Dedridge Wood

(Plan period – 2026 to 2031)

Management Plan Content Page

Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

"A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife."

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK's native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

The following principles provide an overarching framework to guide the management of all our sites but we recognise that all woods are different and that their management also needs to reflect their local landscape, history and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives.

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.

2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.

3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.

4. The long term vision for all our ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.

5. Existing semi-natural open ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.

6. The natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.

7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities to generate income from our Estate to help support our aims.

8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we encourage our woods to be used for local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.

9. We use and offer the Estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.

10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

The Public Management Plan

This public management plan describes the site and sets out the long term aims for our management and lists the Key Features which drive our management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with our long, 50 years and beyond, and our short, the next 5 years, term objectives for the management and enhancement of these features. The short term objectives are complemented by an outline Work Programme for the period of this management plan aimed at delivering our management aims.

Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

A short glossary of technical terms can be found at the end of the plan.

Location and Access

Location maps and directions for how to find and access our woods, including this site, can be found by using the following link to the Woodland Trust web-site which contains information on accessible woodlands across the UK

https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods/

In Scotland access to our sites is in accordance with the Land Reform Act (of Scotland) 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and NI, with the exception of designated Public Rights of Ways, all routes across our sites are permissive in nature and where we have specific access provision for horse riders and/or cyclists this will be noted in the management plan.

The Management Plan

1. SITE DETAILS

Dedridge Wood

Location:	Livingston Grid reference: NT050660 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 65
Area:	3.70 hectares (9.14 acres)
External Designations:	Tree Preservation Order
Internal Designations:	Tree For All Site

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Dedridge Woods form part of the Woodland Trust's holding in the south of Livingston, West Lothian. They consist of three woodland blocks, compartments 38 and 39 forming the Dedridge Strip located within housing areas either side of Dedridge Road and compartment 42, located further south, adjacent to Williamston Primary School. The woodlands consist of mainly mature policy plantings that have been retained for shelter and screening of housing developments.

The woods lie between the altitudes of 130m and 147m above sea level and are generally flat. The underlying geology of the area is sedimentary sandstones/ limestone's/ shale of the Carbonioferous-Dinatian period. Soils are derived from a glacial till of carboniferous sedimentary sandstones and shale. They are generally brown forest soils with gleying, of the Rowanhill association and are characterised by slowly permeable clayey horizons at varying depths between 40 and 80cm. The MLURI climate map identifies the area as fairly warm moist lowland and foothill, being moderately exposed with moderate winters.

Dedridge Woods are principally remnants of an older policy woodland and shelterbelt landscape thought to date from around the late 19th century. The relatively small area of woodland of compartment 42 forms part of a wider complex of woodlands originally associated with Bankton House, which now link into the Murieston Water Greenway, a wildlife and recreational corridor. Mature Scots pine is a major component in most of the stands, being dominant in compartment 39 and in mixture with beech, ash and sycamore in compartment 42. Compartment 38 is made up of 3 areas of mixed age mature woodland connected by an area of younger mixed native broadleaved planting which was planted by 1st year pupils from James Young High School in 2004. Compartment 38 borders housing and two schools as well as neighbouring Froggy Park and pond. The amount of under storey and regeneration varies considerably and is generally better in stands with higher proportions of broadleaves.

The woodland blocks provide good opportunities for local users and contain a number of informal paths and desire lines, accessed from entrance points which link to the formal tarmac footpath and cycleway networks serving local residential areas and also connecting into the wider complex of Livingston paths and Greenways. The woods also connect onto the Mains path which connects the woods to the Bankton Mains Leisure Park and associated open space. There are no on-site car parks at any of the small woodland blocks however parking is available nearby on adjacent streets.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Dedridge Wood will be managed in line with the Woodland Trust's objectives of improving and enhancing biodiversity, encouraging public access and enhancing people's enjoyment of woodlands. It will be managed as a sustainable natural resource to safeguard its public amenity and biodiversity value.

The long-term vision is to maintain and enhance the woodland areas using continuous cover silviculture where possible. The woodlands will consist of mixed broadleaves of a mainly native species with a proportion of Scots pine throughout. Native woodland species will establish along watercourses to reduce shading associated with conifers. Some non-native species and their natural regeneration will be accepted although the intention will be to increase the proportion of native species in the overall mixture.

Large scale felling intervention is not expected to be utilised in this woodland unless health and safety risks from pest, diseases or windblow makes this unavoidable. Rather, small-scale thinning and group felling will be undertaken to diversify the canopy's age structure. This will also help to promote natural regeneration and to improve light levels for ground flora. Where natural regeneration is not establishing or the species diversity is poor, additional planting of native species will be undertaken. Shrubs and low stature species will be prioritised for establishment within proximity to housing and infrastructure, minimising potential conflict and creating a more natural woodland edge. Standing and fallen dead wood will be retained, where it is safe to do so.

The path network and access facilities will be maintained and upgraded to suit local demand (WT Grade A - high usage) with consideration to the development of West Lothian's Core Path network and further development around Livingston that is likely to impact on levels of use on all paths throughout the site.

Due to the woods location within the central belt and close proximity to large populations, the intention is to use the woods to improve and raise awareness of the biodiversity, recreation and health benefits woodlands provide.

4.1 f1 Connecting People to Woods and Trees

Description

Dedridge Wood is a very well-used woodland located to the south of Livingston, either side of Bankton Park. According to 2023-2026 West Lothian Locality Plan, Livingston has a population of around 57,000 and approximately 7,000 people of this total reside in the Dedridge area. The woodland is a significant asset for Livingston, providing a valuable outdoor resource for the thriving local population in a highly urbanised setting.

