



Fort Augustus Land Management Plan Revision

Text Annotations on Analysis and Concept Maps 3a and 3b

There are a number of large text boxes included on Maps 3a and 3b which contain descriptions of particular issues pertinent to ongoing management of the Plan area. In each text box an issue is described (black text colour used) and then a corresponding description of how that issue might be best addressed is given (i.e. as a management concept). The Concept text is coloured red in the maps' text boxes. Note: Some issues/text boxes relate to specific areas – and so have a corresponding arrow pointing to that area on the map. Some issues/text boxes are more generic and, whilst a text box arrow may still point to a particular area on the map, the issue may actually be more wide ranging.

To make the map labels accessible to people using screen reading technology, the exact text of each text box is given here. The issue text is presented first – with an added sentence describing where on the map this issue is most relevant - followed by the associated concept text relating to this particular issue.

Map 3a – shows the southern and most westerly portion of the Plan area and depicts this using the colour Ordnance Survey 1 to 50,000 map as a backdrop.

Issue 1: Significant area of checked and failed first rotation crop on ploughed blanket bog. Local topography has drier ridges and knolls in extensive depth-surveyed bog. *The text box arrow points specifically at the isolated Balnacarn forest block at the western end of the landholding in Glenmoriston near Dalchriechart.*

Concept 1: Restore blanket bog where this has potential (i.e. de-forest, block drains, smooth furrows to re-wet). Establish peatland edge woodland on areas with drier, mineralised soils.

Issue 2: Whole forest area within Glenmoriston is within the River Moriston catchment – a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC). *The text box arrows point toward the river Moriston at various points along its length within the glen.*

Concept 2: Restore riparian woodland along key tributaries. Prioritise felling of wind-susceptible mature forest stands to protect SAC by avoiding storm damage and reactive 'un-designed' clearance operations. Work to UKFS-compliant Forest and Water Guidelines and best practice for operations within freshwater pearl mussel catchments.

Issue 3: LMP area is bounded by Levishie oakwood – a Site of Special Scientific Interest. *The text box arrows point toward the Levishie Oakwood area situated on the northern flank of Glenmoriston between the settlements of Bhlaraidh and Achnaconeran.*

Concept 3: Restructure forest adjacent to Levishie and on contiguous south-facing slopes (with maturing spruce/fir and veteran oaks) for upland birch/oak habitat reinstatement.

Issue 4: 40% of the LMP forest area is Plantation on Ancient Woodland sites (PAWS). Other native woodland remnants occur throughout conifer plantations. *This text box relates to the whole of Glenmoriston and the forests on the northern flank of Loch Ness.*

Concept 4: Restore native woodland at landscape scale, linking PAWS and fragmented Ancient Woodland remnants to create a robust native habitat mosaic. Incorporate management for native timber production on accessible terrain (high density restocking for continuous cover silviculture).

Issue 5: Larch trees are susceptible to virulent, notifiable tree disease with potential to adversely impact larch here and in the wider landscape. *The text box arrow points to a particular forest area where concentrated larch forest is depicted however this issue relates to any and all areas of larch within the landholding.*

Concept 5: Introduce programme of pre-emptive larch felling to meet FLS Larch Strategy – include access development to reach remote stands.

Issue 6: Increasing storm damage to prominent and iconic fir, larch and spruce “cathedral trees” of high aesthetic and historic value. *The text box’s arrows point to several locations in and around Fort Augustus where these older trees are located and concentrated however the issue is also pertinent to several other areas of the landholding.*

Concept 6: Prioritise felling of wind-susceptible stands near vital infrastructure, public access corridors and river Moriston SAC. Retain trees where windfirm and still of historical or silvicultural interest or seed stands.

Issue 7: Mature, thinned Scots pine woodland in area of high recreational use. Recent storm damage has compromised some trees/stands requiring clearance. *The text box label points to the forest area between the village of Auchterawe and the river Oich.*

Concept 7: Continue to manage windfirm stands under continuous cover principles, maintaining habitat continuity, developing characteristic understorey/ground flora, enhancing visitor experience.

Issue 8: Scheduled Iron Age fort ‘Torr Dhuin’ is a prominent feature in local landscape. Riverside native woodland and trails are highly used and valued. Dense, maturing non-native conifer plantation in the vicinity detracts from immediate character and sense of place and is of increasing windthrow concern. *The text box arrow points at Torr Dhuin hilltop fort just south of the settlement of Auchterawe.*

Concept 8: Open up views from fort/summit and improve visitor experience by re-structuring un-thinned productive forest with native pine/oak/alder woodland (continuous cover and amenity management).

Issue 9: Abrupt forest boundaries with open hill and overhead powerlines create incongruous artificial/linear geometry in landscape. Some afforested treelines have proved unsuitable for sustainable productive forestry due to levels of exposure and impoverished, wet soils. *Text box arrows point to upper forest edge at Inchnacardoch and the Beaully-Denny overhead powerline corridor across open ground above Inchnacardoch.*

Concept 9: Create a more naturalistic landscape – bring productive coniferous forestry down the hillside. Integrate forest with open hill and wayleaves by feathering restock densities and varying coupe shapes with native broadleaved species. Continue to engage with utilities/developers to influence design of future infrastructure that is sympathetic to aesthetic and environmental values of LMP area.

