



Scottish  
Forestry  
Coilltearachd  
na h-Alba

Banchory Bike Trails  
Management Plan Title  
2019 to 2029

Scottish Forestry is the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulation

S e Coilltearachd na h-Alba a' bhuidheann-ghnìomha aig Riaghaltas na h-Alba a tha an urra ri poileasaidh, taic agus riaghladh do choilltearachd



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Please refer to the Management Plan Guidance note for advice on how to complete your management plan.

You must have an approved Management Plan before you can apply for Forestry Grant Scheme funding.

## 1. Details

Management Plan Details			
Management Plan Name:	Banchory Bike Trails		
Business Reference Number:	N/A	Main Location Code:	N/A
Grid Reference: (e.g. NH 234 567)	6825 9656	Nearest town or locality:	Banchory, Aberdeenshire
Local Authority:	Aberdeenshire		
Management Plan area (hectares):	12.7		
List associated maps:	See appendix		

Owner's Details			
Title:	Mr	Forename:	Chris
Surname:	Mutch		
Organisation:	Deeside Bike Collective	Position:	Trustee / Project Lead
Primary Contact Number:	██████████	Alternative Contact Number:	
Email:	chris@deesidebikecollective.co.uk		
Address:	44 Cairds Wynd, Banchory		
Postcode:	AB31 5XU	Country:	Scotland

Agent's Details			
Title:		Forename:	
Surname:			
Organisation:		Position:	
Primary Contact Number:		Alternative Contact Number:	
Email:			

Address:			
Postcode:		Country:	

### Access Consent – Complete if applying for thinning

**You are not obliged to give us consent to enter your land, however if we are denied access to your land, and cannot carry out an assessment because of this, we may reject your application. This consent is for access to assess this application as well as monitor compliance with any subsequent approval, where applicable.**

Do you give consent for Scottish Forestry to access your property?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
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### Approval - to be completed by Scottish Forestry staff:

Management Plan Reference Number:			
Plan Period: (ten years) (day/month/year)	From:	To:	
Operations Manager Signature:		Approval Date: (dd/mm/yyyy)	

## 2. Woodland Description

Give information about the following:

- past management of the woodland
- current species and ages
- statutory and non-statutory constraints (e.g. designations, archaeological interests)
- existing or potential public access
- woodland protection

Use the Land Information Search to help you complete this section. For more detailed information on the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland use the Scottish Forestry Map Viewer found on our website: [forestry.gov.scot](http://forestry.gov.scot)

### 2.1 Maps required

Provide maps to support your plan, as outlined in the guidance note. Please list all of the maps that you are including with your management plan in section 1 Management Plan Details.

### 2.2 History of management

The woodland is owned and managed by FLS. Current management is based on commercial forestry, with mature timber last harvested from the site in 2014.

The area of Corsee Wood comprises of circa 12.7 hectares of mature woodland mainly coniferous to the edge of the site with broadleaf to the centre.

### 2.3 Species and age

Most of the woodland comprises of; 5.7 hectares of Douglas Fir, 0.3 hectares of Oak, 2.3 hectares of Birch, 2.1 hectares of Sitka Spruce, 0.1 hectares of hybrid Larch, 0.4 hectares of Norway Spruce and 0.3 hectares of Scots Pine was planted during 1960 to 1961. 1.2 hectares of Birch was planted in 2006.

Thinning work and maintenance to wind blow has been performed in the last 5 years from 2014.

### 2.4 Constraints and designations

SNH Sitelink: No designations. River Dee SAC catchment nearby.

NWSS: Upland birch habitat as shown in Phase 1 Habitat Plan

AWI: Kincardine and Deeside LEPO

### 2.5 Public access

Yes

### 2.6 Woodland Protection

Plant Health (including tree health and invasive or noxious plants)

Rhodendron present.

Deer, Livestock and other mammals

Roe deer, red squirrel, bat, badger, pine marten considered to be present in the area.

## Grey Squirrels

Not recently recorded. Any sightings shall

## Water & Soil (soil erosion, acidification of water, pollution etc.)

Soil erosion, surface water management, pollution protection plans to be submitted as part of Construction Environment Management Plan prior to trail building commencing.

## Environment (flooding, wind damage, fire, invasive species etc.)

Minimal tree removal is required, not likely to include a wind-firm edge; thus not likely to increase wind throw of the forest. The design accounts for avoidance of the birch woodland habitat as noted in the Phase 1 Habitat Survey.

