

Forest Design Plan
GLEN NEVIS
2015-2025
DESIGN CONCEPT

Expand the grazing management regimes on Cow Hill and Blar a Chaorrainn for environmental gains, particularly black grouse and chequered skipper.

Around Cow Hill enhance the existing character of open hill interspersed with upland birch woodland.

Begin removal of conifers around Cowhill and return site to native broadleaves as a backdrop to Fort William. Particular focus on the eastern shoulder of Cow Hill. This area presents a particular technical challenge due to steep terrain and inaccessibility.

Maintain Braveheart car park as the central access point to FC land holding for visitors arriving by car. Develop the sense of landscape character along with and other visitor zones.

Maintain current provision of public access but seek funding opportunities to improve quality of the visitor experience. Such opportunities will be dependent on external sources for funding.

Seek opportunities to manage existing conifer stands at a lower level as low impact silviculture (alternatives to clearfell) through thinning where conditions allow.

Seek to naturalise the upper margin of the forest through felling and natural regeneration. This should assist with maintaining slope stability.

Felling coupes should be designed to enhance the quality of the landscape from around the glen and Ben Nevis. Scale of felling should be smaller at the bottom of the glen and expanding on the upper slopes and skylines.

Continue to diversify the structure of felling on the mid and upper slopes.

Scale and shape of the felling coupes should reflect the scale of perception and the nature of the landform.

Continue the restructuring of the Tollie area through felling. Seek to create a spatial link between the lost township of Tollie and the hillfort of Dun Deardail.

Maintain the openness of the upper slopes. Open woodland establishment should be on lower/middle slopes and extending into the corries to enhance the character of the landform

The future development of landscape character through species composition and stand structure should reflect the that of the glen as a whole. The entrance to the glen is more highly modified but becomes increasingly naturalistic deeper in.

Accelerate the pine and birch wood restoration deep into the glen on FC boundary.

Expand area of new native woodland with some commercial conifers.

Both conifers and broadleaves regenerate prolifically throughout the landholding. Natural regeneration should be the preferred means of establishment with species composition and stand structure being influenced by subsequent operations (eg. re-spacing, thinning). The management of grazing pressure will be a key element of securing natural regeneration.

Construct sufficient roads infrastructure to implement the management strategy sympathetically.

Retain central ridge and high peaks as open. Management will include the control of deer grazing to maintain favourable ecological condition and encourage low levels of natural regeneration on the lower slopes. Sheep and cattle will also be grazed at lower elevations to develop habitat favourable for black grouse.

Establish area of new native woodland on the southern part of the landholding. Opportunity to develop and enhance the landscape character on the final leg of the West Highland way between Kinlochleven and Fort William.

Retain key stands of Scots Pine as landscape feature and red squirrel habitat. Due to the threat of *Phytophthora ramorum* it may not be possible to retain stands of larch for any period of time.

