

**THE GREEN GARDENS
POULSHOT, WILTSHIRE**

**WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR
POULSHOT PARISH COUNCIL**

December 2017

REF: 17.532

REV:



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APPOINTMENT

WH Landscape Consultancy Ltd (**WHLandscape**) has been appointed by Poulshot Parish Council to produce a Woodland Management Plan in respect of the area of land known as The Green Gardens, with a small treed area of The Green to the immediate north also included within the plan.

WHLandscape has an established track record of carrying out Woodland Management Plans and Tree Surveys for the purposes of recreation and amenity.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared by Simon Turner DET, Tech Cert (Arbor A), National Diploma in Arboriculture, Lantra PTI. He has 16 years' experience working as a local authority planning related arboricultural officer, as well as several years' experience as a lecturer at Sparsholt Agricultural College. He works for **WHLandscape** on arboricultural matters, including trees in relation to development.

1.2 This report has been commissioned by Poulshot Parish Council to produce a Woodland Management Plan in respect of the area of land known as The Green Gardens, incorporating a small treed area of The Green to the immediate north.

1.3 The village of Poulshot lies approximately 3.2 kilometres south-west of the town of Devizes, and can be accessed via the A361 towards the northern end, or the unnamed village road between the villages of Worton and Seend from the south. The Green Gardens is located on the eastern side of the village, near the main village green.

1.4 The Green Gardens comprises a mix of young native trees species, with an array of mature trees located within a mature perimeter boundary hedge. To the immediate north lies a treed area of The Green.

1.5 A site visit was undertaken on 17th and 21st November 2017 by Simon Turner.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Location: The Green Gardens, Poulshot, Devizes, Wiltshire

2.2 Woodland type: Young woodland

2.3 Total area: 1.32 hectares

2.4 Grid reference: ST 971 599

3. DESCRIPTION OF WOODLAND IN THE LANDSCAPE

3.1 The Green Gardens comprises a mix of young native trees and shrubs within the confines of an established older rural hedge, which contains an array of mature trees throughout. A linear belt of semi-mature and mature trees also stands on a section of The Village Green to the immediate north, and has been included within these management proposals.

3.2 The new woodland primarily comprises the following species: ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), common hazel (*Corylus avellana*), common spindle (*Euonymus europaea*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), English oak (*Quercus robur*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), gean cherry (*Prunus avium*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*), goat willow (*Salix caprea*) and crack willow (*Salix fragilis*).

4. HISTORY OF MANAGEMENT

4.1 The woodland was created and established in 2003 to provide a local amenity and village asset on an area of land previously used for agriculture and, more recently, village allotments. The trees and shrubs were planted in regimented lines at around 2.0m centres within broad, informally shaped compartments arranged around a central grassed glade, with sinuous grass rides separating each compartment. A small area housing chickens exists in the south-western corner.

4.2 The young trees have flourished post-planting with very few failures throughout, which is potentially due to good site preparation prior to planting and the nutrient-rich soil. However, a number of trees have developed poor structural form, with tight v-shaped unions, splits and twin leaders. Bacterial canker was evident on at least one cherry, and bacterial canker of ash evident on one common ash, which are due to *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *morsprunorum* on the cherry and *Pseudomonas syringae* ssp. *savastanoi* pv. *fraxini* on the ash.

4.3 Bark stripping was evident on the upper stems and within the crowns of a number of the field maple (*Acer campestre*), which is typical of grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) damage. Signs of lower stem bark damage was also seen on trees, which could be attributed to deer.

4.4 The hedgerow is an established boundary feature actively managed around 3.0m in height and primarily comprises bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), common elder (*Sambucus nigra*), common hazel (*Corylus avellana*), common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), common ivy (*Hedera helix*), goat willow (*Salix caprea*) and crack willow (*Salix fragilis*). A number of early-mature large trees stand within the hedgerows primarily comprising ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and common hawthorn (*Crataegus*

monogyna), along with willow species (*Salix* spp). Several ivy-clad, poor-quality crack willow (*Salix fragilis*) standing just outside the northern boundary, with branches overhanging the site. Signs of active past management is evident on the tree, with the wood decay bracket of *Phellinus igniarius* visible at the base of a higher limb overhanging the north-eastern perimeter grass ride.

