



Forestry and
Land Scotland
Coilltearachd agus
Fearann Alba

Gallowhill

Land Management Plan 2023-2033 South Region-V1.0

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We manage Scotland's national forests and land 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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1.0 Objectives and Summary

1.1 Plan overview and objectives

Plan name	Gallowhill
Forest blocks included	Gallowhill only
Size of plan area (ha)	96.5 ha
Location	NX 046 600. See Location map (Map 1)

Long Term Vision
Gallowhill is easily accessed and enjoyed by the local community and visitors to the area. The diverse woodland brings local landscape value by providing a pleasant backdrop to Stranraer township. The combination of wooded, riparian and open habitats enhance the ecological value of the local area and strengthens ecosystem resilience.
Key Management Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Woodland establishment• Maintain a safe and enjoyable visitor experience.
Critical Success Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beat up of woodland with site suitable tree species• Rigorous weed control and effective protection of young trees (e.g. from browsing damage)• Maintenance of recreational facilities to a high standard• Timely and effective engagement with local community.

1.2 Summary of planned operations

A summary of planned operations is shown in the table below.

Table 1

Summary of operations over the plan period	
Clear felling (gross)	0.0 ha
Thinning (potential area)	40.7 ha
Restocking (gross)	0.0 ha
Afforestation	0.0 ha
Deforestation	0.0 ha
Forest roads (including forest road upgrades)	0.0 ha
Forestry quarries (including extensions to existing quarries)	0.0 ha

The forest is managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard – the standard endorsed in the UK by the *Forest Stewardship Council and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification*. Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) is independently audited to ensure that we are delivering sustainable forest management.

2.0 Analysis and Concept

The planning process was informed by collecting information about the woodland (presented in **Appendix I** and **Map 2**). During the development of this Land Management Plan (LMP) we have consulted with the local community and other key stakeholders; a consultation record is presented in **Appendix III**.

Below lists the objectives for the site and how key features present opportunities and/or constraints. The analysis of these form the concept for this LMP. Different management options for achieving objectives were considered against the constraints and opportunities identified during LMP scoping and consultation. The preferred concept is presented in **Map 3**.

2.1 Woodland establishment

Opportunities:

- Establish a woodland with a diverse range of tree species
- Contribute to landscape quality and visible impact of the site

Constraints:

- Complexity of woodland establishment on improved grassland
- Herbivore browsing pressure

Concept:

- Continue to establish a diverse woodland through rigorous and timely intervention
- Consider enhancing visible impact by expanding planted areas and/or softening woodland edges.

2.2 Maintain a safe and enjoyable visitor experience

Opportunities:

- Maintain FLS recreational trails and facilities to a high and safe standard
- Encourage more people to enjoy the site by developing access links with Stranraer
- Contribute to landscape quality and views of/from the site
- Improve general quality of life (e.g. provision of amenity and recreational space).

Constraints:

- Resource availability
- Potential damage from antisocial behaviour
- Improved access links are largely dependent on future urban development

Concept:

- Continue to establish an inviting woodland for visitors and enhance their experience by presenting a variety of tree species, colour and textural experiences
- Continue engaging with the community to identify valued features and better understand future aspirations for Gallowhill
- Encourage responsible public access in the spirit of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC)
- Work with partners to explore possible town access links should urban expansion occur in the future
- Maintain key views over Stranraer, Loch Ryan and to Ailsa Craig.

3.0 Management Proposals

This land management plan was produced in accordance with a range of government and industry standards and guidance as well as recent research outputs, recognised at the time of its production. A full list of the current standards and guidance which guide the preparation and delivery of FLS Land Management Plans can be found using the link [HERE](#).

3.1 Designations

The plan area forms part of, includes, or is covered by the following designations and significant features. Refer to **Map 2**.

Table 2

Designations and significant features		
Feature type	Present	Note
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torrs Warren & Luce Sands SSSI (Not in block, downstream only)
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	No	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	No	
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	No	
World Heritage Site (WHS)	No	
Scheduled Monument (SM)	No	
National Scenic Area (NSA)	No	
National Park (NP)	No	
Deep peat soil (>50 cm thick)	No	
Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	No	
Biosphere reserve	No	
Local Landscape Area	No	
Ancient woodland	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring Bank Plantation, Long-established of plantation origin (LEPO), ID 36973, 1.8 ha
Acid sensitive catchment	No	
Drinking Water Protected Area (DWPA)	No	
Environmentally Sensitive Area	No	

3.2 Clear felling

No clear felling operations will take place during this land management plan period. Refer to **Map 4**.

3.3 Potential thinning

Potential thinning coupes cover a gross area of 40.7 ha and are identified on **Map 5**.

Opportunities for timely thinning will be assessed as trees reach pole stage. Thinning will normally be carried out at, or below, the level of marginal thinning intensity (i.e. removing no more than 70% of the maximum MAI, or YC, per year). Higher intensities (no more than 140 % of maximum MAI, or YC, per year) may be applied where thinning has been delayed, larger tree sizes are being sought or as part of a LISS prescription. In all cases work plans will define the detailed thinning prescription before work is carried out and operations will be monitored by checking pre and post thinning basal areas for the key crop components.

3.4 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 below¹), either because they are now encroaching on or have been destabilised or made unsafe by wind, physical damage, or impeded drainage.

