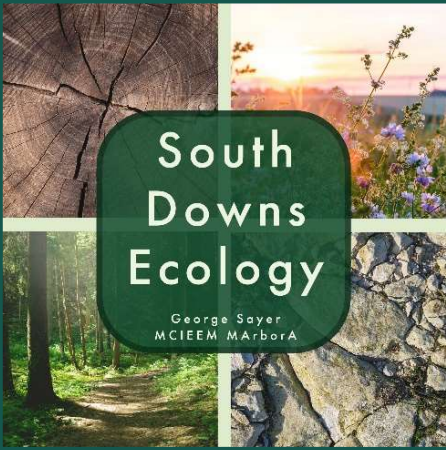


Arboricultural and
Silvicultural Impact
Assessment and
Method Statement

Trywoods, Horsham
Rugby Football Club



**South
Downs
Ecology**

George Sayer
MCIEEM, ArborA

Arboricultural and Silvicultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement

Trywoods, Horsham Rugby Football Club

Version 1 – 10th September 2026

Contents

Introduction.....3

Arboricultural Impact Assessment.....5

Method Statement.....7

|

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A tree survey and Arboricultural and Silvicultural Impact Assessment have been commissioned for the continued use of Trywoods Ancient Woodland for outdoor learning, ecological skills and nature-based experiences by the Woods for Learning CIC.
- 1.2 An Arboricultural and silvicultural survey was carried out on 2nd September 2026 by George Sayer (*BScHons PgDip MArborA; LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection 2019*); from which a schedule and constraints plan of notable trees on and surrounding the site was produced (*GS648.Trywoods.ETS and GS648.Trywoods.TCP*) in accordance with *BS 5837:2012 – 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations'*. From this information an Arboricultural and silvicultural impact assessment has been undertaken and recommendations made to ensure the long-term retention and enhancement of the trees and woodland on-site.

Proposals

- 1.3 The proposals are for the continued use of Trywoods Ancient Woodland for outdoor learning, ecological skills and nature-based experiences by the Woods for Learning CIC. A number of activities have taken place in the woodland and this application is partly retrospective to regularise these activities as well as future activities.

Site Description

- 1.4 The site consists of an area of ancient woodland, adjacent the Horsham Rugby Football Club.

Surrounding Landscape

- 1.5 The site lies to the south-east of Horsham, with extensive areas of woodland to the east and the built-up area of Horsham to the west.

Existing Site Vegetation

- 1.6 The site consists of an area of ancient, semi-natural woodland. The woodland does not appear to have been subject to significant management (other than those works discussed herein). The woodland consists of mature oak trees and occasionally beech, interspersed with dense stands of holly and sweet chestnut that would have originally been coppiced. Understorey typically consists of dense stands of semi-mature holly trees. In places there are stands of downy birch and rowan. To the east a large area of dense cherry laurel exists, with little else other than several emergent oak and ash trees.
- 1.7 Overall the woodland would be classified under the NVC as **W10e** – *Quercus robur*–*Pteridium aquilinum*–*Rubus fruticosus* woodland, *Ilex aquifolium* sub-community. Oak-dominated canopy with a dense holly understorey is the diagnostic combination for W10e specifically over W10. **Sweet chestnut** as a frequent associate matches the NVC W10 category more generally. Such woodlands are typical of the High Weald, where chestnut was historically coppiced under oak standards on the Wealden clay/greensand brown earths that dominate around Horsham.
- 1.8 The occasional rowan and birch are consistent with slightly more acid or impoverished patches within the stand, which W10 tolerates at its margins before grading into W16 (*Quercus*–*Betula*–*Deschampsia flexuosa*) on poor, sandy, base-depleted soils.

- 1.9 The woodland is generally very dense and dark; a number of the mature oaks display epicormic growths and signs of shading stress due to the density of surrounding trees, and beneath there is generally no significant groundcover.
- 1.10 A number of notable trees recorded by the CIC have been assessed for their condition in accordance with BS5837:2012 and are recorded on the Tree Constraints Plan and Existing Tree Schedule. Any further notable trees observed have been added to this list.

