



**Symmetry Park,
Oxford North**

**Woodland
Management
Plan**

Prepared by:
**The Environmental
Dimension
Partnership Ltd**

On behalf of:
**Tritax Symmetry Ltd
and Siemens
Healthineers**

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Appendix

Appendix EDP 1 Work Programme for Woodland Management Operations

Plan

Plan EDP 1 Woodland Management Plan
(edp2425_d047a 27 May 2022 VMS/LT)

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Section 1

Introduction

Background and Planning Context

- 1.1 This Woodland Management Plan (WMP) has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd. It has been commissioned by Tritax Symmetry Ltd and Siemens Healthineers (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicants').
- 1.2 The WMP relates to a 2.5-acre block of woodland, of which one acre has been identified as ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW).
- 1.3 The wood is located on the western boundary of the proposed development area and is located using the Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) SP 55221 19605.
- 1.4 The WMP has been produced to accompany a detailed planning application, for the proposed development of the land immediately to the south and east of the woodland.

General Scope and Purpose of the Woodland Management Plan

- 1.5 Purpose: The purpose of the plan will be to provide a written framework for agreed means of securing long-term protection and enhancement of the woodland.
- 1.6 Lifespan: This plan will contain:
 - Detailed proposals for the implementation of enhancement measures during Years 1 to 5 after the completion of the development; and
 - A longer-term programme of inputs covering Years 6 to 10, which shall be implemented as described (unless agreed otherwise during one of the reviews described below).
- 1.7 Review Period: The provisions of the plan will be reviewed at Year 5 (after the initial enhancement period), Year 10 and Year 15. Any amendments shall be approved in writing by Cherwell District Council (CDC).
- 1.8 Scope: The scope of the plan will encompass all those measures and monitoring required to bring about successful delivery, establishment and ongoing management of the woodland, without detriment to the existing fabric of the woodland.
- 1.9 Site Area: The Woodland Management Plan found to the rear of this report depicts the extent of woodland that is the focus of this management plan.

1.10 Aims: The aims of the management plan are:

- To establish a long-term programme of restoration and enhancement of the woodland, in accordance with best arboricultural practice;
- To ensure the enhancement of the woodland's existing habitats for the benefit of a range of wildlife species;
- To manage existing access and introduce protection measures to mitigate against the impact of informal pedestrian traffic (trampling); and
- To set out a maintenance regime for management of the tree stock.

1.11 Relevant Baseline Documents: The documents relevant to this plan are those prepared by EDP (including the Arboricultural Assessment and Ecological Appraisal) submitted in support of the planning application for the development of the adjacent land.

Section 2

Baseline Woodland Conditions

2.1 This section sets out the current character and wildlife interest of the woodland, which has been assessed through ecological and arboricultural surveys undertaken within, and around the woodland, by EDP between 2021 and 2022, namely:

- BS 5837:2012 compliant tree survey;
- Extended Phase 1 Ecological Survey; and
- Specific detailed surveys for dormouse and bats.

Woodland Composition

2.2 The wood is unmanaged. The dominant trees are oak (*Quercus sp.*), ash (*Fraxinus sp.*) and willow (*Salix sp.*) with an understorey of hazel (*Corylus sp.*), hawthorn (*Crataegus sp.*), and elder (*Sambucus sp.*) species. There are mature standards of oak, occasional mature ash, and mature willow and aspen (*Populus sp.*), particularly on the boundary.

2.3 The hazel is over-stood and can be considered lapsed coppice.

2.4 The ground flora consisted of cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) with frequent wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*). The mature trees support epiphytic bryophytes, and fungi are present on some of the trees and also on deadwood. Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) has become abundant in the field layer in some areas of the woodland. There are patches of nettle (*Urtica dioica*) in particularly disturbed areas.

