

## Landscape

The woodlands at Nostell are a critical and long established aspect of the landscape. All proposed operations ensure continuous woodland cover without any visual impact at a landscape scale. Through increasing light levels to the forest floor, the thinning works aim to allow recruitment and establishment of naturally regenerating native tree species to ensure a continuity of woodland cover long into the future.

## Invasive Species and Disease

Following identification of a *Phytophthora ramorum* infection in 2012, a significant amount of effort has been put into the control of *Rhododendron ponticum*. This have been very effective and site managers should continue to be vigilant and active in preventing it's regeneration. Ash dieback may also affect the site in the years to come. Site managers should be alert to this potential and pursue a programme of restocking in infected areas with suitable alternative species such as lime, aspen, birch and oak.

## Safety

There are risks of injury to staff, volunteers and the public from falling trees and branches. There are also risks of damage to buildings, property and vehicles. The Trust has a statutory and common law duty to assess and manage these risks. The duty is established in criminal law under the Health and Safety at Work Act, and in civil law under the Occupier's Liability Act. The Trust must take all precautions as far as is reasonably practicable to avoid risks to the safety of members of the public, staff and volunteers. Therefore there is a need to inspect trees in and near public places and adjacent to buildings and working areas, to assess whether they represent a risk to life and/or property, and to take remedial action as appropriate.

## Young Woods

Young establishing woodlands are now ready for thinning. The smallest, damaged, misshapen or diseased trees should be selected for removal. The opportunity could also now be taken to high prune the remaining trees to improve their form and visual impact within the landscape.

## Thinning

Thinning is the primary intervention at this site. This will have a number of benefits for the woodlands. It will open up the canopy allowing regeneration of tree and scrub species. This will diversify the habitat creating more opportunities for priority bird species such as the willow tit. By diversifying the woodland's age structure, it will also ensure the long term persistence of the woodlands in to the future.

Thinning will allow the release of veteran trees from competition increasing their health and longevity. It will also allow site managers to develop the younger woodland at the site in a manner that will ensure their health and maximise their landscape value.

## Bats

The site provides regionally important habitat for bats. 7 species of bat have been recorded on the site and Compartment 7 contains a long established roost for Noctule Bats. Compartment 7 has been identified for long term retention, although some scrub creation may be beneficial to protect the roost from disturbance. Many of the other woodland compartments which will see thinning contain old and veteran trees which provide important habitats. These trees should be retained, great care should be taken to identify and protect these trees prior to operations commencing.

## Water

Water protection is paramount during any operations on the site. Many of the ponds are habitat for Great Crested Newt, a range of aquatic invertebrates and waterfowl. All thinning operations should adhere to guidance for water protection as stated in the UK Forest Standard. This includes effective use of brash to protect soils, consideration of weather conditions during period of activity, and the consideration of site drainage systems prior to commencement of operations.

## Deadwood

Deadwood is a critical component of this woodland ecosystem. Nostell supports a range of birds, bats and invertebrates that are dependent on existing and new deadwood habitat for their survival. During thinning operations, operatives should be encouraged to proactively take opportunities to create new deadwood habitat where it is safe to do so.

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2017

Nostell Priory Forest Plan: Map 5 Concept and Constraints  
Scale: 1:7500 at A3

Map Centre SE409 176