Prior to the mid-1800s, the area surrounding Dedridge Wood was previously agricultural land. Historical maps suggest that the section now referred to as compartment 38 was previously known as Dedridge Quarry, limestone. The later 1888-1915 map notes this quarry as being disused and there are no obvious visible features remaining for quarrying on the site. Nevertheless, evidence of historical human influence is visible on site through a drystone dyke present on the eastern boundary of compartment 38, presumably previously used as a boundary marker for the area. Compartment 42, on the other hand, is thought to have been associated with Bankton House.

The woodland compartments are now surrounded by residential housing and schools- specifically James Young High School and Cedarbank School to the northern compartment of 38 and Williamston Primary next to compartment 42. Other community amenities are also located close by including Crofthead Farm, Community Garden and the West Lothian Bike Library to the west and Lanthorn Community Centre to the northeast.

As of 2025, Dedridge Wood provides highly for tree equity with scoring 100 (out of 100) across compartments 39 and 42, due to the good access to trees and woodlands within the community for health, climatic and economic benefits. However, towards the score is lower towards the north of the site with compartment 38 scoring only 73 due to a lower canopy cover of 15 percent. Therefore, this area has been identified as 'High' priority for tree equity improvements. Ideally, the tree cover in the surrounding vicinity should double (to 30%) to improve tree equity within the low scoring sections.

The level of public use for Dedridge Woods is defined as WT Access Category A (High usage) and most users live locally. The site is regularly used by dogwalkers and cyclists for informal recreation. Dedridge wood is an important commuting route used by families on a daily basis as they travel to school and work. Each compartment is within 1 mile (approx. under 30 minutes) walking distance of South Livingston train station. The nearest bus stop is on Dedridge West Road, immediately adjacent to Blocks 38 & 39 along pavements. There is no Woodland Trust car park at the site; parking is limited to neighbouring residential areas either side of the woodland.

There are 13 entrances to the woodland across this site. Each entrance is barrier-free and identified with green welcome plaques on posts which were installed in early 2020. The woodland compartments are generally accessible directly from the surrounding suburban roads and pavement network. Internally, there is a network of approximately 1km of paths. The are a mix of both surfaced and unsurfaced paths within the site. The majority of the internal paths are well drained and remain dry throughout the year. However, the path between Cedarbank School and Alexander Drive which is regularly muddy during spells of wet weather.

Due to the layout of the woods, most routes are linear. Return routes are also available on tarmac paths out with the woodland boundaries and the paths link into a wider network of paths and Greenways throughout Livingston.

Compartment 42 is located in close proximity to two core paths- WL14 Murieston Trail to the south and the WL31 Loan Path to the north. Following this core path to the west leads users to the nearest Woodland Trust site of Bellsquarry Wood. The Core Path also extends further to other Woodland Trust sites in Livingston including Knightsridge Wood and North Wood. Compartment 38 is next to Froggy Park, also known as Quarry Park, which includes a pond and a pump track and features tarmac paths. This area is owned by West Lothian Council and its maintenance is supported by local volunteers.

Other than the dyke previously noted, built structures are mainly found within compartment 42, known locally as Williamston Wood. This section features two sculptures, a welcome doorway entrance on the northern boundary and a 'Wonderful Williamston Wood' sign.

Since the Woodland Trust's acquisition of Dedridge Wood in 1996, replanting efforts have included interaction with James Young High School in compartment 38 during 2004. Unfortunately, during the immediate years following the planting, the trees suffered from vandalism. Woodland Trust ensured that the area was promptly replanted, and this specific anti-social behaviour activity lessened by 2007 and these trees have now become well established.

Litter is a reoccurring issue in compartment 38 as it is a key route to James Young High School. Other anti-social behaviour continues on site with occasional fires in compartment 38c and regular incidents of fly tipping, garden waste dumping along the residential housing boundaries across the compartments.

A Woodland Working Group (WWG) was also set up for the Woodland Trust sites in West Lothian during late 2019. The aim of this group is to conduct practical conservation tasks across the 16 Woodland Trust sites in the area. There are also numerous Volunteer Woodland Wardens that cover the Woodland Trust sites in West Lothian who regularly patrol the sites and provide reports of any issues. Currently (2025) there is two Volunteer Warden specifically dedicated to Dedridge Wood.

Furthermore, the local 'West Lothian Litter Pickers' group covers many of the Woodland Trust sites in Livingston, including Dedridge Woods, and wider West Lothian. Their work helps to keep the sites clean as well as encouraging community engagement for the sites and reporting any issues of concern.

Woodland Trust attends meetings with the Dedridge Locality Planning partners group and West Lothian Partnership Against Rural Crime (WLPARC) to discuss incidents and issues affecting woodland use and management with other local services and landowners across the wider area. This has enabled open discussion to recognise trends and ability to streamline messaging and identify possible opportunities for collaboration and partnership working across the area.

Significance

Dedridge Wood is a popular local wood accessible to a large demographic of people and easily reached with or without transport and therefore the site provides a chance to promote access to a safe, natural environment close to where people live.

It is walked regularly by local dog walkers and commuters and forms an essential part of the local access network, providing varied and alternative routes to pavements, as well as linking to longer distance routes and connecting

communities to areas of open space.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints
Anti-social behaviour such as fires and fly tipping present a safety hazard to visitors as well as being detrimental to the natural beauty of this wood and its wildlife. Previous incidents of fires and vandalism also discourages investment in installation of structures such as benches or signage.

The existence of the drystone dyke in compartment 38 needs to be considered and protected during operations on site.

Some areas of the paths which are unsurfaced can remain muddy throughout the year which can make the area inaccessible especially for those with mobility issues. Poorly drained soils make access provisions difficult to maintain on soft surface routes.

Linear nature of site constrains potential for large circular routes within the site.

No formal car parking, which can cause problems with neighbours and visitors parking on the local roads. This could restrict the opportunity for larger scale events on site that may attract audiences from further afield.

The limited open ground within the site restricts the ability to conduct more planting at Dedridge Wood itself to help improve the Tree Equity Score of the wider area.

Opportunities
To further develop access facilities within the site such as benches, responding reactively to user demand.

