



Friston Forest Management Plan

2024 — 2034

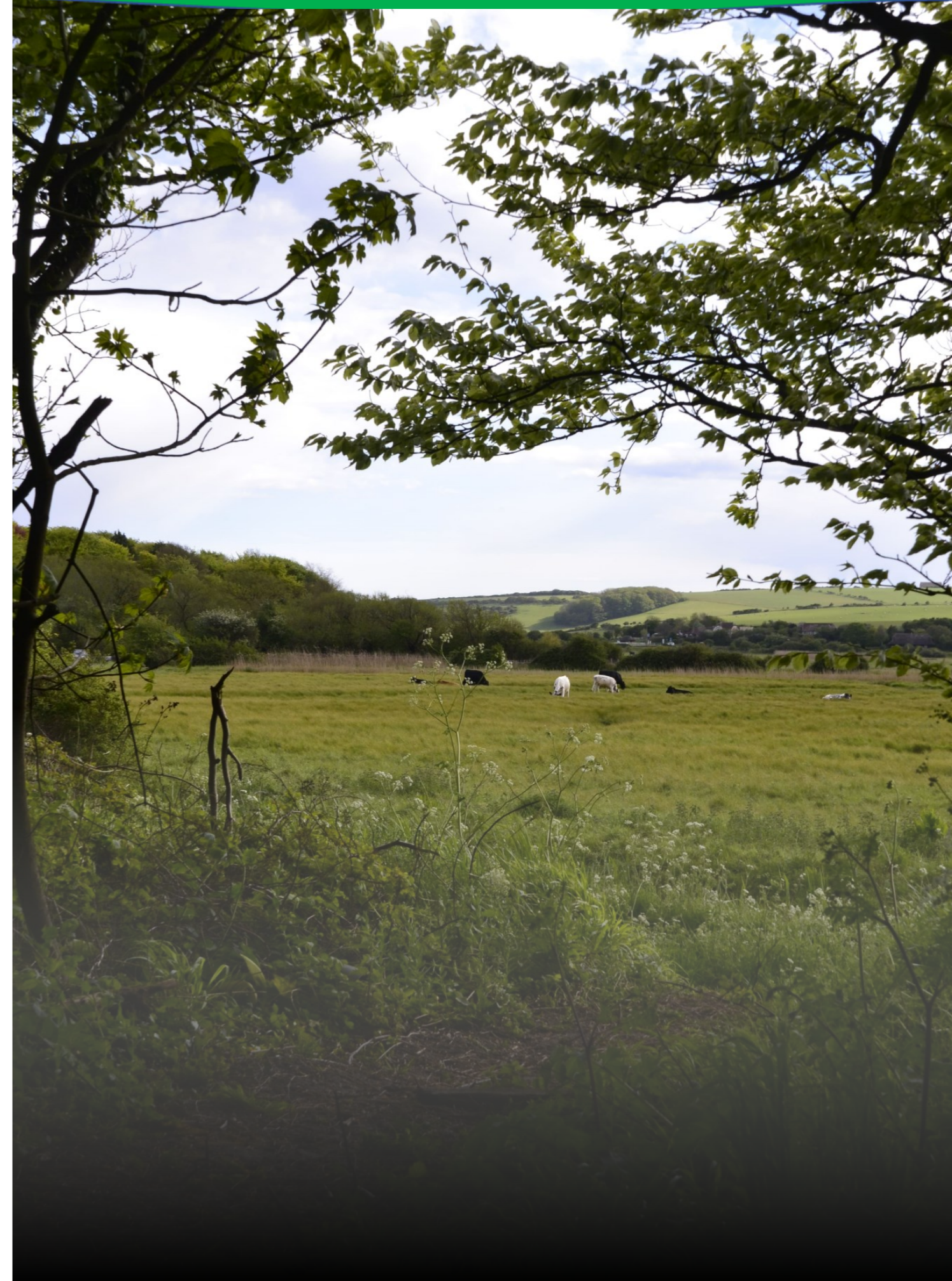
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Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)





Forest Plans are produced by us, Forestry England, as a means of communicating our management intentions to a range of stakeholders. They aim to fulfil a number of objectives:

- To provide descriptions of the woodlands we manage.
- To explain the process we go through in deciding what is best for the woodlands' long term future.
- To show what we intend the woodlands to look like in the future.
- To outline our management proposals, in detail, for the first ten years so we can seek approval from the statutory regulators.

Our aim is to produce a plan that meets your needs for the woodland; meets the needs of the plants and animals that live there and meets our needs as managers.

This plan does not set out the detailed yearly management operations for each small piece of a wood, known as a coupe. It is not possible to say which year a particular operation will take place, but we can say in which five-year period it should happen.

All tree felling in the UK is regulated and a licence is required before trees can be felled; the scale of tree felling across England's public forest estate is such that the Forest Plan is the best mechanism for applying for this licence.

Responsibility for checking that the plan meets all the relevant standards and statutes lies with another part of the Forestry Commission (Forest Services). If all the criteria are met, full approval is given for the management operations in the first ten years (2024 - 2034). The plan will be reviewed after the first five years (2027) to assess if the objectives are being achieved. Natural England will approve management proposals for the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which lie within our woods. Historic England will approve management proposals for Scheduled Monuments (SM).

Who is Forestry England?

For over 100 years, we have been growing, shaping and caring for over 1,500 of our nation's forests for the benefit and enjoyment of all, for this generation and the next.

- We are the biggest landholder in England, managing more than 250,000 hectares of woods and forests.
- As well as health benefits, our woodlands make significant contributions to local economies around the country. The 285 million visits we get per year support over 80 private businesses across England
- We are the largest supplier of sustainably produced timber in England, selling around 1.4 million tonnes per year.
- The benefits our forests provide has been [estimated at £63.5 billion](#).

1. What are Forest Plans?

Standard Practice & Guidance

Underpinning the management proposals in Forest Plans is a suite of standard practices and guidance described briefly below. Some of these practices are strategic national policy, whilst others are local expressions of national policy to reflect the particular conditions found in East England.

The UK Forestry Standard

The [UKFS](#) sets out standards for the sustainable management of all forests and woodlands in the UK and describes, in outline, good forest practice.

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (national)

The [UKWAS](#) certification standard sets out the requirements which woodland owners, managers and forest certification bodies can use to certify their woodland and forests as sustainably managed. It is the document which guides all of our management, and against which the FC is certified by outside auditors to ensure our compliance. The most current edition at this time is the fourth edition.



Government Priorities

The Environmental Improvement Plan was published in January 2023 to set out the government's approach to maintaining and enhancing the natural environment, within a generation. The plan is broad in scope but covers cleaner air and water, public forests and woodland, marine protected areas, species protection, administrative and governance issues.

The [England Trees Action plan](#) 2021-2024 was developed to support the 25 year environment plan for green recovery. It aims to boost tree planting and establishment, improve woodland management and support a thriving green economy across England, delivering more for society, nature, the climate and the economy. There are 80 policy actions the government is taking over this Parliament to help deliver this vision.

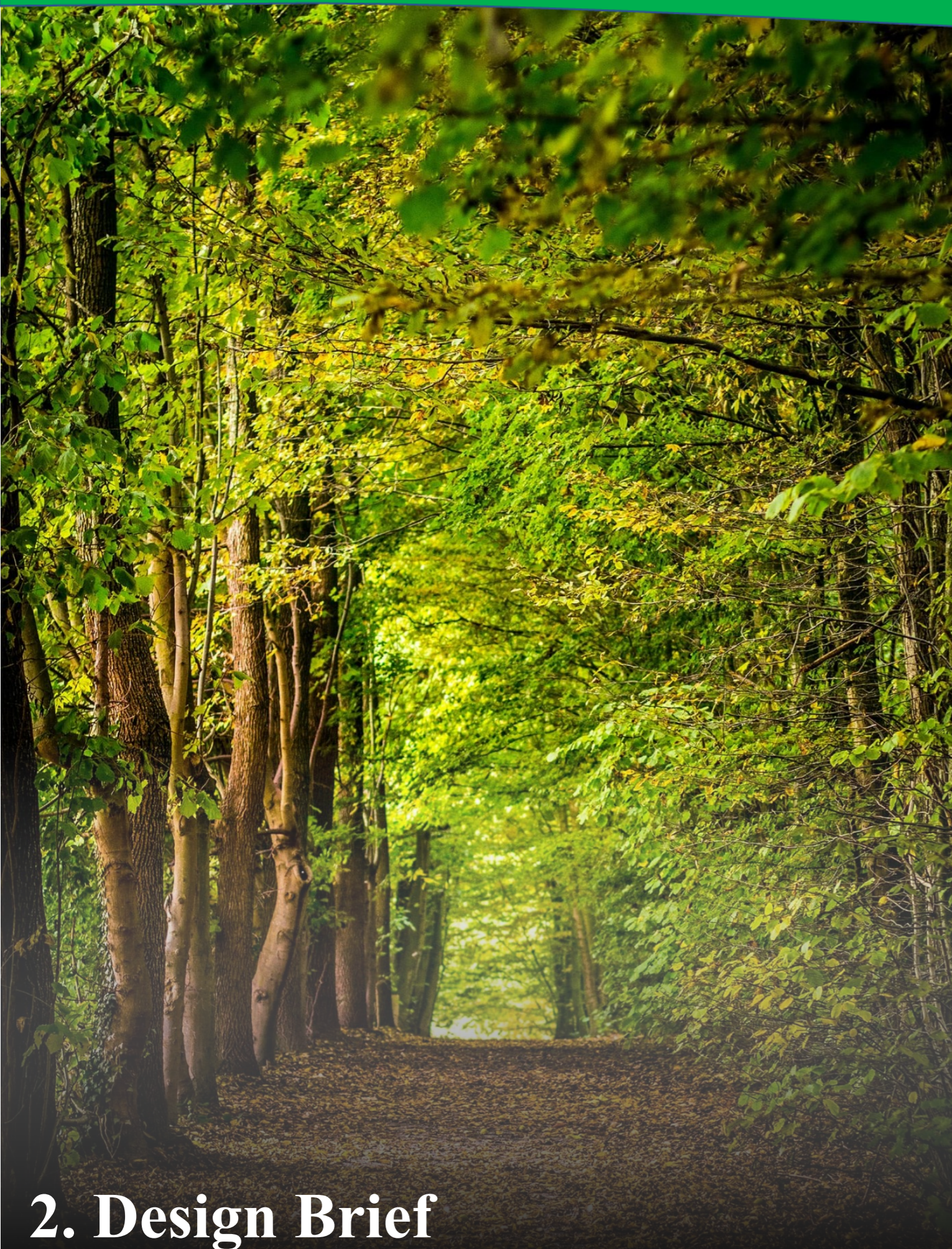
Forestry England Priorities

Our task is to realise the potential of each of the forests in our care for sustainable business opportunities, wildlife and nature conservation, and the enjoyment and well-being of local people and visitors. Each of our forests supports the economy through local jobs, sustainable timber production and the provision of recreation and tourism opportunities. Our compass (opposite page) shows how our purpose, objectives and how [Growing the Future 2021–2026](#) work together to achieve this.

At a district level the East England Forest District Strategy 2023 sets our objectives around five goals:

1. Staff — A skilled, motivated and professional workforce
2. Finance — Generating a financial surplus
3. Forest resilience — A healthy, resilient and productive forest
4. Community — Improved public involvement and engagement
5. Environment — A recognised global leader in environmental stewardship

These strategic documents along with local knowledge are used to prepare a design brief for the forest plan. The plan is then subject to a consultation where subsequent changes may be applied before being finalised. Forest plan objectives are based around goals 2-5 as the goal relating to staff cannot be addressed within a plan.



The objectives below are framed via the Forestry England regional priorities shown on page 4.

Environment

- E1** Continue to protect, maintain and enhance priority habitats by expanding and connecting open space.
- E2** Continue to protect, maintain and enhance priority species.

Resilience

- R1** Maintain the land within our stewardship under Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®)/Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) by meeting standards detailed in UKWAS fourth edition.

