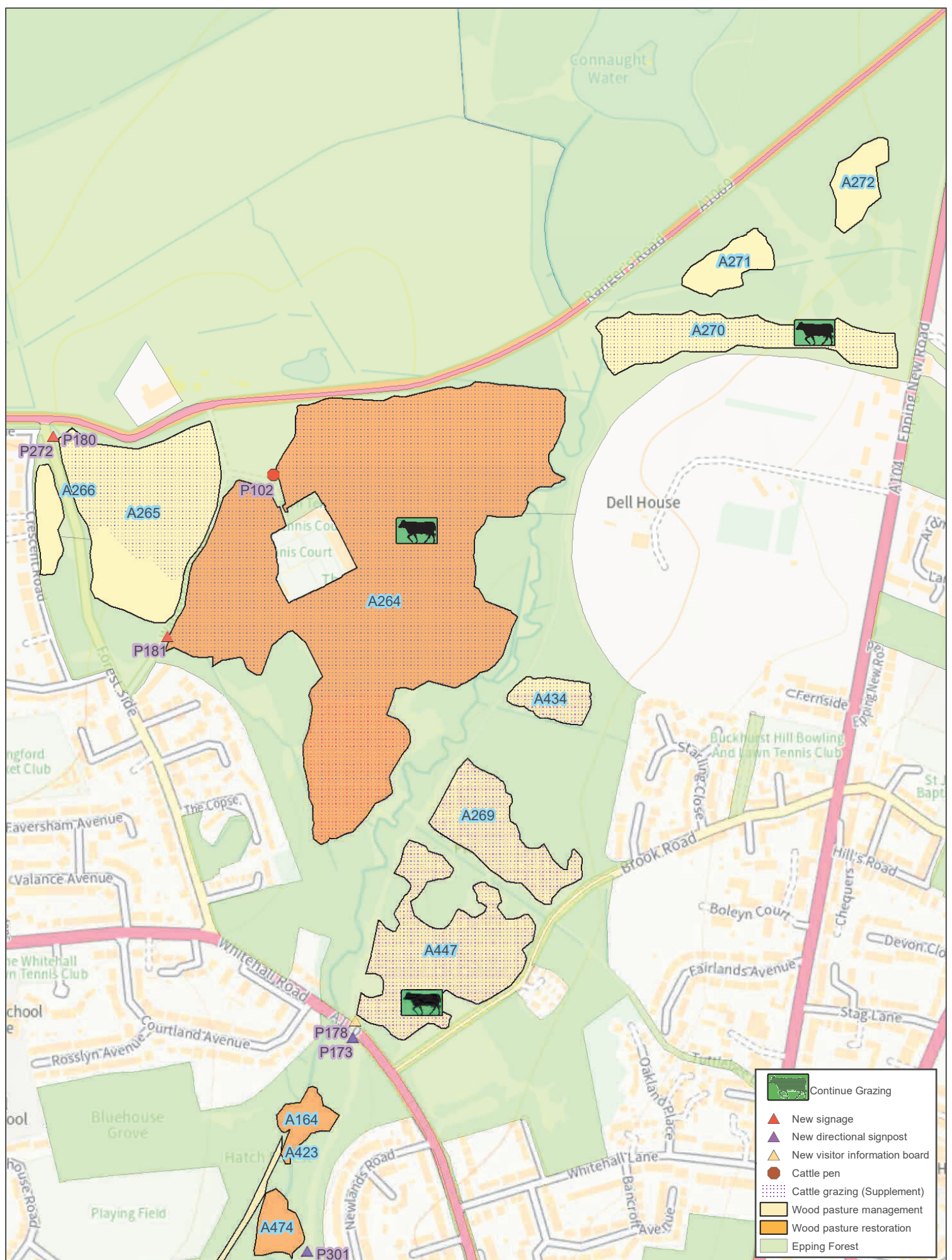
It is hoped that creating more open conditions will allow existing flowering scrub, such as Hawthorn, Elder and Crab Apple, to thrive and hopefully seeds from these plants will germinate to form new scrub bushes. The flowering scrub are rich in pollen and nectar rich and also produce fruits in the autumn which help to support insects, birds and mammals.










Warren Pond has become shaded on its southern end and the open water habitat is being lost. Work will remove some of the adjacent trees to open up a little bit more of the pond, whilst retaining some of the scrub that grows in the water in the southern end as an adjacent habitat.

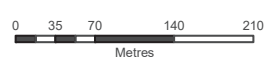
Directional posts and information boards will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Improve the condition of the habitats in these areas and make them better connected
- Increase the vitality and longevity of the veteran trees
- Create new pollards which will become veteran pollards of the future
- Increase the area of restored wood pasture and old plains
- Keep the open glades and grasslands open
- Encourage an increase in flowering scrub
- Increase the amount of deadwood habitat, thereby encouraging an increase in dead wood species such as Stag Beetles and other species that rely on deadwood
- Encourage an increase in rare fungi associated with open wood pasture
- Create the conditions to promote an increase in biodiversity in the area
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



-  Continue Grazing
-  New signage
-  New directional signpost
-  New visitor information board
-  Cattle pen
-  Cattle grazing (Supplement)
-  Wood pasture management
-  Wood pasture restoration
-  Epping Forest



Hatch Forest & The Lops, Chingford

Hatch Forest is centred around the west side of the River Ching along which veteran hornbeam pollards line its banks. Over time more trees have grown up in between shading out both the pollards and the stream so that the bankside flora of Wood Anemones, Violets and Goldilocks have been shaded out and lost. The proposal is to gently open up the riversides to encourage bankside flora to grow again and give light to the hornbeam and oak pollards so they can increase in vitality (A164). A423 is a former trackway that will be opened up to allow vehicular access for this habitat management, and in so doing reopen this old route.

Some of the hornbeam pollards will receive work to stabilise them and lengthen their lives. In addition, new pollards will be made from young trees so they can become the old pollards of the future. It is hoped that there will be more wildlife using the river as a result.

Further south, The Lops (A273) has also seen a large expansion of tree cover with the corresponding loss of acid grassland that used to hold a diverse range of plant species not found in many other places in the Forest. These areas have some of the biggest anthills in the Forest and are now surrounded by young trees which will shade them out in time. However, because the trees are still young there are still many anthills that are not completely shaded out and very small areas of scarce plant species still hang on.

The proposal is to remove some of the young trees in one area that has the best surviving scarce flowers and anthills, and open up the grassland again. Some of the young trees will be left to screen against the view of the road and will become open grown trees in the future. All the Hawthorn and Crab Apple bushes will be kept as these will provide a valuable pollen and nectar source within the grassland which are valuable for wildlife.