4.5 Management of the site has largely been limited to the mowing of the glade and rides, trimming of the boundary hedges and minor branch pruning of young and established trees to clear the rides and provide pedestrian and mower access.

4.6 The stand of trees on The Green, to the immediate north of Green Gardens, is early-mature in age and comprises a closely planted stand of native and non-native broadleaf and coniferous trees comprising aspen (*Populus tremula*), cherry (*Prunus avium*), common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), crack willow (*Salix fragilis*), English oak (*Quercus robur*), mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*). A number of the trees have developed poor-structural form with tight v-shaped unions, with many competing for light and space with adjacent trees. The willows towards the eastern end are showing signs of damage and limb removal.

5. DESIGNATIONS

5.1 The trees are located within the Poulshot Conservation Area, but are not known to be the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. The trees are not located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

5.2 A 6-week Conservation Area Notification must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to undertaking any pruning or felling works to any tree with a stem diameter more than of 7.5cm in diameter, or more than 10cm in diameter if reducing the number of trees to benefit the growth of other trees, subject to a number of exemptions, where only 5-days' notification is required. The proposed works detailed within the notice can be undertaken as detailed, unless a Tree Preservation Order is served to counteract it.

5.3 The Management Plan can be submitted as a 6-week notification if desired.

6. LONG-TERM VISION & MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

6.1 The long-term vision for The Green Gardens, and adjacent tree stand to the north, is to develop and maintain robust tree cover, which will not only enhance the sylvan character and setting of the village, but will also provide a viable community asset, which can be accessed and utilised by the village community.

6.2 In order to achieve this long-term vision, it is recommended that 3-broad objectives be adopted with the tree stands divided into smaller working compartments. Phased management should be undertaken within opposing compartments over a 5-year period to limit any detrimental impact on the long-term vision and broad objectives for the site. The broad objectives should focus on the following:

- Amenity
- Recreation/village social activities
- Wildlife

6.3 Proposed works should look to systematically improve each compartment through a phased programme of operations incorporating pollarding, coppicing and selective tree removal, initially removing those trees of poor structural form, diseased trees and those impeding the management of hedges and grass rides. This will ensure that the site retains maximum unimpeded access for recreational use and village social activities.

6.4 MANAGEMENT AND CREATION OF HABITATS FOR SPECIES

6.4.1 *Habitats*

Management of the existing trees and woodland compartments will seek to protect and enhance biodiversity by:

- Promoting a viable shrub layer through selective coppicing, where appropriate.
- Maintaining the established grass rides.
- Promoting the development of scalloped edges along the compartment margins to create light and shade habitats.
- Promoting the development and retention of standing and fallen dead wood.
- Maintain the suitable management of the hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Promoting the development of a desirable native herbaceous layer.

6.4.2 Birds

Tree and hedge works will be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (March–August inclusive), unless necessary on the grounds of safety, where advice will be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist prior to the commencement of works.

7. MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS/OPERATIONS

7.1 Year 1

Compartment 1 (Stand of trees to the north of Green Gardens)

Cpt 1 Management Prescriptions

- Selectively fell 10–15% of the suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review in year 4 and repeat as appropriate.
- Pollard mature willows to 600 millimetres (mm) above crown break.
- Stack a percentage of cordwood as habitat log piles away from track edge.
- Improve tree quality/condition through a programme of formative pruning.

Offsite to north-east and Cpt 2,3,4,5

- Pollard boundary crack willow trees just off northern boundary and within compartments to around 3.0m/4.0m in height. Repeat every 5–7 years.

Cpt 2, 3, 4 & 5 (All compartments)

- Selectively remove, or crown lift, perimeter trees in The Green Gardens to enable maintenance of grass rides and hedges.
- Mow grass rides throughout growing season.
- Maintain hedgerows at desired height and width.

Cpt 4 (compartment within the south-western corner of the Green Gardens)

- Fell and remove all arisings from ash tree with bacterial canker of ash.

7.2 Year 2

Compartment 2 (south-eastern corner of The Green Gardens)

Cpt 2 Management Prescriptions

- Selectively fell 10–15%, removing suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review in year 5 and repeat as appropriate.