Issue 10: Inverwick forest has high ecological value, improved through historic restoration work. At the heart of Achlain-Dundreggan CPI area, PAWS survey of remnant pinewoods within the CPI buffer zone recommends prioritised removal of non-native trees to conserve (threatened) ecological value. *Text box arrow points at Inverwick pinewood area in Glenmoriston by Torgoyle bridge.*

Concept 10: Manage eastern area as Natural Reserve (minimum intervention). Continue non-native felling in the buffer zone – promoting habitat expansion/connectivity. Benefiting sedentary native pinewood flora, increasing functionality and resilience of unique genetic resource..

Issue 11: Some areas of DNB-infected Lodgepole pine (high infection score) still present in CPI zones and in wider PAWS-dominant landscape. *Text box arrow points to areas of plantation in the upper reaches of Inverwick pinewood.*

Concept 11: Target lodgepole pine for early removal to reduce DNB threat to Core Pinewood Areas. Restock suitable soils with native woodland, better integrating forest with surrounding landscape (open hill and mid-slope pinewoods).

Map 3b – shows the north-easterly portion of the Plan area and depicts this using the colour Ordnance Survey 1 to 50,000 map as a backdrop.

Issue 12: Maturing and over-mature non-native conifer forests on extremely steep, potentially unstable slopes - above major A82 trunk road, settlements and overhead wires/poles. Significant proportion of the Loch Ness slopes are Plantation on Ancient Woodland sites (PAWS) and visually prominent in wider landscape. *Text box arrows point to various locations along the afforested northern flank of Loch Ness between Invermoriston and Bunloit.*

Concept 12: Reduce threat to trunk road by gradual felling of conifer crops through the A82 Project. Target highest at risk slopes as a priority. Enhance biodiversity by re-establishing slopes with minimum intervention native woodland of composition and density that ensures wind firmness, soil cohesion and slope stability. Where practical and viable, design felling coupes to be sympathetic to landscape form and to maintain forest resilience to storm events.

Issue 13: Forest trails – including Great Glen Way – car parks, interpretation and picnic sites are a key asset for locals and visitors and of importance to local economy. *The text box arrows points toward forests on Loch Ness-side but the issue is generic to entire land management plan area.*

Concept 13: Maintain access and facilities/interpretation at all existing thresholds and on all trails (way markers). Maintain established liaison with council Access Officer and community council re planned forest works with potential to impact access and in consideration of alternative arrangements.

Issue 14: Conifer plantation with native woodland remnants on extremely steep, inaccessible terrain along northern slopes of the Allt Sigh gorge. *The text box arrows point to the afforested area in Allt Sigh gorge.*

Concept 14: Use skyline cable/winch operations across the gorge to south-side road – avoiding need for new/upgraded roading/bridge. Retain native woodland remnants and isolated veterans. Intention to hot plant if Hylobius not already triggered by earlier, local clearfelling.

Issue 15: Attractive broadleaf woodland fringes the shore of Loch Ness. *The text box arrows points toward the forest margins along the northern shoreline of Loch Ness.*

Concept 15: Improve integration of forest with woodland along the shore of Loch Ness by re-establishing native broadleaves post -harvesting along the fertile lower slopes.

Issue 16: LMP area is bounded by Levishie oakwood – a Site of Special Scientific Interest. *The text box arrows point toward the Levishie Oakwood area situated on the northern flank of Glenmoriston between the settlements of Bhlaraidh and Achnaconeran.*

Concept 16: Restructure forest adjacent to Levishie and on contiguous south-facing slopes (with maturing spruce/fir and veteran oaks) for upland birch/oak habitat reinstatement.

Issue 17: Access for any harvesting/timber export from Creag nan Euan's lochside flank and Allt Sigh gorge woodland is prohibited by an old/inadequate forest road bridge – denying any PAWS restructuring operations. *The text box arrow points specifically at the shoulder of afforested ground above and north-east of Invermoriston village where current and separate forest roads do not connect.*

Concept 17: Consider and propose new vehicular access to meet forest management objectives (mature non-native productive PAWS forest restructured to conservation and slope stabilising native woodland).

Issue 18: Majority of Creag nan Euan forest is PAWS and includes the Achnaconeran Core Pinewood Inventory area. *The text box arrows point towards the illustrated core pinewood area above the existing treeline areas of Creag nan Euan.*

Concept 18: Incrementally restore Creag nan Euan forest to native woodland – creating a robust native habitat network from Dundreggan to Ruskich wood for visual and environmental benefits. Maximise productive potential of the mid-rotation non-native tree crops here which in turn will limit dramatic landscape change and dramatic loss of structural (woodland habitat) continuity.