Following accurately scoped tree removal of approximately 90 individual trees to facilitate construction, the site shall be monitored for tree instability and measures taken to remove any subsequent unstable trees, or those considered likely to be prone to wind damage. The completed project will undertake an annual inspection of trees adjacent to trails, to monitor for ongoing maintenance of the retained tree stock.

The project and future woodland management is not likely to increase fire risk.

The project will seek to remove as much invasive Rhododendron is possible during initial forest operations, and during ongoing operation of the facility over time.

## Climate Change Resilience (provenance, lack of diversity, uniform structure)

There are opportunities for habitat enhancement through the creation of deadwood habitat piles and reptile basking areas, installing nest boxes for birds and bats and by planting with native trees and shrubs.

Compensatory and supplementary tree planting will occur using native species such as hazel, holly, rowan, juniper and bird cherry of appropriate provenance. All newly planted trees and shrubs should be protected from deer by individual tree guards. Naturally regenerated native trees and shrubs where found may also benefit from protection.

## 3. Vision and Objectives

Tell us how you intend to manage the woodland in the long term and your goals for its development.

### 3.1 Vision

Describe your long-term vision for the woodland(s).

The plan for the woodlands is straightforward, to create a recreational area for the community within the site boundary whilst preserving and enhancing the woodland by encouraging the generation native species biodiversity.

The primary use of the land is to provide a recreational area in Banchory with professionally designed and built bike trails that are accessible to all the community and visitors to the area.

To ensure the recreational area is utilised by as many of the community as possible, the trails will be sympathetically designed and built around the local walking trails, preserving areas of archaeological interest such as historic drystone walls and indigenous flora such as birch woodland. We wish to create a facility that allows fun, relaxation, outdoor learning and promote the development of the land's biodiversity and history. Our management plan will look to actively increase the diversity of the habitat, and as such providing resources for wildlife, through this community led initiative.

The key objectives of the DBC bike project are;

- To provide a bike trails and skills in Banchory town for bike riders of all ages and abilities to utilise.
- Manage and maintain the trails so that they are available to the Banchory area for the community and visiting cyclists (including families) to enjoy in a controlled environment and for generations to come.
- Provide a recreational activities area which is outdoors and encourages health, fitness and wellbeing.
- Improve the biodiversity of the site & surrounding area.
- Promote outdoor learning initiatives. For example: outdoor workshops for children.
- Provide access to bike trails for the local youth who would not otherwise receive this opportunity.
  - Cycling often requires access to vehicles to get to and from purpose-built trails. This will allow people, who may not be able to travel distances to ride, access to maintained bike trails.
- Ensure that most people who use Banchory Bike Trails can reach them through existing walking/cycling pathways.
- Reduce unauthorised "rogue" trail building within the local area. Create sustainable trails.
- Create an area accessible to clubs that can be used for cycle coaching and youth cycle events.
- Help put Banchory on the map for cycling! The trails will be an added asset to the local amenities.
- Reduce travel to other bike trail areas in the Deeside Area, benefiting environment and safety.

Our vision for the woodland is one of continuous cover forest, allowing existing trees to reach maturity after an initial operation to remove the necessary incompatible and unstable trees. Over time further, carefully selected tree removal may occur in order to allow light to penetrate the forest floor and develop increased ground flora and shrub layers.

A supplementary planting regime aims to promote an altered structure towards increased number of medium sized broadleaved trees. This will provide increased resource for pollinators, birds and mammals which can forage seeds/fruits from these species. Over time, these plantings will mature and provide a seed resource for future natural regeneration.

Additional shelter for birds and bats will be provided in the form of high quality artificial boxes. This way, such animals have an instant increase in sheltering opportunity. As trees mature, it is expected that such opportunities may develop naturally. Basking areas for reptiles, located away from the trail network with a south to south-easterly aspect, in a quiet area close to the drystone dyke, will be installed to provide preferable conditions with the aim of reducing the attraction of trail surface for basking, risking injury.

## 3.2 Management objectives

Give your objectives of management and how you will manage the woodland sustainably. Your objectives should be specific, and you should also be able to measure their outcomes.