- Coppice hazel and dogwood to 150mm above ground level.
- Stack a percentage of cordwood as habitat log piles away from ride edge.
- Convert 2 trees into standing dead monoliths incorporating coronet cuts to mimic natural fracture of stem/limbs.

- Improve tree quality/condition through a programme of formative pruning.
- Introduce areas of native wild flowers such as snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*), bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) or wild daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*).

Cpt 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 (All compartments)

- Mow grass rides throughout growing season.
- Maintain hedgerows at desired height and width.

7.3 Year 3

Compartment 5 (north-eastern corner of the Green Gardens)

Cpt 5 Management Prescriptions

- Selectively fell 10–15%, removing suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review in year 8 and repeat as appropriate.
- Coppice hazel and dogwood to 150mm above ground level.
- Stack a percentage of cordwood as habitat log piles away from ride edge.
- Convert 2 trees into standing dead monoliths incorporating coronet cuts to mimic natural fracture of stem/limbs.
- Improve tree quality/condition through a programme of formative pruning.
- Introduce areas of native wild flowers such as snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*), bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) or wild daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*).

Cpt 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 (All compartments)

- Mow grass rides throughout growing season.
- Maintain hedgerows at desired height and width.

7.4 Year 4

Compartment 3 (north-eastern corner of The Green Gardens)

Cpt 3 Management Prescriptions

- Selectively fell 10–15%, removing suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review in year 9 and repeat as appropriate.
- Coppice hazel and dogwood to 150mm above ground level.
- Stack a percentage of cordwood as habitat log piles away from ride edge.
- Convert 2 trees into standing dead monoliths incorporating coronet cuts to mimic natural fracture of stem/limbs.
- Improve tree quality/condition through a programme of formative pruning.
- Introduce areas of native wild flowers such as snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*), bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) or wild daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*).

Cpt 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 (All compartments)

- Mow grass rides throughout growing season.
- Maintain hedgerows at desired height and width.

7.5 Year 5

Compartment 2 (north-eastern corner of the Green Gardens)

Cpt 2 Management Prescriptions

- Selectively fell 10–15% removing suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review in year 7 and repeat as appropriate.
- Coppice hazel and dogwood to 150mm above ground level.
- Stack a percentage of cordwood as habitat log piles away from ride edge.
- Convert 1 tree into a standing dead monolith incorporating coronet cuts to mimic natural fracture of stem/limbs.
- Improve tree quality/condition through a programme of formative pruning.
- Introduce areas of native wild flowers such as snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*), bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) or wild daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*).

Cpt 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 (All compartments)

- Mow grass rides throughout growing season.
- Maintain hedgerows at desired height and width.

8. OTHER ISSUES

8.1 PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE

8.1.1 There are no obvious signs of browsing herbivore damage, but there was evidence of fraying and rubbing, which may be due to deer. There is a reasonable amount of bark stripping on several of the field maple (*Acer campestre*), which is typical of grey squirrel. To control further severe damage, the squirrel population should ideally be below 5 per hectare prior to the main damage period of April to July. However, the control of squirrels using such methods as live cage trap, with the animal humanely dispatched, are likely to be highly emotive issues which will require further debate by Poulshot Parish Council.

8.1.2 The single common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), located within compartment 4, has bacterial canker of ash and, as such, must be removed to prevent the spread of the disease to other ash trees. Regular inspections should be undertaken with infected trees felled and disposal of all arisings.

8.1.3 Ash trees should also be regularly inspected for signs of Chalara dieback known as ash dieback, (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*), with trees suspected of having the disease reported to the Forestry Commission.

8.2 WASTE DISPOSAL AND POLLUTION

8.2.1 The Parish Council will be responsible for the lawful disposal of waste materials, including any infected/diseased material.

8.3 PROTECTION FROM UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES

The site should be informally monitored at a local level with any suspicious activities reported to the relevant authorities.

8.4 MEASURES TO ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity of the site will also be improved through selective thinning and coppicing regimes. Where they have no other use, arisings from these processes will be stacked in habitat piles to introduce an important dead wood component to the woodland. Identified trees will also be turned into standing dead monoliths incorporating techniques such as ring-barking and coronet cuts, where appropriate.