Community

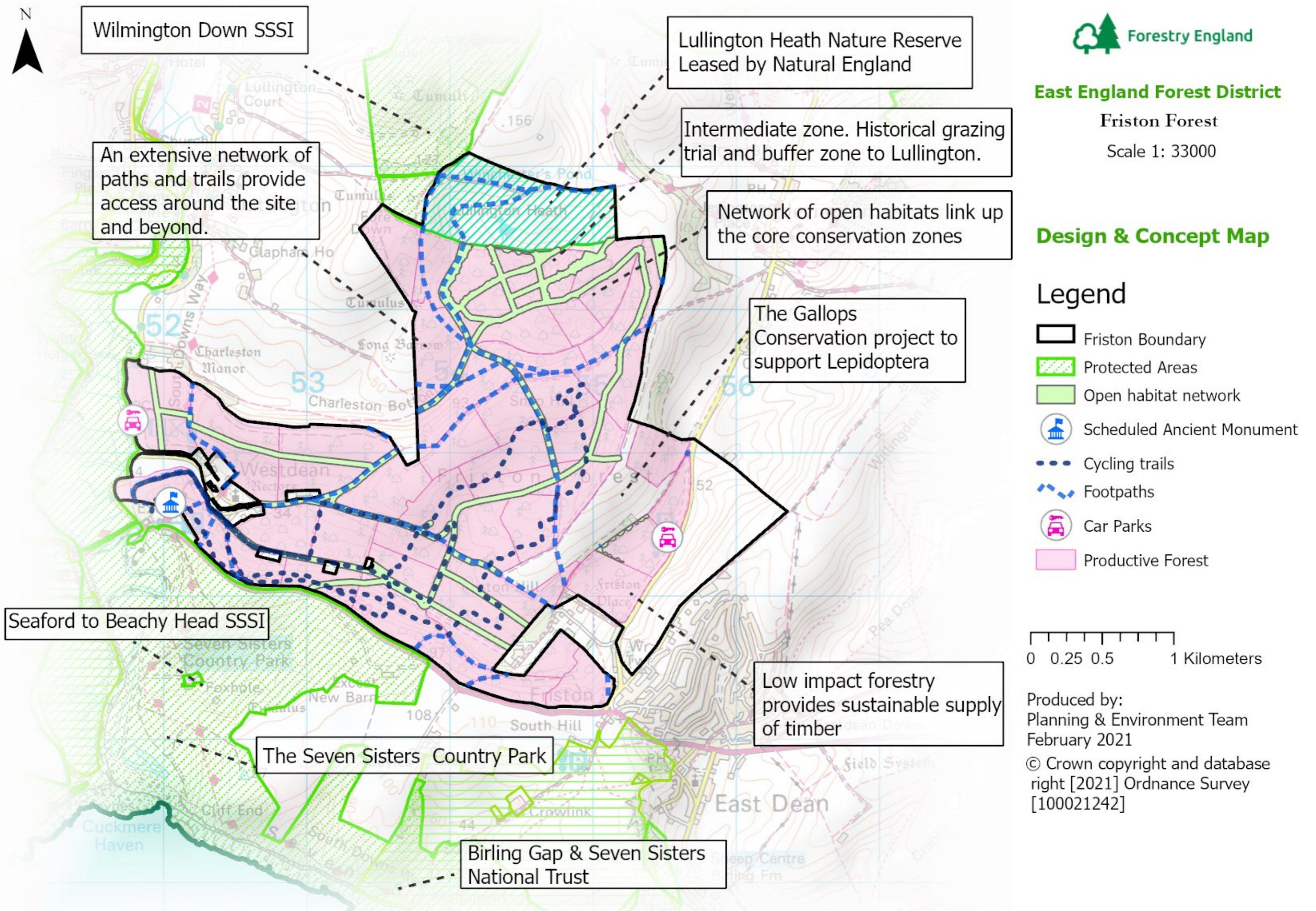
- C1** Maintain recreational facilities to a high standard through inspection processes and ensure they are capable of sustainably supporting Friston's community.
- C2** Continue to conserve Friston's heritage via management of its scheduled monument and unscheduled but significant local features.
- C3** Explore and develop opportunities in partnership with South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) regarding broader landscape-scale opportunities for recreation.

Finance

- F1** To generate income from marketing of timber products whilst ensuring operations take place at a scale and frequency in keeping with the surrounding landscape.
- F2** Continue to diversify the vertical and horizontal forest structure through encouraging natural regeneration, underplanting, replacing failed stands with new diverse stands, widening rides, scalloping and other means.

To see how these objectives are incorporated into the site's planning please refer to the Design and Concept above on the next page.

2. Design Brief



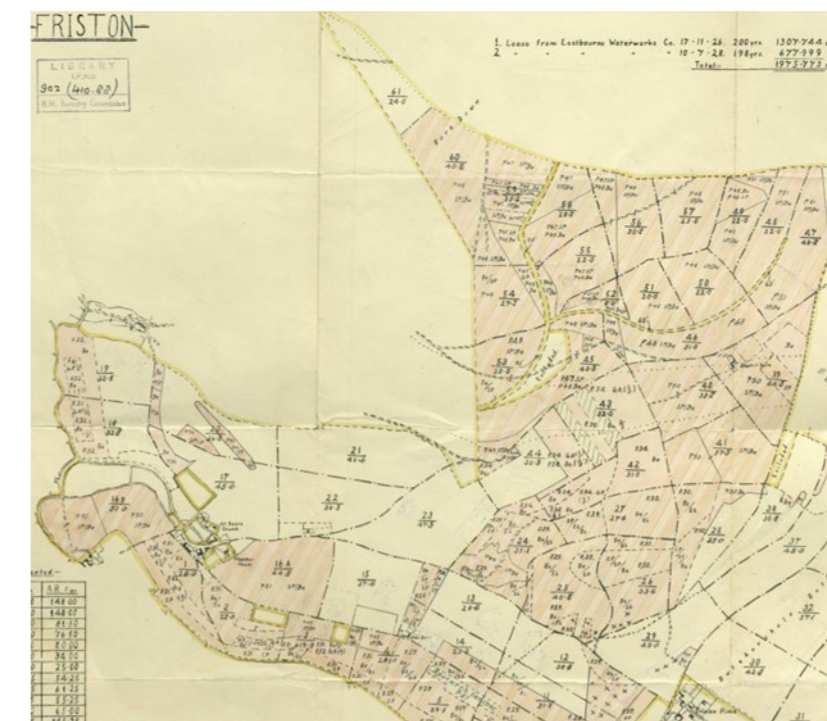
Map 1: An overview of how the environment, resilience, community and finance objectives harmoniously work together to form sustainable forest management at Friston.



Friston Forest covers an area of 849.88 ha of Beech dominated forest approximately 1.7 km from Sussex’s coastline. The site is on a 200 year lease with Eastbourne Water Company (now South East Water) which runs until 2126. South East Water leases the area to the Forestry Commission with the sole ambition of protecting the catchment from agricultural pollution and in the hope that it may lead to higher water yields at Eastbourne pumping station. The site’s first Forest Management Plan (hereafter ‘Forest Plan’) was drafted in 2000. This document represents the site’s second Forest Plan, which will run from 2024 to 2034.

Despite being a relatively new forest, Friston represents a significant feature in the broader landscape and is the largest forest in the south of Sussex. As of early 2021, the majority of the site (~73%) is classed as high forest, though ten distinct land uses are present throughout the property. These include research plots, agricultural land and open spaces. Friston Forest is nestled within South Downs National Park and runs adjacent to two SSSIs: Seaford to Beachy Head and Lullington Heath. Also adjacent to the site are the villages of West Dean and East Dean and within two miles the more major towns of Seaford to the west and Eastbourne to the east.

The history of the site as a forest dates back to the mid-1920s when several research plots were undertaken to ascertain optimal tree species suited to calcareous locations. The notably challenging conditions of exposure, shallow and dry soil, a deficiency of humus and root competition quickly resulted in the necessity for nurse crops. Over the years several nurse crops were tested, with most success from pines and larches, however the long-term goal from the outset was always a primarily beech forest. There are 18 species recorded as having been trialled in the early-mid 20th Century at Friston, of which three are considered ‘complete failures’ and a further eight ‘not suitable’ (Forestry Commission, 1951). The species recorded as best suited to Friston in the 1950s include: Scots Pine, Beech, Ash, Sycamore, Norway Spruce, Monterey Cypress and Western Red Cedar. The history of Friston is therefore intrinsically a mixed plantation from the outset, with a clear recommendation in the 1950s for it to remain so in the future, using conifers to act as nurse crops for the Beech and other minor broadleaf species.



An old map of Friston from the early 20th Century—
Forestry Commission (1951)

3. Location & History



4. Environment

Site Characteristics & Biodiversity

Friston Forest is a largely even-aged forest dominated by Beech and Sycamore with little structural or species diversity. Aside from small pockets of Scot's Pine (2%) and a few other conifers the site's character represents that of an even aged high forest deciduous plantation. The forest contains some species of conservation significance (see below) but broadly speaking the bird and mammal diversity is considered relatively poor. Not all the property is high forest. In the north of the property, the area adjacent to Lullington Heath (Map 1), has been managed as an intermediary zone between the open space of Lullington Heath and the high forest to the south (Map 1). This intermediate zone has been fenced, water supplies for livestock provided and vast open spaces created. It was grazed from 2008- 2018 by Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) but this project ended due to changes in SWT priorities (Sussex Wildlife Trust, 2018). The open spaces are now managed mechanically with cut and collect mowing while options for new graziers are explored.

To the east of the site lies the 'Gallops', a 35ha stretch of valuable grassland that supports notable populations of various Lepidoptera species, including the Chalk Hill Blue, Silver Spotted Skipper and Small Blue (Forestry England, 2020; Seaford Natural History Society, 2020). The Gallops is set to have a new low-intensity sward management system as part of a partnership between Forestry England, South East Water and Jevington Place Farm. Across the site more broadly, rides are being widened and scallops created to increase the area and connectivity of chalk grassland and scrub edge habitat within the forest. The further creation of open space will continue with the long-term goal of joining up Lullington Heath in the north to the Seven Sisters country park to the south-west and the Gallops in the east.

Priority Habitats & Species

Friston is a relatively young forest with low diversity in terms of stand age and species and is largely missing young age stands. It is based on a rich chalk substrate which has the potential for high value chalk grassland habitat. The current priorities are:

- The expansion, increased connectivity and maintenance of open chalk grassland habitat.
- The diversification of high forest stands in terms of age and structure.
- The maintenance of scrub habitat on high forest margins.
- The preservation and maintenance of potential veteran trees.
- The preservation and maintenance of dew ponds.

The aim is to work towards a forest with a range of high quality habitats, from open space, to young forest and scrub to mature forest.

Despite being a young forest there are currently the following priority species:

- European protected species including Hazel Dormice, Great Crested Newts, Bats (various spp).
- Chalk grassland lepidoptera including, Chalk Blue (population of regional significance) and recorded Section 41 species; Small Heath Small Blue, Dingy Skipper, Wall, White Admiral and Grizzled Skipper.
- Schedule 1 bird species including Honey Buzzard, Hobby and Red Kite. Section 41 bird species including Skylark (Gallops only), Common Cuckoo, Common Bullfinch and Song Thrush.
- Other protected species of particular local interest including badgers and adders.

Protected Sites

Lullington Heath National Nature Reserve (NNR) runs adjacent to the northern boundary of the property. The 62ha reserve was originally leased to English Nature (now Natural England) on a fifty-year lease in 1955. It is currently undergoing a new review of the lease. Lullington Heath NNR is notable for its chalk heath which simultaneously supports acid and alkaline loving flora through the vertical mixing of acidic loess soils over chalk. Lullington Heath is also listed as a SSSI and currently has 69% of its units in unfavourable-declining condition. Friston's original forest plan lists over 250 species of plant, 98 bird and 35 butterfly species within the NNR. Of particular note was the presence of the Sub-angled Wave Moth (*Scopula nigropunctata*), one of only three known locations in the UK. The new five year management plan focusses on ten specific features: chalk heath, lowland calcareous grassland, Silver-Spotted Skipper, Great-Crested Newt, Dormouse, the celtic field system, community involvement, education & outreach, public access and estate assets. A continued close working relationship with Natural England is essential for the successful outcome of objectives for both Lullington Heath NNR and Friston itself.

