



Forestry and
Land Scotland
Coilltearachd agus
Fearann Alba

Westfield LMP

2024-2034

We manage Scotland's National Forest Estate to the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard – the standard endorsed in the UK by the international Forest Stewardship Council® and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification. We are independently audited.

Our land management plans bring together key information, enable us to evaluate options and plan responsibly for the future. We welcome comments on these plans at any time.



The mark of
responsible forestry





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1. Description of Woodlands

1.1 Property Details

Property Name:	Westfield		
Grid Reference:	NS 6411 6256	Nearest town or locality:	Blackridge
Local Authority:	West Lothian & North Lanarkshire		
LMP Plan area (hectares):	132.5 ha		
Owner's Details			
Title:	Mrs	Forename:	Carol
Surname:	McGinnes		
Organisation:	Forestry and Land Scotland	Position:	Regional Manager
Primary Contact Number:	0131 370 5633	Alternative Contact Number:	07917 271577
Email:	carol.mcginnes@forestryandland.gov.scot		
Address:	Five Sisters House, Five Sisters Business Park, West Calder		
Postcode:	EH55 8PN	Country:	Scotland
Approval - to be completed by Scottish Forestry staff:			
LMP Reference Number:			
Plan Period: (ten years) (day/month/year)	From:	To:	
Operations Manager Signature:		Approval Date: (dd/mm/yyyy)	

Version History

Version	Date	Comments
0.1	30/04/2024	Initial draft
1.0	31/05/2024	Comments from internal teams added



Declaration

I hereby apply for a permission to fell the trees described in this application and I certify that:

- I am the landowner or an occupier of the land with written permission of the landowner;
- Where the landowner is a business, I am authorised to sign legal contracts on behalf of that business;
- If I am an acting on behalf of the landowner or occupier, I have been mandated to do so;
- Any necessary consents from any other person(s) if required, have been obtained;
- I have made the necessary checks with the local planning authorities regarding Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas;
- I have notified all stakeholders that may be affected by the felling in this application and sought their views prior to submitting this application;
- I hereby acknowledge that Scottish Ministers may process any of my personal data contained in or relating to this application in accordance with the terms of Scottish Forestry's Privacy Notice, a copy of which is available at www.forestry.gov.scot;
- Where applicable and appropriate I have submitted an EIA screening opinion form for operations contained within this application under the Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017;
- I have read and understand this application fully and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information given in this application is complete, true, and accurate;
- I accept that any false or misleading information provided in this application constitutes an offence and may result in any felling permission based on this application being revoked at any time, and
- I have read and understand Scottish Forestry's Privacy Notice, a copy of which is available at <https://forestry.gov.scot/privacy-complaints-freedom-of-information-and-requests-for-information>.

Do you give consent for Scottish Forestry to access your land? Delete as appropriate.

YES

NO

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

Signed:

Print:

Date:



1.2 Location and Background

Westfield is located to the west of Blackridge, just off the A89 between Airdrie and Bathgate (see **M1 – Location Map**). Lying between 200m and 250m above sea level on the Central/Slamannan Plateaux, Westfield was incorporated into the National Forest Estate ten years ago as a woodland creation project. At 132.5 hectares in total, 54.62ha of which was planted as part of the last LMP, Westfield is made up of two separate blocks, one located immediately to the northwest (Grid Ref.: NS 8530 6830) and the other to the east of Westfield Farm House, Caldercruix ML6 7RY (Grid Ref.: NS 8630 6770).

1.3 Existing Schemes & Permissions

Type	Ref. No.	Details
Forest design plan including woodland creation	032/13/05	Approval of a forest design plan including woodland creation. Expires 08/04/2024.

1.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Scoping – Main Points	LMP Reference (section/page):
(Internal) Civils team reported that a new road would be needed and confirmation of a route required.	3.2.11/p.19
(Internal) Landscape Architect commented that restocking of felled shelterbelts would be best with a combination of broadleaves so as to reflect the mosaic of the surrounding area.	3.2.7/p.17
(Internal) Open area in the north of the main block has potential for restoration, but does not meet the criteria necessary to receive funding under the Peatland Action Plan.	3.2.14/p.20
(Internal) Harvesting and FM teams noted need for felling and soil remediation on windblown shelterbelt area as manmade soils are currently too shallow to sustain mature trees.	3.2.1/p.16



1.5 Long Term Vision and Management Objectives

1.5.1 Vision

Westfield is intended to be primarily a site for the production of quality softwood timber to reduce the need for imports and boost the national economy. Additionally, it is the aim of this site to increase the biodiversity value of the surrounding area by creating connectivity between woodland habitats, as well as providing valuable nesting sites for birds.