2.0 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Direct Impacts to, and Removal of Trees

2.1 Of the existing trees, the only tree removals appear to have been as follows:

- Limited removal of a small number of shrubs such as hollies to ensure continued use of footpaths and to widen existing tracks
- Coppicing of an area to the south and east, which is now regrowing with dense shrubs
- Recent coppicing of small areas, with initial regrowth
- Halo-thinning around several mature trees
- Removal of areas of cherry laurel to allow access round the woods
- Removal of several scattered ash and several discrete areas of ash affected by ash dieback and posing a risk of harm to those using the woodland and footpaths

2.2 Some minor impacts on other trees are noted, such as installation of security cameras to tree branches and a small tent/swing in a major oak branch. These would have a negligible impact on the trees and, whilst not optimal from a visual perspective to those using the footpaths, are essential parts of the use of the woodland.

2.3 The coppicing of dense understorey would in the medium and long term have a positive impact upon the woodland. The woodland is currently dense and dark, generally with little groundcover or lower shrub layer. Some areas are known to support bluebells and coppicing is focussed on these areas, allowing light in to enable release and expansion of the bluebells.

2.4 The removal of dead ash trees would reduce the standing deadwood component present, but outside of risk areas these have been left. It is noted that there is extensive deadwood remaining in the woodland. This removal would improve the safety of the woodland and allow light in to the ground, an improvement on the current situation.

Disturbance to Roots and Rooting Environment

2.5 There are no permanent structures in the woodland; temporary structures do not appear to have any kind of footing or foundation.

2.6 The main camp area appears fairly worn with soil being slightly denuded and root flares being slightly exposed. The canopy might very slightly alter the hydrology beneath it but at such a small level as to be insignificant. The trees do not seem to have suffered although frequent foot traffic may over time cause compaction of the soil.

2.7 The existing footpath, and some existing animal tracks have been widened to allow walking through the woodland. This in itself might have resulted in some minor localised compaction to these areas, and some poaching in areas to the north-west where the clay is heaviest. The impact is in discrete areas and the surrounding trees do not appear affected.

- 2.8 It is noted that the CIC have undertaken a programme of rubbish removal from the woodland; the woodland's previous uses mean there are an abundance of debris such as bottles which are being cleared away. Such rubbish can be harmful to wildlife, trees and is unsightly.

Summary of Impacts

- 2.9 Overall, the use of the woodlands as is occurring and proposed is not considered to have a significant negative impact on the woodland. The woodland is currently dense and dark, and opening up the woodland through coppicing, thinning and limited clearance would have benefits which likely outweigh the minor impacts. As such the continued use and management of the woodland could proceed in accordance with local and national policy, and current government standing advice for ancient woodlands.
- 2.10 The following Method Statement details measures which would minimise impacts upon the woodland and would result in enhancement of the woodland in the long term. The proposals are therefore supportable from an Arboricultural perspective.

3.0 Arboricultural Method Statement

Prohibited Activities

3.1 Within the woodland area, no damaging activities shall be permitted, to include:

- *Lighting of fires*
- *Storage of chemicals or building materials*
- *Dumping of spoil or rubbish*
- *Driving of vehicles*
- *Alteration of soil levels.*

Ground Protection

3.2 Where regular access is required, for example around the camp, the soil shall be maintained in its current condition. In any areas where compaction or hollows become evident, such areas shall be filled with site-won woodchip, gently tamped-in by foot.

3.3 To ensure the ongoing protection of trees and retention of pathways, site-won materials shall continue to be used to delineate paths. No general access outside of these areas shall occur or be permitted.

3.4 Should any vehicular access be required, these must use appropriate ground protection and banksmen in sensitive areas to ensure no collisions with trees.

Ongoing Management

3.5 The following management measures shall be undertaken to continue to enhance the woodland for the benefit of wildlife:

- Areas of dense sweet chestnut could be coppiced where labour allows; this would be re-coppiced on a 15-25 year rotation in small discrete areas
- Areas of dense holly shall be coppiced, with small discrete areas of no more than 500sqm in any one year being cut. Hereafter the coppicing should be repeated every 5-10 years in a patchwork fashion, to create a range of microhabitats and varying densities of shrub layers
- Areas with known bluebells should be the focus of coppicing to allow these to spread
- Removal of cherry laurel wherever labour allows, to allow native species to re-establish. New saplings could be grown from acorns and other seeds from the woodland and replanted following removal to aid recovery
- Careful halo-thinning around existing mature trees to ensure their survival
- Continued removal of rubbish from the woodland

3.6 All ongoing management shall have due regard to the following:

- Government standing advice for ancient woodlands
- Keepers of Time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (Defra/Forestry Commission/Natural England, updated 2022)
- Managing Ancient and Native Woodland in England (Forestry Commission Practice Guide - FCPG201)
- Forestry Act 1967 – no more than 5 cubic metres shall be felled per quarter
- UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) 5th Edition 2023