On the southern boundary of Friston is Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI, which is not owned by Forestry England. This 1,081ha reserve was notified in 1999 and follows the Cuckmere river down to the sea before heading east along the coast. Seaford to Beachy Head is currently listed as 99.12% in favourable or recovering condition. In addition to the chalk heath found in Lullington, the SSSI was designated for its diverse range of habits that include maritime grassland, foreshore and chalk cliffs and river meanders. In addition to some notable flora the site is perhaps most notable for its geology, in particular the chalk stratigraphy and periglacial geomorphology.

The whole property sits within the South Downs National Park (SDNP). The SDNP, designated in 2010, covers a total area of 165,300 ha and has ten over-arching outcomes it wishes to achieve by 2050, all of which align to the broader policy objectives of Friston. The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) are the planning authority for the area, and under Article 4 have oversight of any proposed developments in the property. Consequently, any proposed developments within Friston, ranging from fencing to new car parks will need to be approved by the SDNPA to ensure that it does not threaten the character of the area.

Expanding and improving open spaces

Friston Forest and its surrounding areas have some regionally and even nationally important open space habitats. In particular, Lullington Heath includes the largest remaining example of chalk heath in Great Britain (Natural England 2020). Within the Forest, there is potential for a network of high quality chalk grassland habitat to connect Lullington Heath NNR, the Gallops and the wider Cuckmere landscape to the west. There are three primary ways through which open spaces can be maintained, expanded and improved within Friston:

1. Maintain and improve the Gallops area via the Gallops Project. The Gallops project aims to achieve a new sward management scheme, including wildflower seeding, low intensity grazing and hay cutting targeted at maintaining high quality chalk grassland habitat. This is a partnership project between Forestry England, South East Water and Jevington Place Farm.
2. Creating habitat corridors to allow invertebrate and vertebrate populations to spread through the site. Linking up existing priority open spaces such as Lullington Heath and the Gallops through habitat corridors is possible through widening a network of rides across the site. Rides will be widened up to 40 metres (though often less) with scalloped, organic looking edges which will maximise open and scrub habitat. These will be maintained via cut and collect mowing to keep nutrient levels low and prevent monopolisation of the ride network by grasses. This is represented as clearfell on Map 2 whereas in reality much of this area is already open.
3. Beyond open spaces and habitat corridors it's important that the forest itself is conducive to open habitat species. To this effect using low impact silvicultural systems (LISS) that periodically create small-scale open gaps in the canopy will help ensure there is always a diversity of open spaces at different levels of establishment throughout the forest and a continually moving and evolving ecotone between the habitats.

By creating a large, connected mosaic of open space that seamlessly interweaves into other habitats we are creating a network for the future.

“...the largest remaining example of chalk heath in Great Britain”

Lullington Heath Management Plan 2020-2025

Ponds, watercourse and wetlands

Eastbourne Water Company (now South East Water) leased the area to the Forestry Commission with the sole ambition of protecting the catchment from agricultural pollution and in the hope that it may lead to higher water yields at Eastbourne pumping station (Eastbourne Waterworks Company, 1966). The site overlays a large aquifer which supplies the water to Eastbourne and other urban areas in the surrounding district. As such, it is of critical importance that management of the site continues to be mindful of this and does not impede this critical service, e.g. with special regard to the risk of fuel spills and the continued prohibition of pesticides. The afforestation at Friston has been shown to marginally reduce the water yield at Eastbourne pumping station in the past, necessitating careful consideration for any further major afforestation in the area (Eastbourne Waterworks Company, 1966). As of 2021, active engagement with South East Water continues on multiple projects. Rainfall ranges between 750 - 850 mm per year and the Cuckmere river runs adjacent to the western edge of the site. The site is not at risk of flooding, however flood risk areas are contiguous to large parts of the site's western boundary.

Friston Forest contains three dew ponds which represent the only open water sources within the forest. There are no natural ponds or streams due to the chalk substrate. These are an important feature for all wildlife but great-crested newts and bats in particular. These dew ponds are in varying condition, being largely overshadowed by vegetation and having cracked bases, leading to leakage. There is the potential to restore the historic dew ponds. They will be haloed around during felling operations where possible and Forestry England will seek opportunities to undertake larger scale repairs.



Deadwood

Deadwood, either through standing trees or those on the forest floor, is an incredibly important aspect of any woodland. Deadwood provides a key habitat for fungi and invertebrates. To-date, no deadwood assessments have been undertaken at Friston but it is known that there is not an abundance of this resource throughout the site as this is a relatively young and actively worked forest. Standing deadwood will always be retained during felling operations, unless it is a hazard.

Grazing

Grazing within woodlands is a natural process. Historically it would have been done through animals such as Wild Boar, Beavers, Deer and Aurochs. Today, the diversity of grazers is less but the intensity is still high. Deer species in particular can have a significantly detrimental impact on the ability of a woodland to regenerate and on the abundance of the ground flora. Ensuring that any efforts to replant will be protected from grazing is a key consideration and deer numbers will be controlled over the lifespan of this plan. Various options exist, often implemented together as part of a mixed approach. In Friston the most common approach will likely be through the temporary fencing of enclosures and the use of tree guards. Additionally, enclosure plots will be used to assess the level of grazing damage and inform the level of cull effort required.

In some areas of the site, where natural regeneration is not a priority, some grazing is to be encouraged for biodiversity gains. This includes the Gallops project area where Butterfly Conservation Trust have recommended low intensity grazing to create a more varied sward. Another longer term ambition would be to find another grazer for the former Grazing Project area to the north of the site to improve the ground flora assemblage there.

Another example is the northern part of the Forest. This 85ha area directly abuts the Lullington Heath SSSI/National Nature Reserve on its northern boundary. This site has localised areas of chalk heath, a nationally rare habitat and one of the designated features of the NNR. Forestry England are looking to manage this area for its rare habitats and species such as Dormouse, to 'buffer' the NNR with complementary management and landscape it to create a transition from the open down top into the forest. FE are currently looking at conservation management options such as livestock grazing as well as mechanical interventions such as mulching and forage harvesting.



Access and Recreation

The property is well used by locals and day visitors. To accommodate these visitors, the property has three car parks, two managed by Forestry England (Butchershole and Litlington Road) and one by South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) at Seven Sisters Country Park. As of 2020, it is estimated in the region of 150,000 visits occurred through the site's two FE car parks, though this does not account for the significant number of visitors who enter through the Seven Sisters car park or those without vehicles. As a rough estimate the true number of visitors is likely closer to 250,000 to 350,000 per year. Between 2013 and 2019, on average, the number of visitors to the Friston car parks increased 11% each year and this trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The Forestry England car parks can collectively support approximately 120-150 vehicles and they contain additional facilities such as picnic benches, a toilet block, low level play equipment and barbeque stands. Both Butchershole and Litlington Road car parks require development as both, particularly the former, are already regularly over capacity.

The property contains two official forest bike trails, one family bike trail and one mountain bike trail. Many more unauthorised trails have been created by local enthusiasts. Additionally, the property is well served by an official FE orienteering route and two FE waymarked walking trails. There are multiple bridleways and footpaths, including the South Downs Way National Trail which intersects the western edge of the property. Horse riders can benefit from the 'T.R.O.T' (Toll Rides Off-road Trust) system of membership, facilitates an active engagement with the horse-riding community and sustainable riding. The property sits within the much visited Sussex Heritage Coast and such tourism and recreation will always play a big part in management considerations.

People

Friston is situated in close proximity to the villages of East Dean and West Dean with the more major conurbations of Eastbourne and Seaford within ten miles. Friston is clearly a much loved local woodland by many, as evidenced by the active digital communities found on social media. The 'Friends of Friston Forest' Facebook group is a great forum for sharing news and pictures of the Forest as well as flagging any issues that may need addressing. Similarly, there is a dedicated community for bikers who enjoy cycling in Friston. Both of these are managed by the public. Providing the opportunities for local communities to engage with the forest is so important and speaks to two of Forestry England's core values: 'Do it Together' and 'Be Adventurous'.

Safeguarding our Heritage

The site and the surrounding area also have a notable historic heritage. Just to the south of Friston was a key RAF base during the Second World War. RAF Friston was described as a 'flattish piece of open downland', and used for flying in the 1930s by multiple nationalities before being turned into an emergency landing ground and later a sector station in 1942. Multiple squadrons were stationed at RAF Friston throughout the war, with over 1000 personnel stationed there at its height, around D-Day in 1944 (National Trust, n.d.). RAF Friston was bombed, with one suspected bomb crater being close to what is now a National Trust car park. Friston is also in close-proximity to the significant geological heritage in the Seven Sisters, a National Trust property celebrating iconic coastal chalk cliffs. The area of Friston itself was heavily used for tank and troop training exercises, as reflected in the remains of tank tracks, practice gun emplacements and fox holes (English Heritage, 2013). For a comprehensive review of heritage features in Friston please consult Appendix I.

There is one scheduled monument (SM) within the property as well as several more in close proximity to the site's boundary. The site's SM was listed in 1996 and consists of a 0.11 ha oval barrow. The Exeat oval barrow dates from the Neolithic period and spans 28m long and 14m wide, though little else is known about its origin or history (Forestry England, 2013). Within metres of the site's boundary are the remains of the West Dean manor house, a SM split into two component parts, and formed of ruined structures and below-ground archaeological remains. Historical records suggest that West Dean was of significant importance in the Medieval period, especially in the reign of Edward I, whom it is thought visited the settlement.



Fitting into the surrounding landscape

Integration with the broader landscape is a key consideration for Friston because of the multiple areas of ecological, historic and geological interest that run adjacent to the property and connect to other areas of importance, e.g. Lullington Heath NNR connects to Wilmington Down SSSI and all of which nest within the SDNP. Working collaboratively at the landscape scale is noted as a potential opportunity in Lullington Heath's management plan (Natural England, 2020). As well as being a central pillar in the UK Forestry Standard, this broader landscape consideration is central to the Government's new initiative to create a Nature Recovery Network (NRN). Although the NRN is still in its infancy, throughout the lifespan of Friston's new forest plan it will become a central consideration for all landholders, including Forestry England, and the plan should prepare for this. Friston acts as the cornerstone that links all of these sites together to form one contiguous network – enhancing not only ecological values but also social ones as footpaths, bridleways and the South Downs Way connect to the sea.

More specifically, the forest landscape is a backdrop to several nearby and historical villages and one, West Dean, is highly intertwined with the management of the site. The impact of felling, particularly from a short distance within the forest area needs to ensure that the landscape value of the plan area is maintained. Although the surrounding undulating landscape has several ridges and viewpoints, the view will be mostly unaffected, particularly where the forest is bordered by low impact forestry areas. The plan area lies within the South Downs National Character Area.





Sustainable forestry

The sustainable production of timber has been a central pillar of the Forestry Commission for over 100 years. In fact, we are the largest supplier of sustainably produced timber in England, selling around 1.4 million tonnes per year. The production of timber is also the largest source of income for Forestry England, the money from which facilitates the actions required to meet other objectives in the plan, such as conservation work and social infrastructure.

A key aspect of sustainable forestry is learning from the past and planning for the future. This is especially important as we progress through the 21st Century and the effects of climate change become more pronounced. Since its inception Friston has been a forest designed to explore new possibilities for planting trees along the South Coast. This plan would like to continue this tradition through the implementation of a novel and still developing approach for forestry: Forest Development Types (FDT).

FDTs are a long-term vision of how species composition and structure of a forest stand is intended to develop. This is particularly relevant to Friston as there is such a clear dominance of one species and a lack of structural diversity. It is envisaged that by moving to a more mixed species and structurally diverse forest Friston will be able to better achieve the objectives of multi-purpose forestry whilst still providing a steady and sustainable production of high-grade timber.

Another central component of the economic sustainability of Friston will be ensuring that access and facilities through the two Forestry England car parks remain in good condition. These two car parks act as a supplementary level of income but have a disproportionate importance as they act as the first impressions for new visitors arriving by car and act as the central points for Friston's facilities. Sustainable use of the forest, through walking or cycling on permitted trails is encouraged.

