Woodland Management Plan

To be completed by the plan author:	
Woodland or Property name	**St Stephen Parish Council woodlands**
Woodland Management Plan case reference	**1694139**
The landowner agrees this plan as a statement of intent for the woodland	**Yes**
Plan author name	**Gilles Sauvestre – Maydencroft Ltd**

For FC Use only:				
Plan Period *(01/04/2024 – 31/03/2034 Ten years)*	**Approval Date:**	18/4/2024	**Approved until:**	
Five Year Review Date	31/3/2029			

Revision No.	Date	Status (draft/final)	Reason for Revision

Forestry Commission

UK Forestry Standard management planning criteria

Approval of this plan will be considered against the following UKFS criteria.
Prior to submission review your plan against the criteria using the check list below.

	UKFS management plan criteria	Minimum approval requirements	Author check ☑
1	**Plan Objectives:** Forest management plans should state the objectives of management and set out how an appropriate balance between social, economic, and environmental objectives will be achieved.	• Management plan objectives are stated. • Consideration is given to environmental, economic and social objectives relevant to the vision for the woodland.	Yes
2	**Forest context and important features in management strategy:** Forest management plans should address the forest context and the forest potential and demonstrate how the relevant interests and issues have been considered and addressed.	Management intentions communicated in ***Sect. 6*** of the management plan are in line with stated objective(s) ***Sect. 2***. Management intentions should take account of: • Relevant features and issues identified within the woodland survey (***Sect. 4***) • Any potential threats to and opportunities for the woodland, as identified under woodland protection (***Sect. 5***). • Relevant comments received from stakeholder engagement and documented in ***Sect. 7***.	Yes
3	**Identification of designations within and surrounding the site:** For designated areas, e.g. National Parks or SSSI, particular account should be taken of landscape and other sensitivities in the design of forests and forest infrastructure.	• Survey information (***Sect. 4***) identifies any designations that impact on woodland management. • Management intentions (***Sect. 6***) have taken account of any designations.	Yes
4	**Felling and restocking to improve forest structure and diversity:** When planning felling and restocking, the design of existing forests should be re-assessed and any necessary changes made so that they meet UKFS requirements. Forests should be designed to achieve a diverse structure of habitat, species and ages of trees, appropriate to the scale and context. Forests characterised by a lack of diversity, due to extensive areas of even-aged trees, should be progressively restructured to achieve age class range.	• Felling and restocking proposals are consistent with UKFS design principles (for example scale and adjacency). • Current diversity (structure, species, age structure) of the woodland has been identified through the survey (***Sect. 4***). • Management intentions aim to improve / maintain current diversity (structure, species, and ages of trees).	Yes
5	**Consultation:** Consultation on forest management plans and proposals should be carried out according to forestry authority procedures and, where required, the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.	• Stakeholder engagement is in line with current FC guidance and recorded in ***Sect. 7***. The minimum requirement is for statutory consultation to take place, and this will be carried out by the Forestry Commission. • Plan authors undertake stakeholder engagement (ref FC Ops Note 35) relevant to the context and setting of the woodland.	Yes
6	**Plan Update and Review:** Management of the forest should conform to the plan, and the plan should be updated to ensure it is current and relevant.	• A 5 year review period is stated on the 1st page of the plan. • ***Sect. 8*** is completed with 1 indicator of success per management objective.	Yes

Forestry Commission

Section 1: Property Details

Woodland Property Name		St Stephen Parish Council woodlands	
Name	St Stephen Parish Council	Owner	Tenant
Email	matt@ststephen-pc.gov.uk	Contact Number	01923 681443
Agent Name (if applicable)		-	
Email	-	Contact Number	-
County	Hertfordshire	Local Authority	St Albans City and District Council
Grid Reference (e.g. ST 625 785)	TL 133 026 (Blackgreen Wood) TL 147 037 (Park Street Embankment) TL 140 049 (St Julian's Wood)	Single Business Identifier	107145626
What is the total area of this woodland management plan? (In hectares)		**Total:** 11.55ha Blackgreen Wood: 6.21ha Park Street Embankment: 1.17ha St Julian's Wood: 4.17ha	
You have included an Inventory and Plan of Operations with this woodland management plan?		Yes	
You have listed the maps associated with this woodland management plan? (PLEASE NOTE: Google Maps/ images of maps will not be accepted because they are copyright protected and should not be used commercially without the appropriate licencing from Google).		Map 1: Location of the woodlands Map 2: Designations and habitats Map 3: Hazards, constraints and public access Map 4: Stand types Map 5: Management	
Do you intend to use the information within this woodland management plan and associated Inventory and Plan of Operations to apply for the following?		Felling Licence	Yes
		Thinning Licence	Yes
		Woodland Regeneration Grant	No

You declare that there is management control of the woodland detailed within the woodland management plan?	Yes
You agree to make the woodland management plan publicly available?	Yes

Section 2: Vision and Objectives

To develop your long term vision, you need to express as clearly as possible the overall direction of management for the woodland(s) and how you envisage it will be in the future. This covers the duration of the plan and beyond.

2.1 Vision

Describe your long term vision for the woodland(s). (*Suggest 300 words max*)

The long term vision for St Stephen Parish Council woodlands is:

- Three woodlands with diverse tree and shrub species, ages and stand structures, providing good resilience to climate change, pests, diseases and any disturbance likely to occur in the future, supporting a thriving and rich biodiversity,
- Three woodlands with extensive public access where pleasant landscapes and safe footpaths are maintained for the enjoyment of the local community,
- Three woodlands where the ancient semi-natural features (such as veteran trees, woodbanks, flora) and traditional management techniques (such as coppicing and pollarding) are preserved.

2.2 Management Objectives

State the objectives of management demonstrating how sustainable forest management is to be achieved. Objectives are a set of specific, quantifiable statements that represent what needs to happen to achieve the long term vision.

No.	Objectives (include environmental, economic and social considerations)
1	To enhance the woodlands' environmental value and their resilience to climate change, pests, diseases and other disturbances.
2	To maintain and preserve the ancient semi-natural woodland, historic and archaeological features (veteran trees, woodbanks, flora, etc.), and traditional management techniques (such as pollarding and coppicing
3	To maintain and improve the attractiveness of the woodland for public recreation and enjoyment
4	To keep native and non-native invasive species under control
5	To achieve early diagnosis of potential threats such as diseases, invasive species and other pests and to take appropriate measures to mitigate them.

Section 3: Plan Review – Achievements

Use this section to identify achievements made against previous plan objectives. This section should be completed at the 5 year review and could be informed through monitoring activities undertaken.

Not applicable

Section 4: Woodland Survey

This section is about collecting information relating to your woodland and its location, including any statutory constraints i.e. designations.