1.5.2 Management Objectives

No.	Objectives (including environmental, economic and social considerations)	Indicator of objective being met
1	Establishment of crop for softwood log production	Continued growth of coniferous forest areas with little to no damage evident at the end of the LMP period.
2	Improved access to the block	Creation of new entrance to the site independent of other landowners and construction of new road.
3	Increased biodiversity and habitat value	Continued establishment of existing woodland and increased presence of wildlife.
4	Improved landscape character	Successful establishment of new broadleaf area to visually connect existing broadleaf areas, reflecting the existing framework of the surrounding landscape.

1.6 General Site Description

1.6.1 Topography

Westfield has relatively consistent topography with elevation ranging between 190m above sea level at the lowest point, and 220m at the highest. The smaller northern block has a slight slope down in a SE direction, whilst the larger block slopes downwards in a more generally southern direction.

The Naturescot Landscape Character Type is 273 LOWLAND PLATEAUX – LOTHIAN. Key landscape characteristics relevant to the block are: areas of improved pasture with a pattern of tree lines and shelter belts; scattered small scale woodland with a trend for new small to medium scale mixed and conifer plantations; and the area to the east of the block retains a historic framework and pattern defined by small mixed woodland and shelterbelts.



1.6.2 Geology and Soils

Soil Nutrient Regime across the site ranges from Very Poor to medium with most of the site falling between these categories with a classification of Poor. The main soil types found on site are: Deep Peat, Brown earth, Man-made restored ground, Peaty surface-water gley and Surface-water gley.

1.6.3 Climate

Both blocks that form the woodland fall within the Cool, Moist climatic zone with a small area of the north western block also being within the Cool, Wet zone and the main eastern block also having pockets within the Warm, Moist climate zones.

The DAMS score is predominantly 16 within the larger block with some northern areas measuring 17. The DAMS score in the smaller block is predominantly 17. As is evidenced below in section 1.6.5, windthrow is a risk in this area.

1.6.4 Hydrology

North Calder Water flows south westerly between the 2 blocks which form Westfield and runs along the western boundary of the main block for approx. 250m. Westfield has had an extensive drainage network established over time allowing for more suitable conditions for agriculture. The drainage system feeds into North Calder Water which in turn feeds Hillend Reservoir located approx. 1km to the west. North Calder Water is currently classified by SEPA as 'poor' (primarily due to barriers to fish migration).

1.6.5 Windthrow

There is significant windthrow in coupe 60008 which is part of a remnant conifer shelterbelt, standing when the land was purchased by FLS for woodland creation in 2013. The windthrow in this coupe accounts for around half of the 2.5ha area. Despite proximity to neighbouring land, all damaged trees have fallen within the block boundary.

1.6.6 Adjacent Land Use

The LMP area is predominantly surrounded by pastoral agricultural systems with farms rearing both sheep and cattle. The immediately adjacent Westfield Farm, to the East of the main block and currently the main access route into the block, is an equestrian school that trains showjumping and horse trekking.

To the NE lies a small, young conifer plantation of West Drumbeg Wood. The surrounding area is dotted with other small plantations.



1.6.7 Access

Access to the main block is currently achieved by the use of a private road, owned by Westfield Farm to the East. Access to the smaller block can be found via a gate on the adjacent Forrestfield Road.

1.6.8 Historic environment

Prior to woodland creation, the land was used for cattle grazing on improved grassland. Before its use of pasture, the area had previously been the site of an open cast mine. Perhaps due to this land use history, as it is likely that any features were demolished in the process of mining.

No scheduled ancient monuments in footprint of site. Locally significant heritage features associated with farming and mining are present.

1.6.9 Biodiversity

An increase in biodiversity since the inception of the previous plan is evident with 43 species of bird being recorded, of which 38 held breeding territories on site (See **Appendix 1**). Additionally, six red and amber-listed Birds of Conservation Concern were deemed to have relatively good numbers of breeding territories on site (Grasshopper warbler; Reed bunting; Sedge Warbler; Whitethroat; Willow Warbler; Skylark).

There have been no Red Squirrel sightings in the area; no badger sets discovered on site.

Presence of bats is likely in the mature elements of the LMP area.