Clearly, sustainable forestry is about more than felling trees but silvicultural considerations remain at the heart of any Forest Plan and are now described in further detail.

Attaining quality timber

Squirrels have a detrimental impact on woodland by affecting the quality of the woodland as opposed to the quantity. Squirrels strip bark from broadleaf trees which results in that timber being of significantly lower quality. This is a serious issue at Friston Forest where the majority of the naturally regenerating stands are broadleaf. Post 1987 broadleaf stands (mostly from the early 1990s) show such heavy Squirrel damage that the resulting trees can only be chipped and the site restocked, they are not even suitable for firewood grade product. The options available to counteract the impacts of non-native grey squirrels are still emerging and will hopefully become more widely available throughout the lifespan of this plan. This does need to be a priority however as the aim of having productive broadleaf forestry at Friston is not feasible with the extent of Squirrel damage.

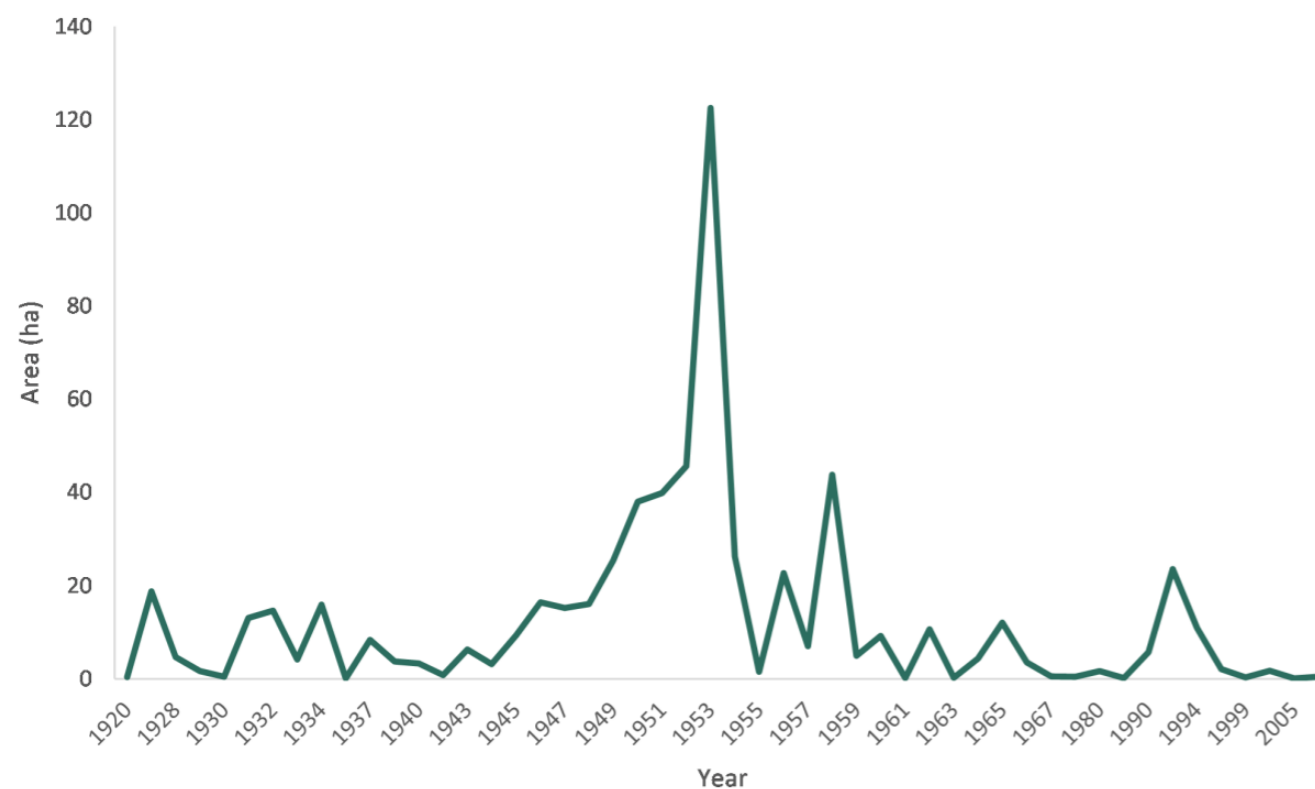


Figure 1: An uneven planting timeline results in distinct age classes

Structural Diversity

Planting at Friston started in the 1920s, but the vast majority occurred in the 1950s (Figure 1). As such, there are few truly veteran trees within Friston but many Beech and Sycamore of high potential. Many of these 1950/60s trees are reaching diameters at which they will be reaching the limits of conventional harvesters in the next 20 years and their value may decrease as they become too large for firewood processors. A primary objective for the next ten years will be to try to diversify the structure of these stands by encouraging natural regeneration and removing the overstorey. The great storm of 1987 had a notable impact on the forest's structure, as can be seen in the spike of planting in the early 1990's, however these stands have largely failed due to lack of squirrel control. In places such as these, removal of the failed crops and restocking will be required.

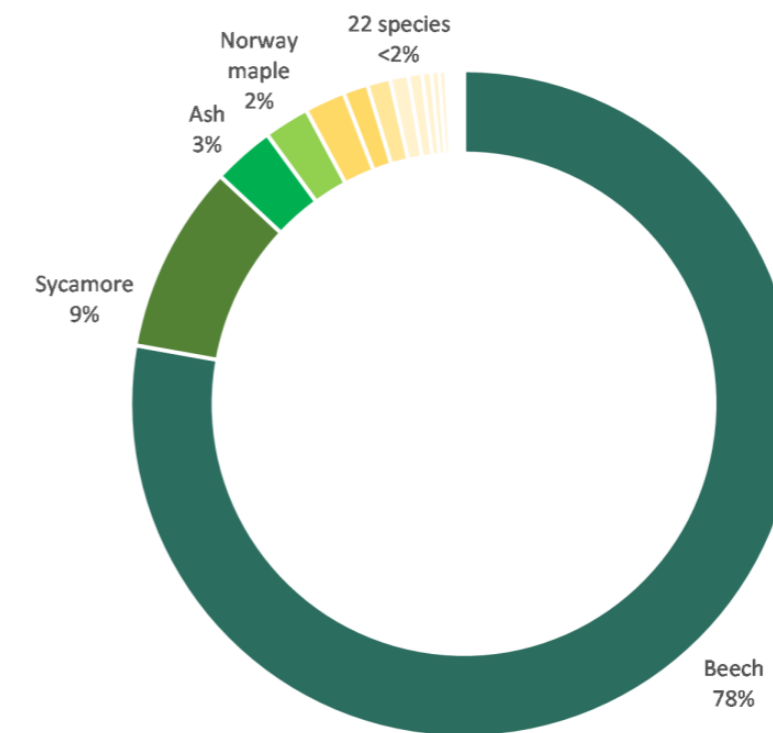


Figure 2: Friston is currently dominated by only a handful of species

Species

Friston is currently overwhelmingly Beech with a notable component of Sycamore. The small proportion of conifers is considered useful for raptor nests and further conifer species are expected to be planted in the coming decades, albeit as part of a broadleaf mix. Corsican Pine was noted from the outset as being particularly well suited to Friston due to the salt spray and could be considered in mixtures as a nursery crop despite *Dothistroma* needle blight. Although Friston is not an ancient woodland, the planting of conifers does have to be done with some consideration for their potential impact on the hydrology of the site. Friston does remain as an active water catchment for nearby conurbations and as such limited and inter-mixed planting of conifers will be done at low levels (e.g. <30%). **Potentially suitable conifer species include: Western Red Cedar, Douglas Fir, Scots Pine, Atlas Cedar, European Silver Fir and Japanese Cedar.** As noted in the Introduction, the original objective for Friston, which is still relevant today, is to create a mixed woodland. As such, potential broadleaf species suited to the site include: Small-leaved Lime, Alder species, Walnut, Wild Cherry, Wild Service, Norway Maple, Whitebeam and Hornbeam. Many if not most of these species will likely be included over the coming decades to varying degrees.

Forest Resilience

Drought is expected to become a more notable problem in the future but is already causing some impact, exacerbated by the underlying chalk bedrock quickly dissipating any precipitation. This is further worsened by the salt air blown in from the nearby coast.

Grazing by Deer is also a notable problem, numbers are controlled but the population is expected to increase both in number and species with other, currently absent, species expanding their range. Fencing is deemed essential for any restock sites to protect the trees from deer browsing; and while it is necessary (and temporary), it is also expensive and visually intrusive.

There is currently limited natural regeneration of any species other than Sycamore which is abundant. Beech has so far failed to naturally regenerate at a meaningful level. The reasons for this are not clear but it could be due to a combination of grazing, the young age of trees and compaction of the soil. It is difficult to predict what the pests and diseases of the future will be; however if some pest or pathogen that affects Beech was to gain hold then the vast majority of the forest would be at risk.

Building resilient woodlands through species and age diversity is key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the forest within a changing climate. A key consideration for ensuring ecological resilience and a steady flow of timber is to diversify the species and age classes within the forest.

Historically, felling has produced in the region of 2000 tonnes of hardwood annually from Friston, though this is a variable estimate. One key element of the Friston plan will be to ensure that a steady provision of timber is achievable in the future, which in turn will require a critical review of which species are best suited to grow at Friston given the climate, pests and diseases and lessons learned from the past.



7. Proposed management

The proposed management below builds upon the objectives listed on page 5

Environment & Resilience Objectives

Each specific action has a method of monitoring listed on page 22

Specific actions:

E1 "Continue to protect, maintain and enhance priority habitats by expanding and connecting open space".

One of the more significant pieces of management over the next ten years will be further opening up parts of the forest to create a habitat network of open spaces that connect these nationally important chalk heathlands and grasslands. These open spaces will be kept as transitional open spaces primarily through the use of a 'cut and collect' system. The Lullington Heath SSSI management plan specifically mentions the potential to expand the chalk heath habitat into Friston.

E1A: By 2034 to have completed the open habitat network creation shown in Map 1.

E1B: By 2034 to have completed the initial six year management programme for the Gallops and discussed future management prescriptions.

E1C: By 2026 to have engaged with Natural England on the renewal of the Lullington Heath SSSI management plan, especially around key strategic areas such as access, habitat connectivity and priority species.

E2 "Continue to protect, maintain and enhance priority species".

Management prescriptions listed in E1 will act as arguably the primary mechanism with which to protect, maintain and enhance Friston's priority species. For example, the expansion of open space via corridors and the Gallops will support Bats, invertebrates, Adders and Skylarks and the maintenance of scrubby edges via rides will support Hazel Dormice, schedule 1 species such as the Cuckoo and Bullfinch. Some additional actions will be required however such as the improvement of Friston's dew ponds, which will ensure that these key water sources remain in place for species.

E2A: By 2034 to have continued working with Natural England regarding the management of Dormouse suitable habitat between Lullington Heath SSSI and Friston's open habitat network.

E2B: By 2034 to have haloed trees surrounding Friston's dew ponds to improve the site's suitability for Great-Crested Newts.

R1 "Maintain the land within our stewardship under FSC[®]/PEFC certification by meeting standards detailed in UKWAS fourth edition".

All timber created by Forestry England is FSC[®] and PEFC certified. Ensuring that we continue to comply to the sustainability standards as set out in the UKWAS fourth edition is part of Forestry England's core work.

R1A: By 2034 to have passed all internal and external auditing against UKWAS standards and to have implemented any actions associated with Friston.

The proposed management below builds upon the objectives listed on page 5

Community Objectives

C1 "Maintain recreational facilities to a high standard through inspection processes and ensure they are capable of sustainably supporting Friston's community".

Friston's recreational facilities are pivotal in facilitating access and enjoyment of the forest. In particular the necessity to review the condition of Butchershole car park is required, especially given the significantly higher levels of visitation experienced during the COVID-19 lockdowns. If Friston is to capitalise on the full potential of recreational visits then further infrastructural change will be needed to ensure it harmoniously integrates with the other land objectives.

C2 "Continue to conserve Friston's heritage via management of its scheduled monument and other heritage assets".

