

Shamblewood Bike Park

Simple Willow Coppicing Management Plan

Site: Shamblewood Bike Park, Hedge End, Hampshire

Management activity: Coppicing of willow

Review period: Annual

1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to maintain the willow woodland at Shamblewood through regular coppicing.

Coppicing will encourage healthy new growth, maintain the woodland character of the site and provide a sustainable supply of willow material for use within the woodland.

2. Coppicing Method

Willow will be managed by traditional rotational coppicing.

Selected willow stems will be cut close to the existing stool, allowing the established root system and stool to remain in place and produce new shoots.

The intention is not to clear or permanently remove the willow woodland.

Coppicing will be carried out in sections so that different ages and heights of willow remain across the site.

3. Timing

Where practicable, the main coppicing work will be undertaken during the dormant winter period.

Before coppicing, the area will be checked for active bird nests and obvious signs of protected wildlife. Any willow containing an active nest will be left undisturbed until the nest is no longer in use.

4. Regrowth

Following cutting, willow stools will be allowed to regenerate naturally.

New shoots will be retained and allowed to establish before that section is coppiced again.

Failed or damaged stools will be monitored and replacement planting considered where necessary to maintain woodland cover.

5. Coppice Rotation

The willow will be divided informally into manageable sections.

Only a proportion will normally be coppiced at any one time, leaving established vegetation elsewhere on the site.

- newly coppiced stools

- young willow regrowth
- established willow
- mature woodland vegetation

The precise rotation will remain flexible depending on the rate of willow growth and the condition of individual areas.

6. Use of Coppiced Material

Where practical, material produced through coppicing will remain within Shamblewood and be reused.

- dead hedging
- habitat piles
- woodland screening
- suitable woodland structures
- other appropriate uses around the site

Smaller brash may be retained in habitat piles or dead hedges where appropriate.

7. Wildlife and Habitat

Coppicing will be undertaken sympathetically to retain habitat throughout the site.

Existing mature trees, suitable deadwood, dense vegetation and undisturbed areas will be retained wherever practical.

The rotational approach means that the entire willow area will not be cut simultaneously, ensuring that vegetation and habitat remain available while coppiced areas regenerate.

8. Monitoring

Coppiced areas will be visually checked during normal site management.

A simple photographic record may be kept to demonstrate regeneration following coppicing.

- successful willow regrowth
- condition of coppice stools
- woodland cover
- wildlife use
- damaged or unsafe stems
- areas requiring future coppicing

9. Management Objective

The long-term objective is to maintain a healthy, regenerating willow woodland through sustainable rotational coppicing.

The management programme will retain the woodland while allowing willow to be periodically harvested and naturally regenerated.