



# Appendix

## Land Management Plan Brief Aros Park

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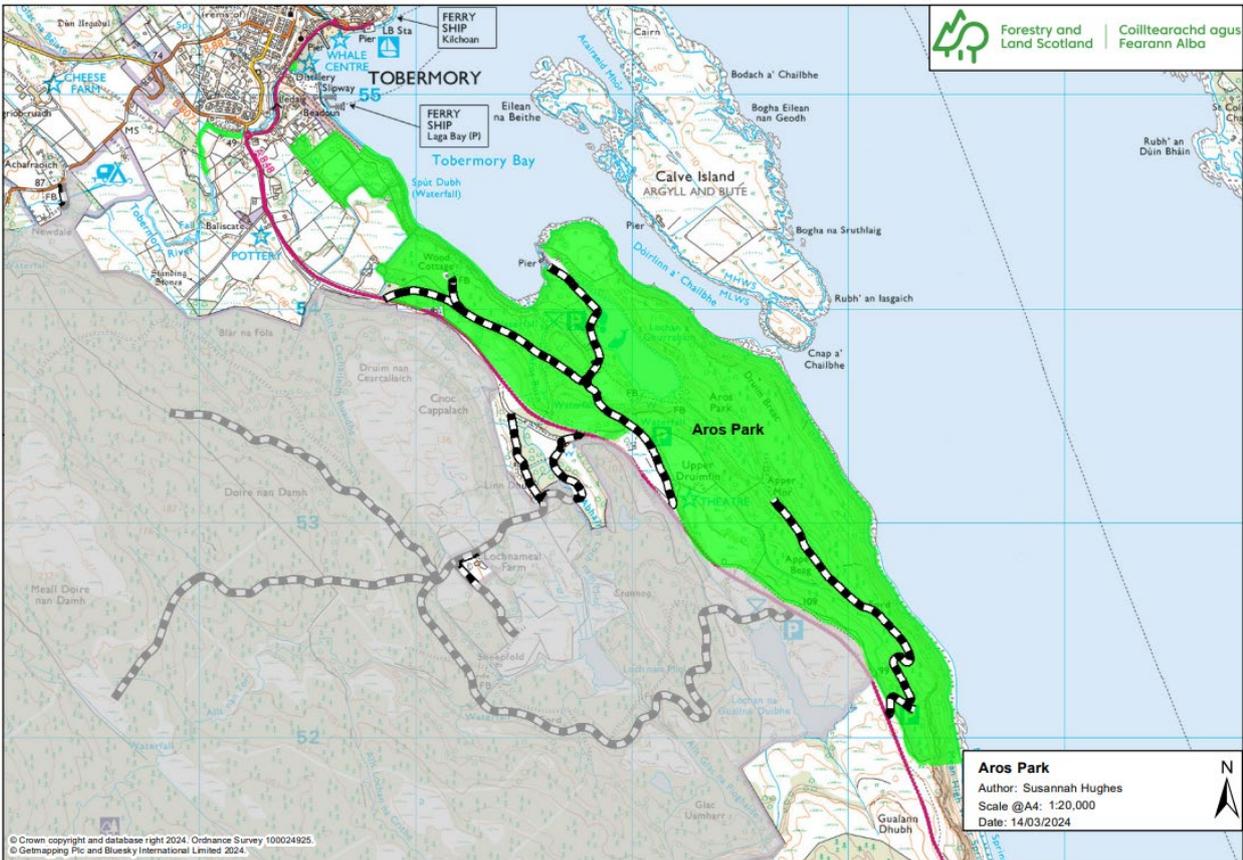
# 1. Key background information

Aros Park is a woodland of high amenity and conservation value close to Tobermory, enjoyed by locals and visitors alike.

## Introduction

Aros Park LMP encompasses 191 ha of land

This management plan will replace and renew the previous Land Management Plan of Aros Park (SF File Ref 033/W/A/13(3))



## Silvicultural Potential

Across the plan area elevation ranges from just sea level at the coast, up to 100m at Druimfin#. The forest sits within “Stepped Rocky Coastlands” landscape type with low stepped headlands and ridges following a SE/NW alignment.

The prevailing cool & wet climate is conducive to good conifer tree growth although the combination of soil types and varied topography (exposed and sometimes steep combined with very flat, wet areas) can limit the choice of tree species. Climate change predictions suggest that the climate will become generally warmer, with drier summers and wetter winters.

The Aros Park Estate is a mixture of policy woodlands, broadleaves and a previously afforested conifer area being restored back to PAWS. Approximately 80% of the site is under woodland cover of (55% broadleaves, 25% conifer), with a further 3% having been felled awaiting restocking and the remaining 20% given over to open ground, open water (loch) an agricultural lease and recreational areas.

