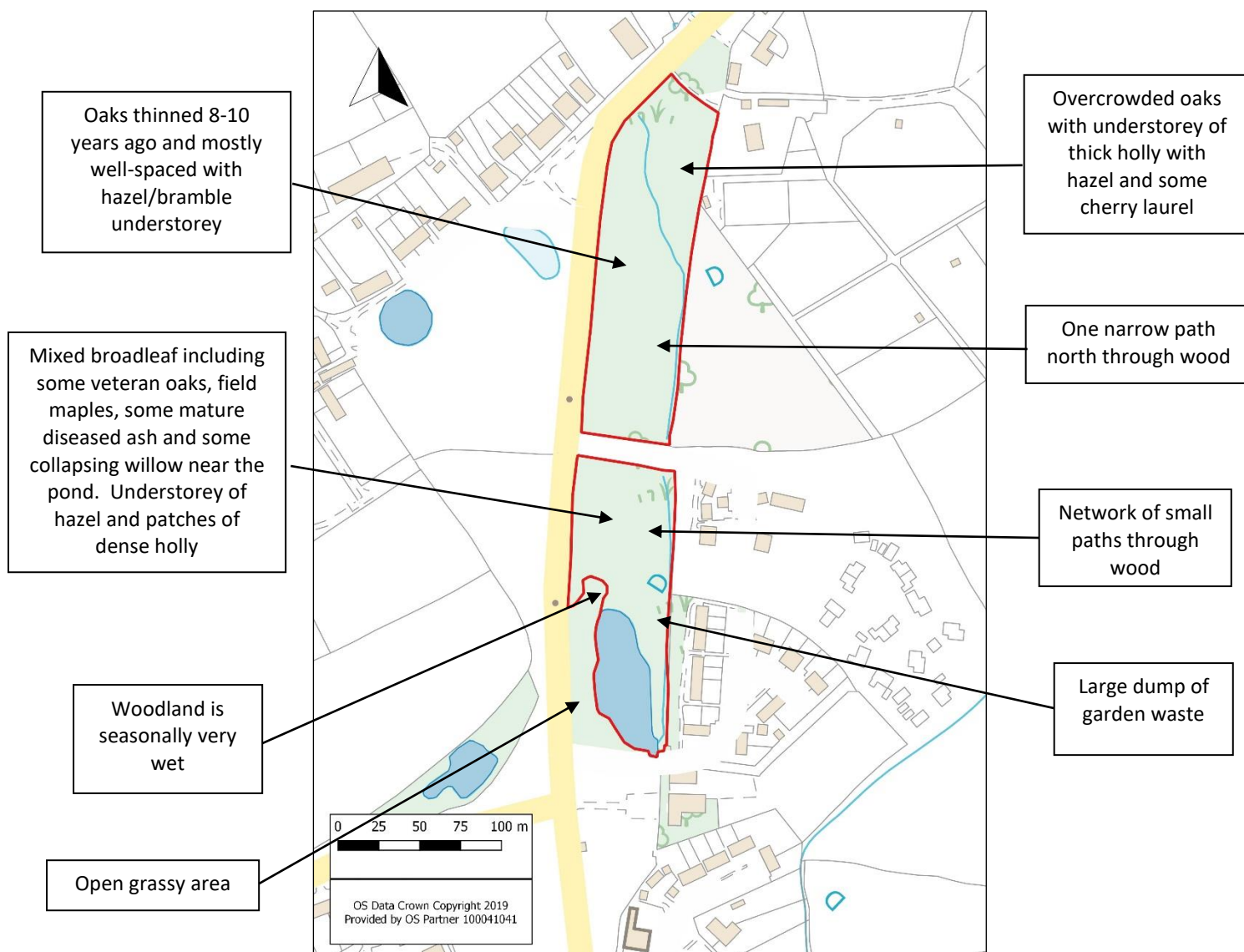




## Management Proposal for Woods North and South of Gratton Chase, Dunsfold



**Figure 1: Summary Map of Woods at November 2020**

The woods north and south of Gratton Chase are ancient semi-natural woodland. They are different in character. The northern wood has future commercial timber value as oak woodland. South of the stream, the oaks were thinned 8 to 10 years ago and are mostly well spaced, therefore only limited felling is required. North of the stream however, the oaks are overcrowded and overdue for thinning.

The southern wood is mixed broadleaf, with a species mix of oak, ash, willow, field maple and yew over a hazel and holly understorey. It has high value for biodiversity but no commercial value. The ash is diseased. Some of the oaks are veterans which would benefit from halo-thinning.

## Management Proposals

a) Contractor to fell any/ all ash >8 cm diameter for safety reasons. Most ash are in the southern wood. Note that the ash is unmarked.

b) Contractor to fell all trees marked with yellow. In the northern wood, marked trees are mainly oak which need respacing. Most are north of the stream with a few to the south. In the southern wood, marked trees are a mix of species which are to be felled mostly for purposes of halo-thinning veteran and potential veteran oaks.

Undergrowth should be cleared as necessary for tree-felling purposes but not otherwise. Timber is to be

stacked on-site until ground conditions are suitable for extraction. Brush is to be left in situ but clear of the paths. Alternatively, it can be burned. If burning, fire sites must be selected with care to avoid overhanging tree canopy and sensitive areas of ground flora. The ideal sites are along the intended route of the paths.

c) Contractor to remove all cherry laurel by cutting and burning the waste, followed by immediate stump treatment with an approved herbicide. The operator should be PA1/PA6 certified in use of pesticides.

d) Contractor to coppice all willow in the southern wood.

e) Council to peg out route of paths through both woods, preparatory to scraping and surfacing them with a material to be agreed with Waverley BC. Excavation is not permitted. Bridges over the streams and wet areas will be required.

f) Contractor to improve the selected paths by clearing 1-2m of undergrowth (including bramble, small shrubs and saplings <8cm diameter) on either side of the path and scalloping (creating ride-side glades) where this can be done without felling mature trees. Where there are mature trees near the path and they do not pose a safety hazard, they should be left in situ as 'pinch points' along the path, to provide arboreal connections for wildlife such as dormouse. The Council should maintain the path margins by cutting in alternate years.



Figure 1: Thin overcrowded oaks (marked with yellow)

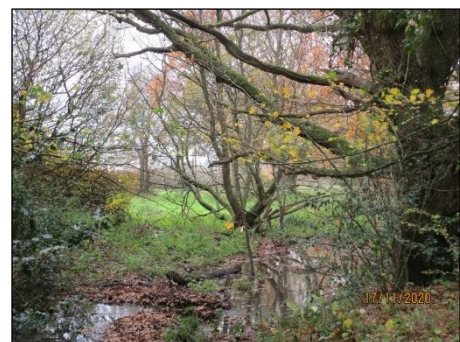


Figure 2 Coppice willow

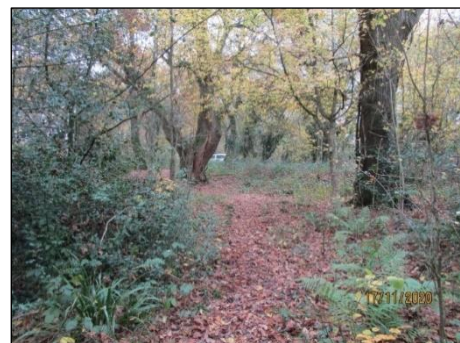


Figure 3: Mark out path and manage the margins in rotation

Petra Billings CEcol MCIEEM  
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