

Beattock land management plan

Analysis and concept map

The analysis and concept map lists plan objectives and highlights key factors and how these may be incorporated into the new plan. The analysis and concept is a working draft and may change as the plan is developed.

Plan objectives

1. Timber production: provide a sustainable supply of high quality timber, supplying local timber markets, securing timber income, and providing secure employment in the timber industry.
2. Forest resilience: plan and design a resilient and healthy forest, mitigating the risks posed by climate change and a growing number of pests and diseases. Ensure the forest makes a positive contribution to mitigating the broader climate emergency by locking up carbon in trees and soils.
3. Natural and cultural heritage: improve the biodiversity value of the plan area, caring for priority habitats and species, and enhancing the overall biodiversity value by developing conservation area networks, linking areas of high conservation value such as ancient woodland sites. Protect scheduled monuments and other heritage features.
4. Landscape: develop a more attractive forest landscape along the M74 corridor and surrounding the long-distance trails through the forest.

Analysis and concept

Analysis

Beattock is a highly productive forest, contributing significantly to South Region's timber production but lacks species and structural diversity.

Concept

Promote sustainable timber production through revised felling and restocking plans that diversify the forest's age structure and species composition. Seek opportunities for thinning where appropriate, to improve long term timber quality and tree stability.

Analysis

Northern part of the plan area includes a variety of mature conifer stands, mixed broadleaves and PAWS sites, with two areas already designated as natural reserves.

Concept

Opportunity to create a substantial area where conservation of biodiversity is prioritised and more sensitive silvicultural management is practiced.

Analysis

First rotation crop on the more exposed higher ground in the western part of the forest was significantly affected by windblow.

Concept

Aim for a shorter rotation of second and subsequent felling coupes and continue to develop more windfirm coupe boundaries.

Analysis

Extensive network of watercourses throughout the plan area form the basis for conservation area networks.

Concept

Continue to expand and enhance riparian areas, using these to link areas of high conservation value and develop conservation area networks. Plant native broadleaves where these can be successfully established, encourage natural regeneration of native broadleaves, and remove non-native conifer regeneration where practicable.

Analysis

Lower slopes of the plan area are highly visible from the M74 and main west coast railway corridor.

Concept

Continue to develop a more attractive landscape above the M74 corridor through use of lower impact silvicultural management and greater conifer and broadleaf species diversity.

Analysis

Several fragmented areas of ancient woodland including PAWS sites. Threats include Sitka regen and Rhododendron ponticum (close to Auchencastle).

Concept

Control invasive non-native species on FLS land and seek opportunities to enhance and expand ancient woodland through development of conservation habitat networks.

Analysis

Southern Uplands Way and Romans and Reivers Route pass through the forest, converging close to Earshaig Lochans walk.

Concept

Seek opportunities to further enhance the forest landscape in these 'interactive' visitor zones, through species diversification and lower impact silvicultural management, where appropriate.

Analysis

Much of the original conifer plantation has been felled or is significantly windblown and due to be felled soon, leaving relatively little mature conifer wildlife habitat.

Concept

Seek to retain remaining mature conifer stands to improve overall age structure and provide suitable habitat for wildlife, notably important species such as raptors and red squirrels. Identify potential future conifer retentions, ideally where the trees are thinable.