As woodland matures a change in species present is likely with diversity being expected to increase with new habitat becoming available to, for example, raptors.

1.6.10 Invasive Species

Japanese Knotweed had previously been reported at specific areas along the northern track in the main block. Despite this, it has not been sighted on site visits within the last 6 months.

1.7 Woodland Description

The LMP area consists of a mix of productive conifer stands, areas of broadleaf for both biodiversity and landscape value, as well as open space (See **M2 – Current Species Map**). The character of the area is noticeably that of a young woodland with the vast majority of the trees currently falling within the 0-10 years age class (see table 2).

By having a mix of land uses within the LMP area, Westfield both sits within and enhances the local landscape



1.7.1 Community and Recreation

A high quality, tarmac, traffic free ~1km section of National Route 75 (Hillend Reservoir to Bathgate, part of The National Cycle Network) runs along the southern boundary with Westfield which is also a Right of Way (ROW). This same path is also part the local core path network. A second ROW runs through the site for ~1km accessed from Forrestfield Road along the existing tarmac road through the site exiting north of the spruce shelterbelt toward West Drumbeg Wood.

Despite having a ROW through the site, the site is not frequently used by the public with the majority of use coming from the equestrian school at Westfield Farm and occasional dog walkers.



Table 1 - Area by Species

This shows the current and future species composition within the entire Land Management Plan area.

Area by species						
Species (Add relevant species groups, or OG/OL)	Current*		Year 10*		Year 20*	
	Area (ha)	%	Area (ha)	%	Area (ha)	%
Aspen	2.9	2.2	3.7	2.7	3.7	2.7
Birch (downy/silver)	1.2	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.2	0.9
Common Alder	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.7
Goat Willow	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2
Hawthorn species	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5
Hazel	1	0.8	1	0.8	1	0.8
Hybrid Larch	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Lodgepole Pine	11	8.3	11	8.3	11	8.3
Mixed Broadleaves	3.2	2.5	2.4	1.8	2.4	1.8
Macedonian Pine	3.2	2.4	3.2	2.4	3.2	2.4
Serbian Spruce	6.7	5.1	6.7	5.1	6.7	5.1
Downy Birch	1.4	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.4	1.1
Blackthorn	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3



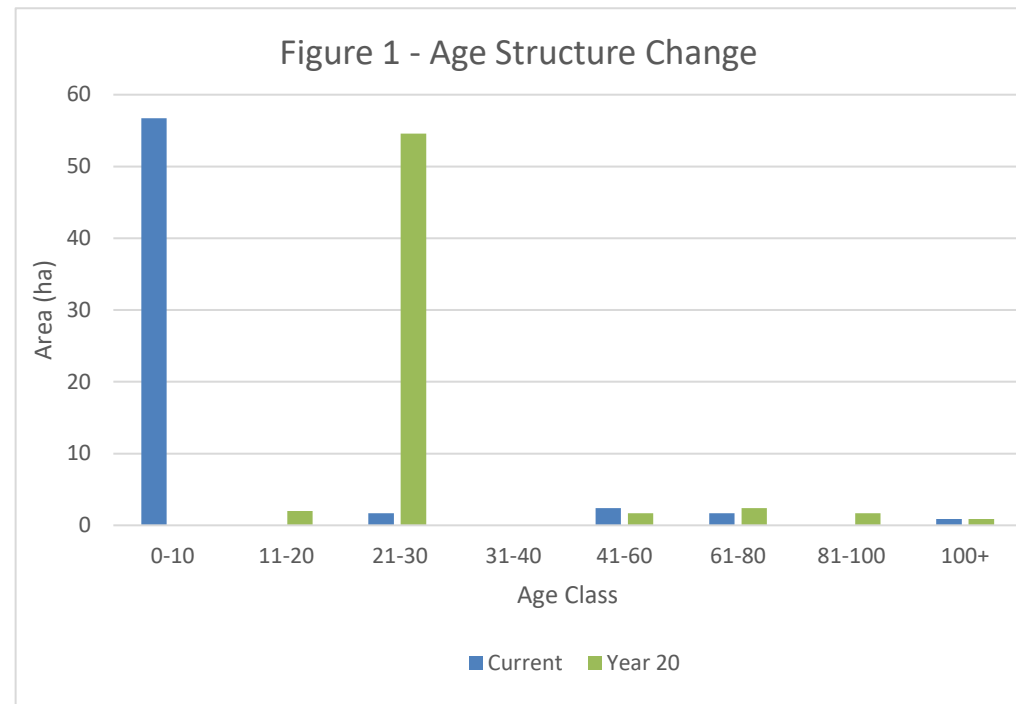
Area by species						
Species (Add relevant species groups, or OG/OL)	Current*		Year 10*		Year 20*	
	Area (ha)	%	Area (ha)	%	Area (ha)	%
Red Alder	3.2	2	3.5	2.4	3.5	2.4
Rowan	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Grey Willow	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Sessile Oak	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Scots Pine	1.1	0.8	1.1	0.8	1.1	0.8
Sitka Spruce	23.1	17.4	22.4	16.9	22.4	16.9
Sycamore	2	1.5	2	1.5	2	1.5
Open	68.9	52	69	52	69	52
Total	132.5	100	132.5	100	132.5	100

