



Castle O'er Land Management Plan 2020-2030

The main objectives for this plan are:

- 1) Provide a reliable supply of timber products to support local markets
- 2) Protect and promote nationally important heritage assets
- 3) Maintain high water quality around Black Esk reservoir
- 4) Manage the forest to maintain a dependable food supply for red squirrels

Timber Production

Continue restructuring of the forest to 'smooth' the availability of timber, helping to meet our production forecasts

Improve the quality of the final crop by thinning where possible

Windblow is a risk in some of the more exposed parts of the forest. Thinning interventions must be realistic and timely

Biodiversity

Work with partners to maintain the integrity of these forests as a stronghold for red squirrels. Retain areas of mature Norway spruce through the forest.

Target native woodland expansion in the sheltered, accessible, lower valleys (favouring small-seeded tree species). This will link with existing broadleaves and open habitats to strengthen the forest's habitat network

Grey squirrels are an ever present threat to the long-term viability of local red squirrel populations

Successful establishment of broadleaves will require adequate protection measures

Resilience

Increase the mix of productive species to build resilience against pests and diseases, and any potential changes in growing conditions due to climate change

Design coupe shapes and sizes to improve the windfirmness of future crops and to allow flexibility for future felling

Existing larch will be removed and the species excluded for restocking during the plan period due to the risk from Phytophthora ramorum

Options for alternative species are limited due to site conditions

Remaining 1st rotation trees are suffering from windblow and should be prioritised for felling during the plan period

Water Quality

Develop a predominantly broadleaf fringe around Black Esk reservoir to buffer inflows from surrounding watercourses, also adding benefits for biodiversity and the visitor experience

Planted broadleaves will require adequate protection from deer browsing

Landscape

Utilise a range of tree species and planting designs to visually enhance the corridor along the B723

Use low impact management to help protect and maintain the special qualities of the long-established plantation woodland

Outdoor Access

Continue to provide waymarked trails to Bessie's Hill and Castle O'er hill forts

Refresh site interpretation for visitors

Planning for any future access and interpretation works must recognise the importance of the 'Prehistoric Trail' to the community

Archaeology

Protect scheduled monuments. Utilise native woodland and open space to enhance their setting within the surrounding landscape.

Natural regeneration of trees is likely and this will need to be monitored and removed where necessary

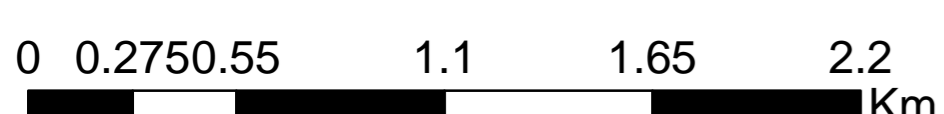
Legend

- Plan area
- Forest Roads
- Watercourses
- Scheduled Monuments
- Long-established woodland of plantation origin
- Open Water
- 1st rotation forest

Castle O'er LMP Map 3: Concept

Scale @ A1: 1:20,000

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Scotland's National Forest Estate is responsibly managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard.