There are multiple active local volunteer groups working in the Community garden, Froggy Pond and Lanthorn Park areas as well as the local Scouts. There are opportunities to engage with these groups and collaborate with them on volunteer projects were possible and appropriate. Furthermore, considering the close proximity to local schools (such as James Young High, Cedarbank school and Williamston Primary school) relationships can be built to further promote and use the woodland as an educational resource. This engagement help to foster a positive connection between local families and the woods encouraging stewardship and preventing anti-social behaviour.

Opportunity to develop the Woodland Trust volunteer group to become more self-led.

Proximity to other Woodland Trust sites close by allows for potential to group works (such as footpath upgrades) together to be more efficient and cost effective.

Factors Causing Change

Continuous litter, fires and fly tipping detract from the natural beauty of this site could cause long-term environmental damage, as well as being hazardous to staff and public using the site.

As the vegetation along the paths edges grows in, this reduces visibility and potentially resulting in personal safety concerns by users.

The recent construction of Cedarbank School has influenced the travel through and use of the neighbouring woodland (compartment 38) including increasing demand on the unsurfaced paths.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Considering the wood's location within the central belt and proximity to large populations, the intention is to use the woods to improve and raise awareness, through education, of the biodiversity, recreation and health benefits woodlands provide.

The site should be safe and welcoming with management of infrastructure, signage and well-maintained network of paths ensuring suitable access across the site.

Litter and fly-tipping will be removed as far as resources allow, to maintain the natural appearance of the wood and discouraging further mistreatment of the woodland.

The site will continue to be promoted as a local resource local schools and community groups. It should be well used, appreciated and respected by the local community, known for its wildlife interest and habitats.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

During this plan period, the short-term objective is to continue to provide public access at Dedridge Wood which is safe and enjoyable. Access provision for this site will be in keeping with WT access category A (high usage). This will be achieved by:

1) The site will be kept in a safe and welcoming condition through site maintenance:
a) Path cuts and entrance maintenance (twice annually)
b) Vegetation cut backs from streetlights to allow lines of sight where possible and appropriate (as per site risk assessment)
- i) compartment 42a- approx. 250m
- ii) compartment 38c- approx. 210m
- iii) compartment 39a- approx. 150m

c) Litter and fly tip uplift (as required)
d) Regular site safety inspections (tree safety, footbridges, steps, benches, fencing) (as per site risk assessment)

2) Improving visitor access by upgrading infrastructure:
a) Scrape back and surface the linear route in compartment 38a (approximately 150m) to standard 1.6m width (2027/2028)
b) Installation of appropriate signage, including timber welcome board and renewed welcome posts are required for up to 12 entrances (before the end of the plan period)

3) Providing and developing more opportunities for community engagement:
a) Continue to meet with the West Lothian Partnership Against Rural Crime (WLPARC) group to discuss updates and anti-social issues on site and collaborate with other local organisations where possible and appropriate (ongoing)
b) Conduct Woodland Working Group sessions on site such as invasive species removal, thinning small trees (as required)
c) Liaise with local schools and community groups regarding any possibilities for improvements in tree equity and wider environmental learning and identify opportunities for collaboration (before the end of the plan period)

4.2 f2 Long Established Woodland of Plantation Origin

Description

Covering a total of over 3.7ha, Dedridge Wood encompasses three woodland compartments (38, 39 and 42). The compartments are small woodland blocks, predominantly mature policy plantings that have been retained for shelter and screening. The majority of the site has consistent flat terrain.

Compartments 38c, 39a and 42 appear to contain trees on the 1860 OS map. Existence of continuous woodland cover from at least the 1860s suggests that these areas should be designated as Long Establish Woodland of Plantation Origin (LEPO) (specifically 2b). These sections may have been missed from the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) due to the small size of the compartments. Nevertheless, their age suggests that they are likely to have a higher conservation value, such as a more complex species composition and remanent features, compared to more recent plantation areas. As these compartments constitute the majority of this site, Dedridge Wood as a whole will be managed as a LEPO woodland.

This whole site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), specifically protecting any trees that were present on the site prior to 1965. In addition, compartment 42a is also covered by the Bankton House Tree Preservation order which covers trees that were present on the site prior to 1990. Any works on these trees requires permission from the West Lothian Council prior to commencement.

The overall mix of species contains broadleaves and conifers with a significant variety of species present including; beech, ash, sessile oak, pedunculate oak, wild cherry, rowan, silver birch, downy birch, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, crab apple, holly, elder, willow, dog rose, dogwood, alder, aspen, sycamore, beech, hornbeam, lime, elm, Sitka spruce, Norway spruce, larch, lodgepole pine and Scots pine. Nevertheless, mature beech and Scots pine are the dominant trees found throughout each compartment.

Natural regeneration seems to be typically dominated by beech, ash and holly across the compartments. This is due, in part to closed canopy restricting light levels and limiting further regeneration especially for the species which are less shade tolerant.

Since acquisition by the Woodland Trust in 1996, the woodland management has focused on retention of the woodland. Thinning was conducted across the compartments in 2002 and 2013 mainly focusing on conifers and beech. Previously a mown grassy area, compartment 38b was planted by James Young High School in 2004. Significant replacement planting was required due to vandalism in the following years. Now, over 20 years on, the trees in this

area have become well established and would benefit from thinning to encourage age diversity and allow more light to the understorey.

Whilst there are no ancient or veteran trees noted in Dedridge Wood, mature individuals are present, particularly in compartments 42, 39 and 38c.

Overall the site is well-drained. A small watercourse is present on site in the form of small drainage ditches that run west to east parallel to the street-lit path along the northern boundary of compartment 38. This small burn running will add some biodiversity to the woodland fed by an underground water from the nearby Froggy pond. It crosses the compartment from west to east and flows into the River Almond network. This burn periodically presents with orange colouration which is thought to be a result of dissolved iron causing oxidisation as the water moves from underground to the open ditch, potentially also somewhat influenced by the historic quarry use.

