

Bearhead Strategic Forest Plan

THE FOREST PLAN

PART A

Description of woodlands

Property

Bearhead Wood is owned by Glasgow City Council (GCC) 228 Scotland Street, Glasgow G53 8ZZ. The forestry agent is Treeland Management Consultants who managed the woodland on behalf of GCC. The payee for all grant monies is Glasgow City Council.

Business Reference Number is 234567

Main Location Code is 234/5678

Location and Background

Bearhead Wood lies to the south west of Bearsden and covers a property area of 23.17 hectares. This includes 7.0 hectares of other land under a double pylon line. The Forest Plan area is 16.17 hectares, which excludes the pylon line area.

There is approximately 13,500 residents in Bearsden the majority of whom live within 1km of the woodland. The woodland will also bring benefits to the residents of Drumchapel which, is close by.

The land was formerly part of Garscadden Estate and was transferred into the Glasgow Corporation, now known as Glasgow City Council, in 1938. The majority of woodland was planted during the 1940's with some older 'veteran trees' dating back to the 1750s. A younger mixed broadleaved planting was carried out in the early 90's under an approved Woodland Grant Scheme. Other than the establishment of this new planting and occasional path maintenance the woodland has had a history of neglect through a lack of resources.

However some active management started under the Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) scheme between 2006 and 2008 by the current agent (Scheme Reference – 032/900/468). The WIAT initiative provided some improvements to path surfaces and design, rubbish and dumping collections, small scale thinnings, enrichment planting and the appearance of the entrances.

There is now a real desire to continue this active management for the benefit of the local community.

Stakeholder Engagement

A scoping meeting was held on 3rd May 2008 to hear the views and aspirations of local people and stakeholders. (See Scoping Report Appendix 1) The main issues that are being addressed as part of the Forest Plan are:

- To tidy up the woodland and improve the aesthetic appearance
- To address concerns that recent work would not be maintained
- To consider illegal activities such as scramblers and quads
- To ensure trees are not felled in the nesting season
- To encourage more planting of long lived tree species such as oak

The Long Term Vision and Management Objectives

The long term vision is to move to an upland oak wood habitat and to ensure that the woodland is managed for the benefit of the people of Bearsden both now and in the future.

Objectives:

- Ensure that tree cover is maintained.
- Enrich the biodiversity of the woodland by introducing native tree and shrub species that are currently under-represented or absent.
- Provision of a safer environment where people can visit and use the woodland for peaceful recreational purposes.
- Where possible timber produce will be harvested and extracted for small scale local markets i.e. woodfuel, wood turning and sawmills for the production of crates, pallets and fencing.

Site and Species Description

Bearhead Wood is a long established planted woodland. It is predominantly broadleaved with small blocks of conifer. The current age structure lacks diversity with most of the planting having taken place in the 1940's and under the Woodland Grant Scheme in the 90's. There are remnants of the original planting in the form of a number of oak trees, now old and showing signs of veteran characteristics. There are also some areas of mature larch and other mature conifers, which were planted between 50 and 60 years ago.

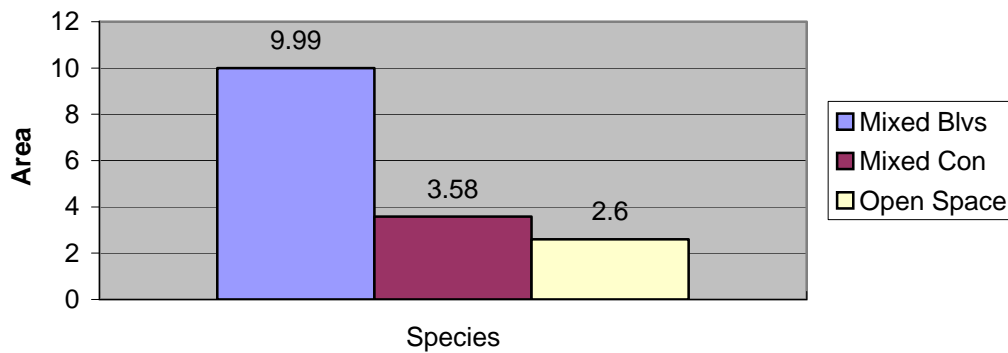
Stand data

The current species and age –class distribution within the woodland is shown in Table 1 and accompanying charts;