TABLE 1: MONITORING PLAN SUMMARY

Objective	Indicator	Methods of assessment	Monitoring period	Responsibility	How will information be used
Pest Control	Presence and activity	Visual surveys	Bi-annual	Parish Council/contractor	This information will provide information to guide pest control measures
Tree Maintenance	Condition of tree protection and health of young trees	Visual surveys	Annual	Parish Council/contractor	This information will provide information to guide decisions on future management, presence/absence of disease and restocking.

TABLE 2 OUTLINE LONG-TERM WORK PROGRAMME

Cpt No	Activity	Year (tick)	
		1-5	5-10
All Cpts	Restructuring of compartments through selective thinning, removal, creation of monolith trees and habitat piles.	✓	✓
All Cpts	Improve tree quality/condition through a programme of formative pruning.	✓	✓
All Cpts	Maintain structural diversity and biodiversity through a programme of coppice management.	✓	✓
All Cpts	Remove pertinacious weeds such as nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>) and creeping thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>) as they develop following the tree works.	✓	✓
All Cpts	Maintain grass rides through a programme of mowing and strimming.	✓	✓
All Cpts	Maintain hedges at desirable height and width.	✓	✓
All Cpts	Introduce areas of native wild flower bulbs such as snowdrops (<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>), bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>) and wild daffodil (<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>).	✓	

TABLE 3: SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAMME (2018 - 2022)

Compartment No	Working year	Main Species	Planting year	Activity	Year				
					1	2	3	4	5
1	2018	Mixed	-	Selectively fell 10-15% of the suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review year 4 and repeat as appropriate.	✓			✓	
1	2018		-	Pollard mature willows to 600mm above crown break.	✓				
Offsite to north-east 1,2,3,4,5	2018	Willow	-	Pollard boundary willow trees just off north-eastern boundary and those within compartments to around 3.0/4.0m in height. Repeat every 5-7-years.	✓				✓
4	2018	Common ash	-	Fell ash tree infected with bacterial canker of ash.	✓				
2	2019	Mixed	-	Selectively fell 10-15% removing suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review year 5 and repeat as appropriate.		✓			✓
2	2019	Hazel and dogwood	-	Coppice hazel and dogwood to 150mm above ground level.		✓			
2	2019	Mixed	-	Convert 2 trees into standing dead monoliths incorporating coronet cuts to mimic natural fracture of stem/limbs.		✓			
3	2021	Mixed	-	Selectively fell 10-15% removing suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review year 8 and repeat as appropriate.				✓	
3	2021	Hazel and Dogwood	-	Coppice hazel and dogwood to 150mm above ground level.				✓	
3	2021	Mixed	-	Convert 2 trees into standing dead monoliths incorporating coronet cuts to mimic natural fracture of stem/limbs.				✓	
4	2022	Mixed	-	Selectively fell 10-15% removing suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review year 9 and repeat as appropriate.					✓

4	2022	Hazel and Dogwood	-	Coppice hazel and dogwood to 150mm above ground level.					✓
4	2022	Mixed	-	Convert 2 trees into standing dead monoliths incorporating coronet cuts to mimic natural fracture of stem/limbs.					✓
5	2020	Mixed	-	Selectively fell 10-15% removing suppressed trees and those of poor structural form. Review year 7 and repeat as appropriate.			✓		
5	2020	Mixed	-	Convert 1 tree into a standing dead monolith incorporating coronet cuts to mimic natural fracture of stem/limbs.			✓		
5	2020	Hazel and Dogwood	-	Coppice hazel and dogwood to 150mm above ground level.			✓		
1,2,3,4 & 5	2018-2022	Mixed	-	Stack a percentage of cordwood as habitat log piles away from track/ride edge following tree works.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1, 2,3,4 & 5	2018-2022	Mixed	-	Selectively remove, or crown lift perimeter trees in all areas to enable maintenance of grass rides and hedges.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1,2,3,4 & 5	2018-2022	-	-	Mow grass rides throughout the growing season.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1,2,3,4 & 5	2018-2022	-	-	Maintain hedgerows at desired height and width.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1,2,3,4 & 5	2018-2022	Mixed	-	Improve tree quality/condition through a programme of formative pruning.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1,2,3,4 & 5	2018-2022	-	-	Remove pertinacious weeds such as nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>) and creeping thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>) as they develop following the tree works.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1,2,3,4 & 5	2018-2022		2018-2023	Introduce areas of native wild flowers bulbs such as snowdrops (<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>), bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>), and wild daffodil (<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>) following tree works.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