4.1 Description

Brief description of the woodland property:

Blackgreen Wood (near Bricket Wood, Herts):

The woodland is now a 6.2ha isolated relic of a former larger wooded area (Blackgreen Wood, Blackboy Wood, Bricket Wood, etc.) which used to cover hundreds of acres. The woodland is now surrounded by residential areas, urban fringe landuse and roads (including the M25 motorway). The wood has been under the parish council ownership since 2006 and has open public access. It is crisscrossed by public and permissive footpaths, and is a Local Wildlife Site. It is also covered by a blanket TPO.

The ancient semi-natural woodland is dominated by sessile oak standards (mixed with pedunculate oak, ash, wild cherry, etc.) and hornbeam coppice (mixed with hazel). In the past fifteen years, the overstorey has been thinned and the coppice progressively brought back into rotation over approximately one third of the woodland, after decades of no management. Areas of overmature coppice and dense overstorey are still present. Thick and tall holly also covers extensive areas of the woodland, suppressing the coppice species and the ground flora. This is a real threat to the conservation of a biodiverse woodland. Other invasive species (rhododendron, laurel, variegated archangel) are also found scattered in the woodland. Ancient woodland flora, historic woodbanks and old coppice stools can be found throughout the woodland.

St Julian's Wood (near Chiswell Green, Herts):

The woodland is a 2.5ha wood, isolated from other woodlands for more than a hundred years. It is under the parish council ownership. It sits at the top of a gentle hill in the angle between two major highways (A414 and North Orbital Road). The woodland is now surrounded by popular and busy recreational areas (football grounds, grassland and semi-improved grassland managed as hay meadow, a community centre, a large car park). The landscape is largely suburban with some arable, recreational and urban fringe land use. The wood has open public access, and is crisscrossed by permissive footpaths. A cycle

route on the national cycle network runs immediately alongside part of the western boundary. St Julian's Wood is a Local Wildlife Site.

In this ancient semi-natural woodland, the overstorey is dominated by pedunculate oak, beech, ash and wild cherry. The hornbeam and hazel coppice makes up most of the understorey, alongside elder, holly, field maple and hawthorn. In the past twenty years, limited areas of overstorey and coppice have been managed. Much of the woodland is still quite dense and mostly managed to keep it safe for the public, with overmature coppice and a simplifiedstructure. Holly is less frequent than in Blackgreen Wood, but could still be of concern in the years to come. Heavy laurel control has been carried out in the past but this invasive species can still be found scattered in the woodland. Ancient woodland flora, historic woodbanks, an ancient Holloway, veteran treesand old boundary coppice stools can be found throughout the woodland. An important marl pit can be found at the northern tip of the woodland.

Several small blocks of broadleaved plantations (ash, oak, wild cherry, field maple, sweet chestnut) are scattered in the vicinity of the main block of ancient semi-natural woodland and are included in this management plan. Some of them have been recently thinned and coppiced.

Park Street Embankment (near Park Street, Herts):

This block covers an approx. 250m-long stretch of the embankment of the disused Midland Railway Park Street branch, from its junction with the Abbey Line railway at its south-eastern end, to the A5183 at its north-eastern end. Used to carry building materials during the construction of the Midland Main Line in the 1860s, this branch was closed between 1883 and 1898. Rising several metres above the surrounding residential areas and playground, the embankment is crossed in the middle by a public footpath, and an intermittent footpath runs along its top. The embankment is currently owned by the St Albans City and District Council, with a long-term lease benefiting the St Stephen Parish Council (with full management). Efforts are underway to transfer ownership of the embankment to the St Stephen Parish Council, a process that is currently in progress. Most of the block is located within Park Street and Frogmore Conservation Area.

The embankment is densely covered with large hawthorns, as well as scattered holly, yew, wild cherry and mature oaks (especially in its western part). It is likely that the current vegetation results from the progressive natural colonisation of the embankment following closure of the railway line. Ground flora is rather scarce.

4.2 Information

Use this section to identify features that are both present in your woodland(s) and where required, on land adjacent to your woodland. It may be useful to identify known features on an accompanying map. Woodland information for your property can be found on the Magic website and the Forestry Commission Land Information Search.

Feature	Within Woodland(s)	Cpts	Adjacent to Woodland(s)	Map No
Biodiversity - Designations				
Site of Special Scientific Interest	No	-	No	-
Special Area of Conservation	No	-	No	-
Tree Preservation Order	Yes	1a	Yes	2
Conservation Area	Yes	3a	Yes	2
Special Protection Area	No	-	No	-
Ramsar Site	No	-	No	-
National Nature Reserve	No	-	No	-
Local Nature Reserve	No	-	No	-
Other (please Specify):	Yes	1a,2a	No	2
Notes	**SSSI:** Moor Mill Quarry, West and Bricket Wood Common are the closest SSSI, 350 north and 530m south of Blackgreen Wood. **Tree Preservation Order:** The entirety of Blackgreen Wood is under a blanket TPO. Park Street embankment is adjacent to another area covered by a TPO, but is not under the TPO. **Conservation area:** Park Street embankment is located within the Park Street and Frogmore Conservation Area **Other:** Blackgreen Wood and St Julian's Wood are Local Wildlife Sites			

Feature		Within Woodland(s)	Cpts	Map No	Notes
Biodiversity - European Protected Species					
Bat	Species (if known)	Likely	all	-	The presence of bats has been recorded in the area. Woodland Wildlife Toolkit refers to Barbastelle, Noctule, Soprano Pip-istrelle, Brown Long-eared bat. Prior to any felling work, the area should be surveyed from the ground for potential bat roosting sites. If any are seen, the tree, together with its neighbours,

					should be excluded from the work area. The timing of the work in areas of high bat roost potential should be kept to late Summer/early Autumn to minimise the risk of disturbance. The 'European Protected Species in Woodland' field guide gives useful recommendations regarding woodland management and bats.
Dormouse		No	-	-	Record from 1985 for a 2km grid area, but not since. Presence unlikely given the size of the woodlands, although possible given the presence of coppice, including hazel coppice. A protocol for undertaking woodland management in England where dormice are present: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/806960/PROTOCOL_Dormouse__May_2019_v4.0_FINAL.pdf The dormouse conservation handbook: https://ptes.org/wpcontent/uploads/2014/06/Dormouse-Conservation-Handbook.pdf
Great Crested Newt		No	-	-	Record from 1998 for a 1km grid area, but not known for site. Presence unlikely (no ponds in the woodlands).
Otter		No	-	-	
Sand Lizard		No	-	-	
Smooth Snake		No	-	-	
Natterjack Toad		No	-	-	
Biodiversity – Priority Species					
Schedule 1 Birds	Species:	Yes	all	-	Raptors possibly use these woods for nest sites. A ground-based survey of raptor nests should be done before any felling takes and if any nests are noted the tree, together with its neighbours will be excluded from the work area. For most bird species, the timing of the works should be confined to post nesting season, i.e. September to February.