Table 1

Species	Age (as at 2008)	YC	Area (ha)	%age
Mixed Broadleaves	68	8	8.64	53%
Mixed Broadleaves	18	8	1.35	8%
Mixed Conifers	68	16	3.58	23%
Open Space			2.60	16%
Total	-	-	16.17	

Area by Species



Area by Age Class



PART B

Survey Data

There has been no recent crop or conservation surveys carried out in the woodland although a recreational survey was carried out in 2005. This recorded the number of people using the woodland and the frequency with which they visit. The statistics conclude approximately 75,000 visits to the woodland annually.

The Scoping Report has identified that a full crop survey will be carried out to obtain up to date species and yield class information. This will also include a survey of the veteran trees.

PART C

Analysis of constraints and opportunities

Most of the constraints and opportunities are common with all small woodlands located close to large populations. Issues of vandalism, rubbish, anti-social behaviour and illegal motorcycling and other activities are real management problems that are difficult to address. A double pylon line is a severe constraint within the woodland although the opportunity will be taken to develop and improve access routes underneath the powerline.

Landscape assessment – This woodland area is not prominent in the wider landscape. Proposed felling is small scale and will not have any significant visual impact. Further landscape analysis is not required.

Archaeological assessment – An unscheduled ancient monument (sheiling) has been identified within the Forest Plan area (see Map 2 - Concept Map). Liaison with the Regional Archaeologist has been undertaken and site meeting took place on 19 November 2007. It has been agreed to fell existing trees and create open space. Forests and Archaeology Guidelines will be followed in all forest operations.

Ecological assessment – The proposed operations will not impact on the ecology, indeed some proposed thinning and felling operations will increase the bio-diversity opportunities. All proposed operations will take place outwith sensitive periods specifically the bird nesting season.

Herbivore assessment - There is no significant damage to the crops planted in the 1990's and although roe deer are regularly seen in the woodlands and in the surrounding farmland, numbers are low and it is considered that no control is necessary. The situation will be monitored on an annual basis.

Social impacts – This woodland plays a large role in defining and enhancing the local residential environment. It is a benefit to the visual appearance of the area, and also provides paths and walks where local people can experience a woodland environment. The views of the local people were clear at the scoping meeting: they didn't want any large scale felling carried out and would like to see more planting of longer living trees such as oak.

Public access – The woodland has a number of footpaths and well used desire lines running through it. These paths link various residential areas and the local school. Heavy usage with upwards of 75,000 visits annually means that maintenance of the path network is vital to maintain the path network in a good condition. Small scale felling and thinning operations are also important to make the woodlands more attractive and remove the perception they are dangerous to walk through. Changes to the design and the management of the access points (i.e. the removal of fly tipping and better buggy and wheelchair friendly access) will also be more inviting to the local population and visitors alike.

PART D

Silvicultural policy

The woodland will be managed on a continuous cover basis and the principle of minimum intervention will be adopted. The aim is to move eventually to a native woodland of an upland oak wood habitat type over the next 50 years. This will contain a higher proportion of oak than would normally be expected in semi-natural woodland of this type. Small scale selective felling, thinning, path construction and maintenance along with some small scale enrichment planting are all desirable operations that will be carried out. These operations will benefit and enhance the existing access, amenity and bio-diversity interests and diversify the current species and age structure of the woodland.

Felling and Restructuring

Thinning

The woodland will be lightly thinned to improve the overall form of the trees, increase light levels and remove the non-native components. It will also increase both the access and amenity value to the local community and other visitors. Thinning will be carried out approximately every 5 – 7 years with no more than 25% of the crop being removed. Care will be taken to avoid damage to veteran trees and to open up their crowns where necessary.

Felling

Two small conifer felling coupes of 0.20 hectares in size will be undertaken to open up some internal viewpoints and create open areas within the woodland. This will increase the diversity within the woodland and has the added advantage of clearing pockets of existing windblow.

Felling and thinning will be undertaken between August and February to avoid nesting season.

There is no other felling planned within the first 10 years of the plan.