The maximum volume of felling in exceptional circumstances over the plan area covered by this approval is 75 cubic metres 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.

[N.B. Trees may be felled without permission if they: are of less than 10 cm diameter at breast height (1.3 m); pose immediate danger to persons or property; are completely dead; or are part of Authorised Planning Permission works or wayleave agreements].

3.5 Restocking

Restocking activities will be limited to the beat up of woodland habitats with consideration also given to softening current woodland edges through a modest expansion of planted areas.

As per the original design, future woodland establishment on the remaining agricultural fields will be considered at such a time that grazing let agreements cease.

The Future Habitats and Species map (**Map 6**) details the intended trajectory of species and habitats at Gallowhill in the long term.

3.6 Species diversity and age structure

The following tables and charts show how the proposed management of the forest will help to maintain or establish a diverse species composition and age-class structure, as recommended in the UK Forestry Standard. (Not included are open fields with potential future management as woodland.)

The current woodland composition is shown on **Map 7**.

Table 4

Plan area by species						
Species	Current Area (ha)	%	Year 10 Area (ha)	%	Year 20 Area (ha)	%
Conifers	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Broadleaves	28.1	29.1	28.1	29.1	28.1	29.1
Open ground	67.9	70.4	67.9	70.4	67.9	70.4
Total	96.5	100.0	96.5	100.0	96.5	100.0

¹ Infrastructure includes forest roads, footpaths, access (vehicle, cycle, horse walking) routes, buildings, utilities and services, and drains.

Chart 1

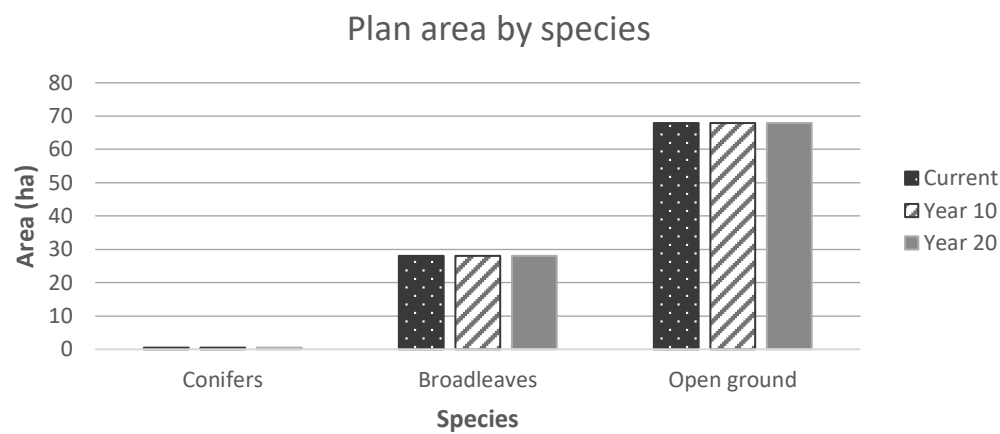


Table 5

Plan area by age (excluding open ground)						
Age Class (years)	Current Area (ha)	%	Year 10 Area (ha)	%	Year 20 Area (ha)	%
0 – 10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
11 – 20	22.9	80.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
21 – 40	0.5	1.7	22.9	80.1	22.9	80.1
41 – 60	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.7	0.5	1.7
>60	5.2	18.2	5.2	18.2	5.2	18.2
Total	28.6	100.0	28.6	100.0	28.6	100.0

Chart 2



3.7 Road Operations and Quarries

There are no roads, upgrades/re-alignments, or quarrying proposed at Gallowhill. Maintenance operations will continue to ensure block access is to a safe and usable standard.

3.8 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

There are no operations requiring an EIA determination proposed within this plan period.

3.9 Tolerance table

Working tolerances agreed with Scottish Forestry are shown in **Appendix II**.

4.0 Management Proposals - guidance and context

4.1 Silviculture

Coupe management

The primary management objective is to continue establishing a woodland with a diverse range of species to benefit visitor experience at Gallowhill. The woodland and hedgerows (coupes 34003 and 34006) will be managed under LISS in the future, but no felling operations are planned within the next 20 year period.

The small shelterbelt will be retained for the period of this plan under Long Term Retention (coupe 34002).

An area of mature broadleaf woodland along the Piltanton burn and the Spring Bank Plantation (long established of plantation origin (LEPO)) ancient woodland will be retained as a Natural Reserve (coupe 34005).

Open ground currently contributes to approximately 70.4% of the block (coupes 34000 and 34001). While there is potential for future woodland management within coupe 34001, these fields are currently managed under a grazing let agreement.

Refer to **Map 4**.

Beat up

Operations will be limited to the beat up of existing planted areas (coupes 34003 and 34006), with Forest Research's Ecological Site Classification (ESC) tool and local site knowledge used to identify site suitable species. There is a preference for spot weeding and small scale, low impact cultivation for operations. It will be important that any interventions avoid damage to young trees.

Future habitats and species composition of Gallowhill block (as per **Map 6**):

- Mixed Broadleaves 36.0 %
- Mixed Conifers 12.9 %
- Open ground 47.8 %
- Scots Pine 2.9 %
- Sitka Spruce 0.4 %.