Compartment 42a is located next to Williamston Primary School and borders housing in Bankton Glade. This section is dominated by mature beech, potentially dating from the Bankton House Estate planting. However, in 2018 Phytophthora cambivora was recorded in this sub-compartment. This resulted in numerous mature beech trees being removed as their rapid decline caused a safety risk to the public and neighbouring housing. The selective fell increased the light and has boosted natural regeneration in this compartment.

Ash die back (ADB), also referred to as Chalara, is also present on site and throughout Livingston causing rapid decline of this species in some areas. Ash tree mapping was conducted in 2020 and identified that there were low densities of this species throughout Dedridge Wood. Since the initial mapping, gradual removal has been conducted for individual ash trees in decline. This has reduced the overall density of ash on this site, the individual ash trees remaining are assessed annually for their response to the disease.

Standing and fallen deadwood is retained on site following safety works on individual trees, where possible and appropriate to do so. When felled, timber is left in large sections to avoid fire lighting on site and provide maximum ecological benefit supporting invertebrates, fungi and other wildlife. In compartment 39, significant deadwood was retained during the earlier thinning works (c.2013) including numerous Scots pine monoliths, many of which have evident woodpecker holes. In contrast, the younger woodland areas of the site, namely compartments 38a and 38b, currently have very minimal examples of fallen or standing deadwood.

Invasive species of Rhododendron ponticum was identified on site in compartment 42a since 2020. The majority of the density in the area lies out with the Woodland Trust boundary so collaboration is required to prevent reinfestation following removal. Pockets of laurel are also present in compartment 38a and snowberry is also common on site.

The dominant floral species across the woodland include brambles, rosebay willow herb, ferns such as buckler, nettles and grasses such as Yorkshire fog and plicate sweet grass. There are occasional patches of honeysuckle in compartment 38c and avens are present in areas with wet flushes. Ivy is particularly common in the northwest of compartment 42a. Regular dumping of garden waste has also contributed to the presence of garden escapees establishing in the woodland. Species include crocosmia, variegated yellow archangel and cotoneaster. The latter of which is spread across the site.

Considering much of the woodland is formed and functions as shelter belts, open ground on the site is limited. The largest area of open ground within the site boundary is present to the northwestern corner of compartment 38c which has been retained as open grassland. However, there is also open ground present within the immediately surrounding landscape such as Froggy Park next to compartment 38c.

Whilst there are minimal official species records for this site, grey squirrels, magpies, wood pigeons and blue tits are regularly sighted in the area and smaller mammals and invertebrates are also likely to benefit from the woodland cover. There are also anecdotal references of great spotted woodpecker, spotted flycatcher, tree creeper, song thrush and pipistrelle bats using Dedridge Woods.

Significance

The wood is a significant feature of the local landscape and provides amenity value and screening next to housing, schools and roads.

Whilst their small size and fragmentation many limit the site's conservation value, the majority of these woodland pockets have been continuously covered by woodland from at least the 1860s and are important for local biodiversity.

Open ground in the surrounding landscape has gradually been replaced by development, increasing the importance and significance of these woodland blocks as essential refuges for from the built-up urban area and surrounding infrastructure.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities

Proximity to other Woodland Trust sites such as Wilderness and Bellsquarry Wood close by allows for potential to group works (such as felling) together to be more efficient and cost effective.

Ongoing senescence of mature beech, presence of ash die back and continuing windblow will lead to an opportunity to retain deadwood, in areas where is it suitable to do so, to increase habitat diversity across the site and opportunities to diversify the canopy and age structure.

Thinning and tree safety works throughout the compartments will also contribute to increased age complexity and levels of fallen and standing deadwood throughout the woodland. This intervention would particularly benefit the younger areas of woodland including 38a and 38b where currently (2025) deadwood and age complexity is limited. Thinning works should prioritise non-native conifer species and any poorly formed growth within falling distance of paths and housing. The method of reducing some of the Scots pine trees would retain standing deadwood in 38a (as has already been achieved in compartment 39). This would allow more light to the understorey which support more varied flora communities as well as increasing the deadwood density on site.

Opportunity to identify any mature individual trees that may require halo thinning including any older trees located in 38a 38b which should be retained, considering the majority of the stand is from more recent planting.

Potential to conduct enrichment planting in thinned areas with mixed native shrubs (i.e. hazel and bird cherry).

Removal of the remaining non-native conifers (mainly Sitka spruce in compartment 38c and lodgepole pine in compartment 42a) would help to increase light levels and support more biodiversity.

Constraints

The site's history of anti-social instances needs to be considered for any interventions and possible immediate and long-term management implications. For instance, to reduce the risk of vandalism to newly planted areas, the use of tree shelters should be avoided during any planting on site. Fires are relatively common in compartment 38c which may restrict opportunities for leaving dead wood (particularly smaller branch wood) in this area.

The conservation value of the woods is limited by the small size and fragmentation of the woodland blocks within an urban setting. Furthermore, the linear nature of the compartments and the presence of multiple footpaths as well as proximity to housing, roads and pavements restricts scope for retaining windblow and standing deadwood in some areas.

Whilst there is minimal browsing noted for Dedridge Wood, roe deer are common throughout woodlands in Livingston. Furthermore, squirrel damage is apparent and threatens young regeneration mature trees on site. The urban location restricts the suitability and efficiency of possible control methods. With this in mind, no management of the species will be undertaken for the foreseeable future and further investment may be required to replace damaged trees.

Proximity to residential housing restricts planting of larger species such as oak in order to avoid future conflict as the tree matures.

The existence of the drystone dyke along the eastern boundary of compartment 38 needs to be considered and protected during operations on site.

Full eradication of the invasive garden escapee species such as variegated yellow archangel, cotoneaster and crocosmia from the site is impeded by the regular instances of garden waste dumping which is difficult to manage for this site.