Conifer regeneration

Conifer regeneration is not considered a threat however it will be monitored. Commercial conifer species with the exception of Scots Pine will be removed.

Table 2 provides a summary of thinning and felling during the first 10 years of the Forest Plan.

New planting

New planting amounting to 0.3ha will be carried out in two small areas (see Map 2 – Concept Map) to enhance bio-diversity and amenity. Primary species will include Oak and Ash with shrubby species including Rowan, Hazel and Holly supplementing the mix (see Table 2b). Regeneration would be the preferred method but this is unlikely given the age structure of the current crop and also the soil conditions, which supports strong weed competition.

Stocking densities will be at 1600 stems per hectare with trees planted in 1.2 metre tree shelters.

Management of Open Areas

All open areas will be maintained as open space and any regeneration will be removed.

Protection and maintenance

All access points, boundary fences and walls will be monitored and repaired as necessary.

Herbivore impacts

Tree damage by roe deer is minimal. Any small scale planting will be protected using tree shelters as fencing and/or culling would be inappropriate in this urban location. These areas will be monitored to ensure the tree shelters are not a target for vandalism.

Public access

Public access will be encouraged along existing routes within the woodland. The proposed new routes when constructed will be promoted locally. All access routes will be upgraded to allow wheelchairs and buggies whilst restricting motorcycles and quad bikes.

Public access is likely to be restricted to only parts of the woodland during certain major operations such as thinning and felling. Restrictions will be kept to a minimum with suitable diversions put in place and operational signs will be erected to notify the public. Local community, user groups and schools (see Appendix 2) will also be notified at an early stage.

Local Police will be kept informed of any illegal activities and associated anti-social behaviour. Liaison with the various user and community groups will be vital in ensuring these activities do not escalate.

Litter/rubbish will be collected from the woodland on an ongoing basis. It is also envisaged that the local community groups may organise different “hands on” events which may include a litter collection day involving the participation of the local community.

Control of non-native invasive plant species

This is not a particular threat at present. However given the increased incidences of fly tipping specifically garden waste; species like Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam are more likely to infest an area. Monitoring will be carried out as part of the routine inspection regime and if a problem is identified it will be controlled.

The summary schedule below details the tree felling to be carried out during the period of the plan. The thinning operations will enhance the development of the young trees already present and benefit bio-diversity with an increase in the flora in the understorey.

Table 2 a – Summary Schedule of Felling, Thinning Restructuring by Felling Period

Felling Period	Area of thinning	Area of Felling (Net Area)	Restructuring Areas by successor crop types (Net areas for species, other land to cover open space)						
			Sitka Spruce	Other conifer	Mixed broadleaves	Native broadleaves	Caledonian Scots pine	Natural regeneration	Other land
2010	8.26	0.20							0.20
2012	3.66	0.20							0.20
2018	1.25								
TOTALS	13.17	0.40							0.4

A Tolerance Table is not included, as it is not envisaged that there will be any amendments to this Plan. Any changes will be discussed with Forestry Commission Scotland to agree actions before they are taken.

Table 2 b – Summary of New Planting Area

Planting Year	Area of New Planting	Species						
		oak	Ash	Rowan	Holly	Hazel	Open space	Total Species
2010	0.15	0.05	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.0	0.15
2011	0.15	0.05	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.0	0.15
TOTALS	0.30	0.10	0.10	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.0	0.30

APPENDIX I

Scoping Report

1) Introduction

Case Title: Bearhead Wood
RDC case Number: 23456789
Business Reference Number: 234567
Main Location Code: 234/5678
Forest Plan Area: 16.17 hectares

This is a report of the scoping meeting that took place on 3rd May 2008 for Bearhead Wood to help with the preparation of the Forest Plan. This plan will be submitted in 2009. Advertisements were posted in local shops and in the Community hall where the meeting was held.