Directional posts and information boards will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way

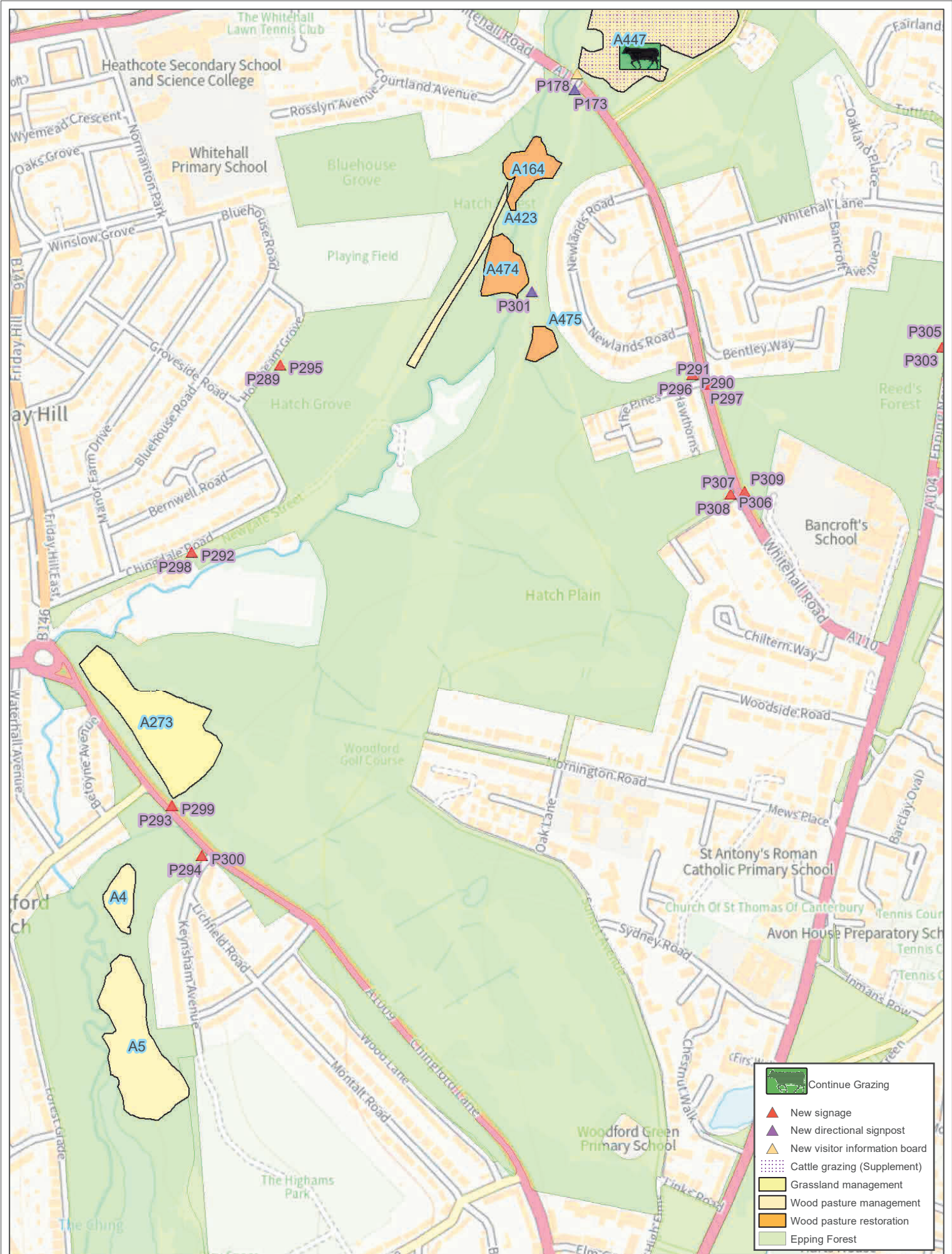
Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Improve the habitats in these areas – acid grassland, riverside habitats
- Increase the area of restored wood pasture
- Increase the vitality and longevity of the veteran trees and create new pollards
- Increase the area of acid grassland and the number of live anthills
- Increase the populations of scarce plants
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



The Lops in the late 1940s showing a much larger grassland ([National Library of Scotland](#))

The Lops in 2022 is a much smaller area of open grassland

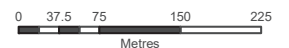


	Continue Grazing
	New signage
	New directional signpost
	New visitor information board
	Cattle grazing (Supplement)
	Grassland management
	Wood pasture management
	Wood pasture restoration
	Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 12 Page 94
Hatch Forest and Lops / Chingford

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Rowan Trail Through Knighton Woods and Lords Bushes, Buckhurst Hill

The Rowan Trail (A55) is one of ten waymarked trails in Epping Forest

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Green-Spaces/rowan-trail.pdf

The Rowan Trail passes through two areas of Epping Forest, Knighton Wood and Lords Bushes.

Knighton Wood used to be owned by one of the first Verderers of Epping Forest and was returned to Epping Forest in 1930, though it had previously been part of Epping Forest. It is a woodland mostly with oak, hornbeam and beech, and a small number of veteran pollards, mainly hornbeams.

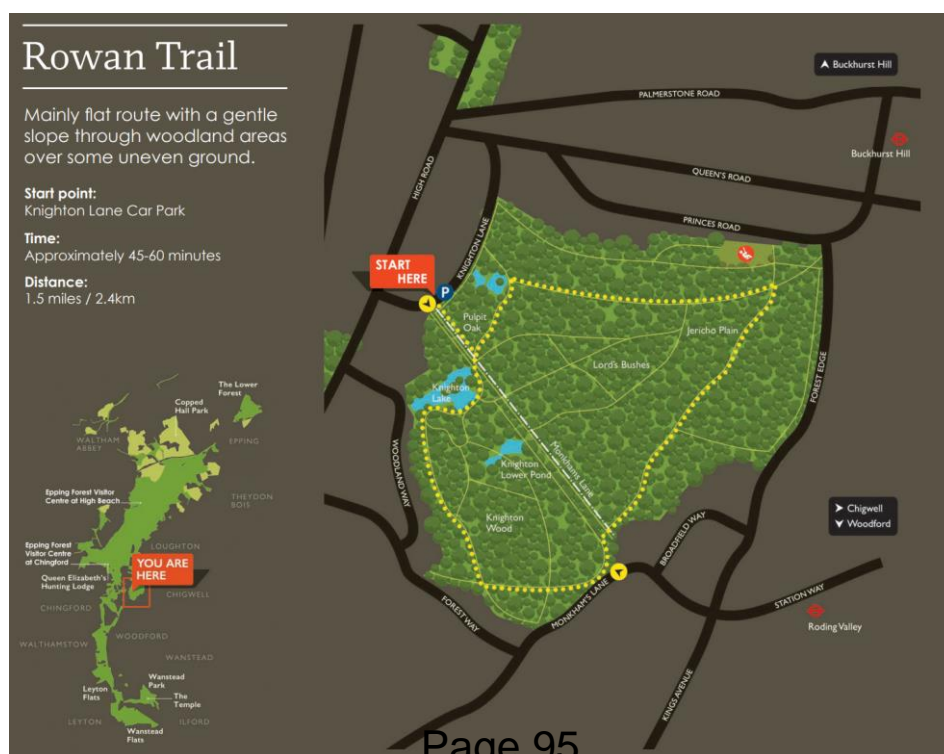
In contrast, Lords Bushes is a wood pasture site with many pollards of hornbeam and some of oak. Beech also grow here in some number, and are much more rare further south in the Forest. Lords Bushes has also had extensive infill of young trees and scrub over the 20th century which has shaded out the Forest floor plants and resulted in the deaths of old pollards.