The current split in terms of age classes structure is approximately:

- 0% establishing crop (0-10 years)
- 7% thicket (11-20 years)
- 8% pole stage (21-40 years)
- 0% mature (41-60 years)
- 85% old forest (61+ years)

Age diversification is therefore minimal with a predominantly old forest.

There is a very little larch within the forests (0.1ha).

## Operational Access

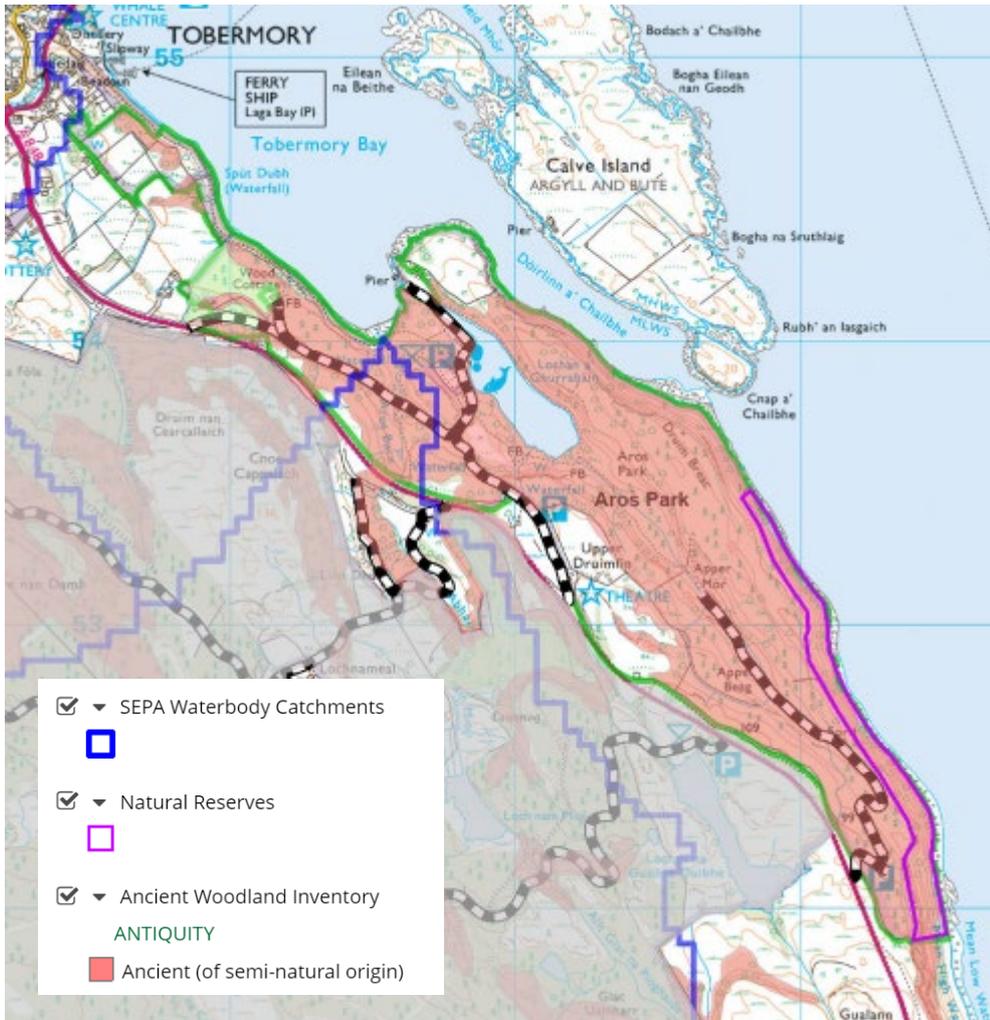
The forest has two discrete forest roads: the first, 2.4km, is primarily recreational from the north and the second, 1.3km, is a timber haul route existing onto the public road away from the public access to the south.

## Environment

The richness of the natural environment on Mull is well known both across the UK and internationally. The island is known as a nationally important area for a variety of species including raptors such as White Tailed Eagle, Golden Eagle and Hen Harrier. There is a SSSI designation within Aros Park, Sound of Mull cliffs, and the whole of the isle of Mull is designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area and the surrounding seas form the Inner Hebrides and the Minches Marine Special area of Conversation.

All the afforested areas are Ancient Woodland sites within the plan area and the SSSI area is a Natural Reserve, 12ha.

There are no SEPA waterbody catchment areas within Aros Park although the Allt nan Torc river (primarily in Aros forest) runs down the series of waterfalls as the Aros Burn and thence into the sea.



## Cultural Environment

There are no scheduled monuments within the plan area, although there are a number of undesigned sites, mostly in relation to the history of Aros Park and its Victorian heritage.

