

Kinloch Hills and Broadford

Land Management Plan Brief

1. Project Background

Kinloch Hills

Landscape setting

There are 3 main hills in the block that run down to Loch Alsh and the Sound of Sleat. Because of this these slopes are highly visible from Kyle of Lochalsh, Balmacara and the Glenelg Peninsula, highly popular tourist areas and Glenelg is a National Scenic Area (NSA).

Soil, climate, geology, slope stability

The underlying bedrock of the block is mostly sandstone and mudstone with conglomerate in the Leitir Fura area. The sedimentary rock has many small basalt and micro gabbro dykes intersecting on north west, south east alignment. They are less resistant to weathering than the sandstone and have therefore created the network of burns that drains from the

The climate roughly varies from warm, moist and sheltered on the coast line with cool and wet for the rest of the land but varying in exposure. The exposure varies from moderate on the hill slopes to severely exposed of 520m with sub alpine climate towards the summits.

The soils are roughly upland brown earths close to the coastal areas with peaty surface water gleys on the hill slope with podzols on the higher hill ground over 500m. In the mid slope, flatter areas on the north and west areas of the block the soil is made up of weakly flushed blanket bog dominated by deer grass, cotton grass, and purple moor grass with unflushed blanket bog at higher elevations with a greater abundance of heather.

There is a single area of slope stability risk. It is of moderate to high risk on the north side of Kylerhea Glen above the public road which is the only land route to Kylerhea. The report commissioned by FES indicates this slope has had landslides in the past, up to 200m long as per the photo below. It was planted with broadleaves in 2006 but this has failed and is currently a bare hill side dominated by heather (*Calluna* spp), bracken and *Molinia*. Landslides from here have covered the road in the past. The report recommends establishing woodland cover to reduce the risk of landslides.



Previous Landslides in
Kylerhea Glen

Forest composition

This forest lies on the east coast of Skye. The total land holding is 7388ha of which 5060ha is open with only 1676ha of productive high forest and approximately 500ha of land that has been felled. The majority of productive conifers is in the north west of the block and are mostly Lodgepole pine (512ha) and Sitka spruce (261ha) planted in the 1970's. There are substantial areas (approx. 100ha) where trees have been planted on high elevation (over 330m) on poor ground and have subsequently failed.

The Lodgepole pine has been heavily infected with Dothistroma Needle Blight and as such there has been substantial areas of felling in the north of the block. The majority of this area is on weakly flushed blanket bog and therefore according to FES Peatland Policy this will not be re-planted and peatland restoration will be undertaken.

Broadford

Landscape setting

This block is 333ha and is split by the A87 road adjacent to Broadford village. The east side is on a small hill, the west side is on a gentle slope with an easterly aspect. It can be viewed from Broadford village and along the A87, is not highly visible but is within a highly used tourist area.

Soil, climate, geology, slope stability

The soil in the east block is mostly podzolic with brown earths near the coast and some patches of gley. The west block is made up of brown earth in the south and unflushed blanket bog in the north. The climate is mostly warm and moist with increasing exposure with altitude. The east block is mostly sandstone and mudstone with 3 basalt, andesite and rhyolite extrusions. The west block is mostly a gabbro intrusion. There is one area of slope instability in the south east of the block, this is however of low risk and as such the report indicate that no special recommendations are necessary. Half of this area is in a red coupe due to be felled in 2019 so it will be important to ensure culverts and drains are well managed during felling and restock operations.

Forest composition

The forested area is 78% Sitka spruce with 6% Lodgepole pine mostly planted in pure stands. A large proportion of the west block is open with young planting around it. This was due to windblow being cleared from this block. The east block is mostly made up of Sitka spruce planted around 1970 and areas restocked in 2013 which are establishing well. An area of forest to the south of this was sold to the community in 2014.

2. Project Objectives /Outcomes

Restore peatland where peat is greater than 50cm deep and establish peat edge woodland on drier soils.

Maintain productive conifers to the west of Beinn Bhreac where stands are accessible with current roads using harvester / forwarder extraction, a new planned road will be required.

Manage Broadford East as a productive forest of commercial conifers whilst maintaining recreation as a high priority and designing the clearfell coupes to minimise landscape impact.

All designated sites to be in favourable condition within the LMP area.

Increase the amount of native broadleaves in Broadford West especially around the PAWS in the north of the block.

Develop a Land Management Plan delivered in accordance with [United Kingdom Forestry Standard](#) (UKFS) and the [UK Woodland Assurance Standard](#).

Develop a Land Management Plan which delivers against the relevant objectives of the [Inverness, Ross and Skye District Strategic Plan](#) and [Scotland's National Forest Estate and Strategic Directions](#)

2.1 Strategic objectives

- **Healthy:** Adapting the National Forest Estate to climate change and build resilience to extreme weather events by diversifying structure and species and creating more windfirm stands.
- **Productive:** Continue to produce a sustainable supply of timber to contribute to Scotland's economy and recognise the potential of the Estate to assist transition to a low carbon economy.
- **Treasured:** Investigate opportunities for partnership working with communities, government bodies and NGOs.
- **Access:** Help visitors to experience and enjoy the outdoor environment, encourage use of the estate for health benefits and outdoor learning.
- **Cared for:** Manage designated land to bring qualifying features into, or maintain,

favourable ecological condition.

