

FOREST PLAN

BROWNHILLS FOREST

SCOPING REPORT

**Prepared by John P Jefford
UPM Tilhill.
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CONTENTS		PAGE
1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	PARTICIPANTS	4/5
3	IDENTIFYING THE KEY ISSUES	
3.1	General	6
3.2	Key Issues	6
3.3	Surveys Requested	6
4	ADDRESSING THE KEY ISSUES	
4.1	Dumfries & Galloway Council	7/8
4.2	East Ayrshire Council – Planning & Building Control	8
4.3	East Ayrshire Council – Roads & Transportation	8
4.4	Scottish Natural Heritage – Ayrshire & Dumfries & Galloway Regions	9
4.5	Historic Scotland	9
4.6	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	9
4.7	Galloway Fisheries Trust	10
4.8	Royal Society for Prevention of Birds Scotland	10
4.9	Carsphairn, Dalmellington & New Cumnock Community Councils	11
5	SURVEYS	
5.1	Ecological Survey	12
	APPENDIX 1	
	Concept Map	13
	APPENDIX 2	
	Minutes of Scoping Meetings & Written Responses During Scoping Process	14

1. INTRODUCTION

Name of property	Brownhills Forest
RDC Case number	12345678
Forest Plan Submission Date	11/06/08
Grid reference of main forest entrance	NS 514013
Business Reference number	123456
Main Location Code	123/4567
Forest Plan Area	1442.24 ha

Scoping Meetings Held	Date
Forestry Commission Offices, Dumfries and Galloway	10/05/08
East Ayrshire Roads Department	11/05/08
Carsphairn Community Hall	11/05/08

A Concept Map (Appendix 1) showing the main opportunities and constraints was sent to all consultees as a focus for discussion during the meetings.

2. PARTICIPANTS

Organisation	Name	Address	Telephone
UPM Tilhill (Agents)	Graham Chalk	Carlow House, Locharbriggs, Dumfries	01387 711211
Forestry Commission	Alasdair Hendry	South Conservancy Office, 55/57 Moffat Road, Dumfries	01387 272440
Dumfries & Galloway Council	Richard Roger	Council Offices English St, Dumfries, DG1 2DD	01387 260000
East Ayrshire Council	1. John Thorp 2. Stuart Norval	1. East Ayrshire Planning Department, East Ayrshire Council London Road Centre London Rd, Kilmarnock, KA3 7BU 2. East Ayrshire Roads Department East Ayrshire Council London Road Centre London Rd, Kilmarnock, KA3 7BU	01563 576000
Scottish Natural Heritage	Ms. D. Holman	Scottish Natural Heritage Carmont House, The Crichton, Bankend Road, Dumfries	01387 247 010
Neighbour	Carol Stephens	Benbrack Farm, Polnaskie Bridge, Carsphair, Dumfries	01387 657249
Neighbour	Donald Fife	Waterhead Farm, Darnscaw, Carsphair, Dumfries	01387 656789

Written Comments From

Organisation	Name	Address	Telephone
Dumfries & Galloway Council	Richard Roger	Council Offices English St, Dumfries, DG1 2DD	01387 260000
D & G Council Archaeologist	Jenny Leslie	Council Offices English St, Dumfries, DG1 2DD	01387 260000
Historic Scotland	Tom Smith	Historic Scotland, South West Team Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1SH.	0131 668 8716

Scottish Natural Heritage	Ms. D. Holman	Scottish Natural Heritage Carmont House, The Crichton, Bankend Road Dumfries, DG1 4ZF	01387 247 010
SEPA	Mike Briggs	Rivers House, Lochside Ind Est, Irongray Rd, Dumfries	01387 720502
Galloway Fisheries Trust	Paul Davies	Galloway Fisheries Trust Fisheries House Station Industrial Estate Newton Stewart Wigtownshire DG8 6ND	01671 403011

(Please note that for the purpose of this example, some of the names and addresses are fictional)

3. IDENTIFYING THE KEY ISSUES

3.1 General

In general terms the Forest is not considered sensitive visually or ecologically and timber production is the key objective. The Forest lies just south east of Dalmellington in Dumfries and Galloway and from a landscape point of view is seen mainly from the A713, which runs along the western flank of the forest. A main viewpoint on the A713 has been identified and a landscape analysis will be carried out on this western flank. The remainder of the forest is not considered landscape sensitive.