Weaving in the human heritage alongside the natural heritage is very important. Friston has a rich recent history but especially so of centuries past, which can teach us a lot about how the area was used by humans. Celebrating this history is important and being mindful of it during all operations is essential. To this effect, the scheduled monument in Friston will have its management plan updated and be factored in to all operational site assessments (OSAs).

C3 "Explore and develop opportunities in partnership with South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) regarding broader landscape-scale opportunities for recreation."

Beyond the boundaries of Friston itself, the Seven Sisters Country opens up opportunities for landscape-scale collaboration, in particular around recreation. The Seven Sisters Country Park already has facilities in close proximity to Lidlington Road car park such as toilets and cycle hire. As already mentioned, there is already an active cycling community that use Friston's trails and often go beyond the permissive trails.

Each specific action has a method of monitoring listed on page 22

Specific actions:

C1A: By 2026 to have undertaken a review of the car parks at Friston and to assess what requirements are needed to ensure these car parks are fit for purpose over the next ten years, noting the expected increase in visitation over the coming decade.

C1B: By 2026 to have discussed how to best sustainably manage Friston's cycling, how to meet its potential and how to embed these actions within any emerging national policy on this matter.

C2A: By 2034 to have started the process to review and update the Exceat Barrow Scheduled Ancient Monument's management plan so that it aligns with the timeline of Friston's Forest Plan.

C2B: By 2034 to have ensured that Friston's heritage features are incorporated into all operational site assessments (OSAs) and that the Heritage Advisor is consulted for best-practice advice as appropriate.

C3A: By 2026 to have discussed potential key areas of collaboration with SDNPA including but not limited to: recreation opportunities, landscape connectivity, priority habitats and species.

The proposed management below builds upon the objectives listed on page 5

Finance Objectives

F1 **“To generate income from marketing of timber products whilst ensuring operations take place as a scale and frequency in keeping with the surrounding landscape .”**

The exploration of suitable tree species for growing timber was the original purpose of growing Friston Forest. The need for sustainable timber is even greater today than it was 100 years ago and predictions show that this demand will continue if not increase in coming decades. Friston is at a difficult juncture where the existing forest is very mature but there is very little regeneration to take its place. Forestry England need to strategically fell and open up the Forest to facilitate the regeneration of a new generation of tree species from seed. However, if Forestry England were to fell vast swathes as clearfell then Friston would lose its distinct character and regional importance as a core woodland habitat as well as increasing turbidity making the water difficult to treat for drinking water supplies to the local communities . The solution is a gradual change over the coming decade and beyond using low impact silvicultural systems over the vast majority of the site.

F2 **“Continue to diversify the vertical and horizontal forest structure through encouraging natural regeneration, underplanting, replacing failed stands with new diverse stands, widening rides, scalloping and other means.”**

Friston is a very large forest. The work required to diversify the vertical and horizontal structure will have to take place gradually over the coming years and even decades. Forest Development Types are going to be pivotal in how Friston transitions into a more structurally and species diverse forest, providing a framework to open up the canopy, restock and manage the forest over the coming decades in a concise and clear manner for decades to come. There is a need to move away from a monoculture of even-aged trees at Friston, to this effect the silvicultural management proposed here will undertake the following changes:

Each specific action has a method of monitoring listed on page 22

Specific actions:

F1A: By 2034, to have finished thinning operations in 80% of the plan area.

F1B: By 2034, to have finished felling all specified clearfell coupes stated in this management plan.

F2A: By 2034 to have followed FDT guidance as appropriate to each subcompartment applying the prescribed management to the context of Friston (e.g. thinning and felling).

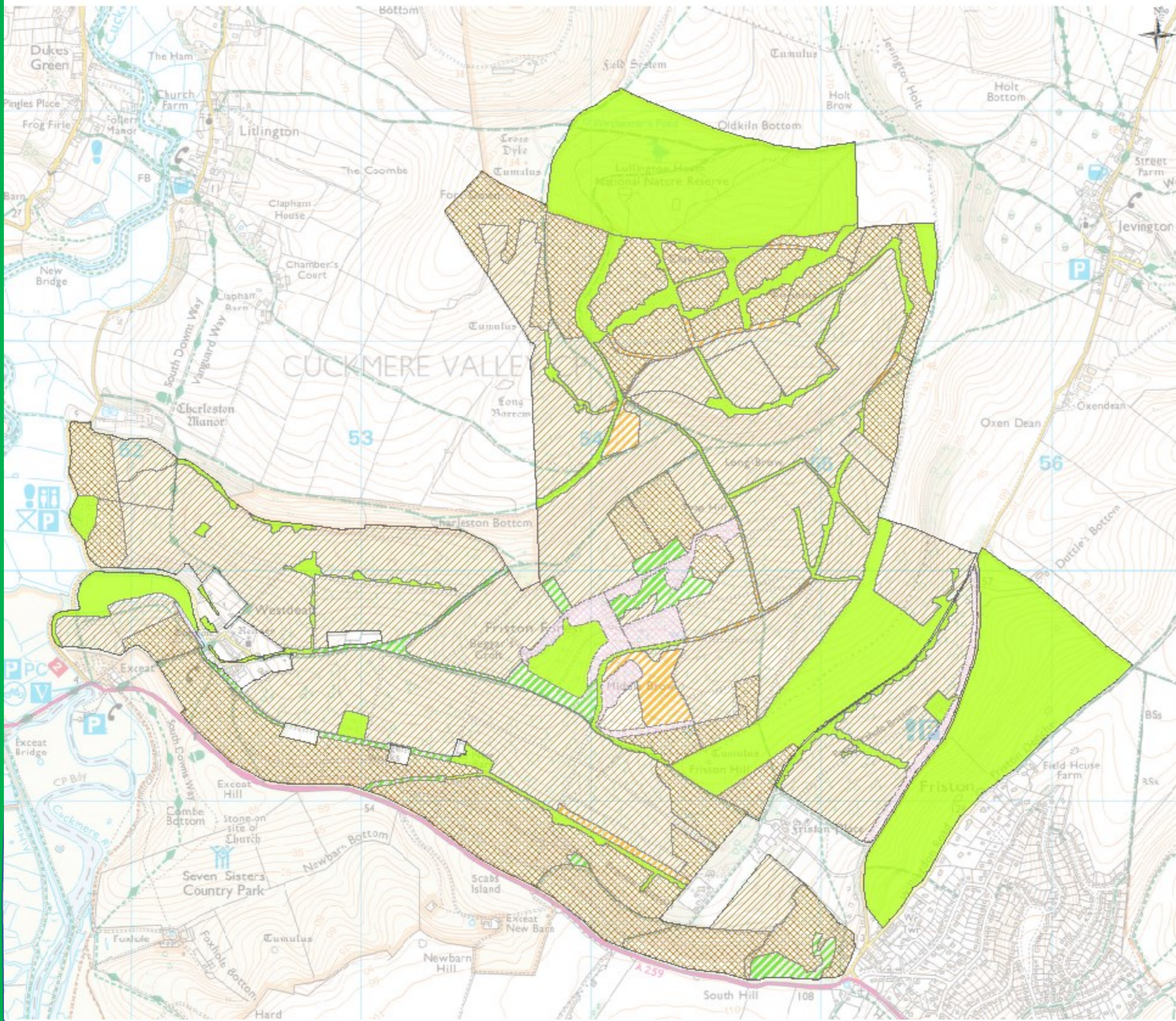
F2B: By 2034 to have ensured that any new tree planting uses best-practice tools to ensure species suitability to the current and future climate, with a preference for native species where possible.

F2C: By 2034, to have trialled exclusion plots within Friston to assess the scale and severity of grazing pressure by animals on restock.

F2D: By 2034 to have assessed whether natural regeneration is sufficiently reliable at Friston, noting the results of the exclusion plots, and to clearly understand what measures will be required for the next iteration of Friston’s Forest Plan.

F2E: By 2034 to have completed all proposed active supplementary planting, thereby ensuring greater species diversity and an expanding understorey throughout the forest.

F2F: By 2034, as part of operations undertaken under actions E2A and elsewhere, to have marked up future veteran trees which are not to be felled.





East England Forest District



Friston Forest

 Scale: 1:15 000




Management map for 10 year plan approval period

Legend


Clear fell


-  Clear fell 2022 - 2026
-  Clear fell 2027 - 2031

Low Impact Silvicultural Systems

-  Max 40% felling to widen rides and feather compartment edges
-  Max 40% felling to diversify beech stands and widen rides
-  Long term retention

Other

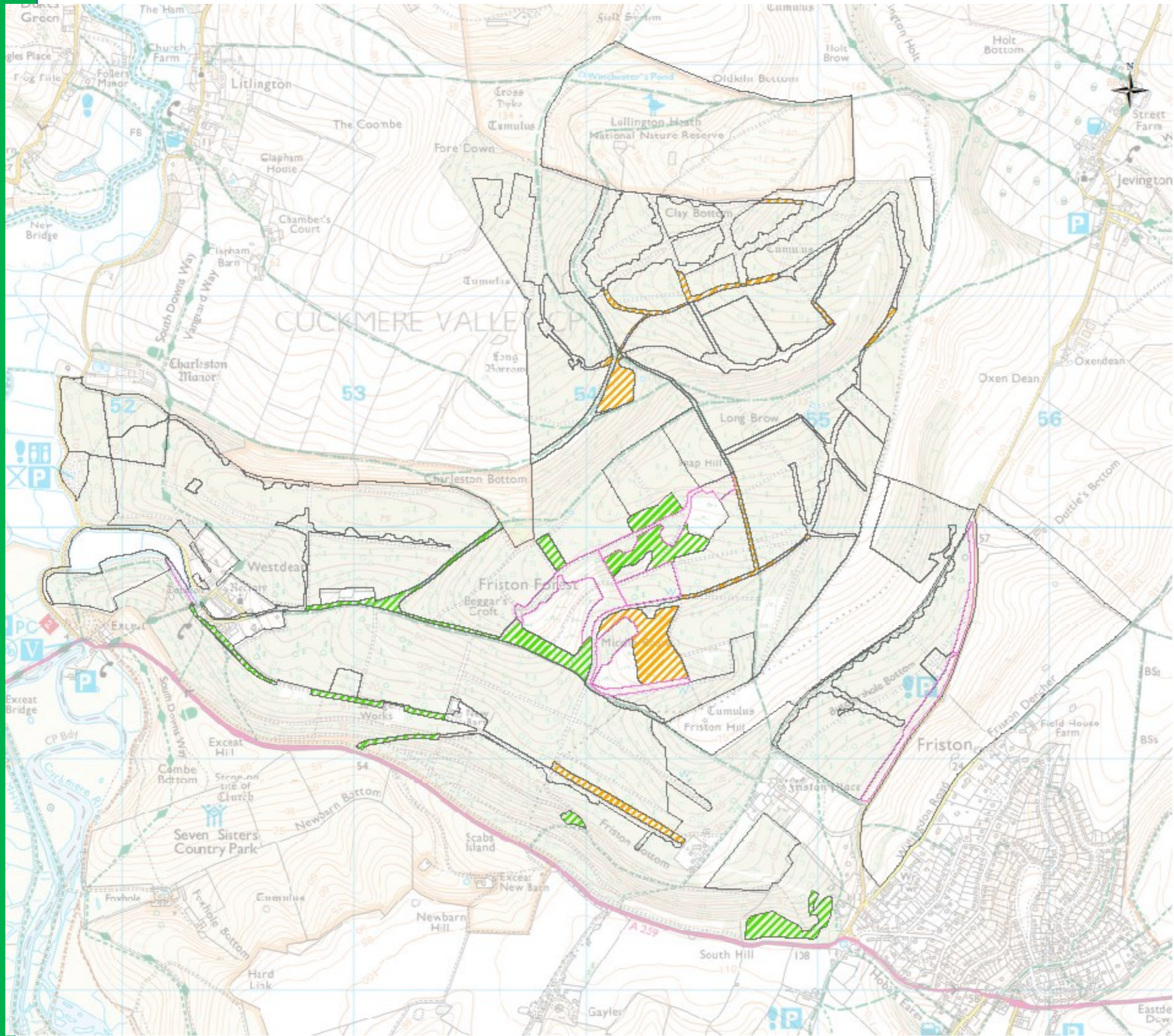
-  Open space

7035 0 70 140 210 280
 Kilometers

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 Ordnance Survey (100021242)
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 Forstry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)