Natural regeneration

Natural regeneration of desired species will be retained where it is appropriate to do so. Natural regeneration will be managed so that any negative impact upon protected or promoted habitats, species,

infrastructure, the public, and landscapes relevant to Gallowhill are minimised and, where possible, mitigated. It will be important that any silvicultural interventions avoid damage to young trees.

Protection

Refer to **Appendix IV** for the Gallowhill Deer Management Plan.

Broadleaves present across the site are generally vulnerable to deer and vole browsing, therefore resilient pioneering species (e.g. Birch and Hawthorn) will likely be planted and newly planted trees could be protected by guards. If used, tree guards will be removed once trees are satisfactorily established and less susceptible to browsing.

Ash dieback (*Chalara fraxinea*) is present within the National Estate in South Region and young trees at Gallowhill are susceptible. Regional monitoring is ongoing and any identified specimens will be treated as per the *Chalara* Action Plan for Scotland (2013).

FLS guidance for biosecurity will be employed throughout operations.

FLS continues to work closely with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to prevent and tackle wildfires that threaten Scotland's National Forests and Land. FLS support SFRS in their lead role for fire prevention and suppression through creating annual fire plans, maintaining a duty rota, and providing additional logistical support. FLS's primary objective is always to protect people's health, safety and wellbeing.

4.2 Road Operations

Road maintenance operations will continue to ensure block access is to a safe and usable standard. Maintenance operations will adhere to Forestry and Land Scotland Civil Engineering Construction Specifications and the UKFS.

4.3 Biodiversity

FLS has a duty to protect priority habitats and species, and ensure their condition does not deteriorate. All forest management operations involve a work planning process before commencement which includes checks for wildlife and important habitats as per legal requirements and described in the UKFS Requirements for Forestry and Biodiversity.

FLS has a single licence to cover forest management activities that may affect squirrel on the National Estate. All works within the plan area will follow the assessment and mitigation actions set out as conditions of this licence. This is in accordance with the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy's aim to resolve species management issues.

If necessary, work plans will be adjusted to avoid disturbance and opportunities to further protect species or enhance habitats will be identified. Any priority habitats that are revealed during site operations (including species-rich groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems (GWDTE)) will be protected as per current best practice. Deviations beyond tolerance from the approved woodland design will be referred to Scottish Forestry for consideration.

Agricultural fields

Prior to afforestation, Gallowhill had been used for intensive agriculture and was comprised predominantly of improved grassland. While there is potential future management as woodland, open fields in the north and south of the block are currently managed under a grazing let agreement and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

Ancient woodland

The Spring Bank Plantation (LEPO) present within Gallowhill has a history of woodland cover extending back for at least 200 years and shows some of the features associated with semi-natural woodland including specialised ground flora. Brown Long-eared Bat inhabit the woodland. FLS aim to protect and enhance this existing habitat through native broadleaf establishment.

Hedgerows

There is an extensive network of hedgerow boundaries across Gallowhill comprising a variety of tree and shrub species. Barn Owl have been sighted, however, hedgerow quality is variable due to browsing and grazing.

Riparian and wet woodland

The Piltanton Burn flows through the block and downstream to the Torrs Warren and Luce Sands SSSI. The burn has been known to support a variety of UKBAP species, including Atlantic Salmon, Trout species, European Eel and Lamprey. Open ground and native woodland (including species such as Rowan, Willow and Hawthorn, in addition to isolated specimens of Ash, Beech, Elm and Sycamore) in riparian areas will contribute to the general improvement of water quality, help with bank stabilisation, and assist with aquatic habitat protection from the effects of climate change (e.g. provision of dappled shading and woody debris/leaf litter). FLS will continue to consider the recommendations of partner organisations such as Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Galloway Fisheries Trust (GFT). Refer to **4.8**.

Shelterbelt

A small linear shelterbelt of Sitka Spruce lies north of Gallowhill farm. This association of shelterbelt with buildings is typical of the area. The shelterbelt will be retained for period of this plan as it offers habitat potential for species such as raptor.

Young woodland

The condition of trees planted in 2010 varies, with browsing levels and grass encroachment making it difficult to achieve consistent woodland establishment. Weeding and modest ground cultivation will be necessary for beat up efforts to meet the target stocking density (1,100 stems per hectare) in perpetuity. The successful establishment of pioneering broadleaf species such as Birch, Rowan, Aspen, Hawthorn and Willow (and a minor conifer component) should benefit Red Squirrel local to the area.

Deadwood

Opportunities for identifying deadwood potential are limited to the LEPO site. Opportunities for retaining or creating deadwood will be identified during future management planning, favouring areas with the highest deadwood ecological potential. Valuable deadwood and deadwood areas will be marked on contract maps. Where it is safe to do so, and does not compromise LMP objectives, standing deadwood will be retained as these offer excellent potential for a range of species.

Invasive species

FLS endeavour to control incursions as per INNS and biosecurity policies, as well as continuing to support the control of Grey squirrel being co-ordinated by Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels.

4.4 Historic Environment

Key priorities for archaeology and the historic environment are to undertake conservation management, condition monitoring and archaeological recording at 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 (2014) and Scotland's Archaeology Strategy (2015). Significant archaeological sites will be protected and managed following the UK Forestry Standard (2017) and the FCS policy document Scotland's Woodlands

and the Historic Environment (2008). Harvesting coupes, access roads and fence lines will be surveyed prior to any work being undertaken 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 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 (e.g. the views to and from a significant designated site).