In many ways the forest is typical of the upland forests in south west Scotland with a predominance of non native conifers. Opportunities will be taken to improve the forest design by reducing hard edges on the western boundary by using open ground and long term retentions and also introduce shrub and open ground along the powerlines on both the western and eastern boundaries.

There are a number of major watercourses in the forest where planting is often very close. Open ground and broadleaves will be introduced to increase diversity and avoid heavy shading.

Recreation in the forest is of low potential but opportunities will be taken to enhance recreational experience in the more accessible parts of the forest.

3.2 Key Issues

The key features highlighted during scoping were

- the direction and timing of timber movements
- the need to manage the archaeological features in a positive manner
- maintenance of public access at the Water of Deuch

A list of all the issues that were identified from 3 Scoping Meetings and written responses are presented in Table 4 together with the measures that will be taken to address them.

3.3 Surveys Requested

- 1 Assessment of Unscheduled Archaeological site was requested by D&G Council.

4. ADDRESSING THE KEY ISSUES

The following tables group together issues raised by each participating organisation and individuals and includes an assessment of the likely impact on the planning of the forest work. The third column details what measures will be taken and the final column is for 'Notes' that give details about issues raised, issues which are not expected to be resolved or prompts for any follow up action.

Table 4

4.1 Dumfries & Galloway Council

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Notes
<p><u>Landscape</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape falls outside Regional Scenic Area • D & G Landscape Assessment – Forest in category Deugh 6 (dense productive forestry, predominantly non native conifers) in Local Forestry Framework • Consider key view points from A713 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on landscape design and planning of felling and restocking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design to consider Forestry Practice Guide “Forest Design Planning” especially Appendix 2b –Worked Example of upland large scale coniferous forest • View points on west side to be used to illustrate impact and change over time • Secondary species to soften edges • Shapes – address hard edges on western side and liaise with neighbours to north on issues of felling timing and coupe sizes 	
<p><u>Archaeology</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known Scheduled Site (Kings Cairn Chambered Cairn & Monument) mapped • Assess forest for any unscheduled sites • Local heritage sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on harvesting site planning and restock design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled Monument Consent application submitted to Historic Scotland prior to harvesting • Use first version of OS maps to identify sites • Undertake site visit to assess current condition • Consider current Carsphairn Heritage Trail in planning 	
<p><u>Recreation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of way – identify routes • Access initiatives – contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on choice of view points and landscape design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider provision for low key access. 	

organisations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Maintenance of access at the Water of Deuch on east side. •Assess impact on neighbour 	
<u>Nature Conservation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •General biodiversity issues – refer to Local Biodiversity Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Impact on restock planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Consider species choice for Black grouse habitat 	
<u>Roads</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Direction & Timing of timber movements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Phasing of timber traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Liaison with Local Authority Roads Dept •Identified routes noted in felling contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Peak flows of timber traffic

4.2 East Ayrshire Council Planning & Building Control

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Bryan's Heights wildlife area along western side of compartments 316 & 317 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Outside boundary – no impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Status of area to be determined 	

4.3 East Ayrshire Council Roads & Transportation

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What level of production can be expected over the 15 year felling period? •Direct access to A713 from west side. If it is currently not up to standard the full planning application may be required •Improve condition of bellmouth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Consider in preparation of felling plan •Impact prior to felling of compartments 316 & 317 •Impact on group management of communal road system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provide felling plan over next 10 years for Roads Dept •Site meeting and possible planning application •Contact other road users to agree work programme to tar surface up to main gate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Obtain approval by all road users