3. Project Scope

3.1 Key features that will influence the development of management proposals

- Broadford is well used by the local community for recreation; it is within easy walking distance of the town so provides good recreation facilities for the local community. Broadford has good road access and provides good site conditions for timber production.
- The Kyle Farm area of Kinloch Hills is mostly made up of deep peat which was planted in the 70's with Lodgepole pine and Sitka spruce. The Lodgepole pine became heavily infected with Dothistroma Needle Blight (DNB) and as such suffered reduced yield and substantial deaths. Most of these stands have been harvested to be restored to peatland. Some stands still remain to be harvested or mulched.
- The Kylerhea area is well used by tourists and locals for viewing wildlife where a hide has been built. There is another hide that is managed by RSPB at the car park at Kylerhea.
- The area at Beinn Bhreac contains a substantial area of larch. This is within 3km of a known infection of Phytophthora ramorum in larch to the SW so is at a high risk of becoming infected.

3.2 Known issues & opportunities to be investigated

Most parts of Kinloch Hills are highly visible from areas that are well used by local communities and tourists. As such it is important that landscape issues are considered carefully in the design of coupe boundaries and upper tree lines. Broadford is also very visible from the town itself.

Part of Broadford East was sold to the local community in 2012, this has since been felled and the community currently plan to create a campsite in this area. The Cuillin Hills NSA also overlooks Broadford Forest. It is therefore important that the design of the forest considers the local landscape and where it is visible from.

Kyle Farm area has had large areas of DNB infected Lodgepole pine removed. The remaining stands are very poorly stocked and have shown low yield. This means that there is not enough brash and to support machines to extract the timber. Because of this a lot of the remaining areas will need to be mulched on site and peatland restoration undertaken.

Visitor facilities at Kylerhea and Leitir Fura will be maintained to ensure visitor experiences are not negatively impacted. Waymarked paths will be retained throughout the forest at Kylelakin, Kylerhea, Leitir Fura and Broadford.

The area west of Beinn Bhreac will continue to be managed for productive conifers, however removal of the larch from this area will be high priority to prevent Phytophthora ramorum infecting these stands. This area is steep but accessible using harvester/ forwarder extraction.

The substantial felled area at Leitir Fura will be surveyed in 2022, and 2027 to monitor the progress of natural regeneration. If this is not meeting the objectives of establishing variable spacing native broadleaf woodland then enrichment planting or protection measures may be taken.

Slope instability is a known issue in Kylerhea Glen. Native broadleaf planting on the north side of the glen has had limited success. Opportunities will be considered here for further planting to help stabilise this slope.

Sleat Community have requested to buy firewood from FES to allow them to continue with their firewood business. A number of coupes in the Leitir Fura area have been reserved for this purpose.

A number of areas were restocked in 2005-2008 as part of a Scottish Forest Alliance project funded by BP to increase carbon storage. Many of these areas were damaged by deer and will need to be beaten up to

reach the desired stocking density.

4. Inclusion (Key documents to be produced)

- Management map
- Future habitat & species map
- CSM6 maps
- Water map
- Deer management plan
- SSSI management plan
- Open habitat management prescriptions
- Landform analysis & plan visualisations
- Summary of activities
- Appropriate Assessment
- EIA determination if necessary

5. Exclusion

- Detailed site specific management plans (work plan)

6. Project Organisation

LMP TEAM- responsible for undertaking the revision	
Ben Griffin	Planning Forester
Isabelle Destor	Environment Forester
Chris Nixon	Harvesting Forester
Mike Beveridge	FM Forester
Russell Cooper	Wildlife Ranger Manager
Renate Jephcott	Landscape Architect
Ross MacMillan	Wildlife Ranger
Sally Phillips	Civil Engineer

Bruce Taylor	Recreation Forester
GOVERNANCE- Responsible for overall management of the project	
Project Sponsor	Doug Mitchell (Planning Manager)
Strategic direction	IRS FD Management Team
Forestry Commission Scotland	Martin MacKinnon (Development and Operations Advisor)
Silvicultural Advisor	Tor Stokes

7. Time frame

Internal Scoping Meeting	September 2017
External Stakeholder and Community Consultation	December 2017- January 2018
Draft plan completion	February 2018
Detailed consultation internal and external.	March 2018
Review of commentary & amendments	March 2018
Internal review	March 2018
Submission of final plan	March 2018

8. Risks

- Plan takes longer to put together than March 2018.
- Stakeholders & community consultation is more complex and time consuming than anticipated.

Mitigation: If the above project milestones are not being met then this will be reported to the project sponsor. If the final deadline will not be met then an extension will be applied for from Forestry Commission Scotland however this will impact other Land Management Plans in the Forest District.