* Of whole LMP area (including open ground (OG)). Any mixtures such as Mixed Conifer (MC) should be broken down and included as an individual species component where a species occupies more than 10%.



Table 2 - Area by Age

Age class (years)	Current	Year 20
	Area (ha)	Area (ha)
0-10	54.6	0
11-20	0	2
21-30	1.7	54.6
31-40	0	0
41-60	2.4	1.7
61-80	1.7	2.4
81-100	0	1.7
100+	0.9	0.9
Total	63.4	63.3





1.8 Plant Health

Whilst there is a small amount of Larch present in the block, *P.ramorum* has yet to be found in the vicinity.

There are no other known plant health issues within this LMP area.



2. Analysis of Information

2.1 Constraints and Opportunities

Factor	Constraint	Opportunity
Windblown trees	<p>Lack of appropriate access to coupe due to low powerlines and poor road quality</p> <p>Part of a former shelterbelt system that extends into neighbouring land</p> <p>The damaged trees are no longer viable for timber markets</p>	<p>Establishment of a new direct access route that could connect with the wider block</p> <p>Connect with neighbouring land owner and provide access to remove their part of the former shelterbelt</p> <p>Replant with productive species to increase financial value of the block</p>
Landscape	<p>Shelterbelt an obvious feature on the landscape separating planted areas</p> <p>Strip of veteran broadleaves within windblown coupe of conifer at southern end of the coupe</p>	<p>Connect adjacent planted areas of broadleaf</p> <p>Provide complimentary habitat for existing veteran trees which will not be felled with the rest of the coupe</p>
Access	<p>Low powerlines over current access point would pose an issue with timber extraction</p> <p>No access point to the main block under FLS ownership</p>	<p>Create new access point from the A89 to the south to harvest windthrow, and connect to the old quarry road network</p>

Concept (see M3 – Analysis and Concept Map)

Access – Create new access route to the main block from the south to facilitate phase 1 felling and provide future access route under FLS ownership.

Windblown Trees - Fell damaged trees in the coupe to recycle and extract viable timber trees whilst leaving any veteran broadleaf trees found within for landscape and biodiversity purposes. Partially restock with productive conifers to increase the productivity of the block.

Landscape – Restock felled area with an area of non-productive broadleaves to add to both the landscape character and biodiversity value of the block.



3. Management Proposals

3.1 Silvicultural Practice

All proposals have been designed in accordance with sound silvicultural and environmental principles, falling within the framework outlined by the UK Forestry Standard, the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme, FC Bulletin 112 Creating New Native Woodlands, FC Bulletin 115 Alternative Silvicultural Systems, FC Bulletin 124 Ecological Site Classification for Forestry and the current SF edition of Forest & Water Guidelines. This plan has considered the natural and historic environment as well as green network opportunities.

The plan has been produced in accordance with a range of government and industry standards and guidance as well as recent research outputs. A full list of these standards and guidance can be found here: <https://forestryandland.gov.scot/what-we-do/planning>

3.2 Prescriptions

3.2.1 Felling

Coupe **60008** is proposed for phase 1 felling. This coupe mainly consists of mature Sitka Spruce, the majority of which has suffered from windthrow. By clearfelling this area, healthier trees can be established in its place.

As the LMP area is the product of a recent woodland creation scheme, the other areas of productive conifer will not be felled until a date far exceeding the lifetime of this plan. (See **M4 – Proposed Management Map**)

3.2.2 Thinning

Due to high levels of exposure across the site, thinning has been deemed unsuitable for the Westfield LMP area.

