



Dalbeattie Forest LTP Revision

Accessible text from Map 3: Concept

Text begins from uppermost box in the top left of the map working clockwise. The box at the bottom of the map appears last in this list.

Water

Constraints and Opportunities:

There are a number of water bodies and three main watercourses present within or near the LTP area. Kirkgunzeon Lane, Fairgirth Lane and Urr Water. The area all rated 'Good' for water quality. There is a number of private water supplies located in proximity of the block. Dalbeattie is a high risk area for flooding and forms part of the Solway Flood Risk Management Plan. There are opportunities for good forest management to positively impact water quality, biodiversity and reduce flood risk.

Concept:

Minimise clearfell size and begin transition towards Low Impact Silvicultural Systems where possible and practical. Actively create, manage and maintain adequate broadleaved riparian buffer zones. Maintain water quality of watercourses and open water via adherence to best practice guidelines. Protect PWSs via accurate mapping and buffer zones and adherence to best practice guidelines during felling and restocking operations.

Ecology and biodiversity

Constraints and Opportunities:

The forest has several ancient woodland sites, PAWs, LEPO areas and priority open habitats. There is scope to continue restoration of the PAWs areas and reinstate active management of the LEPO area to benefit both biodiversity and high quality timber output. Opportunity to continue conservation grazing of the Aucheninnes Priority Open Habitat area. Opportunity to remove unsuitable non-

native species from areas of deep peat and create low density native peatland edge woodland. There are however financial, contractual and operational constraints making prioritisation and practicality very important to consider.

Concept:

Fell remaining non-natives at Gallowleck and Fairgirth PAWs site and encourage regeneration of native woodland. Reinstatement of thinning and windblow clearance in Town Wood and begin process of Western Hemlock removal within this diverse area. Continue conservation grazing and implement a flexible grazing regime with a regular monitoring program to assess impact and maintain/enhance habitat. Protect and promote rare crab apples present in Auchennines. Fell non-natives on Cloak Moss deep peat areas and promote low density native woodland cover. Bring Dry Loch under the management and oversight of the Environment team.

Timber

Constraints and Opportunities:

Opportunity to progress towards LISS across much of the forest, given the quality of the soils, road network and low - moderate exposure. This is limited by a lack of recent thinning, suitable contracts and machinery, wind damage resulting from Storm Arwin, SPHN fellings and shallow rooting species on thin soils. The forest is dominated by brown earths with low-moderate wind scores and is therefore capable of growing high quality, high yield timber from a wide variety of species. Numerous timber processing mills are located within easy reach of the forest.

Concept:

Reinstatement of an ongoing thinning programming as soon as possible to improve final timber quality, individual tree stability and biodiversity. Assess LISS areas for continued suitability within this rotation and focus on achieving key interventions in suitable areas within the next plan period. Address windblow issues and redesign coupes to improve stand stability and on shallow soils initiate a move towards a species mix with varying rooting types to improve anchorage. Begin process of utilising natural regeneration in areas with high Continuous Cover Forestry potential.

Heritage & Historic Environment

Constraints and Opportunities:

There are a number of heritage features associated with the forest. Moyle Hill fort (possibly Iron Age) is the only Scheduled Monument. There are a number of regionally important farmstead and field systems. There are opportunities to make a visitor attraction of Moyle Hill and maintain the viewpoint and associated walking trail.

Concept:

Maintain and protect Moyle Hill and other heritage features of interest.

Climate Change

Constraints and Opportunities:

Future warmer drier summers and increased seasonal drought is likely to present water availability issues for drought prone, shallow rooting species on freely draining soils. Wetter winters may negatively affect the stability of shallow rooting species soil types with shallow peat layers. There are opportunities to improve climate resilience and productivity via increased species diversification, regular thinning, and conversion to LISS where possible.

Concept:

Improve climate change resilience via increased species diversification and reinstating regular thinning regimes and transition to LISS where appropriate. Re-shape and reorder certain felling coupes to improve wind resistance.

Recreation

Constraints and Opportunities:

There is high amount of recreational use of Dalbeattie via a number of walking, hiking and MTB trails. Much of the network requires upgrading and re-designing, with improved interpretation. Funding has been approved to invest in the recreational offering and facilities at Dalbeattie Forest. Current impacts from windblow and future stability risks if high use areas are not regularly thinned. Shade tolerant species may begin to dominate the forest in certain high use areas if not managed. Opportunities for active silvicultural management to improve visual impact of forest.

Concept:

The new investment aims to enhance accessibility, diversify visitor activities and strengthen community involvement. New accessible trails will be built. Improvements made to parking facilities. Multi-user trails will be created. The MTB offering will be upgraded and a horse riding provision improved. Reinstate thinning program to maintain stability and diverse forest structure.

Landscape

Constraints and Opportunities:

The forest is within the Solway Coast Local Landscape Area and the southern edges of the block are within the East Stewarty Coast National Scenic Area. The block is integral to the local town and can be seen from many viewpoints within the locality. The species diversity is already quite high and the topography is varied. There are opportunities to soften the transition from field to forest via increase broadleaved buffers and continued PAWs restoration.

Concept

Continue to maintain and expand species diversity. Implement a new stage of PAWS restoration. Harvest windblown areas and restock sympathetically. Manage via Low Impact Silvicultural Systems where possible and minimise clearfell coupe size in areas where LISS is not practical.

Objectives

1. Sustainable timber - Continue to ensure a regular timber supply via sustainable woodland management. Recover windblow and improve stability via species choice, thinning and suitable management type.
2. Ecological restoration - Continue PAWS restoration and ensure ongoing maintenance via thinning and removal of non-native species. Create native woodland conservation corridors to enhance connectivity. Where practical remove plantation crop from deep peats unsuitable to forestry and manage as low density peatland edge woodland. Continue management and protection of Priority Open Habitats.

3. Recreation - Update and enhance recreation provision via the Borderlands project. This will include improving trail network, accessibility, updating the MTB network, and improving facilities.

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