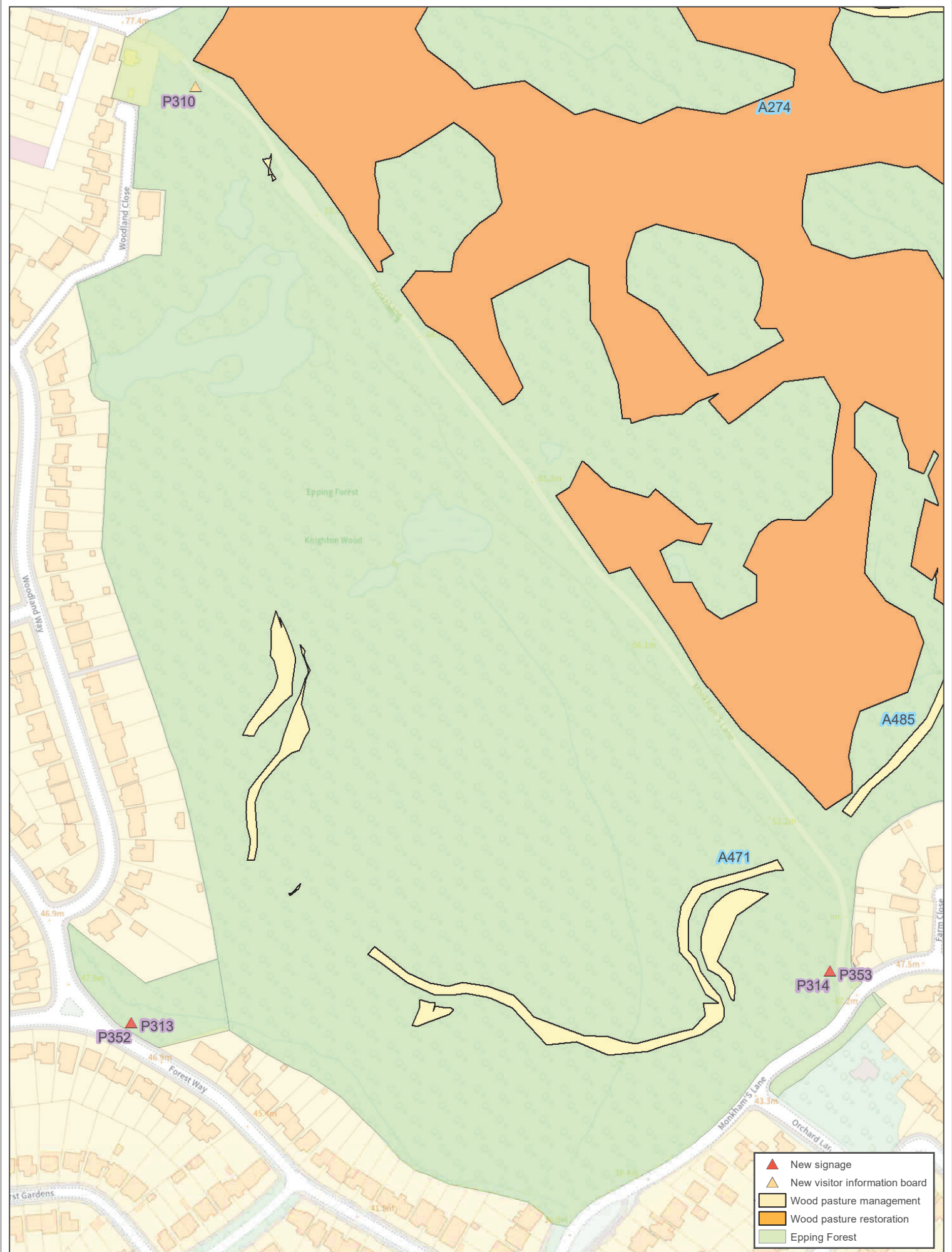
By opening up along the Rowan Trail sunny corridors can be created along its length which will encourage insects and will therefore be beneficial for bats. It will also allow Forest floor plants to grow and increase the biodiversity of the site. Small glades will be linked up. Flowering scrub such as hawthorn will be prioritised for retention as a valuable pollen and nectar source which are valuable for wildlife.

Information boards will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Increase the area of open habitat which will encourage a greater diversity of plant and animal species
- Create new pollards
- Reduce shade around veteran trees and flowering scrub
- Open up the Rowan Trail for visitors
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site





- ▲ New signage
- ▲ New visitor information board
- Wood pasture management
- Wood pasture restoration
- Epping Forest



**Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant
proposal**
Map 13 Page 96
Knighon Wood / Buckhurst Hill

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Lords Bushes, Buckhurst Hill

This area is an oak-hornbeam wood pasture with a smaller number of beech trees. There are hundreds of oak and hornbeam pollards including the named oak pollard, The Pulpit Oak. Over the 20th century the site became infilled with young trees and scrub shading out open glades, plants such as heather and gorse, and surrounding the veteran pollards casting them into dense shade. This caused the death of many pollards. Since the early 2000s work has been done in phases, focussing around the old pollards to restore the wood pasture of Lords Bushes by a careful reduction of selected trees. The old pollards that are in the darkest shade are carefully opened up in phases to prevent over-exposing the tree to sunlight too quickly. Some trees have received tree surgery to stabilise their canopies and reinvigorate them to produce new growth. The old pathways that had become very narrow and shaded have been opened up to form sunny rides and the whole site is becoming connected again through these open pathways and glades which allow wildlife to move easily about. Plants on the Forest floor easily re-establish here but they have to be regularly managed to keep them open.

The proposals for this next phase of wood pasture restoration are to continue to carefully open up more areas to expand glades and release more veteran pollards from shade (A274). Some veteran pollards will be re-pollarded to keep them in the pollarding cycle, which can help to increase their lifespan, and some veteran pollards will receive more careful pruning. In addition, new pollards will be created to become veterans of the future. To help increase the light levels further, some non-pollarded trees will have their canopies reduced so they do not cast as much shade but are able to still grow.

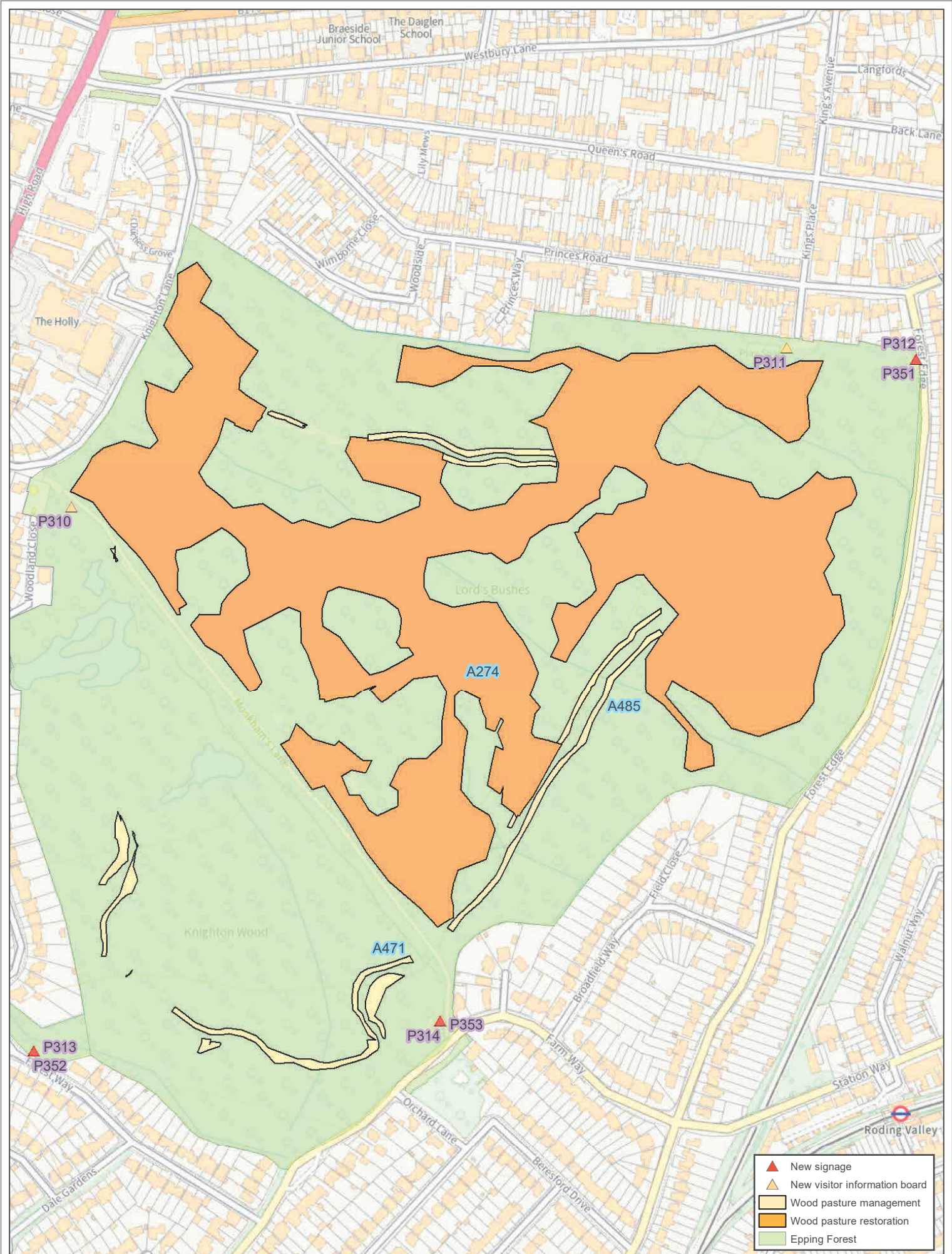
The ponds will be opened up to reduce shade and will help to keep the ponds in good condition by promoting pond plants and encouraging wildlife.

