

Management Plan for Woodland at Tuckingmill Farm, Zeal Monachorum

This small woodland consists of standard hardwood trees and an understorey layer. The standards are nearly all young, self-sown oak of uniform age. The understorey is relatively sparse but is mainly hazel with some elder, hawthorn and blackthorn. Density of ground flora varies with the amount of sunlight penetration. Bramble is noticeable in most places, with bluebells where sunlight is brighter at present. There are probably other woodland species present.

The objectives of the management would be:

- Obtain firewood.
- Improve the quality of the remaining timber standards.
- Maintain or improve attraction for wildlife.

These objectives can be achieved by managing the wood in the style of a traditional coppice-with-standards.

Management activities

A thinning operation to remove existing poor-quality standard tree that are crowding other trees, damaged by squirrels or other factors, or misshapen or leaning.

Coppicing of hazel and other understorey stools in no more than one-eighth of the woodland area per year.

Re-plant gaps in the understorey with hazel at 3-4 metres spacing. A trial run in the first year would determine whether damage by deer, rabbits or squirrels was likely..

Burn some of the removed brash or topwork but rack the remainder in the woodland to become habitat for invertebrates and small mammals.