



TVFP forests are capable of growing high quality timber for the timber industry in South Scotland, and timber production remains an important long term management objective.

Use Ecological Site Classification to select tree species that will continue to thrive and adapt to predicted changes in climate. Seek to diversify the range of conifers and reduce the reliance on Sitka spruce, thus mitigating risks associated with climate change and satisfying other management objectives.

The forests dominates much of the landscape in the valley, in particular the small hills and sensitive slopes close to Innerleithen and Walkerburn, and the lower slopes along the valley. The current forest design has many awkward shapes and boundaries that are not in keeping with the wider landscape. Previous aspirations were to develop LISS management in many of these areas, but this is no longer achievable, and would have failed to address many landscape issues.

Develop a coupe design to address these issues, reflecting the wider landscape and the landscape scale within the forest. Consider LISS options where these are technically possible and meet landscape objectives.

Extensive areas of Upland Heathland (UK BAP habitat), notably Middlebar Knowe in Elibank, Minch Moor in Traquair, and upper plateau of Caberston.

Ensure existing habitat is safeguarded and seek opportunities to expand where appropriate. Improve linkage with other open habitat through on-going felling and restocking, and enhance forest edge adjacent to open habitat by planting or encouraging natural regeneration of suitable scrub woodland.

Four scheduled ancient monuments in Caberston Forest and numerous other historic features throughout the LMP area.

Ensure SAMs are protected and managed in line with SAM management plans. Protect and conserve all historic features in line with FLS best practice

Larch accounts for 11% of LMP area, with much of this on highly visible, steeper slopes overlooking Innerleithen and Walkerburn, and in interactive visitor zones next to mountain bike and walking trails. Phytophthora ramorum poses a significant threat to the larch. Infection will lead to the issue of SPHNS, with subsequent harvesting challenges and disruption to public access and recreation.

To reduce the potential future impacts of infection by phytophthora ramorum, develop a plan to fell and restock areas of larch, taking into account landscape and recreational sensitivities.

P1955 conifers on a steep, stoney slope above A72, with a high proportion of larch. Trees are stable but growing well and will become increasingly difficult to safely fell and extract.

Plan to carry out pre-emptive felling as early as possible in Phase 1 of the LMP, taking into consideration risks associated with steep ground above A72, an OHPL next to the A72 and the proximity of River Tweed. Restock quickly with suitable broadleaves to help stabilise the slope, and minimise future roadside tree hazards.

Open/scrub butterfly habitat on lower slopes near Thornielee car park.

Ensure appropriate habitat management to safeguard and enhance this locally important site.

Plora Wood SSSI is a long term native woodland restoration project, mostly owned and managed by the Woodland Trust. Long term aim is restoring and securing ancient woodland habitats and enhancing ancient woodland communities by removing threats.

Develop felling and restock plan to gradually remove conifers on slopes above Plora Wood, and replace with native broadleaves, or non-native species that will pose minimal threat to successful restoration.

All watercourses feed into River Tweed SSSI/ SAC, and some are important for salmon and trout spawning.

All forest operations will be carried out in strict accordance with UKFS Forests and Water Guidelines. Continue to develop a network of broadleaf woodland and open habitat in riparian zones to provide a buffer around watercourses.

Small but important PAWS site on lower slope of Caddonbank, next to several official mountain bike trails and with difficult operational access. Last thinned around 2013. 2020 survey highlighted a need for further thinning.

Aim to carry out further PAWS thinning in plan period, including removal of remaining larch on Caddonbank face.

New woodland creation projects are being developed on adjacent land at West Bold and Ashiestiel.

Ensure there is integration between plans that will improve landscape in the longer term.

Recreation facilities and informal public access are important for the local tourism industry, as well as the general health and well-being of local people and visitors. The 7 Stanes mountain bike centre in Traquair Forest is a particularly important destination, supporting local businesses.

Continue to develop an attractive and diverse forest setting for public access and recreation, through appropriate felling design, silvicultural practice and choice of tree species. Develop a felling and thinning programme that will minimise disruption to recreation facilities.

Some natural reserves on steep and difficult ground have a high proportion of larch which could threaten their future viability and cause operational difficulties.

Review NRs with a view to pre-emptive larch felling and restocking with suitable species that could enable future management as minimum intervention and possibly NR in due course. In mitigation, identify possible new NR sites.

Although numbers are uncertain, and despite the presence of grey squirrels, there appears to be a healthy population of red squirrels in TVFP forests.

Increase the proportion of suitable conifers, in particular Norway spruce and Scots pine, and endeavour to provide connectivity of suitable mature habitat to provide refuge when coupes are clearfelled.

Southern Upland Way long distance footpath passes through Elibank and Traquair forests.

As forest restructuring continues, through clearfelling and restocking, take opportunities to enhance visual diversity and maintain or create long views from the footpath. Review design of forest edge and hilltop coupes seen from the footpath outside the forest.

Although lek sites within the forest, black grouse are known to use the open heathland habitat between Traquair and Yair Forests

Aim to improve open and forest edge habitat to provide suitable shelter and food sources, and improve open habitat connectivity

Mature/semi-mature conifers provide important habitat for several raptor species including goshawk, buzzard and owls. On-going clearfelling risks losing too many potential nesting sites in parts of the forest.

Identify suitable coupes as long term retentions, especially in Elibank and Traquair wherever there is a long history of goshawk nesting. Continue to develop LISS areas, safeguard natural reserves, and ensure potential future long term retentions are thinned.

Legend

- FLS Trails
- Local Walking Routes
- Forest Roads
- Planned Roads
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Blocks
- Flora Wood SSSI
- River Tweed SSSI
- Natural Reserves
- Watercourses
- Ancient Woodland
- PAWS
- Upland Heathland
- Larch

Elibank, Traquair, Caberston and Thornielee Land Management Plan Map 3 Analysis and Concept

Scale @ A0:1:15,000
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