It will be explored if it is possible to reintroduce cattle grazing. The phases of wood pasture restoration until now have restored enough ground flora that will support a small number of cattle to graze the site. As there has not been grazing here for decades and the site has a concentrated number of visitors, any reintroduction will be trialled to see if it is feasible. The cattle would be contained within the site using GPS collars, which is used in many other parts of the Forest. The benefits of grazing would be to manage the wood pasture and open habitats and also increase the biodiversity of the site through the action of grazing and their dung which is rich food for insects. Birds, mammals and bats feed on these insects, so there is a wider wildlife benefit. Any trial will be done in liaison with the local community.

Information board will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Improve the habitats on the site – wood pasture and glades
- Increase the area of restored wood pasture
- Increase the health of the veteran pollards
- Create new pollards to become veterans of the future
- Encourage an increase in biodiversity of the site, particularly Stag Beetles, rare fungi and other insects associated with the veteran pollards
- Increase the size of the open habitats and make them better connected
- Reintroduce grazing to help increase the biodiversity of the site
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site

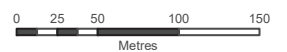


- ▲ New signage
- ▲ New visitor information board
- ▭ Wood pasture management
- ▭ Wood pasture restoration
- ▭ Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 14 Page 98
Lord's Bushes / Buckhurst Hill

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Highams Park & Oak Hill – Highams Park & Woodford

Highams Park is an oak-hornbeam wood pasture, the greatest number of veteran pollards are found at the northern end. Bluebells are managing to hang on here but because of the density of young trees there is not much ground flora of interest because it has been lost because of their shade. The young trees also shade out the flowering scrub, smaller Cherry trees and Honeysuckle.

A couple of areas will be opened up as part of wood pasture restoration (A4, A5) which will release the veteran trees from shade and encourage Forest floor plants to re-establish.

South of this area is an area of acid grassland and oak-hornbeam wood pasture with scattered ponds that sits between Woodford New Road and Oak Hill. There are a small number of veteran pollards as well as some gorse on the edge of the acid grassland. The ponds have become heavily shaded and the reeds have grown to fill in much of the ponds.

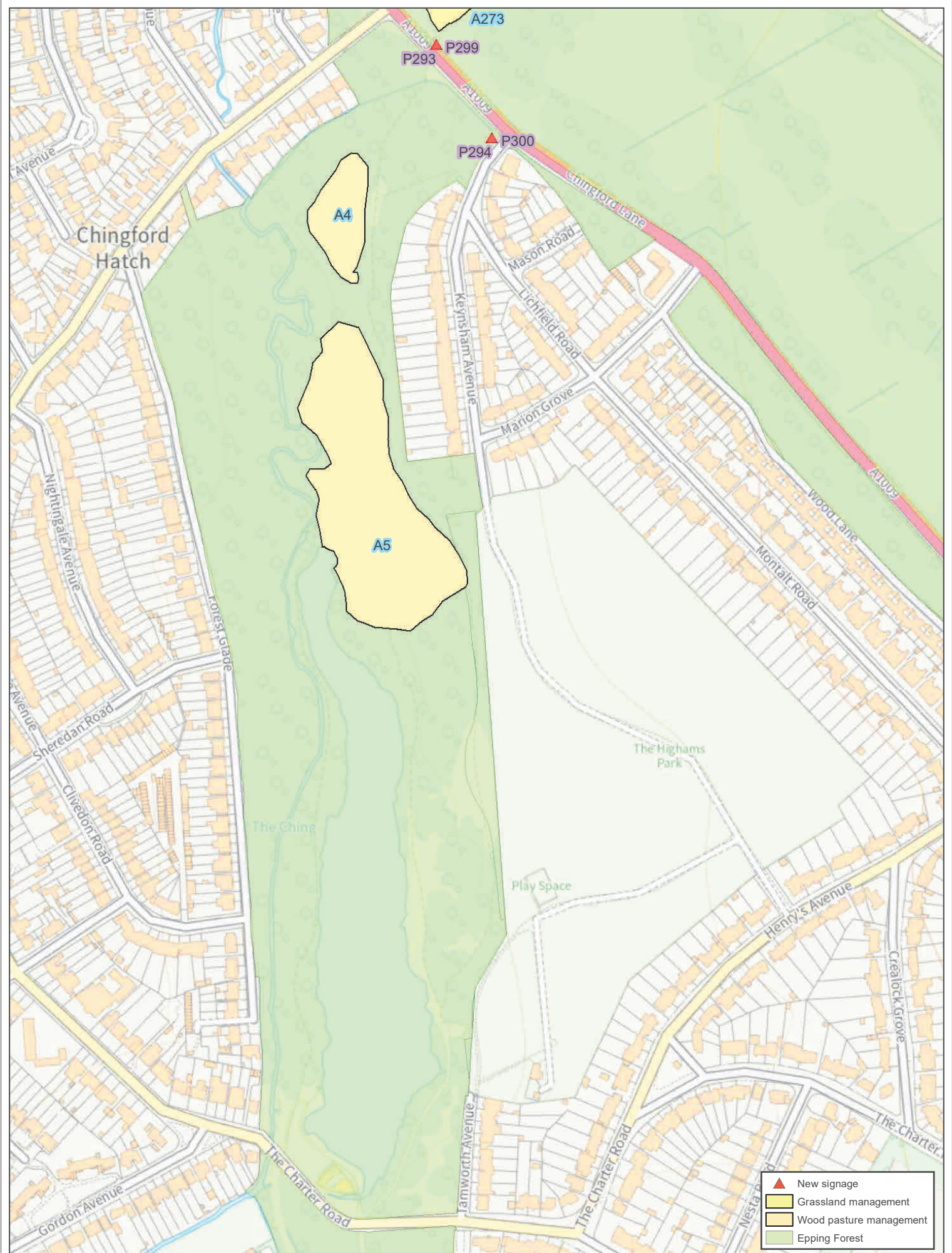
The habitat will benefit from opening up around the ponds and the pollards, as well as expanding the area of acid grassland back towards its former extent (A76, A156, A184, A187, A192, A196). The ponds (A145, A182, A195) used to have a variety of water plants which have mostly been lost and reducing the density of reeds will create space for other plants to expand and improve the habitats for dragonflies and amphibians. Some new pollards would be made. There are a small number of anthills on the edge of the grassland that can be opened up around and released from shade.