Woodland Compartments and Proposed Enhancement

2.5 The following is to be read in conjunction with the Woodland Management Plan, found to the rear of this report.

2.6 Compartment 1 - Broad-leaved woodland, currently 'lowland mixed deciduous woodland' of 'moderate' condition, enhanced to 'good' condition, through implementation of the measures outlined above for the ancient woodland.

2.7 Compartment 2 - The woodland pond, currently 'ponds (non-Priority Habitat)' of 'moderate' condition, enhanced to 'good' condition. This will be achieved through removal of artificial connections (pipes, ditches) to the pond, planting of appropriate native marginal and aquatic planted species, and fencing off the woodland will also help to prevent negative impacts to the pond from disturbance and damage.

- 2.8 Compartment 3 - Ancient woodland, currently 'lowland mixed deciduous woodland' of 'moderate' condition; however, the condition can be improved. This will be achieved through supplementary planting of a variety of native woodland and shrub species; protection of woodland from herbivore browsing and damage from adjacent activities, through installation of fencing around the exterior of the woodland and the use of tree guards on planted trees; continuation of past coppicing of appropriate species through implementation of a coppice rotation; and sowing of an appropriate native species-rich woodland ground flora seed mix.

Impact of Public Access

- 2.9 The wood is not currently accessible to the public, there are no formal or informal routes through the woodland.

Habitats

- 2.10 In addition to the ancient woodland habitat and associated plant community, the wildlife species supported by the local woodland habitat, as identified during surveys in 2021 and 2022, or through records searches, is summarised below.

Birds

- 2.11 The wood provides opportunities for bird nesting and foraging., such as great-spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*), chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*), blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*), willow warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*), blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), great tit (*Parus major*), coal tit (*Periparus ater*), wren (*Troglodytidae*), chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), common whitethroat (*Curruca communis*) and mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*).

Bats

- 2.12 The wood provides opportunities for bat roosting and foraging, and together with the hedgerow/scrub network bounding the wider site, has been found to support low to moderate levels of commuting and foraging activity by a small range of bat species. The abundance and diversity of species recorded is considered to be typical of an urban edge farmland site.

Badger

- 2.13 Several active badger setts are located at the periphery of the woodland.

Conclusion

- 2.14 Despite its relatively small size, the wood is currently assessed as in moderate condition (in ecological terms). The woodland canopy is continuous over more than 80% of the

woodland (target 60-90%) and there has been no recent loss of canopy or habitat, and no change in the amount of open space. There is understorey and dead wood present throughout the wood, a good age diversity and plenty of young saplings, indicating good regeneration potential. There is no evidence of problematic non-native shrubs or diseases in the woodland.

- 2.15 The wood is of moderate value in its current state, supporting a range of wildlife species. However, there is significant scope to increase the value of the woodland as a feature in its own right, and in terms of its wildlife interest.

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Section 3

Woodland Management Plan

The Woodland

- 3.1 This WMP relates to an approximately 2.5-acre block of woodland, of which one acre has been identified as ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW). The wood is on the western boundary of the proposed development area and is located using the Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) SP 55221 19605.

Vision and Objectives

- 3.2 This WMP has been prepared with the following overall vision for the wood:

“To safeguard, restore and manage the woodland so that it thrives in perpetuity, providing public amenity and environmental benefits.”

- 3.3 This will be achieved through the objectives listed in **Table EDP 3.1**.

Table EDP 3.1: Woodland Objectives

| Reference No. | Feature | Objective | Compartments |
|---------------|--------------------------|---|--------------|
| 0.1 | Arboricultural assets | Encourage the continued growth and establishment of the maturing stands of broadleaved woodland. | All |
| 0.2 | Woodland ecology | Create additional habitats to benefit locally occurring species of wildlife. | All |
| 0.3 | Arboricultural assets | Ensure safe and viable retention of the existing and proposed tree stock to maintain public safety. | All |
| 0.4 | Monitoring/ - governance | Ensure that any woodland management works are undertaken to suitably high standards. | All |
| 0.5 | Arboricultural assets | Supplementary planting with a variety of native woodland and shrub species. | C1 & 3 |
| 0.6 | Woodland ecology | Install fencing. | All |

Woodland Risks and Protection

- 3.4 This section describes the protected species and the risks to the woodland's overall condition which were identified in the baseline surveys. These will need to be considered during the planning and implementation of any management actions proposed.