				Woodland Wildlife Toolkit refers to: Garden Warbler (breeding), Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (breeding), Spotted Flycatcher (breeding), Willow Warbler (breeding), Woodcock (breeding), Lesser Redpoll (wintering), Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (wintering), Woodcock (wintering).
Mammals (Red Squirrel, Water Vole, Pine Marten etc)	Not surveyed	-	-	Not surveyed
Reptiles (grass snake, adder, common lizard etc)	Not surveyed	-	-	Not surveyed
Plants	Not surveyed	-	-	Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) as well as other ancient woodland indicators such as Anemones (*Anemone nemorosa*) are present in St Julian's Wood and Blackgreen Wood. Woodland Wildlife Toolkit refers to Lily of the Valley in St Julian's Wood.
Fungi/Lichens	Not surveyed	-	-	Not surveyed
Invertebrates (butterflies, moths, beetles etc)	Not surveyed	-	-	Not surveyed - Woodland Wildlife Toolkit refers to: - St Julian Wood = Stag Beetle, White Admiral, White-letter Hairstreak - Park Street Embankment = Grizzled Skipper, White Admiral, White-letter Hairstreak - Blackgreen Wood = Purple Emperor, White Admiral, White-letter Hairstreak -
Amphibians (pool frog, common toad)	Not surveyed	-	-	
Other (please Specify):	Not surveyed	-	-	

Historic Environment				
Scheduled Monuments	No	-	-	
Unscheduled Monuments	No	-	-	
Registered Parks and Gardens	No	-	-	
Boundaries and Veteran Trees	Yes	all	-	Boundary trees (often old coppice stools) can be found in Blackgreen Wood and St Julian's Wood. Veteran trees are present but rather rare in the three woodlands.
Listed Buildings	No	-	-	Several listed buildings are located in the vicinity of the woodlands (especially Park Street embankment), but none will be affected by the woodland management activities.
Burial Grounds	No	-	-	
Other (please Specify):	Yes	all	3	St Julian's Wood: possible trackway of Roman origin, old pits, woodbanks. Blackgreen Wood: earthworks including ditches and banks. Park Street Embankment is an approx. 250m-long stretch of the embankment of the disused Midland Railway Park Street branch, built in the 19th century.
Landscape				
National Character Area (please Specify): 111 – Northern Thames Basin				
National Park	No	-	-	
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	No	-	-	
Other (please Specify):	Yes	all	-	The woodlands fall within Watling Chase Community Forest area. Small scale grants may be available.
People				
CROW Access	No	-	2	Bricket Wood Common lies at the western and southern edges of Blackgreen Wood (but outside the woodland)
Public Rights of Way (any)	Yes	all	3	Public footpaths cross both Blackgreen Wood and Park Street Embankment

Other Access Provision	Yes	all	3	Permissive footpaths and open access in Blackgreen Wood and St Julian's Wood. Cycle path adjacent to St Julian's Wood, part of the National Cycle Network. Large car park near St Julian's Wood. The open grounds surrounding St Julian's Wood and bordering Park Street Embankment to the north are recreational areas open to public access.
Public Involvement	Yes	1a, 2a	-	Volunteers (Friends) groups used to be involved in Blackgreen Wood and St Julian's Wood management (access management work, etc.). Their activities recently ceased but could resume soon. Public events used to be regularly held to promote wood and its management and could resume with new management operations being carried out.
Visitor Information	Yes	1a, 2a	3	Several interpretation boards have been set up in Blackgreen Wood and St Julian's Wood.
Public Recreation Facilities	Yes	all	3	Public and permissive footpaths, benches.
Provision of Learning Opportunities	Yes	2a	-	A school holidays project is being developed for a woodland trail in St Julian's Wood.
Anti-social Behaviour	Yes	all	-	Campfires, littering, dog fouling, unauthorized trail biking in the marl pits, etc.
Other (please Specify):	No			
Water				
Watercourses	No	-	-	
Lakes	No	-	-	
Ponds	No	-	-	
Other (please Specify):	Yes	1a	3	Ditches can be found around Blackgreen Wood.

4.3 Habitat Types

This section is to consider the habitat types within your woodland(s) that might impact/inform your management decisions. Larger non-wooded areas within your woodland should be classified according to broad habitat type where relevant this information should also help inform your management decisions. Woodlands should be designed to achieve a diverse structure of habitat, species and ages of trees, appropriate to the scale and context of the woodland.

Feature	Within Woodland(s)	Cpts	Map No	Notes
Woodland Habitat Types				
Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland	Yes	1a,2a	2	St Julian's Wood and Blackgreen Wood are both Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands (ASNW)
Planted Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS)	No	-	-	
Semi-natural features in PAWS	No	-	-	
Lowland beech and yew woodland	No	-	-	
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	Yes	1a,2a, 2b, 2c	-	
Upland mixed ash woods	No	-	-	
Upland Oakwood	No	-	-	
Wet woodland	No	-	-	
Wood-pasture and parkland	No	-	-	
Other (please Specify):	No	-	-	
Non Woodland Habitat Types				
Blanket bog	No	-	-	
Fenland	No	-	-	
Lowland calcareous grassland	No	-	-	
Lowland dry acid grassland	No	-	-	
Lowland heath land	No	-	-	
Lowland meadows	No	-	-	
Lowland raised bog	No	-	-	
Rush pasture	No	-	-	
Reed bed	No	-	-	
Wood pasture	No	-	-	
Upland hay meadows	No	-	-	
Upland heath land	No	-	-	
Unimproved grassland	No	-	-	
Peat lands	No	-	-	
Wetland habitats	No	-	-	

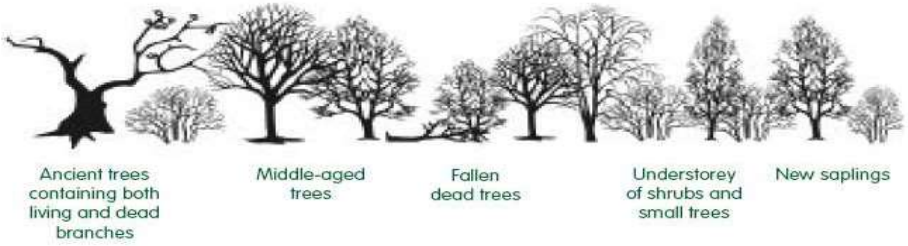
Other (please Specify):	Yes	3a	-	Park Street Embankment is a dense shrubby habitat resulting from the recent natural colonization of the former railway embankment

4.4 Structure

This section should provide a snapshot of the current structure of your woodland as a whole. A full inventory for your woodland(s) can be included in the separate Plan of Operations spreadsheet. Ensuring woodland has a varied structure in terms of age, species, origin and open space will provide a range of benefits for the biodiversity of the woodland and its resilience. The diagrams below show an example of both uneven and even aged woodland.