The Regional Historic Asset Management Plan includes conservation management intentions for designated historic assets on the National Forest Estate. Details of all known historic environment features are held within FLS's heritage data and are included within work plans for operations to ensure damage is avoided. Significant historic environment features will be depicted on all relevant operational maps.

Areas of historic environment interest should be checked both on FLS's internal historic environment records (HER) and with the Council's HER prior to the commencement of forestry activities. Any upstanding features will be clearly marked, both on the ground and on operational maps. Care will be taken to avoid any damage to surviving structural elements.

At Gallowhill (see **Map 2**):

- No designated Schedule Monuments (SM), however, the Mid Ochtrellure SM 7368 lies outside the block to the southeast
- Auchneel field boundary and pit (undesignated, of uncategorised importance, 1.0 ha) at NX 043 601
- Town's Land Greenfield farmstead (undesignated, of local importance, 0.2 ha) at NX 044 596.

4.5 Landscape

The proposed design has been carefully developed to reflect landform, landscape scale, and achieve best character fit with the Peninsula Landscape Character Type (LCT 156) ascribed by NatureScot. See **Map 10**.

Despite its relatively small mass, the block constitutes a fairly significant feature within the wider landscape. Surrounded by agricultural farmland, Gallowhill lies adjacent to the southwest of Stranraer, acting as a backdrop to the town. There is a need to retain continuity of woodland cover, especially in the northeast where the block is particularly visible from the town and from across Loch Ryan. The remainder of the block is typically screened by Gallow Hill itself yet remains visible from the network of public lanes, roads and Core Paths (e.g. the Southern Upland Way).

Multiple utility lines intersecting Gallowhill create hard linear and angular features within the landscape. The woodland design aims to soften these features, particularly with expansion of broadleaf cover along watercourses and hedgerows, in addition to the extensive use of open parkland space and water (e.g. man-made pond).

4.6 People and access

Visitors are welcome to explore FLS land and will only be asked to avoid routes while certain work is going on that will create serious or less obvious hazards for a period (e.g. tree felling). Scotland's outdoors provides great opportunities for open-air recreation and education, with great benefits for people's enjoyment, and their health and well-being. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 ensures everyone has statutory access rights to most of Scotland's outdoors, if these rights are exercised responsibly, with respect for people's privacy, safety and livelihoods, and for Scotland's environment. Equally, land managers must manage their land and water responsibly in relation to access rights and FLS will only restrict public access where it is absolutely necessary and will endeavour to keep disruption to a minimum.

Antisocial behaviour, notably illegal motorbike access, has been noted at Gallowhill. Regrettably, such incidences are unlikely to be prevented by physical barriers, signs, or via face to face conversations. Incidences of antisocial behaviour are most effectively dealt with by Police Scotland and/or in partnership with other bodies. While it is not wholly the responsibility of FLS to educate the public on responsible outdoor access, FLS recognises its part in supporting communities in/around the National Estate. FLS continue to work in partnership with other bodies, including the emergency services, to tackle antisocial behaviour.

Visitor zones

Visitor zones have been identified in areas where FLS encourage and manage access or where the woodland managed by FLS interacts with popular visitor sites or access routes. In these zones, single trees or small groups of trees will be removed when necessary to protect facilities, infrastructure and trails/paths, or to enhance the setting of features, or to maintain existing views (e.g. over Stranraer, Loch Ryan and towards Ailsa Craig). Woodland may also be thinned or trees re-spaced for safety reasons (including to increase visibility to ensure that sites are welcoming and feel safe) and where it is necessary to enhance visitors' experience of the site (e.g. through the development of large trees or preferential removal of trees to favour a particular species).

FLS walking trails and Core Paths support high levels of public access. It is conceivable that future urban development may occur in the fields lying between Stranraer and Gallowhill and, should this occur, further consideration will be given to expanding link routes with the township. Visitor zones and recreational trails are mapped on **Map 11**.

Community

Gallowhill was acquired as a community woodland, with the Gallowhill Community Woodland Group having been actively involved in the block's management. It is important that information on the management of Gallowhill continues to be shared with this group whenever opportunities arise and/or when there are significant issues to communicate. Local information and aspirations should be incorporated where they do not conflict with LMP objectives and are consistent with FLS's approach to land management. See **Appendix III**.

Access agreements, utilities and other developments

There is a network of minor public roads, lanes, farm tracks and Core Paths that provide access to the block. There are several wayleaves for utility lines, including underground gas pipelines, that intersect Gallowhill. There are two communication masts (one derelict) located on Gallow Hill itself. There are water pipelines (indicative) running through the block associated with neighbouring properties (refer to **4.8**). There are active access agreements and tenancies in place at Gallowhill for grazing.

All utilities will be covered by servitude rights on the National Estate and all necessary precautions will be taken to locate services on the ground as part of work planning. This will include robust preparation, liaison with relevant stakeholders, in addition to dissemination of emergency and work planning particulars before operations begin.

Refer to **Map 2** for site features.