Factors Causing Change

The closed canopy nature of the woodland and pockets of dense planting and non-native species such as beech, sycamore, Sitka spruce and snowberry restrict light levels causing a reduction in ground flora and suppressed natural regeneration. Regeneration across the site is mainly Ash, beech and sycamore. This is concerning as the ash regen may not be tolerant of ADB and the beech and sycamore is likely to outcompete native species and may not be appropriate for the surroundings.

Although overall browsing does not appear to be significantly impacting regeneration, this may be because these are small, narrow woodland strips with high levels of human and dog presence causing regular disturbance. Damage by grey squirrels is evident on this site, particularly in compartment 42a, which suppresses natural regeneration and the continued healthy growth of established trees.

Presence of Rhododendron ponticum on council land neighbouring Dedridge Wood is a potential seed source for reinfestation. Ideally this should be removed at the same time as these species being treated within the Woodland Trust boundary to avoid invasives returning to site once removed.

Other invasive species present such as snowberry, cotoneaster and crocosmia in the woodland could potentially become dominant, outcompeting native species. These species should be monitored and prevented from spreading beyond their current location.

Garden waste dumping is an issue particularly in compartments 38a and 39. This anti-social behaviour not only compromises the beauty of the site but also undermines the native flora species as more invasive species are introduced and spread through the woodland. Garden waste can also facilitate the spread of tree diseases.

A Health Plant Notice (SPHN) for Phytophthora ramorum was issued for an area to the north of Livingston in 2018. Whilst the effect buffer zone did not reach Dedridge, it is likely the disease will continue to spread. This could impact areas of the site that do contain larch such as compartment 38c and 42a. However, as there are only a few individual trees in these areas the impact to the overall composition of the woodland would be minimal.

Phytophthora cambivora may still be present at Dedridge which remains a threat for the remaining mature beech and oak in the area. The large mature beech trees which are such a feature in the West Lothian landscape also tend to be of a similar age and are now subject to ongoing senescence. They are becoming increasingly vulnerable to storm damage and disease which is becoming a challenge to manage in terms of tree safety and maintenance of the forested landscape. This is particularly relevant for compartment 42a which encompasses the majority of the mature beech at Dedridge Wood, including along residential boundaries.

Ash die back (ADB) is present on site and throughout Livingston. Due to the high proportion of ash at Dedridge Wood, this disease will have a significant impact on the composition of this woodland. This will increase the volume of standing deadwood in areas where it is suitable to retain declining individuals (i.e. away from roads and footpaths). Due to the prevalence of ADB, Ash will also not be included within restocking. Therefore, its density on the site overall is likely to decline in the long term.

Whilst there will be no deliberate attempts to establish more open ground on the site, areas of the canopy will naturally open-up gradually in response to ageing, disease and response to extreme weather conditions and tree safety works.

Areas of invasive species such as Rhododendron ponticum, laurel, beech and sycamore restrict light levels. Rododendron ponticum has been mapped on site in 2020 and are also present on neighbouring land outside of the Woodland Trust boundary. If this is not removed this invasive species could continue to spread at the detriment to natural regeneration, woodland specialist flora and overall biodiversity across the site.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain a diverse, mixed age and mixed species woodland habitat in perpetuity. Woodland composition will be varied, and predominately native broadleaves. Individual examples of some conifers, particularly Scots pine which is

featured throughout West Lothian, will be retained. Whilst a proportion of non-native species such as beech and sycamore will be accepted, the regeneration and ground flora will be monitored to ensure acceptable levels throughout the woodland.

Openings in the canopy due to felling, tree safety works, storm damage and senescence will allow for the regeneration or planting of native tree and shrub species to diversify the age structure of the woodland and encourage healthy ground flora communities. Biodiversity will be safeguarded by controlling the spread of invasive non-native invasive species where practical.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

The focus of the STOs for Dedridge Wood will be to improve biodiversity and resilience on the site through the following objectives:

1) Improve awareness and recording of species presence on site and wider area:
a) Commission ecological surveys across the site identify sensitive areas/species requiring additional mitigation for site works (prior to path or significant felling works commencing)
b) Identify and map any ancient or veteran trees present on site for protection and appropriate consideration during operations (before the end of the plan period)
c) Map invasive species across the site to identify hot spots, species density and priority areas for control (before the end of the plan period)
d) Discuss areas of non-native species and deer and squirrel management with neighbouring land owners including West Lothian Council within Livingston and explore possibilities for a collaborative approach concerning monitoring of these species and their impact locally (ongoing)

2) Increase tree species diversity and age complexity through targeted woodland restructuring (by the end of the plan period):
a) Thinning (up to 25 percent of each compartment):
    i) Compartment 38a- prioritising removal of poorly formed trees (mostly Scots pine and beech)
    ii) Compartment 38b- halo thin around any existing veteran or future veteran trees
    iii) Compartment 42a specifically lodgepole pine and beech understorey
b) Selective felling of Sitka spruce in compartment 38c (approximately 30 trees covering an area of ~ 0.2ha)
c) Increase deadwood levels on site including retaining standing dead trees where it is safe and appropriate to do so, away from boundaries and paths, and leaving fallen timber from tree safety works including gradual ash removal across each compartment in response to ADB (as required)

3) Optimise on potential areas for restructuring by adding species diversity and age complexity:
a) Restock selective felled area in compartment 38c (approximately 0.2ha) estimated approximately 400 trees to be planted as higher density will be more appropriate in this area considering the history of vandalism to tree shelters. Species to include mixed native broadleaves such as hazel, hawthorn, elder, holly, bird cherry, birch and rowan (following the completion of the felling works)
b) Monitor felled areas for natural regeneration and vitality of restocking. Identify if any additional planting is required in felled areas to ensure stocking density is obtained (annually between felling completion and the end of the plan