 PEFC






East England Forest District
Friston Forest
Scale : 1:15 000

Clear fell areas

Legend

Clear fell

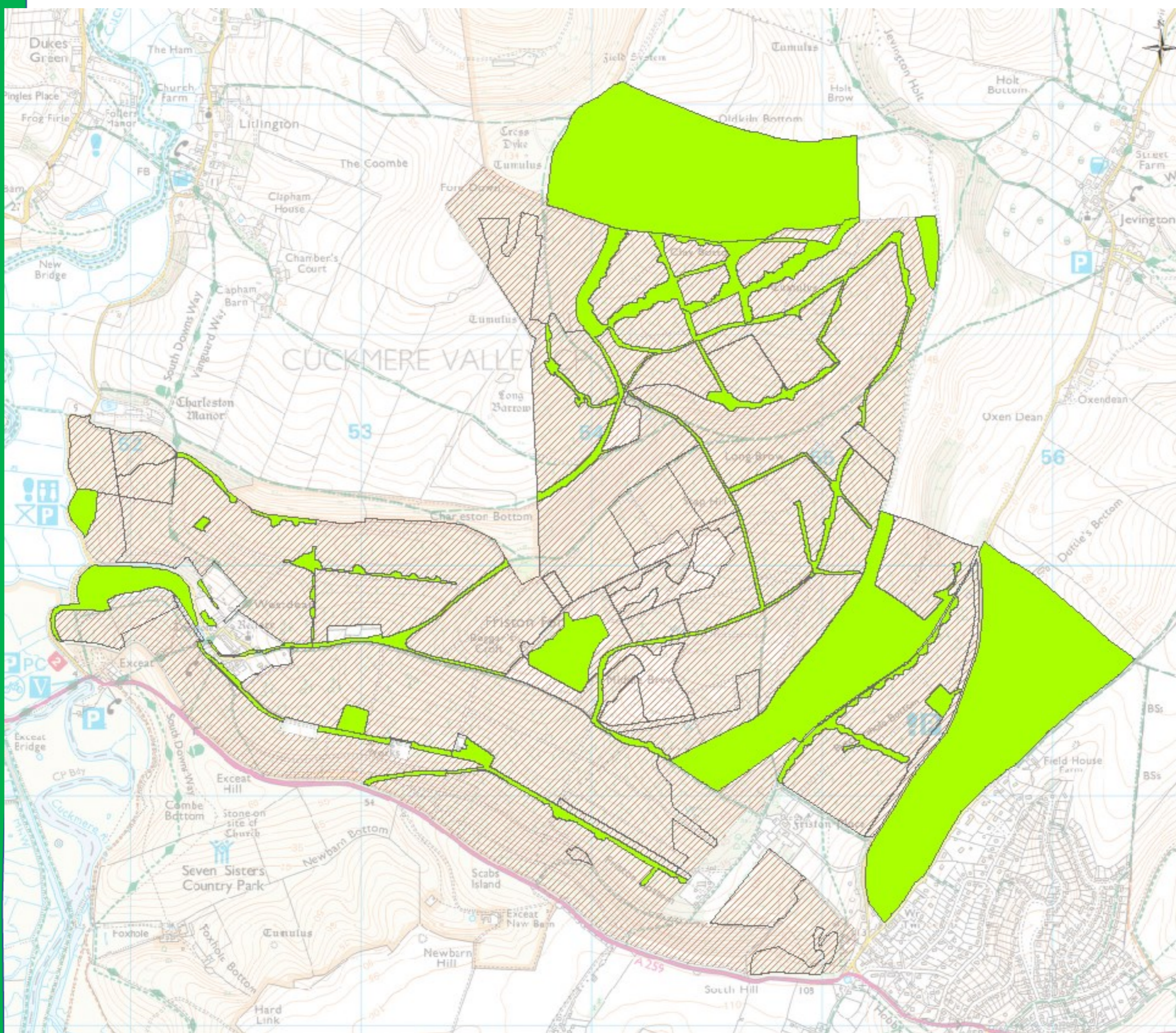
-  Clear fell 2022 -2026
-  Clear fell 2027 - 2031

7050 70140210280
 Kilometers

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 PEFC
Partnership for Promoting Forest Management
www.pefc.org.uk

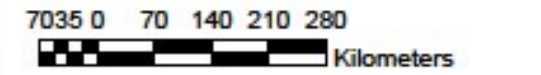


 Forestry England
East England Forest District
Friston Forest
 Scale: 1:15 000

Habitat Map

Legend

-  Managed open space
-  Mixed woodland with up to 20% non-native species



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Map 3: All restock at Friston will mainly broadleaf woodland, in keeping with the wider character of the landscape

Monitoring

FEE National vision and overall goal: “To secure and grow the economic, social and natural capital value of the Nation’s Forest for the people of England.”

District Strategic Objective	Forest Plan Objective	Monitoring
<p>Environment</p> <p><i>“A recognised global leader in environmental stewardship”</i></p>	<p>E1: Continue to protect, maintain and enhance priority habitats by expanding and connecting open space”.</p> <p>E2: Continue to protect, maintain and enhance priority species</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absolute area (ha) and relative area (%) of Friston that is either permanent or temporary open space will be used as a baseline metric of success for E1A. • The presence and abundance of Schedule 41 Priority Habitat (Lowland Calcareous Grassland) and associated Lepidoptera species at the Gallops will be used to monitor E1B. • The condition assessments of Lullington Heath SSSI units will inform the condition of key open space habitats within Friston for E1C. • The presence and abundance of priority species listed above will be used to monitor the efficacy of E2A. • The proportion of dew ponds that have been haloed and cleared of any debris will monitor the efficacy of E2B.
<p>Resilience</p> <p><i>“A healthy, resilient and productive forest”</i></p>	<p>R1: Maintain the land within our stewardship under FSC[®]/PEFC certification by meeting standards detailed in UKWAS fourth edition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The successful completion of UKWAS audits and UKWAS certification without any major corrective action requests relating to Friston will be used to monitor success for R1A.

District Strategic Objective	Forest Plan Objective	Monitoring
<p>Community</p> <p><i>"Improved public involvement and engagement"</i></p>	<p>C1: Maintain recreational facilities to a high standard through inspection processes and ensure they are capable of sustainably supporting Friston's community.</p> <p>C2: Continue to conserve Friston's heritage via management of its scheduled monument and unscheduled but significant local features.</p> <p>C3: Explore and develop opportunities in partnership with South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) regarding broader landscape-scale opportunities for recreation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As to whether the car park facilities have been reviewed for their ability to provide sustained high class visitor experiences until 2031 represents the key indicator for C1A. Ensuring an up-to-date scheduled monument management plan exists or is being created in collaboration with Historic England will represent success for C2A. Ensuring heritage features are incorporated into all and any OSAs will be used to monitor the success of C2B. The number of meetings with representative(s) from SDNPA and other organisations regarding a landscape-scale approach to recreation opportunities will act as the indicator for C1B and C3A.
<p>Finance</p> <p><i>"Generating a financial surplus"</i></p>	<p>F1: To generate income from marketing of timber products whilst ensuring operations take place as a scale and frequency in keeping with the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>F2: Continue to diversify the vertical and horizontal forest structure through encouraging natural regeneration, underplanting, replacing failed stands with new diverse stands, widening rides, scalloping and other means.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that LISS forestry does not go beyond 40% of the canopy within those management coupes is an indicator for F1A. Ensuring that clearfelling does not go beyond the prescribed and agreed limits of this plan is an indicator for F1B. The proportion of the ride widening that has been achieved and maintained by 2034 will be an indicator for F1B. Whether all the intended clearfell has occurred and restocked with suitable species represents an indicator for F2A, F2B and F2E. Whether exclusion plots have been trialled and as to whether they help inform the suitability of natural regeneration at Friston will represent the indicator for F2C and F2D. Whether veteran trees have been marked for retention in coupes marked for intervention will be an indicator for F2F

UKWAS Compliance table ^[1]

	Forest Plan Area (Ha)	Forest Plan %	Forest District Area (Ha)	Forest District %
Total area	849.6	100	34,528	100
Total wooded area	639.3	75.2	31,408	91
Natural reserve - Plantation (1%)	-	-	273	1
Natural reserves - Semi-natural (5%)	-	-	181	5
Long-term retentions and low impact silvicultural systems (>1%)	599.5	70.6	14,188	43
Area of conservation value (>15%) including designations: PAWS, ASNW, NR, SSSI, SAC, SPA & Conservation zones	662.4	78	28,431	92

^[1] Figures calculated 17th May 2024 and correct at time of publication.

Application for Forest Plan

Forestry England— Friston Forest

Forest District:	East England
Woodland or property name:	Friston
Nearest town, village or locality:	Seaford
OS Grid reference:	TV 545 995
Local Authority district/unitary Authority:	Wealden District Council

Areas for approval

	Conifer	Broadleaf
Felling	2.37	21.93
Regeneration Felling	5.68	562.32
Open space creation (rides)	0.2	9.8
New planting (complete appendix 4)	-	-

1. I apply for Forest Plan approval*/~~amendment approval*~~ for the property described above and in the enclosed Forest Plan.
2. ~~I apply for an opinion under the terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England & Wales) Regulations 1999 for afforestation*/deforestation*/roads*/quarries* as detailed in my application.~~
3. I confirm that the pre consultation, carried out and documented in the Consultation Record attached, incorporated those stakeholders which the FC agreed must be included. Where it has not been possible to resolve specific issues associated with the plan to the satisfaction of consultees, this is highlighted in the Consultation Record.
4. I confirm that the proposals contained in this plan comply with the UK Forestry Standard.
5. I undertake to obtain any permissions necessary for the implementation of the approved Plan.

Signed.....

Jane Hull

Area Director

South East & London Area

Date:

Date approval ends:.....

Signed.....

Dan Whyment

Forest Management Director

East England Forest District

Date:

I seek approval to clearfell 34.3 hectares of the Nation’s Forests. 10 hectares of this is in the form of ride widening where no restocking will take place. This is designed to increase the area and connectivity of chalk grassland and scrub edge habitat within the forest. It will increase internal open space from 12% to 14%. Clearfell areas, to be restocked, are 24.3 ha. Restocking in clearfells will be partially through natural regeneration of native broadleaves (with supplementary planting carried out if required) and active planting of mixed woodland to achieve a minimum of 1100 trees/ha. Species to be restocked will be at least 80% native, which may include up to 20% honorary and near-native, and no more than 20% non-native species.

In addition to the above felling 568 ha will be managed using lower impact silvicultural systems (LISS) including regeneration and selective felling. This will be done through the removal of single and small groups of trees, removing no more than 40% of the stems within any single management unit/compartments over the approved plan period. The aim is to widen rides, soften edges and diversify beech stands.

Where the operation is to diversify beech stands, it aims to encourage initial seeding, provision of sufficient light to boost growth of understorey and ground flora, allowing adequate space for the development of crowns and stem form for quality timber and accelerate individual tree growth. Restocking will be partially through natural regeneration of native broadleaf (with supplementary planting carried out if required) and active planting of mixed woodland to meet the specifications above.

Date of commencement of the plan: ____ / ____ / 2024

Expiry Date: ____ / ____ / 2034

Mid-Term Review Date: / / 2029

Glossary

Biological Diversity

The richness and variety of wildlife and habitats.

Canopy

The mass of foliage and branches formed collectively by the crowns of trees.

Clearfelling

This is one of the most common forms of felling. All the trees are felled across the site or 'coupe' with the timber part of the tree extracted to the forest road where it is taken away by lorry. The smaller branches and tops are left on site where they may be chipped, mulched or raked in to rows so that enough bare ground is available to plant the next rotation of young trees. The creation of the bare planting ground can be an important part of the management, as it is this bare ground that is the nesting habitat for Woodlark and Nightjar.

Compartments

Permanent management units of land within a forest, further divided into sub-compartments. The compartment boundary usually coincides with a road or ride.

County Wildlife Sites (also SINC and LNR)

A non-statutory designation, recognising a site's local importance for nature conservation. These sites are identified by the Local Authority and should be taken account of in planning.