Support for the rural economy

FLS supports a sustainable rural economy by managing the national forests and land in a way that encourages sustainable business growth, development opportunities, jobs and investment. Gallowhill is part of the local landscape that attracts investment and visitors to the local area. Careful forest design with

these factors in mind, along with responsible delivery of forestry operations, will provide a positive visitor experience.

4.7 Soils

Typical brown earths as per the James Hutton Institute's (1:250,000) data. See **Map 8**.

4.8 Water

Management of waterbodies and catchments is a key environmental issue and FLS aim to comply with best practice in minimising sediment release and preventing further deterioration in their current/potential quality. All operations will meet the requirements of the UKFS Guidelines on Forests and Water, and Forestry and Water Scotland Know the Rules (2nd Ed.) handbook. Operations will also comply with FLS South Region's Pollution Control Plan and additional mitigations detailed within site specific risk assessments undertaken as part of the work planning process.

Drinking water

There is an unregistered private water supply located outside of the block at Springbank (end users located at NX 043 610 / NX 045 611). The exact location of the supply could not be determined and details of the supply are currently unknown. Given the small scale of planned beat up operations, it is reasonable that any perceived potential impact would be negligible as operations will likely be outside of the UKFS abstraction point buffer and any mitigations will therefore be pertinent to the wider water catchment.

Known water supply points and pipelines are buffered as per the UKFS. As with all known drinking water supply infrastructure on (or interacting with) the National Estate, these are internally recorded and this data is consulted during the work planning process. Sites are inspected ahead of operational commencement to ensure water supply details are correct and to assist with their protection. There will be close liaison with affected end users and relevant authorities prior to work commencement. Water supply infrastructure will be clearly marked on all contract maps/on the ground. Operational commencement will be subject to a site specific assessment of risk and will strictly comply with FLS South Region's Pollution Control Plan, UKFS Guidelines on Forests and Water, CONFOR's Forestry and Water Scotland Know the Rules (2nd Ed.), and FLS's legal obligations.

Watercourse condition

Gallowhill lies within the Piltanton Burn (Galloway Coastal) catchment of the Solway Tweed river basin district. The Piltanton Burn (ID 10484) is classed by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) as having overall 'moderate' water quality.

At Gallowhill, streams have been fenced off to prevent stock erosion of banksides, while open ground and low density woodland establishment in riparian zones aims to benefit water quality. Principles of the Riverwoods² initiative have been incorporated into this plan where possible to promote and provide valuable habitat corridors.

Flooding

The proposals herein have been screened against SEPA's Flood Risk Management (FRM) Cycle Two, which shows the block is upstream of the Stranraer (ID 02/14/23) potentially vulnerable area. There is also a high likelihood of localised flooding along the Piltanton Burn, including at Lochans township and at Torrs Warren Plantation where there is a high likelihood of coastal flooding.

² Riverwoods initiative: <https://www.riverwoods.org.uk>

There is no clear felling proposed during this plan period and, owing to the scale of the site within the context of the wider catchment, FLS activities are unlikely to have a measurable negative effect. Indeed, ongoing woodland establishment is more likely to have a small yet positive effect.

For enquiries about this land management plan please contact:

Carol Finch
Forest Planner
Forestry and Land Scotland
Creebridge
Newton Stewart
DG8 6AJ

Appendix I: Description of Woodlands

Description of woodlands																																																																																																																			
Topography and Landscape																																																																																																																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A relatively exposed site with prevailing south-westerlies due to its proximity to the Atlantic OceanAltitudes range from 40 m to 100 m at GallowhillBlock is surrounded by agricultural grazing fieldsMap 11 shows the Peninsula landscape character type (LCT) relevant to Gallowhill. LCT 156 (NatureScot): improved pasture with a medium sized field structure, boggy hollows, scarce tree cover, hilltops dominated by gorse, and a network of lanes.																																																																																																																			
Geology and Soils																																																																																																																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Predominantly Permian basal breccias, sandstones and mudstonesA small area of Namurian (Millstone Grit series) to the west along the Piltanton BurnSoil types within the forest block are shown on Map 8.																																																																																																																			
Climate																																																																																																																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">DAMS ranges from 12-17. See Map 9.An average temperature of 12.5 °C (April - September) and 6.5 °C (October - March)An average precipitation is 78.4 mm (April - September) and 111.7 mm (October - March)Accumulated temperature (day-degrees above 5°C) – min: 1788, max: 1867, average: 1817Moisture Deficit (mm) – min: 94, max: 102, average: 96The climate of the block area is highlighted below:																																																																																																																			
<table><tr><th colspan="11">Accumulated temperature (day-degrees above 5°C)</th></tr><tr><th></th><th></th><th>>1800</th><th>1800-1475</th><th>1475-1200</th><th>1200-975</th><th>975-775</th><th>775-575</th><th>575-375</th><th>375-175</th><th><175</th></tr><tr><td rowspan="9">Moisture Deficit (mm)</td><td>>200</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="3">Warm Dry</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>180-200</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>160-180</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>140-160</td><td colspan="3" rowspan="3">Warm Moist</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="3">Cool Moist</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>120-140</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>90-120</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>60-90</td><td></td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Warm Wet</td><td colspan="3" rowspan="9">Cool Wet</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>20-60</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td><20</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Sub-Alpine</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="7">Alpine</td></tr><tr><td colspan="11"></td></tr></table>											Accumulated temperature (day-degrees above 5°C)													>1800	1800-1475	1475-1200	1200-975	975-775	775-575	575-375	375-175	<175	Moisture Deficit (mm)	>200	Warm Dry									180-200								160-180								140-160	Warm Moist			Cool Moist						120-140						90-120						60-90		Warm Wet		Cool Wet						20-60						<20				Sub-Alpine	Alpine												
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">Map 2 shows all watercourses, open water, and recorded water supplies within the FLS holdingWater pipelines associated with Gallowhill Farm and Greenfield Cottage intersect with the blockUnregistered private water supply at Springbank (at approximately NX 043 610 / NX 045 611) requires ground truthing with the end user ahead of operationsPiltanton Burn (ID 10484): overall condition is ‘moderate’, flows along southwestern boundary, and downstream is the Torrs Warren and Luce Sands SSSIMan-made pond at NX 0474 6066Flooding: upstream of Stranraer (ID 02/14/23) Potentially Vulnerable AreaPotential for localised flooding along/downstream of the Piltanton Burn.																																																																																																																			
Public access																																																																																																																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">FLS facilities include a car park (NX 0464 6040), benches/picnic tables, and recreational trailsHigh local interest in the block, particularly with dog walkers																																																																																																																			