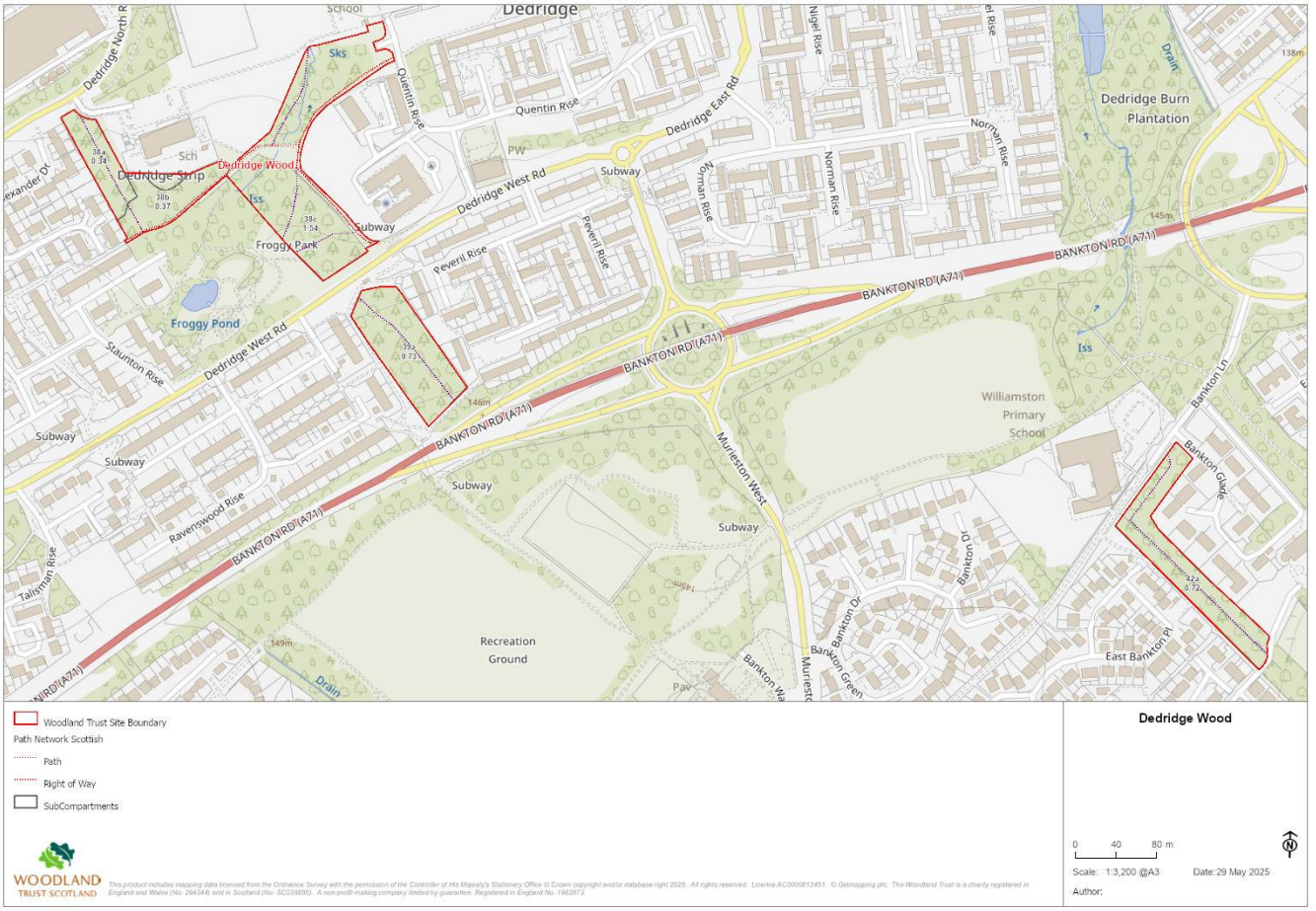
period)
c) Weeding and replacing any dead planted trees to ensure fulfilment of felling licence conditions where Sitka is removed in compartment 38c (for 3 years following restocking)

4) Protecting the site's biodiversity by working towards the eradication of invasive species during this plan period:
a) Removal of named species via non-chemical methods such as removal with hand tools due to small, young patches (2025 onwards):