Coupes

Areas of forest that have been or will be managed together.

Cubic metre

A standard forestry unit of timber volume. A cubic metre is roughly equivalent to a tonne of timber.

Favourable condition

Natural England's definition for an SSSI in its intended state.

Forestry Commission Guidelines

Outline the principles and standards of good management practices in forests and woodlands to enable landowners, land managers and their advisors to satisfy Forestry Commission policy.

GIS

Geographic Information System - computer program that enables the FC to hold and display all the district's inventory, landholding and crop information. All the maps in this document have been produced using GIS.

GPS

Global Positioning System, which uses information from satellites to accurately locate a position on the Earth.

Historic Environment

These are the physical remains of every period of human development from 1 million years ago and include artefacts, earthworks, buried remains, structures and buildings.

Historic Environment Action Plan (HEAP)

Sets out the requirements for the sustainable management of all historic environment sites.

Historic Environment Record (HER)

The definitive database of all known Historic Environment remains which is managed by the County Archaeology Service.

LiDAR

Light detection and ranging is a method of surveying landscapes. Flights over the landscape send down laser pulses to the ground and the time taken to reflect back builds a picture of the relative height of the land and vegetation. For more information visit www.breakingnewground.org.uk.

Low-impact silvicultural systems (LISS)

This is also known as Continuous Cover Forestry and includes a suite of silvicultural systems where species, sites, wind risk, tree health risk and management objectives allow a range of silvicultural approaches. These include group selection, shelterwood or under-planting, small coupe felling, coppice or coppice with standards, minimum intervention and single tree selection systems. The majority of these systems are based on thinning the crop on a regular cycle and removing a proportion of the trees thereby making space for seeds to germinate and new saplings to grow and fill the resulting space. In the plan this management includes selective felling and regeneration felling. LISS is often used in areas of high public access to maintain the visual impact of large mature trees for their aesthetic value. It is also a suitable management system on sites where establishment of trees would be difficult if the site were to be clearfelled, due to mammal damage or poor soil quality. LISS is also used to manage most of the broadleaf crops and all the mature conifer crops in areas of high conservation value as these trees often provide important nesting habitat.

Long Term Retention

In some areas trees are retained beyond their normal clearfell age to provide non-timber benefits such as bat roosts, raptor nests and landscape interest. Generally, these are thinned to encourage large crowned stable trees.

Minimum Intervention & Natural Reserves

These two management types are similar in that they are areas where natural processes are left to progress unhindered unless there are tree safety issues e.g. a tree has died adjacent to a footpath and creates a hazard to the public. The natural

reserve areas have been identified as a permanent feature in the plans where as minimum intervention is the current management type in these areas but could change in the future.

Native woodland

Woodland containing tree and shrub species which colonised Britain unaided by the influence of man after the last Ice Age.

Natural regeneration

The growth of trees from seed found in the soil or cast from adjacent trees and shrubs.

Non-native species

Trees and shrubs that have been introduced to the UK by the activities of man. Also used to describe species not native to the site and locality.

Open space

Temporary open space follows felling when coupes are prepared for planting or to encourage natural regeneration.

Permanent open space will be centred on the gallops and ride widening programmes.

Operational Site Assessment (OSA)

Detailed site plans that are prepared in advance of all major forest operations and identify site constraints, opportunities and areas requiring special treatment or protection.

Red Data Book species

Species that are included on Red Data lists published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). The lists are based on a global system developed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural resources (IUCN) for classifying species according to their extinction risk.

Restocking

The re-establishment of trees where felling has taken place. Restocking may be achieved through natural regeneration but as a term, it is more usually associated with replanting.

Ride

Forestry term for unsurfaced roads, paths and tracks within a woodland.

Rotation

The period, in years, that a 'crop' of trees take to reach economic maturity e.g. Scots Pine may be grown on a 80 year rotation.

Scheduled Monuments

Nationally important archaeological sites which are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979.

Semi-natural woodland

A woodland predominantly composed of trees and shrubs that are native to the site and are not obviously planted.

Species Action Plan

A conservation plan under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan for species based upon knowledge of its ecological and other requirements, which identifies the action needed to stabilise and improve its status.

SPA

Special Protection Area designated under the European Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC).

SSSI

Site of Special Scientific Interest—this designation is determined by Natural England and placed on areas of very high conservation value.

Sub-compartments

Areas of forest comprising a more or less homogeneous crop in terms of age, species composition and condition. Their boundaries may change as the forest develops after felling and restocking.

Stand

An easily defined area of the forest that is relatively uniform in species composition or age and can be managed as a single unit.

Strategic Plan

Serves as a guide to the management of East England Forest District under four headings: Being an Outstanding Organisation; Sustainable Finance; Superb Forests & Natural Capital and Telling Our Story. Various KPIs are set against these overarching headings.

Succession

Applied to the natural sequence of species change on a site over time, or more simply, the following on of one thing after another. So successional open space is the open space and the plants associated with it, that persist for a short time after felling of trees.

Thinning

The removal of a proportion of the trees in a sub-compartment to improve the quality of the remaining trees, accelerate individual tree growth and provide income.

Underplanting

This system involves selectively felling strips currently between 1-2 rows of trees across the site or 'coupe'. These rows are then planted with young trees. The remaining older trees provide shade in summer and shelter from frost in winter giving an ideal climate for a larger variety of species to grow. The majority of tree species prefer this type of climate making this a useful management system for increasing species diversity and increasing success rates of restock.

UK Forestry Standard

The Government's criteria and standards for the sustainable management of forests in the UK.

UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

A voluntary standard for the independent assessment of forest management in the UK. The Standard has been developed by a partnership of forestry and environmental organisations in response to the growing consumer demand for timber products from sustainably managed forests. It has been designed to ensure that it reflects the requirements of both the Government's UK Forestry Standard - and through this the guidelines adopted by European Forestry Ministers at Helsinki in 1993 - and the Forest Stewardship Council's (FSC®) GB Standard.

Uniform Shelter wood System

A management system that allows young crops to become established under the overhead shelter of existing crops. The existing tree crop is evenly and gradually removed over time in successive regeneration fellings to bring about natural regeneration on the ground beneath.

Veteran tree

A tree that is of interest biologically, aesthetically or culturally because of its age, or a tree that is in the ancient stage of its life, or a tree that is old relative to others of the same species.

Windthrow (or sometimes windblow)

Uprooting or breakage of trees caused by strong winds.

Yield Class

Yield class is a measure of the growth rate of a tree crop and is the maximum average rate of volume increment (increase) that a particular crop can achieve. For example, a crop capable of a maximum annual increment of 14 m³ per hectare has a yield class of 14.

Tolerance Table

	Adjustment to felling coupe boundaries	Swapping of felling coupes	Adjustment to felling operation	Clearance of standing trees associated with wind-blown areas	Timing of restocking (including natural regen)	Species choice	Tree health
Formal approval by area team required.	> 25% of the coupe area	Where changes to the felling sequence is likely to result in a significant breach ^[1] of the UKFS adjacency rules	Thinning to selective felling or clearfelling	Clearance of > 1ha or 10% of the area (whichever is less) in sensitive areas ^[2] , > 5ha or 25% of area (whichever is less) in non-sensitive areas.	Where this is > 4 planting seasons from the date of felling.	From mixed, predominantly broadleaves to evergreen conifer.	Where no SPHN issued and felling required.
Written approval only required from area team.	Between 10-25% of the coupe area	Where changes to the felling sequence is likely to result in a minor breach ^[3] of the UKFS adjacency rules			Where this is at least 2 but no more than 4 planting seasons from the date of felling.	Deciduous conifers to evergreen.	Thinning > 50% but <65%
Formal approval by area team not required.	<10% of the coupe area	Where changes to the felling sequence does not result in a breach of the UKFS adjacency rules.	Clearfelling to selective felling or thinning	Clearance of < 1ha or 10% of the area (whichever is greater) in sensitive areas, < 5ha or 25% of the area (whichever is greater) in non-sensitive areas.	Where this is < 2 planting seasons from the date of felling.	Any other changes.	Where SPHN is issued or thinning up to 50%

[1] Greater than 20% or more of the coupe boundary

[2] Definition of sensitive areas is as per the EIA guidance

[3] 20% or less of the coupe boundary



Appendices:

I: Heritage features & SM Management Plan

II: Biodiversity features

III: Water considerations

IV: Bibliography

The archaeology of Friston Forest is characterised by the good survival of field systems and funerary monuments dating to the later prehistoric periods (Neolithic to Iron Age), including a Scheduled Monument, Exceat Neolithic oval barrow. Further indications of human activity during these periods are evinced by numerous artefact scatters, and excavated evidence of settlement on Friston Hill. Excavations in advance of the laying of the Folkington to Friston Water Main identified settlement features in this area dating to between the Late Bronze Age and Roman periods. Features dating to more recent periods comprise post medieval quarry pits and dewponds, and Second World War practice trenches. Monuments dating to the Early Medieval and Medieval periods predominantly lie outside the forest area, but a cremation of Anglo-Saxon date was found on Friston Hill during digging for post-holes for fencing.

Monument types with surviving features above ground comprise:

- Extensive field systems thought to date to the late Bronze Age, cover the northern and eastern areas of the forest, from Lullington Heath to Friston Hill.
- The south-eastern end of a Bronze Age cross ridge dyke (formed of a linear bank) on Fore Down lies within the forest on Lullington Heath.
- A Scheduled Neolithic oval barrow, or burial mound, is located at Exceat lying across the forest boundary. The main part of the barrow lies outside Forestry England land, but the northernmost side ditch, from which material was excavated to create the mound, lies within Friston Forest.
- Two Bronze Age round barrows are situated to the south of Clay Bottom in the northern part of the forest, one located near the western boundary and the other near to the eastern boundary. The remains of a flint cairn are located on a similar alignment between these two barrows. A Bronze Age barrow is also located on Friston Hill.
- Post medieval, possibly 19th century, chalk quarries are located at Duttles Farm and Friston Dencher.
- 19th century dewponds are located at Middle Brow, Duttles Farm and Friston Dencher.
- A Second World War slit trench has been identified on Friston Hill and a second possible example is located on Lullington Heath.