Description of woodlands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network of nearby minor public roads, lanes and farm tracks, as well as several Core Paths in the general area (including the Southern Upland Way) • Two masts at NX 0459 6048 (active) and NX 0461 6045 (disused) • Numerous utility lines intersect the site, including the NI gas pipeline • Water pipelines associated with Gallowhill Farm and Greenfield Cottage intersect the block • Active access agreements (e.g. neighbours and grazing) • Refer to Map 2 for features and Map 11 for visitor zones.
Historic environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no Scheduled Monuments within the block • Auchneel field boundary and pit (undesignated, of uncategorised importance, 1.0 ha) at NX 043 601 • Town's Land Greenfield farmstead (undesignated, of local importance, 0.2 ha) at NX 044 596.
Biodiversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural fields: open fields in the north and south of the block. Potential future management as woodland but currently managed as open ground under grazing let agreement • Ancient woodland/Natural reserve: riparian woodland at NX 0426 5984 and Spring Bank Plantation (LEPO) at NX 0462 6077. Support terrestrial and aquatic habitats (e.g. for Bats, Red Squirrel, Raptor and Atlantic Salmon) • Hedgerows: extensive network of boundaries across site • Riparian and wet woodland: Piltanton Burn supports various UKBAP species and flows to the Torrs Warren and Luce Sands SSSI • Shelterbelt: retained given habitat potential for species such as Raptor • Young woodland: varied condition due to browsing damage and grass encroachment. Weeding and modest ground cultivation is necessary for successful establishment of pioneering species and small conifer component (for Red Squirrel) • Deadwood: generally limited to LEPO woodland and riparian area • Invasive species: herbaceous exotics within LEPO site.
Current woodland composition and management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current woodland composition is shown on Map 7. • Current management is shown on Map 4 and Map 5. • Sitka Spruce 0.5 % (0.5 ha), Broadleaves 29.1 % (28.1 ha), Open Ground 70.4 % (67.9 ha) • Managed open ground: coupe 34000 (32.2 ha) and 34001 (15.7 ha) • Long term retention: coupe 34002 (0.5 ha) • Natural Reserve: coupes 34004 (0.7 ha) and 34005 (4.7 ha) • Future LISS: 34003 (33.4 ha) and 34006 (9.3 ha) • Thinning coupes: 34001 (no thin, 55.7 ha) and 34002 (potential re-spacing and non-target species removal, 40.7 ha).
Plant health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ash dieback (<i>Chalara fraxinea</i>) is present.
Infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS facilities: car park at NX 0464 6040, benches/picnic tables, and recreational trails • Network of nearby minor public roads, lanes and farm tracks, as well as several Core Paths in the general area (including the Southern Upland Way) • Two masts at NX 0459 6048 (active) and NX 0461 6045 (disused) • Numerous utility lines intersect the site, including the NI gas pipeline • Water pipelines associated with Gallowhill Farm and Greenfield Cottage intersect the block • Refer to Map 2 for features and Map 11 for visitor zones.

Appendix II: Tolerances

	Maps 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 3 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 letters and map	Y	Advance felling of Phase 2 coupe into Phase 1	Up to 15% of coupe area	Between 3 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 >60 m in either direction from centre line of road	Increase by up to 10% of coupe area Any reduction in open space of coupe area by planting.	Up to 5 ha
Approval by formal plan amendment may be required	Y	Felling delayed into second or later 5 year period. Advance felling (phase 3 or beyond) into current or 2nd 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.	In excess of 10% of coupe area. Colonisation of open space agreed as critical.	More than 5 ha.

Notes

- * Felling sequence must not compromise UKFS, in particular felling coupe adjacency
- ** No more than 1 ha, without consultation with FCS, where the location is defined as 'sensitive' within the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) 1999 Regulations (EIA)
- *** Tolerance subject to an overriding maximum 20% open space
- **** Where windblow occurs FCS should be informed of extent prior to clearance and consulted on where clearance of any standing trees is required.

