

## 1.0 Summary

### 1.1 Introduction

The Ardgartan Land Management Plan area occupies a peninsula of land between Lochs Long and Goil in the eastern part of Argyll. The closest larger settlements are Lochgoil immediately to the west and Arrochar, further away to the north east. The strategically important A83 trunk road runs to the north of the block. Both commercial non-native conifer plantations and significant areas of native woodland are concentrated in narrow strips along the shores of the lochs. The central part of the area is open hill ground making up almost 60% of the 3354ha total area. Of the woodland area 64% is Sitka spruce, 20% other conifers (including Scots pine) and the remainder is broadleaved woodland (the majority of which is native woodland). Over 50% of the woodland is greater than 50 years of age and there is very little less than 20 years old.

Key objectives include diversification of both species and age structure. Also, although retaining a significant element of timber production is important, restoration of ancient woodland sites is a fundamental concern. A programme of progressive removal of larch will be implemented and alternative species sought at restocking that continues the landscape interest provided by larch.

### 1.2 Objectives

- Create a coupe structure that progresses the restructuring process started in the previous plan aiming to diversify both species and age diversity. Include coupes already incorporated into the Regional felling programme.
- Incorporate stands with significant proportions of larch into first phase felling coupes in line with FLS policy to remove 50% of larch from zone C by 2023.
- Remove the majority of accessible non-native conifer from the western part of the plan area within the plan period. Outline longer term management options for remaining stands.
- Restore ancient woodland sites and re-establish commercially non-viable sites with native woodland, avoiding isolation of commercially viable sites.
- Retain majority of the southern tip of the peninsula as natural reserve, but incorporate larch stands into felling coupes due to threat from Ramorum disease. Where feasible create a buffer zone around the reserve.
- At restocking seek to maximise production using Sitka spruce as the predominant species in a clearfell management system. Use alternative species to improve diversity and landscape, where site conditions are favourable.
- Restore PAWS indicated as 1a and 2a on the ancient woodland layer in line with Forestry and Land Scotland Policy.
- Establish a definitive forest habitat network and outline management approaches to be adopted within it.
- Where feasible seek to improve habitats for a range of bird and mammal species including golden eagle, black grouse and red squirrel.

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- Seek to soften landscape impacts through careful coupe design, expansion of a forest habitat network (FHN), modification of upper treeline and judicious use of alternative species.
- Examine management options in the area around Coillessen taking into account recreation interest along trail networks and the Your Park areas.
- Establish and maintain a deer control programme that allows successful establishment of vulnerable species.

## 1.3 Key proposals

<b>Total Plan Area</b>	3354 (ha)
<b>Planned operations</b>	
Felling	496ha.; 243250m <sup>3</sup>
Thinning	367ha; 7200m <sup>3</sup>
Restock	302ha of conifer; 194ha of broadleaf.
New planting	0ha
Roads and tracks	8411m track; 47000m road upgrade
Public access	

## 1.4 Species diversity

Species group	2020	2030	2040
<b>Sitka spruce</b>	26.0%	23.0%	21.0%
<b>Other conifers</b>	6.2%	3.5%	3.3%
<b>Scots pine</b>	1.0%	0.6%	0.3%
<b>Broadleaves</b>	7.2%	11.3%	17.0%
<b>Open space</b>	59.7%	61.7%	58.5%

## 1.5 Major issues

Issue	Description/mitigation
Issue 1	Steep, challenging sites, particularly in western part of area. Use contractors with adequate skills base and machinery to manage sites.
Issue 2	Extensive areas of plantation on ancient woodland sites. Establish extent of priority ancient woodland and outline a sustainable restoration plan that can be sustained into the future.
Issue 3	Threat from Ramorum disease impacting management of non-larch trees. Incorporate larch into a felling programme that meets FLS objective of removing 50% of that species before the end of 2023.
Issue 4	Poor road access. Find cost effective, long lasting, solutions to improve road system and provide access into isolated coupes.

## 1.6 Critical success factors

The following are critical to success of the plan:

- Timely construction of new, or upgrading of, existing roads, and roads/tracks to access approved felling coupes.
- Availability of contractor base capable of working in challenging situations.
- Adequate deer control measures for protection of broadleaved species and soft conifers.

## 1.7 Standards and guidelines

This plan takes account of Scottish Government and Forestry and Land Scotland policy and strategy. It has been developed in accord with the latest UKFS Guidelines and is audited under the UK Woodland Assurance Standard. Forest and Land Scotland Woodlands are certified as being sustainable by both FSC and PEFC.

## 1.8 Consultation

During the development of this plan we have consulted with stakeholders known to have an interest in this plan area. A list of stakeholders and their response can be found in Appendix I.

## 1.9 Contacts and further information

For further information on this or any other land management plan please contact:

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