9. REFERENCES

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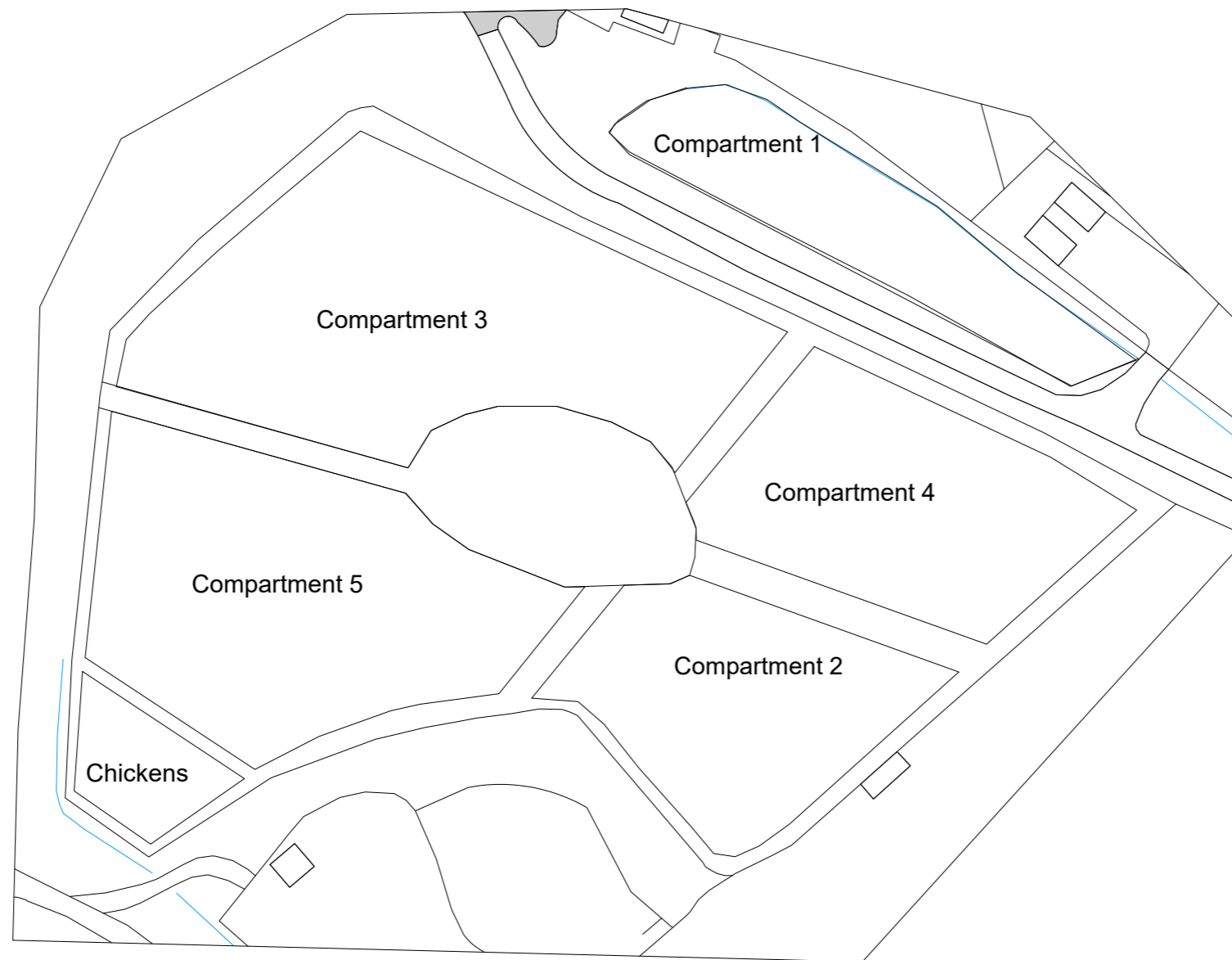
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The Tree Retention Categories symbols shown in the key are for reference and may not always be present on the plan.

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Client:
Poulshot Parish Council

Project:
Woodland Management Plan

Figure title:
Compartment Plan

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