## Landscape

NatureScot Landscape Designations show the FLS land area to be mostly Stepped Rocky Coastlands.

## Community Use

There are no Rights of Way runs within Aros Park although a network of formal trails which are mostly part of the Core Path network run through the forest.

A variety of community leases exist through the woodland including:

- the Walled Garden
- Mull Theatre
- Grazing lease
- Fishing lease

And discussions are underway regarding a potential lease of the sawmill and pier area.

Argyll and Bute Council's Local Development Plan LDP2 has been consulted on in 2019 and the revised plan identifies Aros Park as Countryside Areas.

## Neighbouring reservoirs / fisheries

The public water supply for the majority of Mull comes from the Mishnish lochs but this catchment is outwith Aros Park and there are no known private water supplies within the forest

Lochan a'Ghurrabain offers fishing opportunities via permit.

## Wildlife Control

Deer control in Aros Park is undertaken by direct Wildlife staff but is difficult due to the high recreational nature of the forest, the topography and its proximity to the town of Tobermory. Deer ingress is impacting on the natural regeneration of trees within Aros Park.

## 2. Strategic drivers

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 we will have regard to the Forestry Strategy in our work, we have identified the relevant Forestry Strategy 'Priorities for Action' in our Corporate Outcomes

section of the FLS Corporate Plan 2019-2022. These, alongside key issues and site specific challenges, have informed our draft land management objectives, as illustrated in Table 12 below.

### 3. Draft land management plan objectives

- Support and enable investment in facilities and access for both locals and visitors to the isle of Mull.
- Continue to manage policy woodland silvicultural system
- Continue to work with the community on facilitating and progressing opportunities for community involvement in the forest given its close proximity to Tobermory.
- Work with the community to protect the important Victorian heritage of Aros Park Estate.
- Improve SSSI (Sound of Mull Cliffs) to ensure favourable condition, and restore broadleaf Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) including the SSSI buffer; develop and implement a plan to reduce and contain *Rhododendrum ponticum*
- Facilitate solutions for management of herbivore impact to support species diversity and ground vegetation as well as encouraging natural regeneration.

### 4. Stakeholders

- Scottish Forestry
- NatureScot
- Argyll & Bute Council
- Argyll Fisheries Trust
- Argyll Timber Transport Group (ATTG)
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Mull & Iona Community Council
- West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS)
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT)
- Rural Payments and Inspection Division (RPID)
- Scottish Water (SW)
- Mull Deer Management Group
- Visit Scotland
- Holiday Mull
- Association wildlife tour operators
- Scottish Southern Energy
- Scottish Water
- Mull Museum

- Mull Native Woodland Group
- Neighbours
- Tobermory Harbour Association
- Mull Theatre
- Leasees/Permissions (Fishing, Grazing, Walled Garden, Disc Golf)

**Table 12 – Relationship between relevant corporate outcomes and the site specific draft LMP objectives**

Corporate Outcomes Relevant to LMP	Operational Actions To Deliver Outcome Relevant to LMP	Draft LMP Objectives
<p><b>Outcome 1: Supporting a Sustainable Rural Economy</b></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"> <li>● 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</li> <li>● Developing our forest planning processes to ensure long-term sustainable productivity of the national forests and land                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing a sustainable supply of timber to Scotland’s timber processing sector</li> <li>Implementing the Restocking Strategy for the national forests and land and develop a new plant and seed supply strategy</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Supporting Scottish tourism and the visitor economy through the provision of visitor attractions</li> <li>● Support the venison processing sector through our deer management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain Small Round Wood, pallet log and biomass production (maintained timber income, clearfell/restock)</li> <li>● Plan roads to access less accessible crops.</li> </ul>

Corporate Outcomes Relevant to LMP	Operational Actions To Deliver Outcome Relevant to LMP	Draft LMP Objectives
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> 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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing the national forests and land to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity</li> <li>Maintaining and enhancing our work on peatland restoration</li> <li>Collaborating with partners on integrated landscape-scale approaches to habitat management and restoration</li> <li>Continuing to implement the Larch Strategy in order to reduce the rate of expansion of <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to restore and maintain areas of bog habitat (reduce carbon release, diversify habitat)</li> <li>Protect historical features</li> <li>Mitigate against excessive water runoff in catchments.</li> <li>Pre-emptively remove larch</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> 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"> <li>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</li> <li>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</li> <li>Enabling outdoor learning and encouraging schools and community groups to make use of the national forests and land</li> <li>Continuing to engage communities in decisions relating to the management of the national forests and land</li> <li>Continuing to support community empowerment by enabling communities to make use of the national forests and land to benefit their communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide for use by local community and visitors (high tourist numbers, proposed settlement expansion, fire risk)</li> </ul>