4.4 Scottish Natural Heritage – Ayrshire & Dumfries & Galloway Regions

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SNH is keen to encourage work on woodland edge and suggested use of broadleaves •Consider long distance views from Loch Doon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Impact on restock planting •Impact on landscape design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lower/upper planting limit on Windy Standard. Consider positioning of broadleaf groups to break up external boundaries •Assess view points on ground from west side of Loch Doon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View Point assessment shows forest not visible from Loch Doon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Opportunities for increased access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Impact on all operational work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Discuss with Councils to determine plans to develop access 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Is peat restoration planned within the forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Impact on restocking planting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Consider use of open ground in sites of deeper peat 	

4.5 Historic Scotland – Written Response

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Scheduled monument – need for consent to fell in area •Contact Regional Archaeologist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Impact on harvesting planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Application for Scheduled Monument Consent prior to felling around Kings Cairn 	

4.6 SEPA – Written Response

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Follow Water Guidelines •Target open ground in riparian zones •Block old ditches which flow directly into watercourses •Assess road drainage – silt traps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Impact on harvesting site preparation and restocking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Follow Forest and Water Guidelines during harvesting and site preparation works 	

4.7 Galloway Fisheries Trust – Written Response

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water of Deugh –contains brown trout population. Maximise width of riparian zones and care during harvesting to avoid silting of watercourses. • Plant broadleaves along banks at low densities to avoid excessive shading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on harvesting, planning and restock design. • Impact on restock design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvesting to comply with Forest & Water Guidelines and design of open ground in restocking phase. • Design broadleaf planting in matrix of open ground, especially alongside major watercourses. 	

4.8 RSPB – Written Response

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black grouse (BK) – the most important bird species in this area – beneficial work along external boundaries • Merlin are known to breed close to Campbells hill. • Maximise riparian habitat to benefit wildlife and other bird species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on new design. • Impact on felling and planning part of Campbells hill (cpts. 305, 307 & 308 felled in 2001). • Impact on felling and restock design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced stocking along external edges of Windy Standard and planting of broadleaves to benefit BK. • Consider timing of felling around Campbells hill. • Follow water guidelines and maximise open ground alongside watercourses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter working may have adverse impacts on other forest environments.

4.9 Carsphairn , Dalmellington and New Cumnock Community Councils

Issue Raised	Impact on Planning/management	Measures to be taken	Potential Conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Protection of water supplies •Opportunities for employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Impact during felling and restocking •Impact on restocking phase to achieve establishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Protect during harvesting and leave in open ground at time of restocking •Work with interested parties to obtain skills and qualifications to establish local contractor base 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Small Holdings policy – not considered by current owners •Long Tern Retentions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •No impact •Impact on felling areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Already planned within UKWAS process 	

5. SURVEYS

5.1 Ecological Survey

An ecological survey was undertaken in 2007. This identified three significant sites and recommended management prescriptions for their protection and possible expansion:

- 1 Major burnsidings running through the centre of the forest.
- 2 A wetland north of Campbells hill.
- 3 Hill top bog.

These features have already been identified in the UKWAS Management Plan. Monitoring and management has been established in sites 1 and 2. Work around site 3 may be considered in the future.

APPENDIX 1

Concept Map

Please see Map provided as a separate attachment

APPENDIX 2

Minutes of Scoping Meetings

and

Written Responses during Scoping Process

(Note: For the purposes of this example, only one set of meeting minutes is included)

BROWNHILLS FOREST

East Ayrshire Scoping Meeting

Minutes of Meeting Held at East Ayrshire Roads Department Offices, Luga

17th July, 2008

Present:

Graham Chalk, Tilhill Forestry Limited, Carlow House, Locharbriggs, Dumfries
J. Thorp, East Ayrshire Planning Department, East Ayrshire Council
Stuart Norval, East Ayrshire Roads Department, East Ayrshire Council
Ms. D. Holman, Scottish Natural Heritage