Welcome signs will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Highams Park Lake is one of Epping Forest's largest waterbodies. It is very popular with visitors and the footfall around the lake causes some of the paths to be very muddy in places. Along the eastern side of the lake from Chingford Lane down to The Charter Road a new surfaced path will be installed to provide an all-weather path.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Improve the condition of the habitats on the site – wood pasture, acid grassland and ponds
- Increase the size of these habitats and make them better connected
- Increase the area of restored wood pasture
- Increase the health of the veteran pollards
- Create new pollards to become veterans of the future
- Encourage an increase in biodiversity of the site and encourage Forest floor plants to re-establish
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



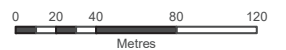
- ▲ New signage
- Grassland management
- Wood pasture management
- Epping Forest



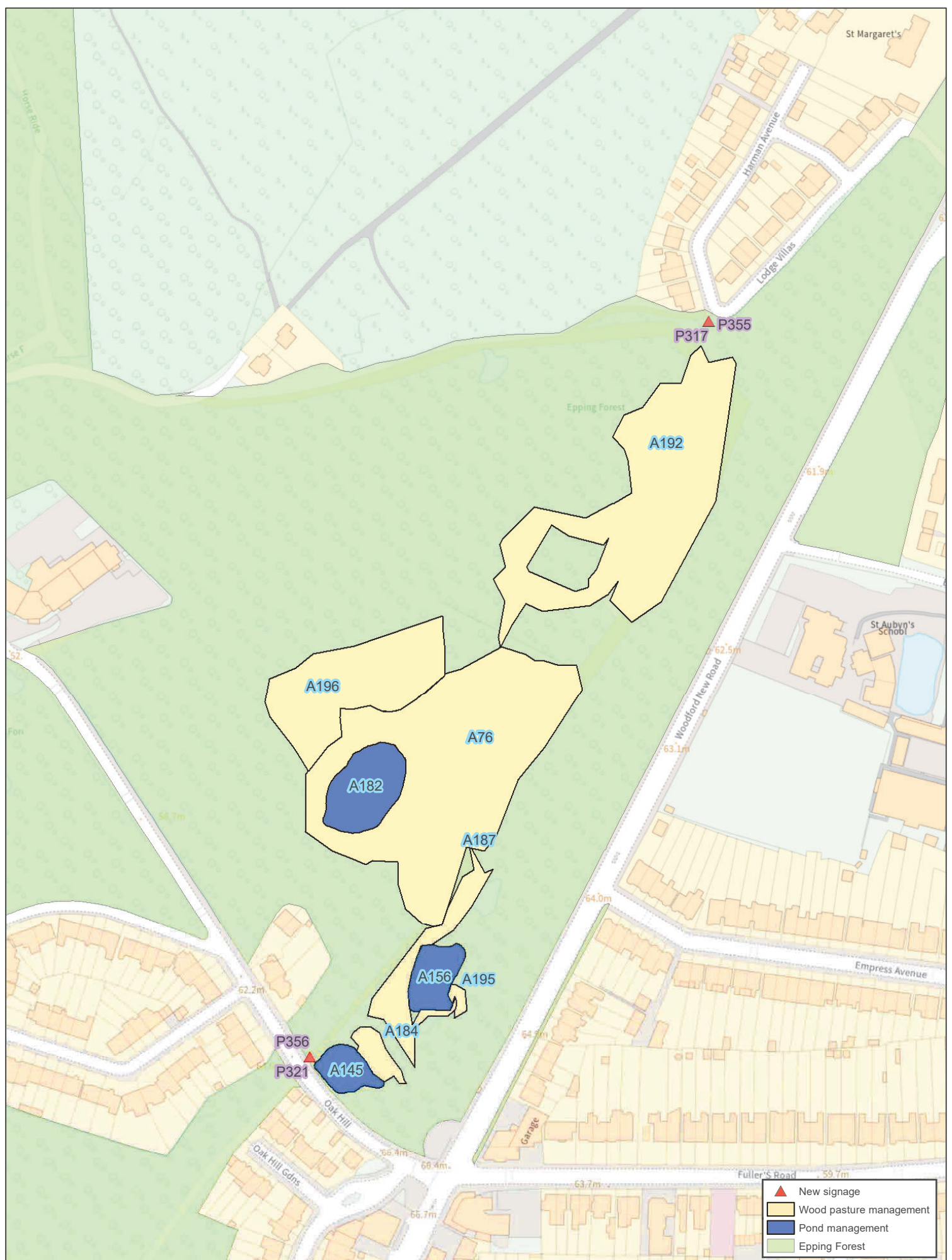
Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 15 Page 100
Highams Park North / Highams Park

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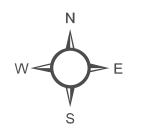
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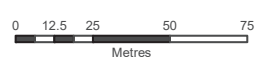


	New signage
	Wood pasture management
	Pond management
	Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 16 Page 101
Oak Hill / Woodford Green

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Gilberts Slade and Canada Plain, Snaresbrook/Walthamstow

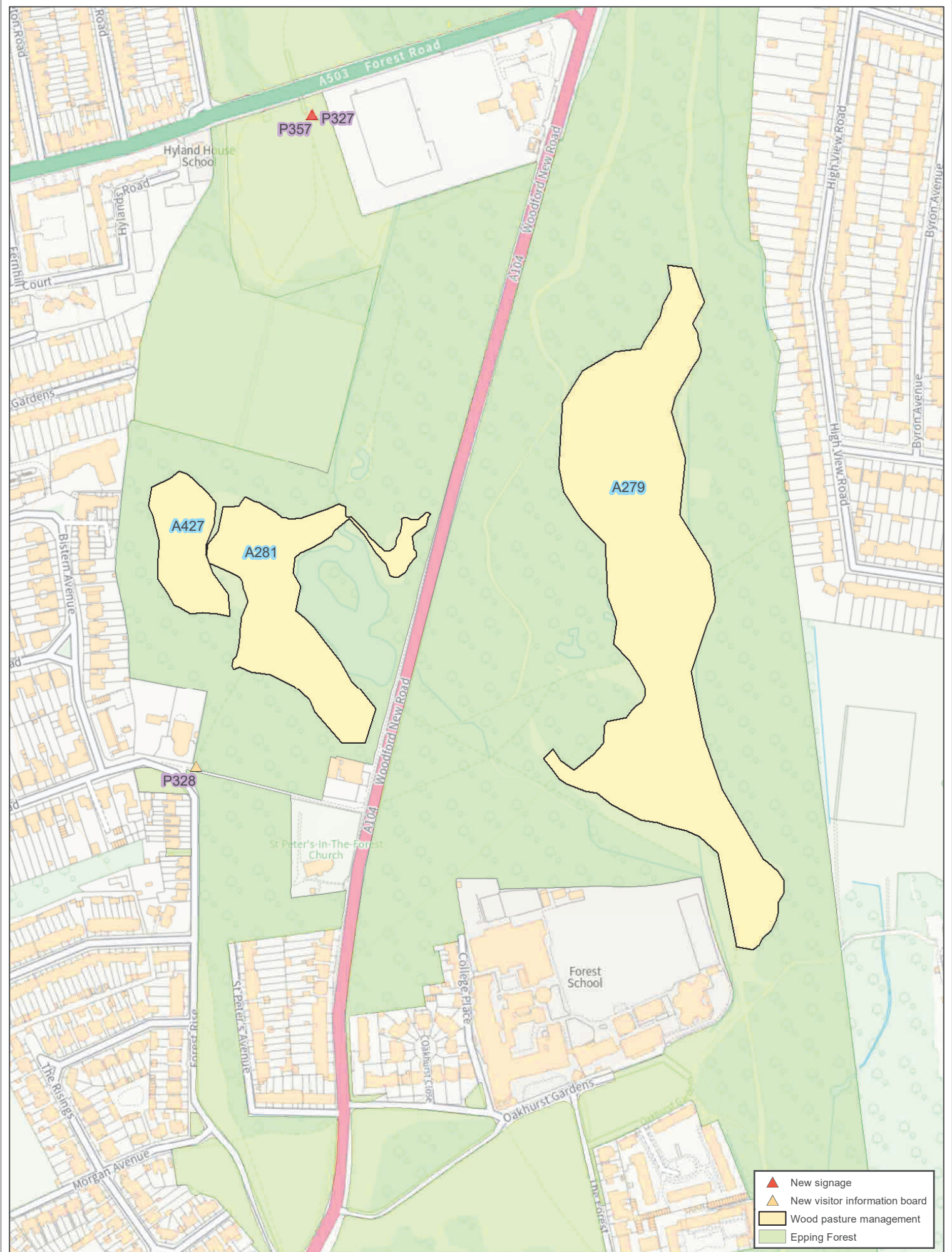
These two sites sit either side of Woodford New Road but they are the same habitat type – oak-hornbeam wood pasture with acid grassland glades (Gilberts Slade A279; Canada Plain A281-2). There are a high number of hornbeam pollards and the grassland still contains good acid grassland species such as Sheep's Sorrel and Cow-wheat and less common grasses.