Protected Species Legislation

Birds

- 3.5 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), with certain species afforded additional protection measures. In addition, certain conservation concern species are listed as UK priority species.
- 3.6 Preliminary Guidance: Any removal or disturbance of potential bird nesting habitat (such as trees, scrub, bramble or dense ivy) should either be undertaken between September and February inclusive, or following inspection for active nests by a suitably qualified ecologist.

Bats

- 3.7 All species of British bat are listed as a European Protected Species (EPS) on Schedule 2 of the *Conservation Regulations* (Annex IV (a) to the *Habitats Directive*). This affords bats and their roosts strict protection under the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (as amended). Additional protection for bats is also afforded under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* and a subset of the British bat assemblage are listed as UK priority species.
- 3.8 Preliminary Guidance: Advice from a suitably qualified ecologist should be sought before the felling of, or removal of limbs, from trees containing any of the following potential bat roosting features:
- Loose/peeling/fissured bark;
 - Natural holes e.g. rot holes and holes from fallen limbs;
 - Woodpecker holes;
 - Cracks/splits or hollow tree trunks/limbs; and
 - Thick-stemmed ivy.

Badger

- 3.9 Badgers and their setts receive protection under the *Protection of Badgers Act 1992*, which protects badgers from deliberate harm and injury.
- 3.10 Preliminary Guidance: Woodland management actions are very unlikely to infringe the legal protection afforded to badgers. However, if a suspected sett is present, care should be taken not to disturb the sett or obstruct any sett entrances during vegetation removal (i.e. avoid using heavy machinery and do not leave logs/brush over entrance holes).

Reptiles

- 3.11 All common reptiles are protected under Section 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) from sale only, as well as being listed as UK priority species.
- 3.12 Preliminary Guidance: Woodland management actions are very unlikely to infringe upon the protection afforded to reptiles. However, care should be taken during vegetation removal.

Brown and Black Hairstreak

- 3.13 Both brown and black hairstreak butterflies are protected under Section 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) from sale only and are also listed as UK priority species.
- 3.14 Preliminary Guidance: Woodland management actions are very unlikely to infringe upon the protection afforded to these butterfly species. However, care should be taken during vegetation removal.

Ancient Semi-natural Woodland Designation

- 3.15 The wood bears the ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) designation, consistent with the AWIs described in **Section 2** of this report.

Invasive Non-native Species

- 3.16 A number of non-native species do not pose any immediate or significant risk to the woodland condition or ecology.

Environmental

- 3.17 With climate change predictions for more intense storm events, there is increased risk of windblown trees in the immediate and longer term, in the absence of an appropriate strategy.
- 3.18 These changing environmental conditions, along with increased public recreation, create an increased risk of harm to the public due to hazardous trees, particularly along footpaths and access points.
- 3.19 To meet the WMP vision and objectives, to comply with relevant protection legislation, and to avoid/reduce the effects of identified threats, a detailed range of management strategies (prescriptions) offer an opportunity to enhance the woodland.

Management Strategy

- 3.20 The precise dates for the Woodland Management Plan 10-year period, and when the management prescriptions in **Table EDP 3.2** will be implemented, depend upon when planning permission is granted.