3.2.3 LISS

Due to high levels of exposure across the site, LISS has been deemed unsuitable for the Westfield LMP area.

3.2.4 Minimum Intervention (MI)

For various areas of the forests biodiversity will be the primary objective and we are prepared to commit such areas of land to minimum intervention (MI) management.

The mixed broadleaf areas as seen in **M2** have been planted with the aim of improving both landscape character and biodiversity value for the area. As these areas mature, there may be an



3.2.4 Minimum Intervention (MI)

opportunity to manage as coppice to the benefit of local communities, but such a time falls outside of the remit of this LMP. (See **M4 – Management Map**)

3.2.5 Other Tree Felling in Exceptional Circumstances

FLS will normally seek to map and identify all planned tree felling in advance through the LMP process. However, there are some circumstances requiring small scale tree felling where this may not be possible and where it may be impractical to apply for a separate felling permission due to the risks or impacts of delaying the felling. Felling permission is therefore sought for the LMP approval period to cover the following circumstances:

- Individual trees, rows of trees or small groups of trees that are impacting on important infrastructure (as defined below*), either because they are now encroaching on or have been destabilised or made unsafe by wind, physical damage, or impeded drainage.

**Infrastructure includes forest roads, footpaths, access (vehicle, cycle, horse walking) routes, buildings, utilities and services, and drains.*

The maximum volume of felling in exceptional circumstances covered by this approval is 75 cubic metres per Land Management Plan per calendar year. A record of the volume felled in this way will be maintained and will be considered during the five year Land Management Plan review.

3.2.6 Woodland Management of Visitor Zones

Due to minimal public use, there are no designated Visitor Zones within this LMP area.

3.2.7 Restocking Proposals

Productive area -

Productive restocking on site will be with the primary aim of quality timber production; as such, and as per the Regional restocking strategy, the management input will generally be:

- standard ground prep methods
- restocking at full initial density of 2,700 stems/ha to achieve a final density of between 2,250 and 2,500 stems/ha with an emphasis on achieving overall stocking
- standard top-up spraying and weeding as required
- standard SDA process

In order to improve the soil nutrient regime within manmade soils, Aspen has been selected as a nurse species for the productive spruce. This will serve to encourage straight and fast growth in the spruce whilst also enhancing nitrogen levels in the soil, as well as providing short term diversity and landscape value.

Non-productive Broadleaves –

Broadleaf planting will be done with the objective of adding landscape value, merging existing areas of similar species. To this end, the broadleaf area indicated in the restock map will be planted to achieve a final target density of 1600 stems/ha. (see **M5 – Future Habitats and Species Map**)



Table 3 - Felling

SCALE OF PROPOSED FELLING AREAS (including LISS final fell areas)													
Total LMP Area:		132.5		hectares									
Felling	Phase 1	%	Phase 2	%	Phase 3	%	Phase 4	%	Long Term Retention	%	Area out-with 20yr plan period	%	
Area (Ha)	2.1	1.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47.2	35.6	

Table 4 - Restocking

Felling Phase	Map Identifier(s)	Species to be planted	Area (ha) to be planted
1	60008	Sitka Spruce	0.6
1	60008	Aspen	0.8
1	60008	Red Alder	0.3
1	60008	Sessile Oak	0.2
1	60008	Open	0.2
Total Restocking Area			2.1



3.2.8 Hydrology

All operations will follow best practice as detailed in the current Forest and Water Guidelines. Timber extraction will normally avoid crossing burns or main drains, but, where necessary, each crossing point will be piped or bridged. Branches will be kept out of watercourses and trees will generally be felled away from the watercourses.

3.2.9 Protection

1.2m biodegradable tree guards will be used for the newly planted broadleaves. These should be of a design that does not require the guards to be collected and recycled at a later date, but rather decompose naturally. An example of these would be the tree shelters from NexGen which are made of ethically sourced wool and natural resin, degrading only after the 5 years needed for successful establishment.

Less palatable conifers will be planted without protection.

3.2.10 Fence erection / removal

Due to ongoing beat-up areas within the block and the presence of grazing sheep in the adjacent land, fencing will remain in-place. This will be reviewed after a 5 year period and an assessment of establishment success.

3.2.11 Road Operations

In order to complete the felling operations outlined in the above prescriptions, a new access route is required. This will come in the form of a new 680m road, entering from the A89 in the SE of the block. This road will extend to the proposed felling area, simultaneously joining onto the network of disused quarry roads thus serving the whole block for the future. (See **M3 - Analysis and Concept Map**)

3.2.12 Public Access

Existing public access gates will be maintained to ensure safe operation.

