






Map 4.2 Opportunities and Constraints Map

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Scale @ A1: 1:15,000

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Legend

-  Access_road
-  reservoir catchment
-  proposed roads
-  Forest boundary
-  Core path

Phytophthora ramorum
As at November 2021, there was 15.9ha of larch present in scattered groups with limited or no access at present. Larch manually felled must be left on site until extraction becomes possible. Designing coupes to fell all larch in the plan period would have a slight negative impact on overall coupe design and restructuring. The 3 SPHN's have forced redesign to deal with the infections.
LMP revision can facilitate the redesign of the forest to fell all the larch in Phase 1 of the plan, and so comply with the SPHN notices and with the FLS larch strategy targets for larch removal.

Windblow risk
Tree height and exposure limit silvicultural choices, particularly in higher, more westerly sections. The current conifer crop is now past safe thinnable age. Windblow may arise when the road network is inserted and felling commences.
There is little windblow at present. Lower areas with better soils will be safely thinnable in the future.

Water
Oban public water supply reservoir and catchment are sensitive to forest operations. There are a number of sensitive private water supplies, springs and adjacent ponds. The reservoir catchment is not particularly suited to the use of LISS (Low Impact Silvicultural Systems) and associated proposed broadleaved species and Scots pine. No more than 20% of the catchment can be felled in a 3 - year period.
Opportunity to consult with Scottish Water and produce a robust design to protect the public water supply in the future. Keeping the new road network out of the catchment would be helpful. Liaison with private water supply stakeholders can help advise the plan design. A design that increases open and native woodland buffers in riparian areas will improve future protection.

Visibility
Forest edges in particular are visible from external viewpoints, such as Soroba, the Auction Mart, the A816, the Council's refuse and recycling centre, Kerrera, Seil, Kilinver, Lerags Glen and ferry routes. There are some angular shapes, skyline fringes and hard conifer edges.
Much of the forest has little external visibility due to topography, woodland and limited access, so fewer design sensitivities. Existing landscape issues can be addressed in the short to medium term as much of the forest will be felled in the next ten years. Future planting can provide further integration with external landscape features and provide softer, graded edges.

Priority habitats
Most areas with deep peat have been planted, but the tree growth can be poor. Some areas of deep peat pose access issues to areas beyond. There will be an associated loss of commercial forest area through open hilltop expansion and possible peatland restoration.
Opportunity to restore small areas of deep peat and protect existing areas identified as priority open habitats, with associated carbon storage benefits. There is also an opportunity to expand the area of open hill top with Upland heathland habitat in a couple of places. These will also remove skyline conifer fringes.

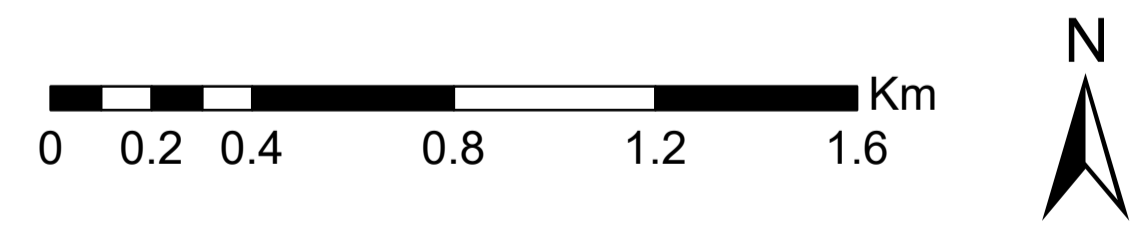
Restructuring
The forest is currently even-aged. Restructuring has been negatively affected by the late start to harvesting, due to legal issues delaying road access construction. Delaying restructuring further has the potential to increase windblow risk.
There is an opportunity to restructure the forest, which will have a positive benefit on landscape and amenity values.

Access for haulage
Haulage along the C33 Lerags Glen road is subject to Timber Traffic Management Plan. Any changes to this must be agreed with the Council. Deterioration of the road may result in haulage being stopped until issues are resolved. The private road is also constrained by strength, width and bends. Use during the winter season is preferred by the chalet park owners. Some restrictions also apply to the section of built forest road across the private field. The planned new access across Ariogan will take time to
Opportunity now available for access across Ariogan. Liaison with Argyll and Bute Council, neighbours and stakeholders over use and condition of the Lerags Glen access can address any issues that may arise, should access be required. Condition surveys and monitoring during use will help maintain current standards.

Recreation
In-forest visitor parking is constrained by access through private farmland. Parking is currently informal on private ground. The existing Core Path is uninspiring and receives little use. The path is not waymarked. Access along the side of the reservoir is difficult.
Opportunity to review the routing of the existing forest walk and possibly incorporate new viewpoints and visitor zone management into the new design. Access for fisherman to the reservoir can be improved. Other informal or wild path routes may also be identified. Opportunity to enhance the forest visitor experience through diversification and restructuring of the next rotation. Opportunity for new links to Oban through Ariogan.

Hardwoods
Access to some hardwood areas is constrained by steep slopes and lack of direct access to the proposed new road network. Ash dieback is threatening to decimate the ash content of the forest.
Reasonable soils throughout the lower parts of the forest will allow a variety of broadleaved species. Hardwood timber production is possible from existing crops. Proposed new hardwood planting will also offer productive potential. Hardwoods offer increased diversity, amenity and landscape benefits.

Species choice
Plant health issues prevent planting of larch, ash and most pines. Exposure and soils limit species choice over parts of the forest.
Opportunity to diversify the forest on lower slopes with better soils and more shelter, with good growth potential for most species here and good growth potential elsewhere for Sitka spruce. Hardwoods offer productive potential on better soils. Deer numbers are currently low, aiding establishment of species vulnerable to deer browsing.



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