Resource	Objective	Indicator of achieved objective
Land scape	Create a recreational resource whilst retaining woodland as the dominant landscape feature and promoting a diverse structure through planting and establishment of native species trees and shrubs.	Woodland is retained as the dominant landscape feature. Increased woodland species diversity. Successful planting establishment and future natural regeneration of native trees and shrub layer.
Community	Create a recreational area on the outskirts of Banchory to inspire people to use the woodland, ride their bikes and enjoy the outdoors whilst spending time with family and friends.	Increased use of bikes locally. Local clubs obtain an area for cycle coaching and Skills development. Increase level of visitors to Banchory. Increased health and wellbeing of users. Less unauthorised trail building locally. Positive collaborations with local associations. Increased economic activity of linked businesses.
Biodiversity	Maintain woodland cover and connectivity to wider woodland habitats. Increase tree and floral species diversity by restructuring the woodland. Implement ecological enhancement measures.	Woodland cover is maintained. Desirable woodland species (native) increase from the Phase 1 Habitat species list (baseline data). Rhododendron cover is decreased. Number of roosting and nesting opportunities increase. Increase in deadwood habitats (standing, fallen and buried).
Access	There are multiple points of access to the area. The main site entrance is from Glassel Road. Project scope is also to improve the connecting core path through the site and provide a new walking path. Access for woodland users to be unrestricted. Maintain necessary access for FC forest vehicles and the emergency services Improve drainage at lower point next to the site entrance	All access points clearly identified on site maps and supporting material. Paths and site entrance kept clear of vegetation and in good condition. Users of the woodland satisfied with the improvements and newly created path through the site. Improved vehicle access. Increased access to the area resulting in paths for all users. Increase in woodland use. Reduction in drainage concerns.
Recreation	Provide a high quality outdoor recreation facility for the community to walk and cycle in a woodland environment. Promote the area for additional outdoor activities such as school trips, den building and nature hunts.	A measurable increase in outdoor recreational facilities for Banchory usable by a diverse demographic.  Visitor usage may be measured through survey/counting/digital apps/observation.  Promote healthy living and use of the local woodland.

## 4. Stakeholder Engagement (if required)

This may be required depending on the work you intend on carrying out in the woodland and the constraints or designations that have been identified.

Individual/ Organisation	Date contacted	Date feedback received	Response	Action

## 5. Analysis and Management Strategy

Analyse the information from the previous sections and identify how to make best use of your woodland and its resources to achieve your objectives.

### 5.1 Constraints and Opportunities

Using the table below analyse any issues raised or relevant features within your woodland and record the constraints and opportunities.

Feature/Issue	Constraint	Opportunity
Upland birch habitat	Removal of a corridor of birch measuring 5 to 8 meters in width will be required to create the red/orange grade trail through the middle of the site.	Felled material will be retained within the birch component woodland to increase fallen deadwood habitat and provide resource for saproxylic organisms. Birch regeneration adjacent to the trail will be encouraged and if necessary protected by the addition of tree guards. Planting of birch won't be undertaken, rather allowing the woodland to regenerate its own site-native stock.  Opportunity to expand the upland birch habitat, in preference to any exotic coniferous woodland will be reviewed.
Invasive Rhododendron.	An invasive species threatening the floral	Remove all Rhododendron within the site boundary

	composition of the woodland, reducing site biodiversity.	including stump removal and control re-growth annually. Establish new planting and encourage regeneration of desirable native species.
Core path for Inchmarlo area running east to west through the site.	Currently in a poor condition with lack of drainage and thickly overgrown in places.	Part of the project scope will be to upgrade the path to allow for increased usage through out the year on a all weathered path constructed a width of circa 2.2 meters.
Red squirrels present within Corsee Wood.	Occasional sightings in recent years identified. Known to be present in the Banchory area.	Increased food resource over a greater breadth of seasonality by promoting a more diverse woodland species structure.
Neolithic long cairn located at NO 6836 9686.	Little know about the site. Area should be considered during plans for the woodland.	Taking ownership of the land allows the opportunity for this site to be preserved and managed. Further archaeological surveying required on two area at the site. Opportunity for areas on the site to be preserved, with the construction of trails directed away from any areas of interested. Program of monitoring necessary during construction work.
Drainage at the south of the area near to the entrance from Inchmarlo Road.	Opportunity to improve the drainage around the current parking area. This would benefit the site during wetter seasons.	Drainage ditches to be dredged around the lower point of the site where the trails end. Improve the flow of draining water away from the access trail and parking area during the construction of the trails. Group to keep the drainage ditches well maintained and free from vegetation.
Removal of spruce and larch from the site to create the trails.	Opportunity to replace felled trees with UK species. Promote naturally regeneration on the site.	Develop site biodiversity. Replace with native species such as juniper, rowan and bird cherry. As recommended through the ecological survey.
Additional detail:		

## 5.2 Management Strategy

Following your analysis, provide a broad statement describing your management strategy. Consider all aspects (economics, access, biodiversity, landscape) and pay particular attention to your silvicultural strategy for meeting your management objectives.