Table EDP 3.2: Management Strategy

| Ref. No. | Feature | Management Strategy | Compartments |
|----------|--------------------------|---|--------------|
| 0.1 | Contamination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubbish and other fly-tipped materials will be removed and disposed of appropriately. | All |
| 0.2 | Arboricultural assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stored coppice in compartment C1 and 2 will be selectively thinned to improve age diversity and promote habitat for dormice. The woodland is in moderate condition, with acceptable coverage and a good age diversity. This will require ongoing monitoring to maintain this condition. | C1 & 2 |
| 0.3 | Arboricultural assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-native invasive species, should they occur, will be removed using appropriate methods and all arisings will be removed from the woodland. | All |
| 0.4 | Woodland ecology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing ecological features will be preserved, except where there is a meaningful risk to the public The continued growth and establishment of the maturing stands of broadleaved woodland will be encouraged through appropriate management. Canopy and understorey connectivity will be maintained and enhanced in areas where it is currently sparse, whilst maintaining good light levels reaching the woodland floor. Structural diversity and the diversity of ground flora will be encouraged. Additional habitats to benefit locally occurring wildlife species will be created. | All |
| 0.5 | Arboricultural assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any trees with compromised stability will be removed. | C1 & 2 |
| 0.5 | Monitoring/ - governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An appropriately qualified contractor will be chosen to undertake any work. Work will be monitored before, during and post completion to ensure standards are maintained. Where appropriate, ecological & arboricultural supervision will be in place during the work. | All |

- 3.21 A Work Programme has been attached as **Appendix EDP 1** in order to document, in detail, the woodland management operations required.

Review

Formal Review Mechanism for the WMP at Year 5 and Year 10

- 3.22 The management company will formally review the WMP at Year 5 and Year 10, publish findings and recommendations, and amend the WMP as necessary to ensure the overall vision is achieved/maintained. To inform the review, the woodland surveys and a selection of ecological surveys will be repeated at Year 4 and Year 9 by suitably experienced surveyors.

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Appendix EDP 1

Work Programme for Woodland Management Operations

Table EDP A1.1: Management Programme Years 1-5

| Prescription | Activity | Year | | | | |
|--------------|--|------|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | Artificial bird, bat and invertebrate boxes will be installed within less accessible parts of the wood. | + | | | | |
| 2 | The stored hazel coppice in compartment C1 & 2 will be selectively coppiced to promote habitat for a variety of wildlife and to increase age diversity of the compartment. | | + | | | |
| 3 | Non-native species, should they occur, will be cut and treated with a suitable herbicide application, and all arisings will be removed from the woodland area. | | + | | | |
| 4 | Surplus arisings from woodland management operations be left in small piles & stacks in appropriate locations ('eco-piles') to create additional wildlife habitat. | | + | | | |
| 5 | A woodland survey will be undertaken to monitor the woodland for improvement/deterioration. | | | | + | |
| 6 | An ecology survey will be undertaken to monitor for improvement/deterioration. | | | | + | |
| 7 | Woodland management plan will be reviewed to ensure it is meeting objectives and overall vision. | | | | | + |
| 8 | Supplementary planting of native species. The quantity and location of planting will be assessed prior to the planting seasons. Example of Tree Species can include Oak, Hawthorn, Hazel, Willow, Elder and Field Maple. Example of Shrub species Spindle, Guelder rose, Dog rose and Holly. | | + | | + | |

Table EDP A1.2: Management Programme Years 6-10





| Prescription | Activity | Year | | | | |
|--------------|--|------|---|---|---|----|
| | | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 1 | A woodland survey will be undertaken to monitor the woodland for improvement/deterioration. | | | | + | |
| 2 | An ecology survey will be undertaken to monitor for improvement/deterioration. | | | | + | |
| 3 | Woodland management plan will be reviewed to ensure it is meeting objectives and overall vision. | | | | | + |

Woodland Management Plan
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INSET (1:2000 @ A3) -Compartment Areas



-  Site Boundary
-  Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)
-  Compartment Boundary
-  Compartment Number

client
Tritax Symmetry Ltd and Siemens Healthineers

project title
Symmetry Park, Oxford North

drawing title
Plan EDP 1: Woodland Management Plan

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