

Cowal and Trossachs Forest District

Land Management Plan

Strathlachlan



Summary of Proposals

The Strathlachlan Land Management Plan (LMP) draws on the key themes of the Scottish Forestry Strategy (SFS) (2006), Forest Enterprise Scotland's Strategic Directions and Cowal & Trossachs Forest District's Strategic Plan. Several objectives, for example native woodland restoration are in line with the Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Action Plan. The area covers approximately 1869ha divided into three discrete units.

The objectives of the new plan, which were developed following internal and external consultation, are summarised below and emphasise the key principals of establishing and maintaining a diverse, resilient forest capable of delivering a wide range of ecosystem services into the future.

1. Continue to manage the forest for timber production. Clearfelling, before onset of windblow, and replanting will be the predominant management technique.
2. Opportunities will be sought to thin stands and also establish continuous cover systems, where appropriate.
3. At restocking Ecological Site Classification (ESC) principles, will be used to guide choice and diversify species structure. Up to date guidance on the effects of climate change will be taken into account. Sitka spruce will remain the dominant species at higher elevations and will only be preferred at lower elevations, where site conditions are less than favourable to allow alternative species.
4. A diverse age structure will be maintained in order to provide visual diversity and help maintain resilience.
5. Priority ancient woodland sites will be restored, enhanced and maintained.
6. A forest habitat network (FHN) will be established and managed for conservation and landscape interest.
7. The area of productive broadleaves will be increased, in line with Scottish Government policy. Ancient woodland and parts of the FHN will be managed productively if appropriate.

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8. Seek to maintain visual diversity in the forest landscape using judicious species choice, especially at lower elevations, and open space. Coupe shapes will be planned to soften their visual impact, especially in landscape sensitive zones.
9. There are several known features of archaeological interest which will be given appropriate protection. Record and protect any new discoveries made during operations.
10. Continue the programme of control of non-native invasive species initially targeted to areas of ancient woodland.
11. Enhance and protect habitats, including open ground, for priority species of conservation interest.
12. Establish appropriate deer management infrastructure to allow early natural regeneration and protect planted trees.
13. Protect water supplies, water courses and manage riparian zones, to maintain and improve water quality, increase biodiversity and mitigate against erosion and flooding. Follow all forest and water guidelines during forest operations.