Woodland Type (Broadleaf, Conifer, Coppice, Intimate Mix)	Percentage of Mgt Plan Area	Age Structure (even/uneven)	Notes (i.e. understory or natural regeneration present)
Coppice with standards – broadleaved species	77%	Uneven	Blackgreen Wood and St Julian's Wood
Even-aged plantations – broadleaved species	13%	Even	St Julian's Wood (progressively transformed in coppice with standards)
Shrubs with scattered standards – broadleaved species	8%	Even	Park Street Embankment
Open areas or scattered trees	3%	-	Park Street Embankment

Uneven-aged woodland – many wildlife habitats because of high diversity



Even-aged woodland – tidy but of low diversity

Section 5: Woodland Protection

Woodlands in England face a range of threats; this section allows you to consider the potential threats that could be facing your woodland(s). Use the simple Risk Assessment process below to consider any potential threats to their woodland(s) and whether there is a need to take action to protect their woodlands.
Note: To add more tables, Copy the table and Paste below.

5.1 Risk Matrix

The matrix below provides a system for scoring risk. The matrix also indicates the advised level of action to take to help manage the threat.

Impact	High	Plan for Action	Action	Action
	Medium	Monitor	Plan for Action	Action
	Low	Monitor	Monitor	Plan for Action
		Low	Medium	High
		Likelihood of Presence		

5.2 Plant Health

Threat	Ash dieback *(Chalara fraxinea)*
Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	Medium
Response	Ash is present in Blackgreen Wood and St Julian's Wood, but is always mixed with other species and never makes up the majority of the stands. The dieback of most ash trees in the woodlands will definitely reduce the woodlands diversity, but will not have dramatic impacts on the landscape or the woodland structure. However, ash trees are present along public and permissive footpaths, as well as woodland boundaries. These trees could cause safety problems in case of dieback. Ash trees will be monitored near footpaths and boundaries, in order to proactively take appropriate measures to protect the safety of workers and the public frequenting the area. The proportion of non-ash species should also be increased in ash-rich stands, by favouring the retention of other species during thinning operations and/or by restocking.

Threat	Acute Oak Decline

Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	High
Response	Acute Oak Decline has been confirmed in the woodlands, and has been reported to the Forestry Commission. Survey, record, monitor and manage accordingly, e.g. by taking declining trees into consideration when marking up for thinning operations, by managing safety issues, and by maintaining a diverse mix of species in the woodland. Resources to manage acute oak decline, especially guidance on how to fell and process infected trees, are available online (forestresearch.gov.uk).

Threat	Oak Processionary Moth
Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	Medium
Response	OPM has not been identified in St Stephen Parish Council woodlands, but has been observed in the surrounding area (including around the council's office buildings) and is likely to colonize the woodlands in the next few years given its current trend of expansion. Oaks will be monitored and any sightings will be reported via Tree Alert. Appropriate safety work will be carried out where needed and possible. Temporary closure of some footpaths or woodlands can also be considered in case of danger for the public.

5.3 Deer

Species - Likelihood of presence	Muntjac – high Roe – medium Other species – low
Impact	Medium
Response	Even if Muntjac is present (at least at Blackgreen Wood), deer presence seems to be rather moderate in the woodlands due to their location in a rather dense suburban area. The successful coppice regeneration in the woodlands as well as the presence of young saplings (including oak) tends to show that deer impact is rather low (at least until recently). However, given the importance of bringing more coppice back into rotation and diversifying the ages and structures in the stands in the years to come, coppice regrowth and natural regeneration should be monitored and appropriate measures taken in case their growth is not satisfactory.

	Considering the difficulty of controlling deer in such heavily frequented woodlands, mitigation measures could be temporary deer fencing and brash baskets in the newly coppiced areas, and individual shelters around saplings/seedlings (naturally regenerated or planted).

5.4 Grey Squirrels

Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	Medium
Response	Grey squirrel damage (to bark) can be observed in all the woodlands, however the lack of trees in the diameter/age range targeted by squirrels makes it hard to assess their potential impact when the regenerating coppice and saplings reach these diameters and ages. Grey squirrel is also likely to have an impact on the regeneration of nut producing species. Given the importance of increasing the species diversity, age range and structural diversity in the woodlands, grey squirrel impact must be kept low so as not to jeopardize the management efforts. Grey squirrel impacts should be monitored and control measures such as culling and trapping should be carried out if necessary

5.5 Livestock and Other Mammals

Threat	Rabbit
Likelihood of presence	Medium
Impact	Medium
Response	Monitor impact. Protect coppice regrowth and saplings/seedlings (cf 5.3 – Deer). Consider rabbit control.

5.6 Water & Soil

Threat	Wet and soft soils
Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	Medium
Response	The woodland soils can get very wet at certain times of the year. Works involving "heavy" machinery such as timber extraction should only be undertaken under drier conditions (usually from late Spring to early Autumn).

Threat	Pollution incidents
Likelihood of presence	Low
Impact	Low
Response	Ensure all fuels, oils and chemicals are stored in work vehicles at all times. Refuelling should be done at the vehicle and away from watercourses and water bodies. All machinery with hydraulic hoses should carry an oil spillage kit.

5.7 Environmental

Threat	Holly
Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	High
Response	Holly is a native and common species in many English woodlands, providing dense cover, nesting and hibernation opportunities, and food for birds and small mammals. It can also act as a visual and noise barrier along residential boundaries and roads. However, in some woodlands, holly can sometimes be found at extreme densities and heights. In these areas, holly overgrows the coppice, compromises natural regeneration and suppresses ground flora, jeopardising in time the species diversity, age range and structural diversity in the woodlands, and, as a result, their biodiversity and resilience. This situation can be found in extensive areas of St Stephen Parish Council woodlands, especially in Blackgreen Wood but also to a lesser extent in St Julian's Wood and in Park Street Embankment. In these areas, holly should be drastically reduced by cutting, root removal and/or chemical treatment to bring it back to a density and heights that do not compromise natural regeneration, coppice growth and the development of ground flora. Holly can be left at a higher density along the roads and residential boundaries as a visual and sound barrier, keeping in mind that from these areas, holly will rather quickly re-colonise the controlled areas. In other areas, holly should be monitored and controlled, keeping it at a density and a height that do not compromise natural regeneration, coppice growth and ground flora development.

	Holly control should be carried out before any sylvicultural activity is undertaken in a given area, considering the difficulty of doing it afterwards (in the dense regrowth of target species, coppice, etc.).