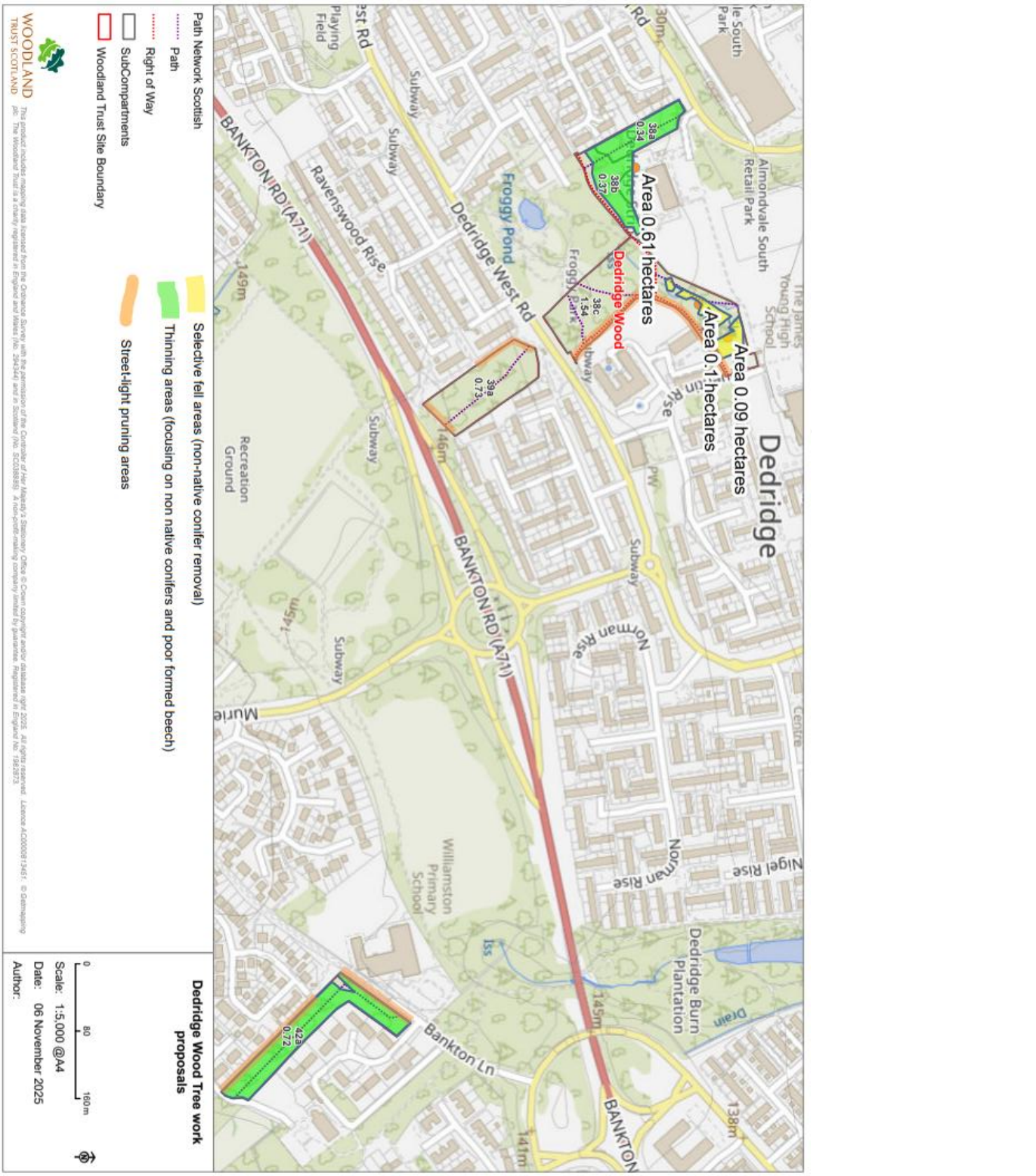
i) Removal of rhododendron ponticum in compartment 42a
ii) snowberry (compartment 38c)
iii) laurel (38a and 38c)
iv) crocosmia (compartment 39)
v) cotoneaster (all compartments)

b) Review results of removal works to determine if non-chemical removal has been successful in eradication, should be continued in the next planning period or has been ineffective (annually following removal efforts)
c) Raising awareness regarding invasive garden species and the risk of garden/organic waste dumping through engagement with surrounding residents and landowners (as required in response to instances noted on site)