These sites have had a first phase of wood pasture restoration between 2008 and 2018 which opened up around the hornbeam pollards and expanded the grassland. The proposed work is to continue to maintain the open areas by cutting. Some of the hornbeam pollards that have not been pollarded since the 19th century will have their canopies reduced in height to increase the light and increase the trees' stability to prevent them from collapsing. New pollards will be made from young trees to become veteran pollards of the future.

A welcome sign and an information board will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

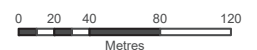
- Improve the condition of the habitats on the site – wood pasture and acid grassland
- Increase the size of these habitats and make them better connected
- Increase the area of restored wood pasture
- Increase the health of the veteran pollards
- Create new pollards to become veterans of the future
- Encourage an increase in biodiversity of the site and encourage Forest floor plants to re-establish
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 17 Page 104
Gilbert's Slade and Canada Plain/Walthamstow, South Woodford

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Leyton flats, Snaresbrook & Walthamstow

This is a site of mixed habitats with wide open areas of acid grassland, dense gorse scrub, a mixture of old and young trees, waterbodies and ditches. It is one of the most visited places in the Forest.

There is a lot of work proposed on this site which aims to significantly improve the condition of the habitats and encourage more biodiversity.

Firstly, at the northern end of the site (north of 280), between the north of the Hollow Pond and Eagle Pond, the woodland will be opened up to restore its former open character. There are a small number of oak pollards and some large non-pollarded oaks. They will benefit from the increase in light which will hopefully improve their health. It is hoped that the Forest floor plants will re-establish in these areas and some flowering scrub will increase. Some of the young trees will be made into new pollards that will become future veteran trees.

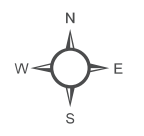
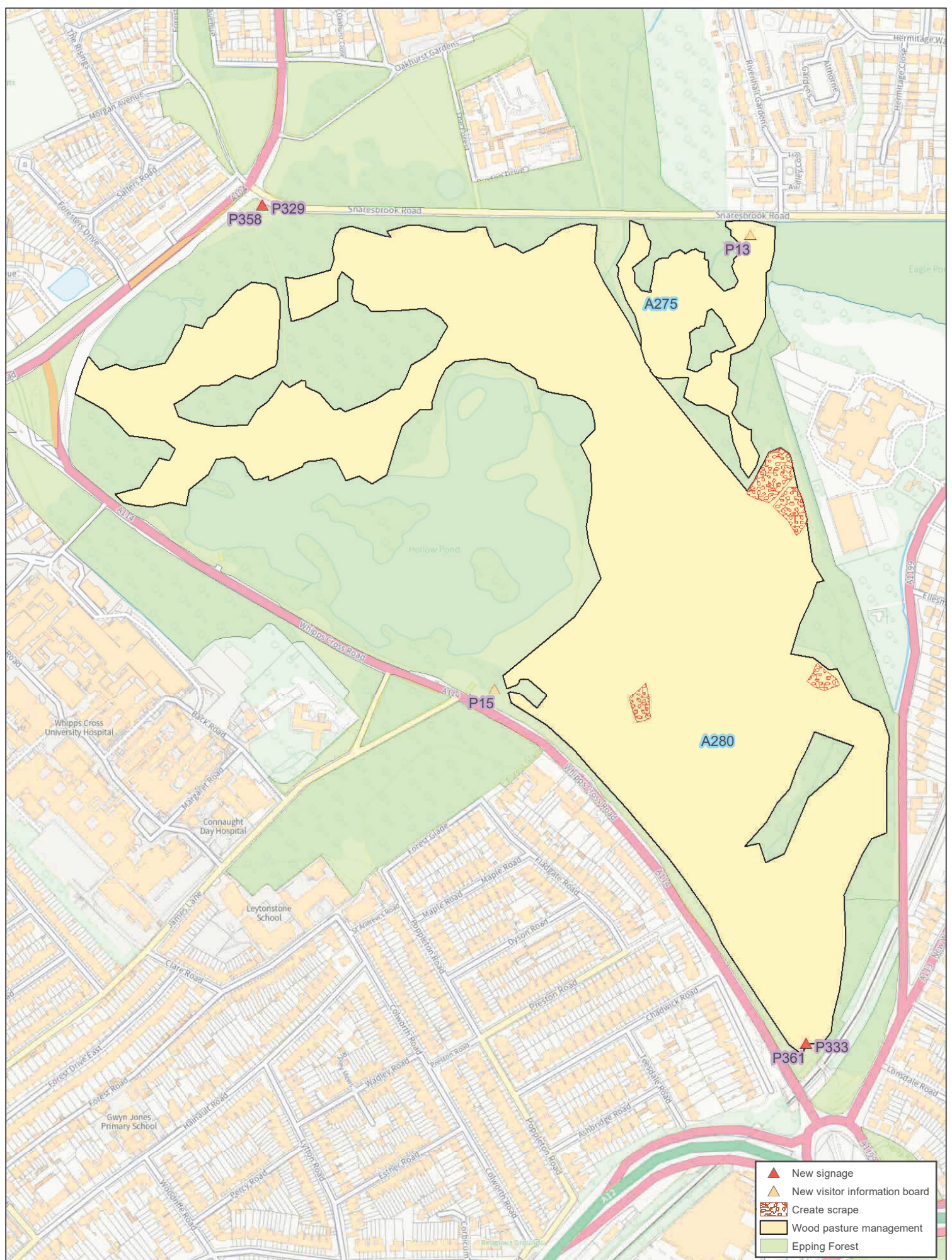
Around the edges of the acid grassland across the site there will be selected tree removal to restore the acid grassland and give space for particular plant species to expand (central and south A280). Despite being one of the most visited sites, the grassland still contains a good variety of acid grassland and heathy plants which are worth preserving. In order to promote these special plants, small areas of competitive grasses will be removed to expose the seedbank of these species and encourage their germination. It is hoped that species such as Heather and some less common grass and rushes species will return (A223, A224, A227, A230). The remainder of the grassland (within A280) will continue to be managed on a regime to promote conservation.

The more open aspect of the habitats will make it easier to manage this site in the future. These proposals would be a major step in working to improve the condition of the habitats on this site and hopefully increase its biodiversity.