Threat	Invasive species
Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	High
Response	The woodlands are located in a densely populated suburban area and are often bordered with private gardens. Garden escapes of invasive species are highly likely (e.g. presence of Variegated archangel, Rhododendron and Laurel in Blackgreen Wood). Their development can have severe impacts in time on the woodland diversity. Fly-tipping and the disposal of garden waste in the woods must be strongly discouraged by appropriate signage and communication with the local community. The presence of invasive species will be monitored and actions will be taken to urgently and permanently control these species (chemical treatment, uprooting, etc.).

Threat	Fire
Likelihood of presence	Medium
Impact	Medium
Response	The lighting of campfires should be discouraged in the woodlands (especially in Blackgreen Wood where an area seems to be regularly used for this purpose), given the risk that the fire will spread and damage the flora, coppice regrowth, seedlings, etc. The risk of fire spreading into the woodlands is increasing with the likelihood of prolonged periods of drought caused by climate change. Ensure the local fire brigade are given a map of the woodlands showing the best entrance points together with any areas of surface water that could be used if needed.

Threat	Plastic pollution
Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	Medium

Response	Old plastic shelters and spirals are present in the woodlands. Some of them are deteriorating and are likely to cause plastic pollution in the woodlands. The shelters and spirals should be collected and disposed of appropriately as soon as they are redundant.

Threat	Wind
Likelihood of presence	Medium
Impact	Medium
Response	Blackgreen Wood is rather flat with a low wind hazard risk. Park Wood Embankment vegetation is overall too low to suffer much from wind. However, St Julian's Wood seems more vulnerable to wind throw given its exposed location at the top of a hill. As a general rule when thinning stands, the side facing the prevailing winds should be kept as windfirm as possible by retaining windfirm trees and not opening too large gaps. Dense graded shrubby fringes can also help reduce the risks of windblows.

5.8 Social

Threat	Public access
Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	Medium
Response	The woodlands (especially St Julian's Wood and Blackgreen Wood) are well used by local people as there many public and permissive footpaths crossing the woodlands. Along footpaths passing through or adjacent to the woodlands (especially where ash is present), trees will be regularly inspected for safety and dangerous trees or limbs will be removed. Appropriate measures (such as signage and labour resources) will be taken when any work is carried out to ensure the safety of the visitors. Trampling can have an important impact on soils (compaction), ground flora (including bluebells) and natural regeneration/planting, especially in St Julian's Wood where the muddy soils and high public usage result in widened footpaths, the multiplication of desire footpaths and widespread trampling by both walkers and dogs. Authorized footpaths should be clearly marked, and, where necessary and possible, should be made more accessible (drier and flatter surface,

	clear delimitation). The public should be excluded from areas of natural regeneration and planting, and should be informed about the impacts of trampling and the guidance for conservation of the soils, flora and regeneration. Developing a denser understorey and ground flora (by coppicing, thinning the overstorey, planting) can also dissuade people from leaving the dedicated footpaths.

Threat	Anti-social behaviour
Likelihood of presence	High
Impact	Medium
Response	Anti-social behaviours are frequent in the woodlands: littering, dog fouling, unauthorized trail biking in the marl pits, campfires, etc. These behaviours should be monitored and adequate measures should be taken to mitigate them (for example maintenance and improvement of existing signage, maintenance of dog bins and bins for rubbish, organisation of litter-picking activities with the local community, etc.).

5.9 Economic

Threat	Timber markets
Likelihood of presence	Medium
Impact	Low
Response	Generating revenue from timber is not the primary focus of the council's woodland management. Firewood is often offered to the local community, and a mobile sawmill is occasionally utilized to produce boards for internal purposes. While timber income would be appreciated to help offset management expenses, fluctuations in timber markets are not expected to significantly affect woodland management strategies.

5.10 Climate Change Resilience

Threat	Lack of species, structural and age diversity
Likelihood of presence	Medium
Impact	Medium
Response	Age and structural diversity have been improved by recent coppicing, thinning and planting operations, especially in Blackgreen Wood, but

	some areas in the woodlands are still quite homogeneous with a lack of understorey and younger standard trees. Coppicing and thinning operations should continue in Blackgreen Wood, should resume in St Julian's Wood and should be introduced in Park Street Embankment to maintain and improve age and structural diversity. Where natural regeneration and coppice regrowth fail despite appropriate protection measures, and there is a risk of lasting loss of shrub and tree cover in the woodland, planting should be carried out before competing vegetation such as bramble takes over. Woodland edges should also be managed to maintain or create graded margins like the existing ecotone along the north-western edge of St Julian's wood. Species diversity is rather good in all the woodlands. Coppicing and thinning operations will continue to promote the natural regeneration of diverse species by allowing more light to reach the ground. Appropriate maintenance such as respacing will help encourage species diversity in the natural regeneration. Where natural regeneration of standard species and coppice regrowth are not satisfactory in terms of species diversity, enrichment planting should be used to diversify the species mix. When thinning the overstorey, tree selection should also aim to maintain or increase species diversity.

Section 6: Management Strategy

This section requires a statement of intent, setting out how you intend to achieve your management objectives and manage important features identified within the previous sections of the plan. A detailed work programme by sub-compartment can be added to the Plan of Operations.

Management Objective / Feature	Management Intention
To enhance the woodlands' environmental value and their resilience to climate change, pests, diseases and other disturbances.	The woodlands' environmental value and resilience will be improved by maintaining and developing the woodlands' species, ages and structural diversity. The main activities to carry out to achieve these objectives are to: - bring back coppice into rotation, coppicing small blocks at a time to mitigate visual impact, but large enough so that the levels of light and the temperature at ground level can promote a dynamic coppice regrowth: ○ in Blackgreen Wood, up to 30% (1.2ha) of the remaining mature coppice (4ha) will be harvested in two or more stages during the management plan period. Areas where coppice crowns have grown into the standards' canopy should be harvested first. Prior any harvesting to be undertaken, holly control will be carried out to allow managers to make appropriate management decisions (coppicing, restocking, etc.). ○ In St Julian's Wood, approx. 25% of the mature coppice will be harvested in one coupe during the management plan period, where the hornbeam coppice is densest and overmature. The coppiced area must be large enough, retaining few coppice stems, so that the light levels are sufficient to promote a dynamic coppice regrowth. In the plantations surrounding the main block of woodland, coppiceable