Appendix III: Consultation record

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response
British Horse Society	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
Butterfly Conservation Scotland	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
Community Council (Stranraer)	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
CONFOR	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
DGC - Access	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
DGC - Archaeology	20 July 2023	17 August 2023	Requested extension to provide comments.	Extension agreed. No further comments received. Refer to 4.4 .
DGC - Environmental Health	20 July 2023	2 August 2023	Unregistered private water supply at Springbank property (details unknown).	FLS appreciate sharing of this information. Attempts by FLS staff to ground truth the supply in August 2023 were futile. FLS comply with UKFS Forests and Water Guidelines, Forestry and Water Scotland Know the Rules, FLS South Region Pollution Control Plan, and its legal obligations. Refer to 4.8 .
DGC - Flooding/Resilience	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
DGC - Roading	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
Galloway Fisheries Trust	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
Gallowhill Community Woodland Group	20 July 2023	9 August 2023	FLS and representatives of the Gallowhill Community Woodland Group participated in a joint site walkover on 9 August 2023. Issues raised: tree species choice, weeds, trail maintenance, and future land use (e.g. wildflower meadows and grazing).	<p>FLS welcome the opportunity to engage with the group directly on this LMP renewal. Standard decision making tools and local site knowledge will help determine appropriate tree species choice and the preferences of the community have been noted. Spot weeding will likely be undertaken as part of beat up operations. Refer to 4.1.</p> <p>FLS have noted points along recreational trails that require additional maintenance (e.g. to facilitate horse passage). Visitor Zones and formal trails are managed as outlined in 4.6.</p> <p>FLS welcome the group's interest in future possible land use at Gallowhill. Open fields will remain under a grazing agreement for the foreseeable future. The potential for</p>

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response
				establishing a wildflower meadow will be explored in partnership between the group and FLS.
Historic Environment Scotland	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
IUCN Otter Specialist Group	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
NatureScot	20 July 2023	21 August 2023	Supportive of proposed actions. Advised proposals do not present risk to the Torrs Warren – Luce Bar SSSI. Suggested partnering with neighbouring landowners to establish woodland across riparian zones.	FLS welcome given feedback. FLS welcome opportunities to work with partners (including neighbouring landowners). However, FLS are land managers of Scotland's National Estate and do not lead forestry activities on privately held land. Refer to 4.6 and 4.8 .
Raptor Study Group	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
RSPB	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
Scottish Forestry	20 July 2023	8 August 2023	Interest in community engagement and requested private water supply details are noted in LMP.	<p>FLS welcome the given feedback. For the purposes of this LMP renewal, FLS have invited community representatives to participate in the stakeholder consultation exercise and have met with the Gallowhill Community Woodland Group directly (see above). FLS endeavour to incorporate local aspirations and will continue to engage with community representatives throughout the lifespan of the plan. Refer to 4.6.</p> <p>Attempts by FLS staff to ground truth the supply in August 2023 were futile. FLS comply with UKFS Forests and Water Guidelines, Forestry and Water Scotland Know the Rules, FLS South Region Pollution Control Plan, and its legal obligations. Refer to 4.8.</p>
Scottish Water	20 July 2023	21 July 2023	No Scottish Water drinking water catchments, water abstraction sources, or assets in the area that may be affected by the proposed activity.	FLS appreciate sharing of this information. FLS comply with UKFS Forests and Water Guidelines, Forestry and Water Scotland Know the Rules, FLS South Region Pollution Control Plan, and its legal obligations. Refer to 4.8 .
SEPA	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-
Visit Scotland	20 July 2023	N/A	-	-

Appendix IV: Deer Management Plan

The Gallowhill Deer Management Plan (DMP) should be read in conjunction with the Gallowhill land management plan (LMP) and FLS Deer Management Strategy. This document was authored by FLS South Region's Wildlife Management Team.

1.0 Background

Located within a kilometer of Stranraer, Gallowhill has very high public activity and designated car parking areas. Prior to being planted, the area was good quality agricultural land with low lying/rolling hill terrain. Gallowhill is now a community woodland which has a network of paths and open areas providing very good access for recreational activities. Further enhancement work within the woodland is possible for years to come and therefore managing deer numbers will remain a high priority.

Presently only Roe deer are found within the site, however, Red deer also populate the general area around Gallowhill.

High public activity can often limit culling opportunities at Gallowhill, with visits often rescheduled when members of the public are present. Culls over the last five years (2018 – 2023) have achieved an average of six Roe deer annually.

2.0 Deer management objectives

2.1 National objectives

- Contribute to Scottish Forestry's Forestry Strategy.³
- Adhere to the FLS Deer Management Strategy.⁴
- Contribute to the Scottish Government's Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.⁵

2.2 Local objectives

- Protect the National Estate from unacceptable impacts by deer (i.e. less than 10% leader browsing damage by deer on all planting year 1 to 5 coupes. Minimise bark stripping and fraying to all crop ages).
- Aim for total deer densities to be in the range of 2-9 deer/km².
- Meet tree stocking density targets per hectare at year five.
- All biological resources on the forest estate are protected from negative impacts of browsing/grazing herbivores. This includes all tree crops, Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), Low Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS), National Nature Reserves (NNR), and other locally designated areas.
- Contractor and authorised controllers ensure good relationships with members of the public, other forestry customers, and FLS staff.