2) Participants

Name	Address	Telephone
Colin Roebuck Treeland Management Consultants	Treeland Management Consultants, Woodland Office, Strathblane, Central Scotland	0141 233 6654
Mr B Salmond, Wildlife Trust Volunteer	23 Athol Road, Bearsden, Glasgow	0141 265 5678
Mr A Blair, Local Resident	Glenview, Hamilton Road, Bearsden, Glasgow	0141 265 3571
Mrs B Rankin, ornithologist	8 Bearhead Road, Bearsden, Glasgow	0141 265 7896
Mr D Brown, Woodland Manager and G Patterson, Biodiversity Manager	Woodland and Parks Department, Glasgow City Council, 228 Scotland Street, Glasgow G53 8ZZ	0141 287 2000
Mr T Connolly, Policy Officer	Scottish Natural Heritage Caspian House, Mariner Court, Clydebank Business Park, Clydebank G81 2NR	0141 951 4488
Ms E Smith, Secretary	Bearsden Community Council, Mansion House, Bearhead Road, Bearsden, Glasgow	0141 184 1967
Sergeant Crossbill	Strathclyde Police 173 Pitt Street	0141 532 2000

	Glasgow G2 4JS	
Mr John Smith, Regional Archaeologist	Department of Physical Planning, Viewforth, Stirling,	01786 842357
Mr Jim Tanner, Operations Manager,	Forestry Commission Scotland, Central Scotland Conservancy, Bothwell House, Hamilton House, Caird park Hamilton	01698 368530

(Please note that for the purpose of the example, names, addresses and contact numbers may have been changed)

3) Identifying the Key issues

A Concept map is shown in on Map 2 showing the key constraints and opportunities.

- a) The key issues identified by the participants at the scoping meeting were:
 - i) Tidy up the woodland and improve the aesthetic appearance: supported by Mr Salmond and Mr Brown
 - ii) Concerns that recent work would not be consolidated: Mr Blair
 - iii) Illegal activities such as scramblers and quads using the woodland: Mrs Rankin
 - iv) Trees should not be felled in the nesting season: Mrs Rankin
 - v) More planting of long lived tree species such as oak: Mr Connolly
 - vi) Owners: sustainably manage the woodland for the enjoyment of all, now and in the future.
- b) It was noted that Mrs Rankin, Mr Salmond, and Mr Connolly offered help if any conservation work was being organised.
- c) Public access is obtained by using existing Right of Ways from the public roads

4) Addressing the Key Issues

- a) Timing of operations should be limited to outside the bird nesting season.
- b) Extraction routes will need to be planned to avoid damaging the large oak trees. Where possible, deadwood management of these trees should be a priority, rather than removing them altogether, subject to safety requirements next to paths.
- c) Detailed measure(s) to be taken:

Main Issues	Detail any likely Impact	Detail measure(s) to be taken
Under-representation of oak in lower age classes.	Possible change in character of the woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High proportion of oak to be planted in felled coupes and proposed new planting • High proportion of hazel and holly to be planted with oak in large canopy gaps to develop understorey,
Operations during nesting season	Possible non-compliance with Nature Conservation Act (Scotland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All felling and extraction operations to be carried out between August and February inclusive.
Illegal activities particularly motorcycles and quad bikes	Puts people off using the woodland for quiet recreation. Potential health & safety issues more seriously someone being injured in a collision with a bike.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade existing access to the woodland which allows pedestrians, wheelchair and buggy access whilst restricting illegal access by motorcycles and quad bikes.

- d) Surveys to be undertaken:
- i) Survey of mature and veteran oak trees. Numbers and positions recorded, with condition of crowns and identifying possible threats, e.g. ivy or suppression from surrounding trees.
 - ii) A full crop and map survey of the woodland will be carried out to update species and yield class data. This will contribute to an analysis report for potential woodfuel production from all woodlands within Glasgow City Council (GCC) area.

APPENDIX 2

Contact List

This list will be used to notify local groups when major work within the woodland is planned.

Name	Address	Telephone
Mr A Smith, Head Teacher	Bearhead Primary School, Abbey Road, Bearsden, Glasgow	0141 233 8679
Ms E Smith, Secretary	Bearsden Community Council, Mansion House, Bearhead Road, Bearsden, Glasgow	0141 184 1967
Mr George Park, Scout Leader	34 Callander Road, Bearsden, Glasgow	0141 233 8257
Mr A Duncan, Secretary	Running Club, Park Road, Bearsden, Glasgow	0141 233 2447