	species such as field maple and sweet chestnut should be systematically cut to produce a dense understorey. ○ In Park Street Embankment, approx. 30% of the hawthorn will be progressively coppiced during the management plan period to initiate a rotational regeneration cycle (e.g.: 10% every three years). Following the first cut, the regrowth should be monitored, before extending the operation. A few hawthorns should regularly be retained to progressively transform into older then veteran trees, ○ When old coppice stools (and pollards) have not been managed for decades, graduated coppicing can be undertaken by retaining one or a couple of stems on the stool. The retained stems will then be removed a few years later, when the regrowth from the previously cut stems is satisfactory. This can help mitigate the "shock" undergone by the coppice stool, and make sure they survive the operation. However, this must not lead to retaining too many stems in the coppiced area, which would prevent sufficient levels of light to reach the ground and the stools, hindering the development of the ground flora and the regeneration of the stools. - thin the overstorey above the coppiced areas so that enough light can reach the ground and promote the coppice regrowth as well as the natural regeneration of standard species: ○ over approx. 75% of the working area, 30% maximum of the overstorey canopy will be removed to bring dappled light to the ground (thinning), ○ over approx. 25% of the working area, small groups of overstorey trees will be felled to increase the light reaching the

	ground and promote the regeneration of light demanding species (regeneration felling). ○ the density of standards varies across the woodland, and dieback has been observed in all species (including oak). This must be taken into account so as not to deplete the overstorey excessively. Where coppice is dense, no thinning or regeneration felling will be required. In the plantations at St Julian's Wood, the overstorey should also be thinned for the benefit of the coppiced trees, as well as to promote a better air flow in the canopy, limiting the risk of spreading fungal diseases such as ash dieback. However, given the small size of the plantation blocks, regeneration felling should not be carried out in these areas. - increase species diversity, for example by appropriate respacing operations allowing species-diverse seedlings and saplings to thrive in the regenerating areas. Where natural regeneration and coppice regrowth are not sufficient in terms of density and species diversity despite appropriate protection measures, and could lead to a lasting loss of shrub and tree cover in the woodland or a reduction in species diversity, planting should be carried out before competing vegetation such as bramble takes over. This should allow the introduction of more diverse broadleaved native species such as Small leaved lime and Wild service tree, and increase the frequency of existing species such as Field maple. - maintain and create more graded woodland edges such as the one along the north-western edge of St Julian's Wood. This is particularly relevant for the eastern and southern edges of St Julian's Wood main

	block, and around the broadleaved plantations. These shrubby ecotones (which should be approx. 10m wide) should be cut in rotation to avoid their development into a more mature and more homogeneous woodland. Deer and grey squirrel impacts should be monitored, implementing control activities if the levels of impact begin to affect the woodlands' successful regeneration and growth. Whenever possible considering public safety, both standing and fallen deadwood will be retained during harvesting and safety operations. Monoliths can be created.
To maintain and preserve the ancient semi-natural woodland, historic and archaeological features (veteran trees, woodbanks, flora, etc.), and traditional management techniques (such as pollarding and coppicing).	Archaeological features (woodbanks, ditches), veteran trees and important landscape features will be mapped and their presence as well as appropriate protection measures will be notified to any contractor working in their vicinity. Necessary management activities, such as haloing of veteran trees, pollarding, or removing vegetation putting these features at risk will be undertaken. Coppicing operations (and pollarding where relevant) will continue to be carried out to maintain these traditional management techniques. The ancient woodland boundaries with their banks and their old and remarkable coppice stools and pollards will be maintained or restored by laying, coppicing, pollarding the existing features, and replanting with native species where required.
To maintain and improve the attractiveness of the woodland for the public recreation and enjoyment	Using CCF (Continuous Cover Forestry) principles will reduce the visual impact of harvesting upon the landscape, avoiding over-large openings and sudden, large-scale changes. The appropriate and gradual management of edges will also contribute to the diversity and attractiveness of the landscape.

	Appropriate signage and additional labour resources will be used to ensure the safety of the visitors and neighbouring residents when sylvicultural and management operations are undertaken. Regular safety inspections will be carried out, especially along footpaths, boundaries and in areas with ash, and appropriate safety works will be undertaken in order to minimize risks for woodland visitors and neighbouring residents from diseased and dangerous trees. In St Julian's Wood, an accessible footpath with a laid surface, limiting the widening of the existing footpaths by walkers who try to avoid muddy areas, should be built to mitigate the impacts of trampling on soil and flora. Restricting access for people off the designated should also be considered.
To keep native and non-native invasive species under control	Holly: in the areas where holly is most invasive, it should be drastically reduced by cutting, root removal and/or chemical treatment to bring it back to a density and height that do not compromise natural regeneration, coppice growth and ground flora development. Holly can be left at a higher density along the roads and residential boundaries as a visual and sound barrier, bearing in mind that from these areas, holly will rather quickly re-colonise the controlled areas. In these areas, it is also possible to cut holly without removing its roots or treat it chemically, so that the dense multi-stems regrowth acts as a better low-height barrier. In other areas, holly should be monitored and similarly controlled. Holly control should be carried out before any sylvicultural activity is undertaken in a given area. Other invasive species: the presence of invasive species such as rhododendron, laurel or variegated archangel will be monitored and

	immediate action will be taken to permanently remove them from the woodland before they can spread. This can be done by mechanical (cutting, uprooting) and/or chemical (herbicide spraying or capsules) operations. Fly-tipping and the disposal of garden waste in the woods must be strongly discouraged by appropriate signage and communication with the local community.
To achieve early diagnosis of potential threats such as diseases, and pests, to take appropriate measures to mitigate them.	Diseases and pests will be regularly monitored, and appropriate measures will be taken to limit their spread where possible (removal of diseased trees, chemical or mechanical control, etc.).

Section 7: Stakeholder Engagement

There can be a requirement on both the FC and the owner to undertake consultation/engagement. Please refer to Operations Note 35 for further information. Use this section to identify people or organisations with an interest in your woodland and also to record any engagement that you have undertaken, relative to activities identified within the plan.

Work Proposal	Individual/ Organisation	Date Contacted	Date feedback received	Response	Action
All	St Stephen Parish Council				
All (CA and TPO)	St Albans City and District Council				
All	Neighbours				
All (Local Wildlife Site)	Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust				
All	Herts Historic Environment Unit				
All	Herts Ecological Record Centre				

Section 8: Monitoring

Indicators of progress/success should be defined for each management objective and then checked at regular intervals. Other management activities could also be considered within this monitoring section. The data collected will help to evaluate progress.