3.0 Approach

FLS use an information based decision making process to set its deer management operations with the data received from various internal and external reports. All data is then combined as best possible and applied to a population model which is used to set culls. Data used to create this DMP can be found in the FLS Deer Dashboard. (Currently only available to FLS staff, however, it will be made publicly available soon.)

³ Forestry Strategy: <https://forestry.gov.scot/forestry-strategy>

⁴ Deer Management Strategy: <https://forestryandland.gov.scot/what-we-do/who-we-are/corporate-information/deer-management-strategy>

⁵ Scottish Biodiversity Strategy: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-biodiversity-strategy-2045-tackling-nature-emergency-scotland/>

Sources include:

- Thermal drone counts
- Herbivore dung counts
- Historical cull data
- Sighting data
- Ranger daily/monthly reports
- Deer Management Contractor daily/monthly reports
- Helicopter counts
- WRM surveys
- Strath Caulaidh survey data, independently obtained (i.e. deer density figure, impacts - NN/HIA, SDA, etc).

4.0 Population modelling and future culls

Gallowhill forest is located within the Galloway West outlying population model. Population modelling is used to ascertain a recommended cull for a greater area, with cull and impact data used to support the distribution of culls to the forest blocks within the model area.

The Gallowhill deer population can be transient owing to regular disturbance from members of the public (which often moves deer temporarily off site). Deer sightings during stalking activities estimates the current population around 4 – 8 deer present at any given time. This number will fluctuate depending on public activity.

Based on population modeling and up to date cull data, 2023/24 culls have been set at 12 roe deer. Culls will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis.

5.0 Resourcing

Deer management is currently carried out by FLS Wildlife Ranger, this will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure objectives are being achieved. Most deer will be culled in the early morning within the first 2 hours of daylight as to avoid public use of the site.

All controllers are qualified to Deer Stalking Certificate levels 1 and 2. In addition, all are required to carry out an annual firearms skills test, ensuring the highest levels of safety and competency when undertaking their duties. Wildlife Rangers also complete additional self-checklists and training at set intervals that are part of the resumption system. FLS Wildlife Rangers are supported by a Wildlife Ranger Manager and Area Wildlife Manager.

Wildlife Contractors are a vital resource in FLS' s deer management tool box. Wildlife Contractors are selected after satisfying FLS of their competence via a competitive tender. This work is arduous and critical to the success of the impact reduction strategy and only very experienced and appropriately qualified contractors are considered. All Wildlife Contractors have the same qualifications as FLS Wildlife Rangers and compliance, and health and safety are continually monitored by the Wildlife Ranger Manager.

Out of season shooting is an essential tool in the protection of vulnerable tree crops and natural habitats. This is conducted either under the General License issued by NatureScot for enclosed woodland or by 5(6) authorisations on application to NatureScot for un-enclosed woodland. Male deer of all species will be shot year round on the National Estate and, following permission, the shooting of females out of season will be limited to the periods 1st September to 20th October and 16th February to 31st March. When early out of season shooting of females is carried out any dependent young will be shot first.

Night shooting is permitted by the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 as amended by the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011 (WANE Act), under section 18(2) authorisations granted by NatureScot. Applications for night shooting will only be made where unacceptable levels of damage would occur, and where the use of all other legal means of control (including out of season shooting) have been considered. Operational dates for night shooting will be kept under review and can be changed should circumstances dictate. All operations will conform to current Best Practice Guidance and a copy of the guides will be held at the district office and issued to Wildlife Rangers as necessary. Night shooting is a valuable tool in areas of high deer management pressure where the population has become wise to deer management practices.

6.0 Infrastructure

Road access to Gallowhill is good and there are several well-constructed foot paths allowing access to most of the site. Any new infrastructure will be considered after any felling or thinning work has started. As this is a relatively small woodland, it is expected that current access arrangements will be suitable for the long term. Vegetation and scrub management is likely to be required to maintain some sight lines for efficient deer culling operations in the future. Flailing will assist with vegetation management if required.

All FLS Wildlife Rangers have the following kit as standard:

- 4 x 4 vehicle with either a winch or loading crane attached to the back to aid in loading carcasses safely.
- Capstan rope to aid in extraction when far away from roads.
- 4 x 4 ATV with winch.
- Trailer to transport ATV.
- Sledge/hill trailer to aid in extraction using the ATV.
- .270 caliber rifle with high magnification scope. Some rangers have smart scopes where applicable.
- Binoculars.
- Handheld thermal imager to increase herbivore detection.
- Various knives, saws and PPE.
- Access to thermal drone and pilot.

The Glentrool deer larder is the primary appointed larder for this site. (Larder capacity equals 80 red deer.)

7.0 Collaborative working opportunities

There are currently no collaborative working arrangements at Gallowhill and there is no active deer management group affiliated with the area.

FLS continue to apply to NatureScot to acquire out of season and night shooting authorisations.

8.0 Venison

FLS subscribes to the Scottish Quality Wild Venison (SQWV) scheme with all venison quality assured and currently sold to Highland Game Ltd. for the provision of a natural, sustainable, healthy product for the food industry. All animal by-products are sold to Highland Game along with the venison. All waste from larders is removed by a licensed waste disposal contractor.