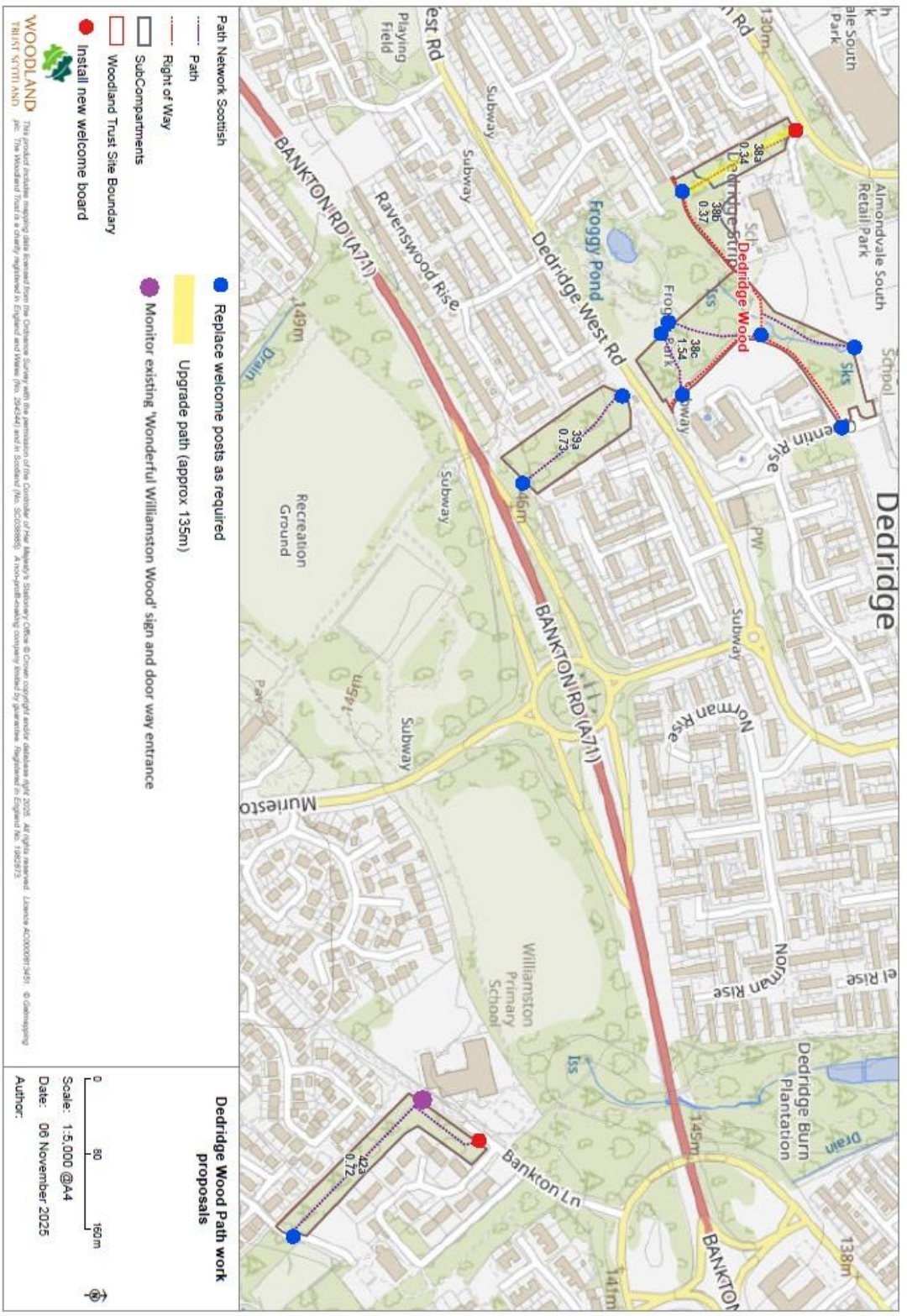
APPENDIX 1 : SITE COMPARMENT MAP



APPENDIX 2 : SITE PROPOSED TREE WORK MAP



APPENDIX 3 : SITE PROPOSED PATH WORK MAP



APPENDIX 4 : HARVESTING TABLE (20 YEARS)

Compartment	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Forecast Year	Estimated Total Volume (m3)
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2027	1
38c	Selective Fell- (removal of non-native mainly along path in the north eastern side of the compartment)	1.54	2029	20
38a	Thinning (Scots pine)	0.34	2029	10
38b	Thinning (non-native conifers)	1.54	2029	10
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2029	1
42a	Thinning (beech, ash and non-native conifers)	0.72	2030	20
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2031	1
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2033	1
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2035	1
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2037	1
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2039	1
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2041	1
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2043	1
38c, 39a, 42a	Street-light pruning, 42a- 250m, 38c- 210m 39a- 150m	0.06	2045	1

APPENDIX 5 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
38a	0.36	Scots pine	1975	High forest	Services & Wayleaves, Housing/infrastructure, structures & water feature	Tree Preservation Order
'Dedridge Strip' a stand of semi mature Scots pine with beech and several other occasional species. Bounded by Dedridge North road to the north, to the west by Alexander Way and to the east by the Cedarbank School. Ground flora is dominated by bramble where light levels are good. Deadwood is limited in this compartment. Flyipping is common along the western boundary with the housing. The entrance to the north has a fence with a pedestrian gap leading onto an unsurfaced path that travels southwards to meet the street-lit tarmac track leading directly from Alexander Way.						
38b	0.37	Birch (downy/silver)	2004	Min-intervention	Services & wayleaves	Tree Preservation Order
Located to the south of Cedarbank School, this area of the 'Dedridge Strip' was planted with approximately 700 trees by 1st year pupils James Young High School as part of Trees for All campaign in 2004. Species include Scots pine, oak, ash, willow, birch, rowan, hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn. Historically drainage was poor in this area resulting in so much of this section remaining wet throughout the winter months. However, this has improved as the trees have become more established. Ground flora includes mixed semi-improved to wet grassland species. The southern boundary of this sub compartment includes a street-lit tarmac track. Underground sewage and electricity lines are present in this compartment.						
38c	1.54	Mixed broadleaves	1900	Min-intervention	Services & wayleaves	Tree Preservation Order
Mature mixed stand of Scots pine, beech, ash, oak, with Sitka spruce and sycamore. Understorey, predominantly towards the south of the sub compartment includes rowan, Sitka spruce, ash, beech and oak. Ground flora comprises of brambles, nettles with broad buckler fern towards the south. Occasional deadwood throughout. Ditch runs from west to east along the northern section of this compartment. Froggy Park is located to the west of this compartment. Litter is common in this compartment as it is well-used by students on their commute to/from James Young High School.						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
There is underground sewage lines that are present within this sub compartment and street-lights are present along the tarmac tracks along the northern and eastern boundary.						
39a	0.73	Scots pine	1900	Min-intervention	Services & Wayleaves, Housing/infrastructure, structures & water feature	Tree Preservation Order
'Dedridge Strip South'- Stand of mature Scots pine, with occasional ash, sycamore, birch, pedunculate oak and hawthorn. The understorey consists of beech, birch and occasional holly and field maple. The ground flora contains soft grasses with areas of bramble. Good volumes of standing and fallen deadwood throughout the compartment following previous thinning works. Garden waste dumping is a common issue along the western boundary and fly tipping is also common along the eastern boundary next to the housing. This compartment has an underground gas pipeline runs along the western boundary and bisects through the northern section of this compartment and connects to the governing station on the northeastern corner of the woodland. Other underground services, including water, electricity and telephone are present on the outskirts of this compartment. There is also a small electrical services box present on the northwestern boundary of the site.						
42a	0.72	Beech	1900	Min-intervention	Services & Wayleaves, Housing/infrastructure, structures & water feature	Tree Preservation Order
'Bankton House Strip' Stand of mature beech with Scots pine and the occasional lime, downy birch, sycamore and pedunculate oak. The understorey contains frequent beech and rowan regeneration with sycamore, holly and ash also present. The ground flora is comprised of areas of heather and blaeberry mixed with areas of soft grasses and there is a small damp area with rushes located towards the north west of the compartment. Levels of dead wood are good with numerous large beech trunks from wind damage and tree safety felling works. There is a 'Welcome to Williamston Wood' sign and and timber doorway sculpture entrance present on the northern boundary opposite Williamston Primary School. Underground electrical and gas service lines are present along the northern boundary close to Williamston Primary School.						

GLOSSARY

Ancient Woodland
Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland
Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

Ancient Woodland Site
Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

Beating Up
Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

Broadleaf
A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

Canopy
The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

Clearfell
Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment
Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

Conifer
A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

Continuous Cover forestry

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

Coppice
Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

Exotic (non-native) Species
Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

Field Layer
Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

Group Fell
The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

Long Term Retention
Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

Minimum Intervention
Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

Mixed Woodland
Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)
A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

Native Species
Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration
Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

Origin & Provenance

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

Re-Stocking
Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

Shrub Layer
Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand
Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

Sub-Compartment
Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

Thinning
The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes
Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

Weeding
The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established.

Windblow/Windthrow
Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.

Registered Office:
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