Welcome signs will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

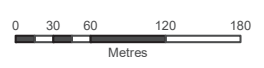
- Improve the condition of the habitats – particularly the acid grassland
- Start wood pasture restoration at the northern end of this site
- Improve the health of veteran pollards
- Create new pollards to become the veterans of the future
- Expand the area of acid grassland
- Take specific measures to promote the recolonisation of acid grassland plant species
- Increase the biodiversity of the site
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 18 Page 106
Leyton Flats / Snaresbrook, Walthamstow

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Wanstead Flats, Leytonstone & Aldersbrook

Similar to Leyton Flats, Wanstead Flats has even larger areas of acid grassland with some valuable scrub. As a result, the area is important for birds and insects and it manages to retain some good patches of acid grassland species such as Heather, Creeping Willow and less common grasses. This site has been grassland probably for over a thousand years, and therefore it is important to look after these ancient habitats.

Work at this site will mainly focus on the grassland (A27, A28, A283, A284) with a bespoke cutting programme for conservation management, this will include a combination of annual cutting or cutting patches every few years. This will help preserve the grassland structure of long and short grass that promotes a greater diversity of wildlife.

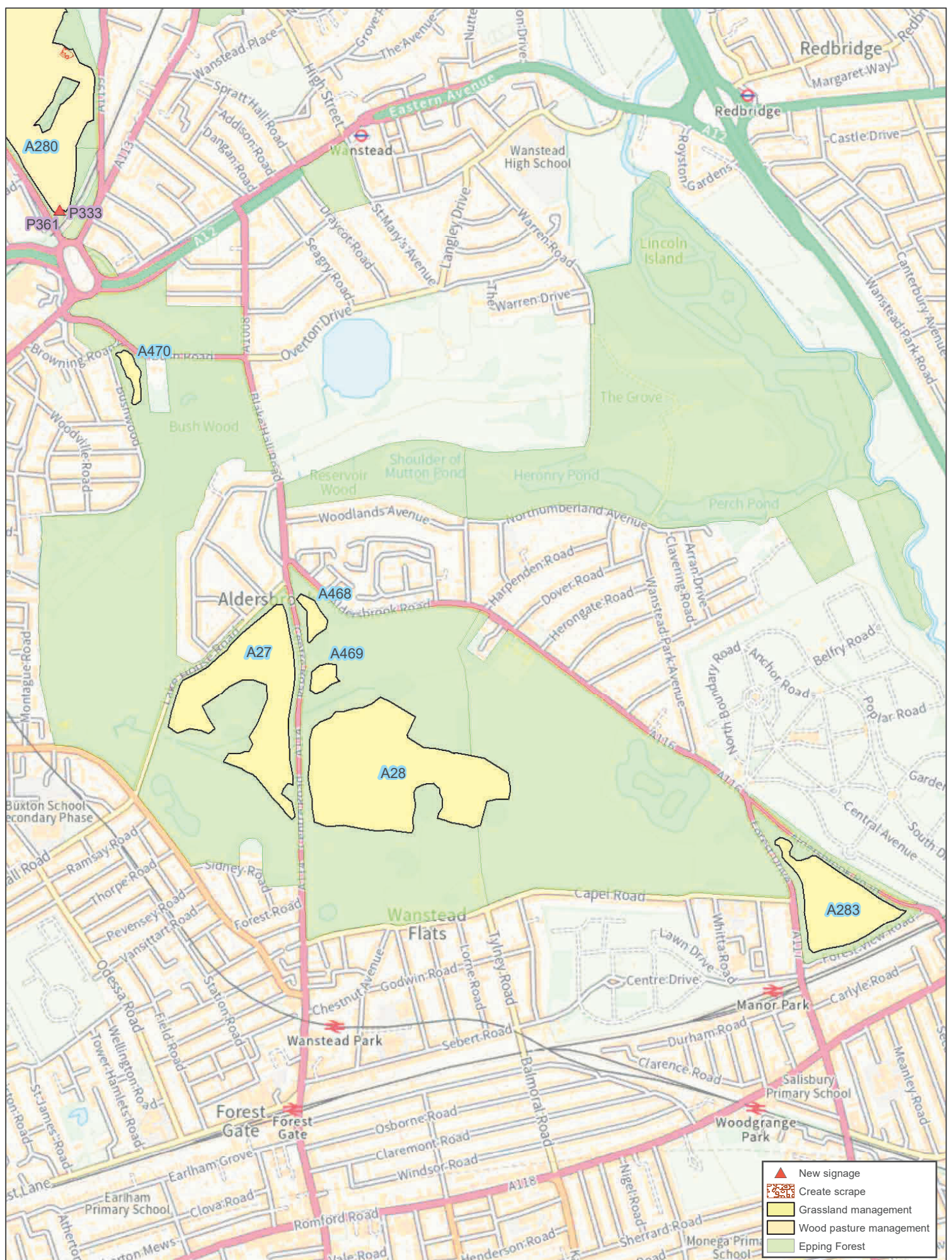
The site has had a number of wildfires in recent years therefore, sensitive management of the scrub habitat is required to strike a good balance between keeping some scrub habitat that is valuable for wildlife and having a large amount of scrub that would be extra fuel in a wildfire.





One of the notable species of the site are the Skylarks which are only found in this part of the Forest, close to London. They need large open grasslands and also are very sensitive to being disturbed. In recent years a fence has been put around their core breeding area, and this may be replaced with a permanent fence, possibly covering a different area.

Welcome signs and information board will be installed to welcome visitors to the site and help them find their way.

Overall, the aims for the proposals for this area are:

- Continue to manage the large open acid grassland primarily for the site's wildlife
- Balance conservation management and management to reduce the occurrence of wildfires
- Protect the Skylark population from disturbance and manage the grassland to increase their population
- Welcome visitors and help them find their way around the site

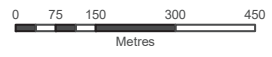


-  New signage
-  Create scrape
-  Grassland management
-  Wood pasture management
-  Epping Forest



Epping Forest Countryside Stewardship grant proposal
Map 19 Page 108
Wanstead Flats / Aldersbrook

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Appendix 2 - Forest 1 Budget Summary

Preamble

The "Forest 1" Countryside Stewardship grant started in 2020, and is due to be completed in 2029. It will deliver surgery on over 2100 veteran trees, extensive wood pasture, grassland, heathland management as well as management of Loughton Camp.

The original delivery approach was to use in-house arborists and volunteers to deliver the majority of the work. Now in-house arborists need to focus on tree safety during 2023-4. During this time contractors will be used to deliver their work. In the situation that the in-house arborists will need to remain largely on tree safety work until 2029 a budget analysis has been done to calculate if the remainder of the work can be delivered by contractors if it needs to be; this is separate to the work that will be undertaken by volunteers.

- Expected grant income 2020-2029 = £1.747 million
- Budget spent to date = £ 330,865
- Remaining expected income = £1.416 million

Basis of budget calculations

- o Indicative prices from contractors in 2023 were used to calculate costs.
- o Contracting out all the remaining 1651 veteran tree surgery works, with accompanying required creation of new pollards and minor felling in the areas of veteran tree works.
- o Contracting out the remaining wood pasture restoration works where there are works unable to be done by volunteers. It is very difficult to calculate how much the remaining wood pasture restoration works will cost. The cost of the veteran tree works would leave around c. £600,000 and based on recent contracts it is felt this should be sufficient to deliver what is required.
- o Minor additional works will include things like bracken spraying on the heathlands to reduce their smothering desirable heathland plants.