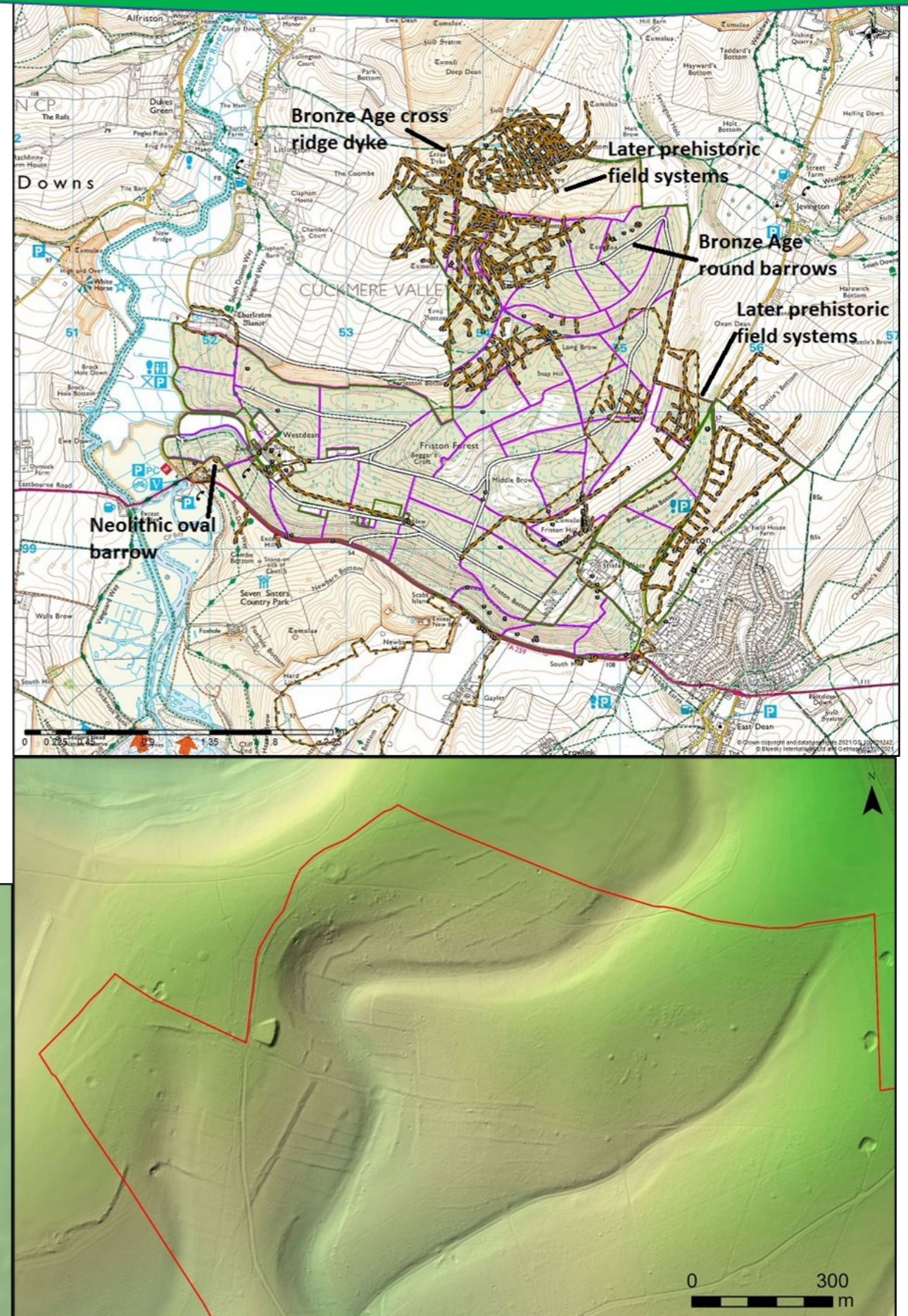


Figure 1: Overview of main types of heritage features within Friston Forest.

Archaeological sites within Friston Forest by period and category (with East Sussex Historic Environment Record numbers)

Prehistoric

Category	Instances
Field system/Lynchet	Fore Down MES16275 Long Brow MES17179 Friston Hill MES19527 MES19528 Exceat Hill MES16429 Duttles Brow MES19822 Friston Dencher MES19824 Friston Forest MES21842 MES8488
Settlement	Fore Down: LBA settlement MES2980 South of Winchester Pond: IA hut platform MES7317
Funerary monument	Fore Down: Barrow site MES2983 Friston Forest: Bowl barrow MES2984 Friston Forest: Bowl barrow MES2985 Ne of Exceat Visitor Centre: Neo oval barrow MES3012 Friston Hill: Bowl barrow MES3066
Linear earthwork	Fore Down: Cross dyke MES2981
Artefact scatter	Friston Hill: Neo/EBA flints MES19532 West Dean: scraper MES21605 Friston Forest: BA flints MES24373 Snap Hill: IA pottery MES2988 Litlington: Pal-Neo flint collection MES999 Exceat, Westdean: Pal axes MES3009 Westdean: Pal handaxes MES3010 Bells Field, Friston : Pal Implements MES3065 Friston: Neo pottery MES3076 Westdean: Meso axes MES3089 Friston: Paleo axe MES3107 Lullington Heath: worked flint scatter MES34373 Wick Farm, Eastbourne: Pal handaxe MES577
Settlement features and finds	Route of the Folkington to Friston Water Main: post hole, stake hole

Roman

Features and finds	Route of the Folkington to Friston Water Main: post hole
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Early Medieval

Features and finds	Route of the Folkington to Friston Water Main: Saxon pit and pottery
Funerary	Friston Hill Area: A.S. inhumation MES3070 'Friston': AS cremation and finds MES3075

Medieval

Artefacts	The Parsonage: Medieval coins MES21477 The Long House, Westdean: Med pot MES22822
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Post-Medieval

Dewpond/Pond	Middle Brow MES19526 Friston Dencher MES19832 Duttles Bottom MES19834 Friston: C19 pond MES3080
Quarries	Duttles Farm MES19825, MES19827 Friston Dencher MES19829, MES19831
Hollow way/Trackway	Duttles Farm MES19828 West Dean MES20128
Building	West Dean Manor C19 building MES20125 Upper Barn: C18 barn MES20127 New Barn: C18 barn MES20140 The School House: C19 building MES22331 Forge Cottage, West Dean: C18 building MES24375 Westdean House: C17 house site MES3004 Old Barn, Cuckmere Valley: C19 Outfarm (site of) MES32516 Snaphill Barn, Cuckmere Valley: C19 Outfarm (site of) MES32545 Westdean, Cuckmere Valley: C19 Farmstead MES32963 New Barn, Cuckmere Valley: C19 Outfarm MES32964 Sheep High Cottages, East Dean And Friston : C19 Farmstead (site of) MES32966
Artefacts	The Long House, Westdean, East Sussex: PM Finds MES22821

Archaeological sites within Friston Forest by period and category (with East Sussex Historic Environment Record numbers)

Second World War/Modern

Practice trenches/training areas	Friston Hill: Slit Trench MES19530 Gayles Farm, Cuckmere: Slit trench MES35706, MES35707, MES35708 Friston Forest, Friston: WW2 slit trench MES8499
Buildings	Gayles Farm, Cuckmere: WWII Military Structures MES35704, MES35705 Water Tower, Friston: C20 Water Tower MES45868
Features	Road East of Exceat: WW11 Road block MES7880

Undated

Features and finds	Route of the Folkington to Friston Water Main: post hole, pit, stake hole, gully, ditch
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Forestry England Monument Management Plan East District		Date of Visit:	
List Entry: 1014386	Scheduled Monument Name: Oval barrow 200m north-east of Exceat Park Visitor Centre		
Local Numbers: 12791 <small>© Environment Agency lidar 2019 1m DTM Hillshade model</small>	OS Grid Reference: <small>Photo taken looking north-west June 2005</small> TV 52049965		
Beat: East Sussex	Forest District Compartment Number: 8001		
Plan Period: 2021-2026	Other Statutory Designations: N/A		
Site Descriptions and Importance: The Neolithic oval barrow at Exceat includes a low earthen mound 28m long and up to 14m wide, and also the surrounding ditch or ditches from which the earth and chalk used to construct the mound was quarried. The mound is easily visible; it is oval in plan and stands to a height of up to 1.2m above the surrounding ground level. The quarry ditch is not visible on the surface, however, having been filled by soil from the eroded mound. The monument is sited on relatively low ground compared with other examples in East Sussex, but it nevertheless shares its situation of local prominence, on the crest of a chalk spur overlooking lower ground, with many other similar examples. The flint estate wall which crosses the monument on the north side of the mound is excluded from the scheduling, although the ground beneath it is included.			<p><small>Photo taken looking north-west June 2005</small></p>

<p><u>Condition</u></p> <p>A flint estate wall crosses the north side of the monument and a footpath occupies part of the infilled side ditch on</p> <p><u>Management Objectives:</u></p> <p>Removal of trees bordering the monument and relocation of footpath away from the flint wall.</p>	<p><u>Decline and Vulnerability</u></p> <p>.</p>	
<p><u>Proposed Works which Require Scheduled Monument Consent:</u></p>	<p><u>Work Proposed in the Plan Period:</u></p> <p>At next thinning, or when next practicable, remove the trees currently bordering the footpath outside the flint wall to a distance of 5m and move the footpath away from the flint wall.</p> <p>Advise Historic England of the timings of this operation to confirm exact location of the surrounding ditch.</p> <p>Sensitive Scrub Management- Weeding/cutting/uprooting the scrub elder and nettles from the northern side of the flint wall and from both sides of the footpath on the same side. Avoid encouraging path creation to sensitive areas. (ref to (a) above)</p> <p>NB: Management of the weeds, thorn and other scrub on the Southern (Country Park) side of the wall is the responsibility of Sussex Downs Conservation Board.</p>	<p><u>Achieved</u></p>
	<p><u>Arrangements for Monitoring:</u></p> <p>The monument will be re-visited at least once every three years by FE staff and/or volunteers.</p>	

Please ensure any reports of damage are passed to Historic England ASAP. Contact: Christina Reade, Inspector of Ancient Monuments (christina.ream@historicengland.org.uk)

The following species have been recorded within Friston and are considered priority species for management:

Key Species	Taxon	Notes
Common Toad	Amphibian	
Smooth Newt	Amphibian	
Palmate Newt	Amphibian	
Common Frog	Amphibian	
Great Crested Newt	Amphibian	
Common Pipistrelle	Bat	
Brown Long-eared Bat	Bat	
Natterer's Bat	Bat	
Noctule Bat	Bat	
Whiskered/Brandt's	Bat	
Daubenton's Bat	Bat	
Soprano Pipistrelle	Bat	
Whiskered Bat	Bat	
Serotine	Bat	
Nightjar	Bird	
Firecrest	Bird	
Skylark	Bird	Gallops Key Species
Grasshopper Warbler	Bird	
Nightingale	Bird	
Merlin	Bird	
Pied Flycatcher	Bird	
Meadow Pipit	Bird	Gallops Key Species
Spotted Flycatcher	Bird	
Chalk Hill Blue	Insect - Butterfly	Gallops Key Species
Adonis Blue	Insect - Butterfly	Gallops Key Species
Silver-spotted Skipper	Insect - Butterfly	Gallops Key Species
Small Blue	Insect - Butterfly	Gallops Key Species
White-letter Hairstreak	Insect - Butterfly	
Dingy Skipper	Insect - Butterfly	
Grizzled Skipper	Insect - Butterfly	Gallops Key Species
White Admiral	Insect - Butterfly	
Wall	Insect - Butterfly	Gallops Key Species
Forester	Insect - Moth	
Barred Tooth-striped	Insect - Moth	Privet especially managed for this species around the Gallops
Scarlet Tiger	Insect - Moth	
Olive Crescent	Insect - Moth	Very rare moth, last record in 2011
White-banded Carpet	Insect - Moth	Very rare moth, last record in 2011
Hazel Dormouse	Mammal	Box monitoring scheme in Friston Forest
Early Spider-orchid	Plant	
White Helleborine	Plant	
Frog Orchid	Plant	
Common Lizard	Reptile	
Grass Snake	Reptile	
Slow-worm	Reptile	

Friston is leased from South East Water. A shared priority is ensuring sustainable water provision to surrounding communities over the long-term. To this effect collaboration with South East Water provided insights into how best to create this management plan.



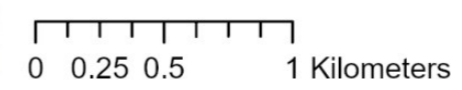
East England Forest District
Friston Forest
 Scale 1: 33000



Water Considerations

Legend

- Zone 1
- Zone 2
- Zone 3
- Friston Boundary



Produced by:
 Planning & Environment Team
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In collaboration with South East Water this Forest Plan was designed so that broadleaves were favoured in source protection zone 1 (shown red in map). This favours the ability of the site to capture and retain water for the surrounding communities.

Bibliography

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Image Citations

- Image 1:** Friston Forest—Ed Lewis
- Image 2:** Friston Forest—Butchers hole car park—Ed Lewis
- Image 3:** Friston Forest—Ed Lewis
- Image 4:** Trees—David Bruyndonck—from Unsplash
- Image 5:** Friston Forest—Ed Lewis
- Image 6:** Butterfly—Daniel Cooper
- Image 7:** People—Markus Spiske—from Unsplash
- Image 8:** Exceat Barrow—Scheduled Monument Management Plan—Forestry England
- Image 9:** Friston Forest—Ed Lewis
- Image 10:** Wood Logs—Mika Baumeister—from Unsplash
- Image 11:** Cyclists in Friston Forest—Ed Lewis
- Image 12:** Meadow—Marcus Neto—from Unsplash
- Image 13:** Friston Forest—Ed Lewis

Stakeholder consultation

Statutory: Natural England, East Sussex County Council, Environment Agency, Historic England, County Archaeologists, South Downs National Park Authority.

Non-statutory: Parish councils, Friends groups, Neighbours, forest residents, sporting tenants, general public, conservation interest groups, SWT, Woodland Trust, RSPB.



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