The plan for the woodlands is straightforward, to create a recreational area for the community within the site boundary whilst preserving the woodland and creating a native species biodiversity.

By closely following the recommendations of the ecological survey and FLS's Banchory woods land management for future habitats and species, the DBC will nurture the woodland encouraging native wildlife, shrubs and trees to develop. The survey identified that the proposed work performed sympathetically to create the bike trails presents little risk to the biodiversity of the woodland and will create an opportunity for habitat enhancement which the group want to embrace.

Opportunity for biodiversity enhancement of the area. On removal of the spruce, fir and larch to create the trails which equates to approximately 80 to 90 trees, the woodland will be left to regenerate naturally. In key areas on the site native tree species will be planted to improve the biodiversity of the area, as recommended in the ecological survey. Regenerating the birch wood section shall be maintained once the red trail (middle trail on the site) is established. The groups aim is to retain as much tree cover as possible, without encroaching on the trails, as they provide shelter from the elements especially during windy periods. Trees also add to the appeal of biking whilst at a constructed trail facility as this is the essence of what mountain biking is about. We want the site to look beautiful as well as ride well.

The DBC will enlist the help of specialist consultant to direct the group on a strategy for developing the biodiversity of the site. The group has a few local ecologists that agree to support the project.

The DBC group to become an active member of the Community Woodland Association. This will be initiated on confirmation of the use of the land by FLS.

### **Bike Trails Maintenance and Inspection**

The bike trails will be inspected on a bi-monthly basis by a qualified trail inspector. When maintenance work is required to a trail, the trail will be closed with immediate effect until the work is performed and the issue rectified. Inspection of the trails will be documented along with the necessary work performed. Risk assessments for specified tasks will be completed when required. This will be in addition to the general risk assessment covering the bike trails and site.

Users of the trails will be encouraged to immediately report any trail hazards or issues found on the trails or site to the DBC. This will be channelled through the social media page or the DBC contact email address.

If work is required on the trails and site that cannot be completed manually with hand tools, a suitably qualified contractor will be appointed to perform the work.

### **Signage**

Signage will be erected at the necessary points in and around the access to the site. Signs and markers will identify the grades of the trails, direction of travel, type of

features, along with sites maps and the required safety information and emergency contact details.

### **Paths and Access**

The DBC will work closely with the Banchory Paths Associate (BPA) to improve access to the site through core paths within Corsee Wood. This will include developing and maintaining the exiting path network.

As part of the project scope the core path at approximately 125 meters in length running east to west through the site will be upgraded to a sustainable all weather surfaced path. In addition to this a walking track will be created running adjacent to the west side boundary line from the site entrance up to the core path. This will increase access to the trails and will allow all woodland users with additional connectivity between the core path and the dismantled railway line path.

### **Site Damage**

In the event of any damage to the site through high winds or flooding, the trails will be closed to the public by way of signage and alerts through the group's social media page and website. The DBC will utilise a qualified contractor to remedy the impairment and make any necessary changes prior to inspection and reinstating use of the site and trails. A site inspection has been undertaken by a local contractor to discuss the potential requirement for forest work, ground works and civil engineering when required.

## 6. Management Proposals

Tell us the management operations you intend to carry out over the next 10 years to help meet your management objectives for the woodland. The submission of this plan will be considered as an application for permission to thin the woodland over the 10-year plan period, subject to the completion of Table 1 and the submission of appropriate maps. If you intend to carry out other types of felling, you must apply for permission separately.

### 6.1 Silvicultural Practice

Outline silvicultural practice and management prescriptions. Include any past management practice that is relevant and the strategies to address the issues identified in section 5.

The project requests an initial removal of 80-90 individual trees and a 5-8m wide area of birch woodland in order to facilitate development of the community trail facility.

A suitable proportion of deadwood will be retained for habitat enhancement.

Rhododendron removal is likely to be completed as part of forest operations.

Tree planting and encouraging establishment of naturally regenerating trees will feature as a silvicultural practice.