Management Objective/Activities	Indicator of Progress/Success	Method of Assessment	Frequency of Assessment	Responsibility	Assessment Results
To enhance the woodlands' environmental value and their resilience to climate change, pests, diseases and other disturbances.	Area of woodland coppiced and thinned Length of shrubby ecotone managed or created Number of trees and species replanted / number of seedlings/saplings and species respaced	Data collated in annual management report	Annually	Forest manager	
	Deer and Grey squirrel impact and activity levels	Deer and Grey squirrel Habitat Impact and	Every three years	Forest manager	

		Activity Assessment			
To maintain and preserve the ancient semi-natural woodland, historic and archaeological features (veteran trees, woodbanks, flora, etc.), and traditional management techniques (such as pollarding and coppicing).	Number of veteran trees released from competing vegetation Area of woodland coppiced, number of pollards re-pollarded Length of restored woodland boundaries (coppiced, laid, etc.) Number of incidents involving the degradation of ancient semi-natural woodland, historic and archaeological features	Data collated in annual management report	Annually	Forest manager	
To maintain and improve the attractiveness of the woodland for the public recreation and enjoyment	Average area of coppice harvested annually (CCF principles)	Data collated in annual management report	Annually	Forest manager	

	Number of safety inspections carried out, and subsequent safety work undertaken. Number of accessible footpaths built in St Julian's Wood				
To keep native and non-native invasive species under control	Area of invasive vegetation control work carried out (or number of days spent when scattered vegetation)	Data collated in annual management report	Annually	Forest manager	
To achieve early diagnosis of potential threats such as diseases, invasive species and other pests, to take appropriate measures to mitigate them.	Number of surveys for diseases, pests and invasive species carried out in the woodlands (and result) Mitigation actions undertaken	Data collated in annual management report	Annually	Forest manager	

Forestry Commission England

UK Forestry Standard woodland plan assessment

For FC office use and approval only:

UKFS management plan criteria	Minimum approval requirements	Achieved	Review notes
Plan Objectives: Forest management plans should state the objectives of management and set out howan appropriate balance between social, economic, environmental objectives will be achieved.	• Management plan objectives are stated. • Consideration is given to environmental, economic and social objectives relevant to thevision for the woodland.	**Yes/No**	
Forest context and important featuresin management strategy: Forest management plans should addressthe forest context and the forest potentialand demonstrate how the relevant interests and issues have been consideredand addressed.	Management intentions communicated in ***Sect.6***of the management plan are in line with stated objective(s) in ***Sect. 2***. Management intentions should take account of: • Relevant features and issues identified in thewoodland survey (***Sect. 4***). • Any potential threats to and opportunities for the woodland, as identified under woodlandprotection (***Sect. 5***). • Relevant comments received from stakeholder engagement are documented in ***Sect. 7***.	**Yes/No**	
Identification of designations withinand surrounding the woodland site: For designated areas, e.g. National Parksor SSSI, particular account is taken of landscape and other sensitivities in the design of forests and forest infrastructure.	• Survey information (***Sect. 4***) identifies anydesignations that impact on woodland management. • Management intentions (***Sect. 6***) have taken account of any designations.	**Yes/No**	
Felling and restocking to improve forest structure and diversity:	• Felling and restocking proposals are consistentwith UKFS design principles (for example scaleand adjacency).	**Yes/No**	

When planning felling and restocking, the design of existing forests should be re-assessed and any necessary changes madeto meet UKFS requirements. Forests should be designed to achieve a diverse structure of habitat, species and age range of trees, appropriate to the scaleand context. Forests characterised by a lack of diversity,due to extensive areas of even-aged trees,should be progressively restructured to achieve age class range.	• Current diversity (structure, species, age structure) of the woodland has been identifiedthrough the survey (***Sect. 4***). • Management intentions aim to improve / maintain current diversity (structure, species,and ages of trees).		
Consultation: Consultation on forest management plans and proposals should be carried out according to forestry authority procedures and, where required, the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations.	• Stakeholder consultation is in line with currentFC guidance, and recorded in ***Sect. 7***. The minimum requirement is for statutory consultation to take place, and this will be carried out by the Forestry Commission. • Plan authors undertake stakeholder engagement (ref FC Ops Note 35) relevant tothe context and setting of the woodland.	**Yes/No**	
Plan update and review: Management of the forest should conformto the plan, and the plan should be updated to ensure it is current and relevant.	• A 5 year review period is stated on the 1st pageof the plan • ***Sect. 8*** is completed with 1 indicator of success identified per management objective	**Yes/No**	

Approved in Principle *This means the FC is happy with your plan; it meets UKFS requirements.* *a) You can use it to support a CS-HT or other grant application.* ***b) You do not yet have a licence to undertake any tree felling in the plan.***	**Name (WO or FM):**	**Date:**
Approved	**Name (AO, WO or FM):**	**Date:**
This means FC is happy with your plan; it meets UKFS requirements, and we havealso approved a felling licence for any tree felling in the plan (where required).		

Hedgerow Plan

Key

Twice a year
Annually
Ecotone 1
Ecotone 2
Ectone 3
Hedgelaying/planting

Implementation Plan

Location					**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**2031**	**2032**	**2033**	**2034**
Greenwood Park															
Play Area															
Tippendell Lane Allotments															
Top car park field side															
Watford Road allotment															
Tennis court fence															
Top car park cycle track side															
A405 Boundary play area															
North close															
A405 boundary ecotone 1															
St Julians wood spinney side ecotone 1															
Cycle path to allotment ecotone 1															
St Julians wood allotment side ecotone 2															
Cycle path to allotment ecotone 2															
Watford Road Boundary ecotone 2															
Cycle path to allotment ecotone 3															
Watford Road Boundary ecotone 3															
A405 boundary meadow ecotone 3															
Hedge Laying phased installation															
Woodbury Field															
Annually															
New Hedge planting															
Park Street Lane Allotments															
Twice a Year															
Park Street Recreation Ground															
Annually															
Cherry Hill															
Annually															