3.2.13 Historic Environment

Our key priorities for archaeology and the historic environment are to undertake conservation management, condition monitoring and archaeological recording at our significant historic assets; and to seek opportunities to work in partnership to help to deliver *Our Place in Time: the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland* and *Scotland's Archaeology Strategy*. Significant historic environment features will be protected and managed following the UK Forestry Standard. Harvesting coupes, access roads and fence lines will be surveyed prior to any work being undertaken in order to ensure that upstanding historic environment features can be marked and avoided. At establishment and restocking, work prescriptions remove relevant historic environment features from ground disturbing operations and replanting. Where appropriate, significant historic assets are recorded by archaeological measured survey, see active conservation management and may be presented to the



3.2.13 Historic Environment

public with interpretation panels and access paths. Opportunities to enhance the setting of important sites and landscapes will be considered on a case-by-case basis (such as the views to and from a significant designated site).

The *Regional Historic Asset Management Plan* includes conservation management intentions for those designated historic assets in Scotland’s national forests. Details of all known historic environment features are held within the *Forester Web Heritage Data* (built using national and regional historic environment records) and included within specific operational *Work Plans* to ensure damage is avoided. Significant historic environment features will be depicted on all relevant operational maps.”

Objective	Opportunities	Constraints	Concept
Caring for the Historic Environment	We will ensure positive conservation management at significant historic assets, undertaking scrub control, condition monitoring and archaeological recording where necessary.	We will undertake suitable work practices on operational sites with known historic assets (and those discovered during operations).	We will ensure that historic assets (both designated and un-designated) are included within our land management and operational plans and are managed in line with <i>UK Forestry Standard</i> .

3.2.14 Biodiversity

Existing mature broadleaf trees within the felling area will be left standing where possible due to their value as habitat and their contribution to age class diversity in the area.

Opportunity for potential peatland restoration on the open area in the north of the main block which we look to do should funding become available.

3.2.15 Invasive species

Presence of invasive species will continue to be monitored and surveyed with the necessary control and removal measures to be put in place should they be found.

3.3 Environmental Impact Assessment and Permitted Development Notifications

As the new road construction is less than 1Ha in area and will require no felling in the process, no EIA permission is needed.



3.4 Tolerance Table

	Map Required (Y/N)	Adjustment to felling period*	Adjustment to felling coupe boundaries**	Timing of Restocking	Changes to Restocking species	Changes to road lines	Designed open ground ***	Windblow Clearance****
FC Approval normally not required	N	Fell date can be moved within 5 year period where separation or other constraints are met	Up to 10% of coupe area	Up to 2 planting seasons after felling	Change within species group e.g. evergreen conifers or broadleaves		Increase by up to 5% of coupe area	
Approval by exchange of email and map	Y		Up to 15% of coupe area	Between 2 and 5 planting seasons after felling subject to the wider forest and habitat structure not being significantly compromised		Additional felling of trees not agreed in plan Departures of more than 60m in either direction from centre line of road	Increase by up to 10% Any reduction in open ground within coupe area	Up to 5 ha
Approval by formal plan amendment may be required	Y	Felling delayed into second or later 5 year period Advance felling into current or 2 nd 5 year period	More than 15% of coupe area	More than 5 planting seasons after felling subject to the wider forest and habitat structure not being significantly compromised	Change from specified native species Change between species group	As above, depending on sensitivity	More than 10% of coupe area Colonisation of open areas agreed as critical	More than 5 ha

Note
 *Felling sequence must not compromise UKFS in particular felling coupe adjacency. Felling progress and impact will be reviewed against UKFS at 5 year review.
 ** No more than 1 ha, without consultation with Scottish Forestry, where the location is defined as 'sensitive' within the Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.
 *** Tolerance subject to an overriding maximum of 20% designed open ground.
 ****Where windblow occurs, Scottish Forestry must be informed of extent prior to clearance and consulted on clearance of any standing trees



5. Appendices

Provide a list of appendices:

Item number	Title
Appendix 1	Westfield Breeding Bird Survey Report 2022

6. Maps

Item number	Title
M1	Location Map
M2	Current Species Map
M3	Analysis and Concept Map
M4	Management Map
M5	Future Habitat and Species Map
M6	Timber Haulage Map