



# South Dundonald Farm Woodland Creation Summary

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## History and Context

South Dundonald Farm was purchased by Forest Enterprise Scotland (now Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS)) in 2011. Approximately 43.6ha of the site was planted with a mixture of productive and non-productive broadleaves, and productive conifers with the remaining area (c.50ha) being retained in agriculture and leased on a limited-duration 10 year tenancy as a 'starter farm'. The tenancy for this farm is due to expire in 2025 and, thereafter, FLS intend to establish further areas of new woodland on the site which will contribute to local and national targets as set out in the [Fife Forestry and Woodland Strategy 2013-2018](#) (under revision) and the [Scottish Forestry Strategy 2019-2029](#).

The site is classified as grade 3.2 agricultural land (James Hutton Institute Land Capability for Agriculture 1:50,000), and comprises improved grassland with the current land use being livestock (sheep) grazing. Approximately 2/3 of the site is located on a broad ridge with soils in this area originating from reformed opencast mining spoil which was remediated around 2005.

## Proposals

Approximately 45ha\* of woodland creation is now proposed on South Dundonald Farm (see map 6). The proposed species breakdown of this will be predominantly productive conifer, with much of the surrounding land having already been planted with native broadleaves/shrubs for biodiversity enhancement. This combination will contribute to sustainable timber production, carbon sequestration and biodiversity value/forest habitat networks. In order to facilitate the proposed woodland creation, one of two proposed new roads will be constructed as depicted on map 6, the exact location of which will be determined following further survey.

(\*Not including open land within woodland creation boundary. Exact boundary may vary.)

### Proposed species breakdown:

- Productive conifers (Norway spruce and Douglas fir): c.36.5ha
- Productive native broadleaves (wild cherry/gean): c.2.8ha
- Other native broadleaves/shrubs (hawthorn, oak, birch, hazel, bird cherry crab apple): 5.7ha

('Productive' conifers and broadleaves refer to areas intended for future timber production, 'other' native broadleaves/shrubs will be managed purely for biodiversity and amenity value.)

## Impacts

As part of our woodland creation application, FLS must detail any significant environmental effects and the associated proposed mitigation, particularly in regards to the following receptors:

### Population and Human Health

Several properties lie directly adjacent to the woodland creation area, namely at Muirhead and South Dundonald. The proposals have considered the proximity of these properties and applied buffers of native woody shrubs for biodiversity and amenity value. There will unavoidably be some loss of existing views from these properties, however the proposed buffers will help to mitigate this and also ensure there is no loss of light to the properties as the forest matures.

A single Right of Way passes alongside the woodland creation area and will not be impacted by the proposals, otherwise there is currently relatively little public access within this area.

### Biodiversity

Given it's current use as highly modified improved grassland there is considered to be little biodiversity interest in the proposed woodland creation area. Most of the biodiversity interest is in surrounding young and mature woodland areas, which will be enhanced by further planting.

### Agriculture

No woodland creation is proposed on prime agricultural land and the proposals will have limited impact on the availability of agricultural land within the local area, with the site comprising just 1.5% of the respective and most common agricultural land capability classification within 5km.

### Soil, Water, Air and Climate

The proposals will not result in any negative impacts to soil, water or air quality and in the medium to long-term the proposed woodland creation should benefit these receptors.

### Material Assets

Appropriate buffers have been applied to all residential properties, roads and utilities in order to protect these features as the woodland matures (e.g. from possible future storm damage).

### Cultural Heritage

No cultural heritage features are recorded and given the recent history of the site it is unlikely that any remains are present.

### Landscape

Although currently open, the site sits within a landscape surrounded by woodland and although some of these are relatively small, the overall effect can give the impression of larger wooded areas. As a result, analysis from our Landscape Architect suggests there will be minimal impact on the overall landscape character of the area as a result of the proposed woodland creation.