Map 3 - Blackgreen Wood - Hazards, constraints and public access

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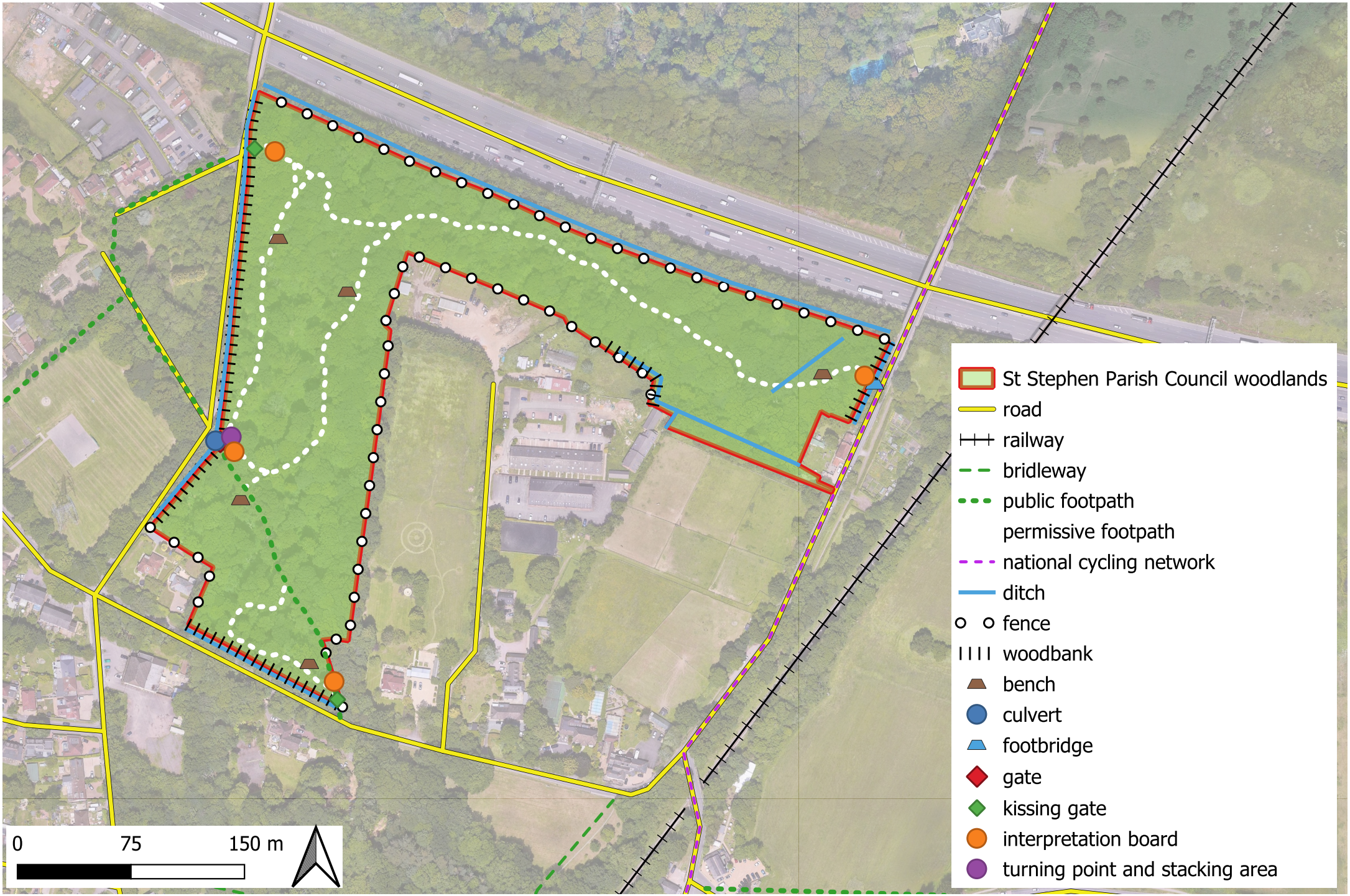

Map 3 - St Julian's Wood - Hazards, constraints and public access

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Map 3 - Park Street Embankment - Hazards, constraints and public access

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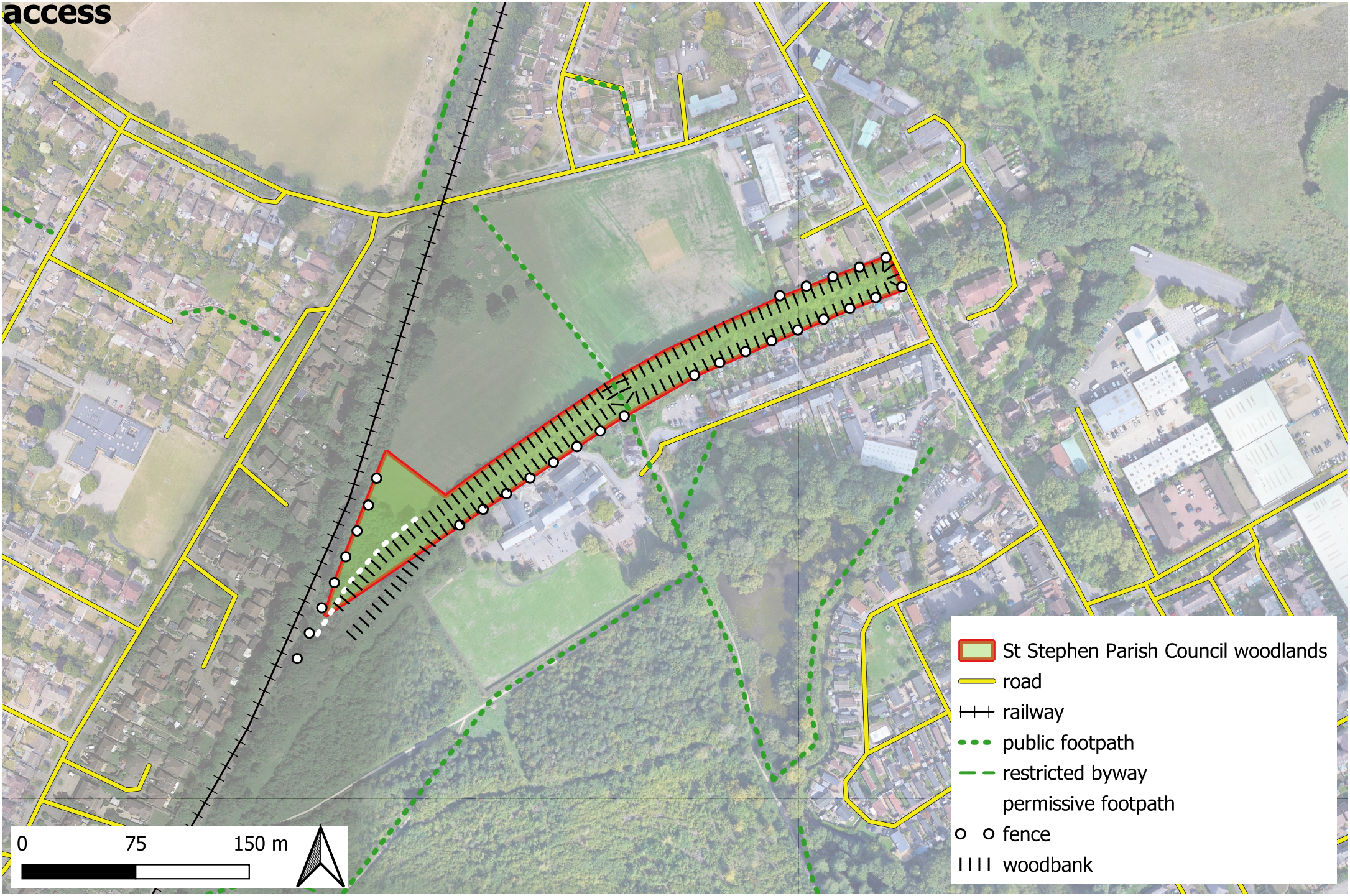

Map 5 - Blackgreen Wood - Management

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Map 5 - St Julian's Wood - Management

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Map 5 - Park Street Embankment - Management

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