It is assumed

- o Any grass cutting already delivered by contractors or in-house team will continue on the same basis and not be paid for from the grant.
- o The chipping up of volunteer brush piles will continue to be done in-house.
- o Volunteers will continue to undertake work on Forest 1 habitat areas, largely undertaken by the Epping Forest Heritage Trust and Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers.
- o All the flailing will continue to be done in-house within the Estates & Conservation Team.
- o There will continue to be no cost for collection of arisings (wood chip or timbers) from Bury Road through an ongoing relationship with a local farmer.
- o In order to ensure that in the situation where in-house arborists do not restore any capacity to deliver Forest 1 work, the calculations have been done to see if contractors could deliver all the larger-scale work for the remainder of the contract. In reality in-house arborist teams should progress on tree safety works before 2029 to allow them

to transition back to delivering part of the Forest 1 agreement; in this situation less money will be spent on contractors and any remaining grant funds will be used to contribute to staff costs within Epping Forest Local Risk.

Caveats & Consequences

- Costings are based on indicative prices from 4 contractors obtained in spring 2023 so will rise over time.
- A 4% annual inflation is based on information from Tender Price Inflation (TPI) average (Oct 22) from Quantity Surveyors -Cost Consultants. Inflation could be subject to further economic instability.
- No contingency has been built in, if it is then this will need to be met from Epping Forest Local Risk.
- The income is based on all the habitat work being done and making associated grant claims.
- Staff costs are not factored in to the proposed spends as the staff required to deliver this are already employed – no new staff are required for this project, the undertaking is within the remit of existing roles.
- The increased requirement of procuring contractors and managing contracts will need to be undertaken within the Estate & Conservation Management Team.

Budget Summary

	Income Capital
Income 2020-2029	£1,747,860
Spent to date	£330,865
Remainder	£1,415,995
Projected veteran tree spend if all done by contractors	£710,275
Projected new pollard and minor felling spend if all done by contractors	£107,408
Projected wood pasture restoration contractor work spend	£598,312
Projected spend	£1,415,995

Appendix 3 - Forest 2 Budget Summary

Preamble

The “Forest 2” Countryside Stewardship application is in development. If successful it will start in 2024 and run to 2033. It will deliver tree surgery to hundreds of veteran trees, large scale wood pasture, heathland and grassland management, tree management on Ambresbury Banks and part of Purlieu Banks, and installation of new visitor welcoming structures. The following calculations have been based on delivery largely being done by contractors and volunteers, with a smaller element being done by in-house operational teams.

Budgetary costs include

- All tree surgery and all big-scale habitat work to be done by contractors.
- Half the flailing and all the strimming to be done by contractors – strimming might not be required but this won't be known until the habitat maintenance phase has been reached during the grant delivery.
- All new grass cutting to be done by contractors.
- Bracken treatment to be done by contractors.
- Small scale wood pasture restoration, heathland and grassland management to be done by volunteers.
- Installation of access infrastructure by in-house teams.

Budgetary costs do not include

- Any costs related to grass cutting already being delivered under contract or done by in-house operations team.
- Cost of chipping brash/timbers from volunteer tasks – this would be a requirement of one of the in-house operation teams.
- There will continue to be no cost for collection of arisings (wood chip or timbers) from Bury Road through an ongoing relationship with a local farmer.
- Cost of removing anti-social waste at Leyton Flats before the contractors start on the FM2 works there.
- ED1 Educational grant for delivering educational visits on Epping Forest – this income will go to the Field Studies Council.
- Contingency – any additional costs will need to be met by Epping Forest Local Risk.
- Staff costs are not factored in to the proposed spends as the staff required to deliver this are already employed – no new staff are required for this project, the undertaking is within the remit of existing roles.

Caveats

- Different costings are based on indicative prices from 4 contractors obtained in spring 2023 so this cost could rise over time.
- A 4% annual inflation is based on information from Tender Price Inflation (TPI) average (Oct 22) from Quantity Surveyors -Cost Consultants. Inflation could be subject to further economic instability.
- The annual figures are approximate as the works cannot be split exactly evenly each year, but the year 1-3 period for one-off works and accompanying annual works delivery would require a

net of £147k over the 3 years and the cost of annual works over years 4-10 is estimated to be cost-neutral.

- Major one-off wood pasture restoration and heritage site works – years 1-3 (Grant codes: FM2, HE1)
 - o Assuming works are funded at 100% of actual costs – this was the case for the Forest 1 grant. The grant amount will be set in late summer 2023 based on quotes received in spring 2023.
 - o The tendering can only be done on award of the grant. Tendering will be undertaken around mid-2024. It is not unlikely that these grants will not cover all the cost of the works at the point of tender. A 4% inflation amount has been added on to 2023 quote values. However, there may be a possibility to go back to the grant agency in 2024 to request additional funds if inflation has caused the cost of works to significantly rise at the point of tender.
- Assuming Rural Payments Agency will fund each notice/information/interpretation board to a maximum of £1000. Assuming all other items will be funded at 100% to the cheapest quote – there is a possibility that some of the items will not be funded at 100% rate.
- Grant income for tree surgery is dependent Conservation Team being able to undertake all the fieldwork to supply information for the final stage submission. If information on fewer trees are prepared income would be lower, but the cost of deliverables would be adjusted downwards in accordance.

Net costs

The estimated net annual costs would be £49k for years 1-3 and be approximately cost neutral for years 4-10.

Estimated total income: £1.911m

Estimated total cost: £2.058m

Delivery approaches to balance contractor costs with capacity of in-house team for delivery

1. Scrapes at Long Running and Leyton Flats
 - o To be done by Estate & Conservation staff during quiet winter period
 - o About 2 weeks work
 - o Saving about £60,000 in contractor costs
2. Mulching the opened-up wood pasture in the north of Leyton Flats to remove stumps to allow easier annual flailing
 - a. The newly purchased stump grinding head could be used with a hired high-power tractor @ c. £600/week, with added sundries = c. £1500
 - b. About 2 weeks work
 - c. To be done by Estate & Conservation staff during quiet winter period
 - d. Saving about £25,000 in contractor costs
3. Together would save about £85,000 in contractor costs.

Further notes

4. Tree surgery makes up the majority of the costs
 - a. At some sites the tree surgery is the main habitat work so has to be done at scale to deliver habitat benefits
 - b. The numbers of new pollards could be reduced but this is threatening the future populations of new pollards and would set us on a track of no new pollards in some parts of the Forest for the future
 - c. The in-house arborist teams would do one site of 60 beech trees over 10 years – this would be about 1 weeks' worth of work a year (c. 6 trees per year) and save nearly £50,000. This would allow in-house arborists to retain some conservation arboriculture work.
 - d. Further tree work could be given to the in-house teams if their capacity increases in the future.
5. The wood pasture maintenance flailing is estimated to cost about £70k per year if done wholly by contractors. Forest 1 and Forest 2 flailing, undertaken at a productive work rate, would take in the region of 7 weeks a year by 2 people. With restructure of Epping Forest staff, this work is best placed being moved from the Arborist team to the Grazing and Grassland Team to deliver. However, whether this full 7 additional weeks can be added on is uncertain, so the calculations below factor in half of the flailing to be delivered by contractors.

	Income Capital	Expend. Capital	Income Annual	Expend. Annual	Net
Year 1	£400,892.87	£449,886.04	£70,880.20	£70,879.96	-£48,992.92
Year 2	£400,892.87	£449,886.04	£70,880.20	£70,879.96	-£48,992.92
Year 3	£400,892.87	£449,886.04	£70,880.20	£70,879.96	-£48,992.92
Year 4			£70,880.20	£70,879.96	£0.24
Year 5			£70,880.20	£70,879.96	£0.24
Year 6			£70,880.20	£70,879.96	£0.24
Year 7			£70,880.20	£70,879.96	£0.24
Year 8			£70,880.20	£70,879.96	£0.24
Year 9			£70,880.20	£70,879.96	£0.24
Year 10			£70,880.20	£70,879.96	£0.24
Total	£1,202,678.62	£1,349,658.11	£708,802.00	£708,799.59	-£146,977.08

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