

# Newhill Land Management Plan

## Appendix II - Supporting Information

### II/1.0 The Existing Forestry and Land Holding

As this plan is for a woodland creation the vast majority (97%) of the site is currently open grazing land. There is approximately 2.5 ha of forest cover, made up of a small thicket stage crop of mixed conifer and broadleaf and a copse of mature Scot's pine on the crest of the hill.

### II/1.1 History of the Land Holding

The site was acquired by FLS in 2018 from a local landowner looking to rationalise his landholding in advance of retirement from farming. Prior to purchase the land had been divided into a number of fenced paddocks for grazing sheep and cattle.

### II/2.0 Analysis of the Previous Plan

#### II/2.0.1 Aims of Previous Plan and Objectives

As this is a new planting scheme there is no previous plan to review.

### II/3.0 Background Information

#### II/3.0.1 Physical Site Factors

##### Geology, Soils and Landform

The underlying geology of the site is an igneous bedrock of Devonian origin, rich in andesite and pyroxene.

Soils are predominantly brown earth with some areas of gleying. There is some evidence of localised surface water retention caused by sub-surface compaction from frequent livestock movement.

##### Hydrology

The site drains to a single watercourse which emerges from a field drain at grid reference NO 1226 0784. The burn then runs south east into a fishing pond outwith the land holding. All watercourses in this locality drain into the ecologically sensitive Loch Leven catchment.

##### Climate

Local site climate is described in Environmental Site Classification (ESC) terminology as 'cool-moist'. The ESC climate values are derived from a range of factors detailed below:

**Elevation: 180-250m**

**Accumulated temperature: 1000-1138**

**Moisture Deficit: 56-109mm**

**DAMS Score: 12-17**

#### II/3.0.2 The Existing Forest

##### Age, Structure, Species and Potential Yield

Existing forestry on the site amounts to approximately 2.5 ha of thicket stage mixed conifer and broadleaf planting, established in 2005, and a copse of mature Scot's pine.

Good soil conditions and low exposure show the potential of this site to produce high yielding commercial crops, especially favourable to diverse conifer species.

##### Access

Access to the site is directly from the C414 Glenfarg to Path of Condie public road. There are currently two gate access points into each side of the land holding from this road.

##### LISS Potential

Good quality, deep rooting soils, aspect and potential for workability all suggest that this site will be highly suitable for the implementation of alternatives to clearfell management.

##### Thinning Potential

As above, the site has potential to implement thinning regimes provided the necessary access is in place for operations.

#### II/3.0.3 Land Use

The surrounding land use consists of agricultural land, predominantly open pasture with some dispersed properties and small shelterbelt woodlands.

#### II/3.0.4 Biodiversity and Environmental Designations

Breeding bird surveys and a phase 1 habitat survey have been carried out on the site during spring/summer of 2019. The Phase 1 habitat survey did not identify any priority habitats of conservation concern, the Newhill acquisition comprises of mainly improved grassland with a small 2.15 ha area of young plantation mixed broadleaved woodland and three small patches of planted conifer woodland including one patch that had been recently felled. Breeding bird surveys recorded 23 species, including 10 on either the amber or red watch list. Afforestation on this site will have no impact on the national, regional or local breeding populations.

#### II/3.0.5 Landscape

The site sits within a landscape of rolling hills ranging between 180-250m in elevation. To the east of the public road the site drops steeply to a minor watercourse before climbing again up the slope of a rounded hill with aspects from north west to south. To the west of the road the land climbs to the ridge of a low rounded hill running on a south east to north west vector.

#### II/3.0.6 Social Factors

The site is bisected by a core path running from the gate at the junction of the C414 and Path of Condie roads up to Birniehill farm at the east end of the block. In spite of this recreational use of the site is limited, the core path is used locally by horse riders.

#### II/3.0.7 Statutory Requirements and Key External Policies

There are no statutory designations in place in the Newhill LMP area.