

Relatively warm and sheltered site conditions with extensive surface water gleys and some brown earths, below 175m. Cooler, increasingly wet and exposed, with peaty gleys and peat above this. Steeper slopes often rocky. Retain a strong element of commercial conifer production but seek opportunities to use alternative species to Sitka spruce, especially broadleaves, at lower elevations.

Extensive natural regeneration of Sitka spruce and lodgepole pine on previously felled ground. More limited spread onto open ground. Accept regeneration on felled areas and seek opportunities to utilise this as a productive crop in the future. Monitor spread onto open ground and manage appropriately.

Black grouse occur close to upper margins of woodland. Accept development of diverse natural regeneration at upper edge and manage to encourage black grouse.

Burns are used for private water supply. Protect water supplies and ensure all relevant guidelines are followed during operations.

Only relatively small areas of original plantation remain and this is now showing signs of wind damage. Retain some stands of more mature trees in medium term but balance this against risk of continued windblow especially on slopes that are difficult to access.

Steep, often rocky, slopes present operational challenges. Upper parts of coupes potentially isolated. Establish appropriate infrastructure to access as much standing timber as possible.

Loch Letter provides open water and a range of other wetland habitats, including small areas of deep peat. Eastern burns feed into Loch Rusky. Maintain and enhance diversity of wetland habitats. Follow relevant guidelines during operations close to burns.

Woodlands have been dominated by Sitka spruce and are prominent in the landscape when seen from the A81; distant views from across the Forth Valley. Examine options to diversify the character of the woodlands and enhance visual appearance. Expand area of broadleaved species and make some use of alternative conifer species to Sitka spruce where site conditions allow.

Several protected bird species nest within or close to the plan area. Continue existing levels of protection and carry out operations only under strict guidelines. Devise management programmes sensitive to nesting requirements of birds and within existing legal frameworks.

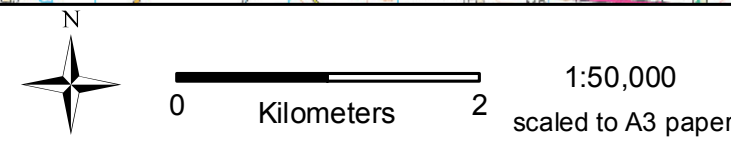
Limited areas of ancient woodland, on the fringes of the plantation. Seek opportunities to expand area of native woodland.

Reported high deer populations pose risk to establishment of "softer" species including productive broadleaves. Use appropriate measures, including fencing, to control deer numbers and protect young trees.

Southern coupes currently isolated from road system. Construct extension to existing road to access stands.

Letter

Analysis and Concept



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