### 6.1 Thinning Prescription

If you are applying for thinning, you must provide a map as per Appendix 2 of the Forest Plan Applicant's Guidance. The map must show all areas proposed for thinning. Provide any further details required here in reference to your map(s).

Thinning of the woodland is not expected during the 10-year plan period.  
Trees will be removed only on a selective basis.

**Table 1 – Thinning**

This table shows the total management plan area as well as the thinning compartments proposed for management. The

Total Plan Area:			hectares							
Thinning Compartment	Area (ha)	%	Species to be felled (one per row)	Age (Years)	Marking of Trees	No of Trees	Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )	Thinning Density (per ha)		
								Total	Pre	Post
<b>Total Area</b>					<b>Total Volume m<sup>3</sup></b>			<b>Total to be removed:</b>		

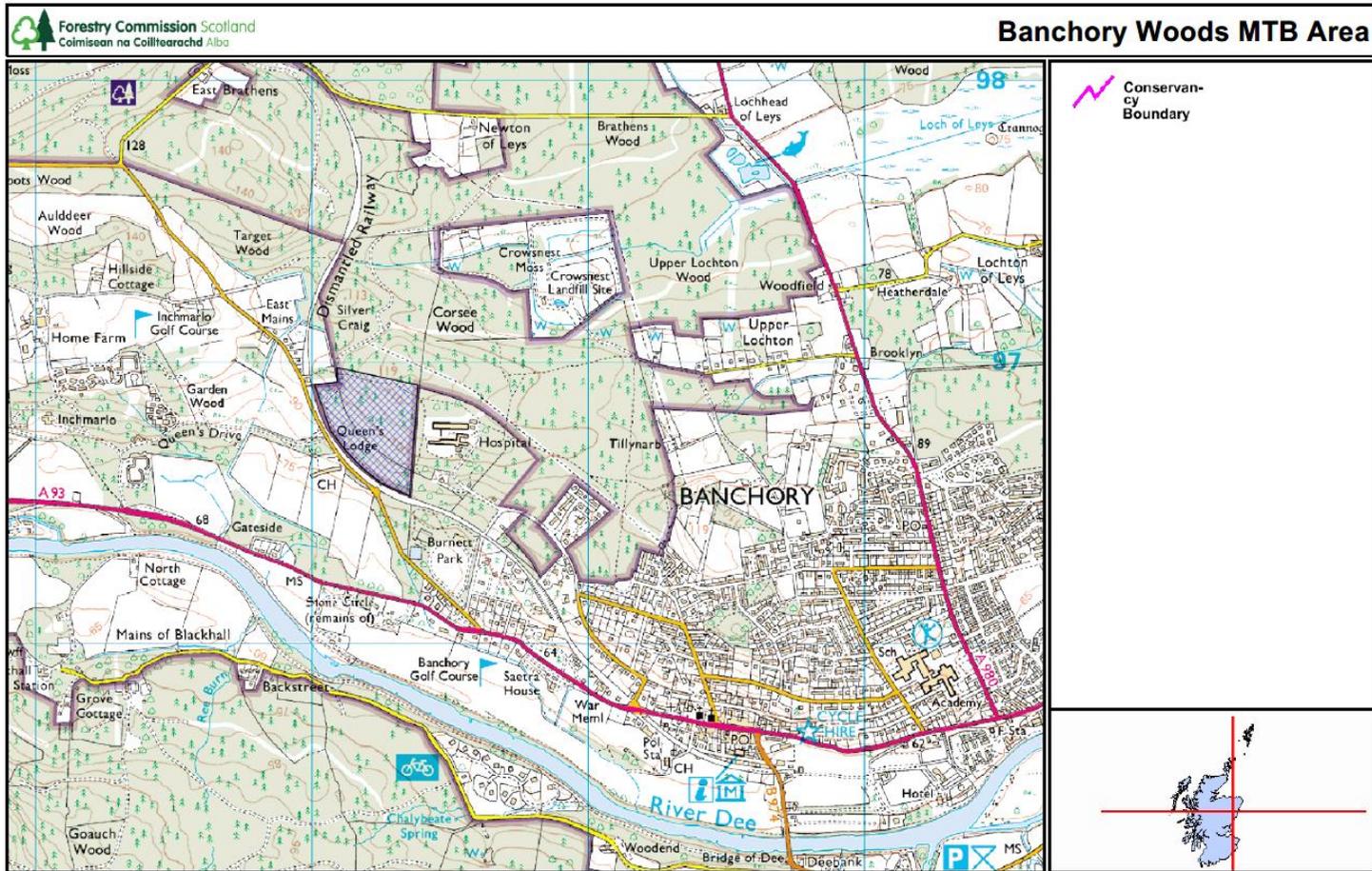
felling site/compartment in this table must be shown as the same on the thinning map(s). Please select method of displaying thinning regime:

Pre/Post stocking density

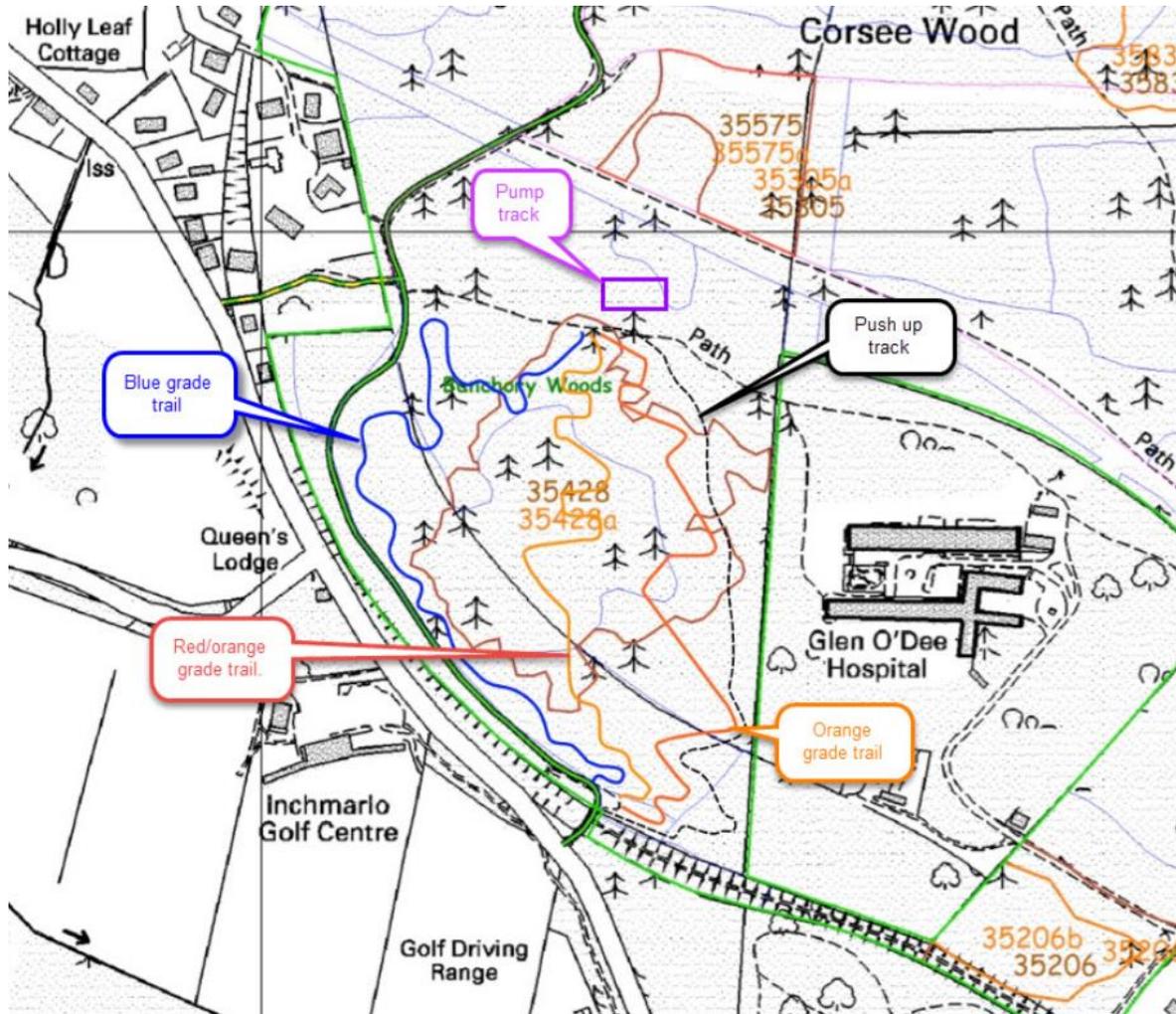
Pre/Post basal area

Volume to be removed

## Appendix 1 Site Location



## Appendix 2



## Appendix 3 Habitat Map