1. Graham Chalk gave history of Forest Plans and described issues relating to whole property and specific issues with the Ayrshire area.
2. One owner not on the Constraints and Opportunities map is Mossdale Farm Fish Hatchery which uses water by pipe from the forest.
3. John Thorp raised the issue of the 'Muckwater Disused Water Catchment Area'. The south west corner of the area is located close to pipe line to Mossdale Hatchery. Graham Chalk to write to SEPA to determine current status.
4. D Holman raised the issue of increasing access. D Holman and John Thorp provided Catriona Morrison as contact for development of access routes in East Ayrshire (tel: 01563 554737). Graham Chalk to make contact to determine if routes are planned close to Brownhills.
5. Graham Chalk confirmed that claimed a ROW exists along eastern end (in Dumfries & Galloway) and said that an area of hard standing was used for parking with walking.
6. D Holman enquired if peat restoration was planned within the forest. Graham Chalk confirmed that lowering of upper planting limit will allow native vegetation and soil horizons to develop over time. Also Larch LTR area in centre of forest may be left as open ground as the deep peat and heather is not viable for quality timber production.
7. Graham Chalk indicated that in the future, it may be possible to resurvey for ecological benefits.
8. D Holman approved the use of two viewpoints developed and enquired if other views could be established; perhaps from Loch Doon. Graham Chalk confirmed he would check. This was undertaken. The forest is not visible from this area. Other viewpoints to be considered.
9. John Thorpe confirmed presence of Bryan's Heights Wildlife Area along side the western end. Gill Small (tel: 01292 532000) is the Conservation Manager for Ayrshire. Graham Chalk to make contact. Graham Chalk felt that this area may be extended when area of forest on west of A713 is deforested.
10. Stuart Norval confirmed that if there is not an established access to remove timber from west side of A713 then full planning application may be required. Graham Chalk felt a site meeting would suit both parties to consider lines of sight and need for a tarmac apron.
11. Stuart Norval enquired as to the level of production each year. Graham Chalk confirmed an average of 70 hectares per year and 250 – 300 tonnes per hectare = 17,000 – 20,000 tonnes per year, all to come off main gate.

12. Stuart Norval provided copies of 'Ayrshire Agreed Routes Map for Timber Transport' and confirmed timber should be going up A713 and along A70 to Egger Mill.
13. Graham Chalk confirmed approximately 70% - 75% will travel north and the remainder going south.
14. D Holman enquired about local community woodland or involvement. No community woodland planned. Graham Chalk confirmed that Tilhill would be pleased to have local contractors, but no one from previous Scoping had come forward with the necessary certification for chainsaw or pesticide use. Currently squads come from Dalmellington and Dalbeattie in Dumfries & Galloway.
15. Stuart Norval confirmed the need for improvements to the surface at the forest entrance. Tarmac to a depth of 50mm with a good camber to allow surface water and sediment to drain laterally. Graham Chalk enquired if this was required for existing entrances. Stuart Norval confirmed that it was under the Road Traffic Act.
16. Stuart Norval enquired if surface erosion and water movement is a problem on clearfell sites. Graham Chalk confirmed that good site planning by keeping water below all working machinery and realignment of existing drains prior to restocking will minimise site damage and soil movement, especially in water supply and catchments.
17. Stuart Norval enquired about the next steps in process. Graham Chalk confirmed that after Community Scoping Meeting a draft Scoping Report will be sent to all participants within a two to three week period for responses. All written responses to the draft will be included in a final report submitted to Forestry Commission for their approval.
18. D Holman pleased to see consideration given to Black grouse management. Graham Chalk confirmed that native broadleaves will include Birch, Rowan, Alder, Willow and some Ash and a few Oak. 120 elm (seed from Dalbeattie area) have already been planted.
19. Meeting concluded at 12.05 pm.