



Draft LMP Brief and Introductory Information

Introduction

The plan for Cologin covers 270.1ha. It is located 2 miles south of Oban. It is primarily a commercial conifer forest with areas of amenity hardwoods. The forest area was acquired in two stages. Cologin Farm was acquired in 1967 and Achalic was acquired in 1984. The area was planted between 1984 and 1987. A forest walking route was established. A full crop growth assessment was undertaken in 2013. The surrounding land is predominantly low grade agricultural land. Loch Gleann a' Bhearraidh borders the northern part of the forest, is managed by Scottish Water and is the public water supply for Oban.

As at 1st November 2021, no harvesting had been undertaken due to previous access issues. These were resolved in 2021, when a forest road access was constructed to the edge of the forest. Further to this a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) requiring the felling of larch infected by *Phytophthora ramorum* was issued by Scottish Forestry in September 2021, requiring felling of larch close to the reservoir by the end of February 2022. A felling permission to take additional timber around the infected larch trees is also being considered, along with an extension to the newly built road to access this larch.

Progress (on previous plan)

The previous plan was an indicative plan, comprising a single map with annotated objectives. Indicative plans were produced as a means of gaining FC (now Scottish Forestry) plan approval where no operations were planned over its 10 year life span. This plan expired on 25/01/2015 and was then extended to 31/12/2019.

The indicative plan brief identified users/viewers of the forest, including motorists, walkers, fisherman using the reservoir and local residents. In terms of context, it described the forest as having a distinct character, because of its varied terrain and orientation, occupying the top and upper slopes of a ridge. It raised issues of lack of roading, woodland forming a barrier to habitat networks, visibility from the A816, species uniformity and lack of integration, and the presence of a water supply reservoir and its catchment. The indicative plan highlighted some angular forest boundaries as another issue. It also stressed the need for a design solution that catered both for the commercial and landscape/habitat needs, suggesting a balance was needed.

The indicative plan analysis and concept primarily addressed landscape issues, making suggestions as to how these would be dealt with in a full plan. These included development of native woodland and riparian networks, integration and diversification of tree species, use of species choice to accentuate landform, improvement to and provision of a circular walking route, and modification of the forest edge to integrate with the surrounding



landform. It identified visually sensitive areas, with a significant viewpoint along the south side of Loch Feochan on the A816. It also suggested areas in which Phase 1 felling would ideally take place, based on a road running down the spine of the block. This felling was proposed for 2015, but was unachievable at the time due to lack of an agreed access over which to haul timber.

Development of a circular walking route with some enhancements has been undertaken. All other issues remain unaddressed, but the issues raised and solutions suggested largely remain valid.

Overarching policies

To realise the vision as set out in the Scottish Forestry Strategy 2019-2029, six priorities for action have been identified for implementation:

- Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed
- Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives
- Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets
- Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands
- Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands
- Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands

To demonstrate how FLS have regard to the Forestry Strategy in its work, FLS have identified the relevant Forestry Strategy 'Priorities for Action' in the Corporate Outcomes section of the FLS Corporate Plan 2019-2022. These, alongside key issues and site specific challenges, have informed West Region's draft land management objectives, as illustrated in the table below.

Key Issues and Site Specific Challenges

- No currently agreed arrangements for hauling timber from the western section across the eastern section.
- The forest walking route is enclosed by dense trees and uninspiring. Most parking for accessing the forest walking route is on private land.
- Sensitivity of public water supply and private water supplies.
- Need to restructure – should have started by now. Current assessments suggest the forest will be more vulnerable to wind damage as soon as forest roadline felling and coupe structuring commences. Some pockets of windblow now evident.



- Need for further landscape enhancement and integration into the wider landscape/habitat network.
- Phytophthora ramorum is becoming a problem with SPHN's being issued requiring felling of larch within a short timescale.
- The Timber Traffic Management Plan for the public road has to be considered in felling plans. The private tarred road may require some improvement work.

Context	Corporate Outcomes Relevant to LMP	Operational Actions to Deliver Outcomes	Draft LMP Objectives
Economic	<p>Outcome 1: Supporting a Sustainable Rural Economy</p> <p>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 investments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing the national forests and land in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS) to ensure that timber and other products produced by FLS are guaranteed to be from a sustainably managed resource • Developing our forest planning processes to ensure long-term sustainable productivity of the national forests and land. • Providing a sustainable supply of timber to Scotland's timber processing sector. • Implementing the Restocking Strategy for the national forests and land and develop a new plant and seed supply strategy. • Supporting Scottish tourism and the visitor economy through the provision of visitor attractions. • Support the venison processing sector through our deer management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval for 98.1 ha of felling, to be completed within the plan period, and 79.5 ha of restocking is being sought, for completion within 10 years of felling. • Timber production from felling yielding 58.5 Km³. • Construction of a new road requires EIA approval for 2.8 Km of new roading within the first five years of the plan.
Environmental	Outcome 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing the national forests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of habitat



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	<p>Looking after Scotland's national forests and land</p> <p>Scotland's national forests and land are looked after; biodiversity is protected and enhanced; and more environmental services are provided to people.</p>	<p>and land to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintaining and enhancing our work on peatland restoration. ● Collaborating with partners on integrated landscape-scale approaches to habitat management and restoration. ● Continuing to implement the Larch Strategy in order to reduce the rate of expansion of <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i>. 	<p>networks design framework for the woodland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restoration of areas of deep peat. ● Felling of all larch during the plan period and not replanting with larch. ● Forest restructuring to aid diversity and resilience.
Social	<p>Outcome 3: National forests and land for visitors and communities</p> <p>Everyone can visit and enjoy Scotland's national forests and land to connect with nature, have fun, benefit their health and wellbeing and have the opportunity to engage in our community decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintaining walking and biking trails to promote fun in the outdoors, focussing on improving entry level experiences for everyone to enjoy and gain health benefits. ● Continuing to remove barriers to ensure that people from all backgrounds can and do access the full range of benefits of the national forests and land. ● Enabling outdoor learning and encouraging schools and community groups to make use of the national forests and land. ● Continuing to engage communities in decisions relating to the management of the national forests and land. ● Continuing to support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Landscape enhancement through appropriate design. ● Protection of the public water supply for Oban and managing future restocking under low impact management forestry. ● Protection of private water supplies through design of adequate riparian buffers and following UKFS guidance.



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		community empowerment by enabling communities to make use of the national forests and land to benefit their communities.	

Stakeholder consultation

In addition to the Region's statutory stakeholder's (NatureScot and Argyll & Bute Council), SEPA is routinely consulted. Scottish Water has been consulted in relation to the public water supply. The RSPB, Confor and SSE have also asked to be routinely consulted (although in the case of Cologin, there are no powerlines in or adjacent to the forest, so no consultation is necessary). Kilmore Community Council will be consulted. Close neighbours, where identifiable, will also be consulted. A public consultation exercise will be held when draft proposals have been prepared. Information will be posted online on the FLS website at various stages of the plan development, with the approved plan eventually being made available here.