



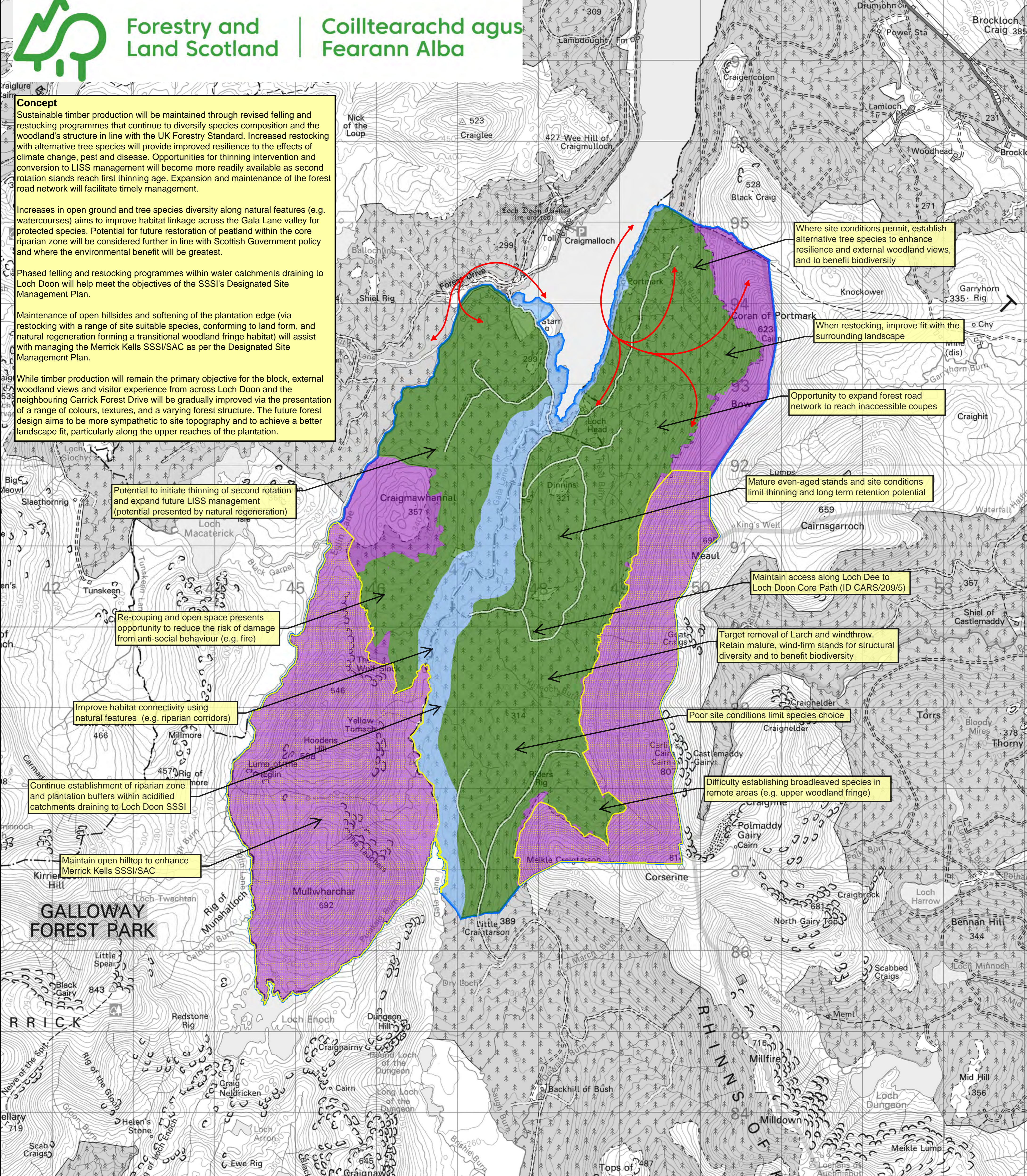
Concept
Sustainable timber production will be maintained through revised felling and restocking programmes that continue to diversify species composition and the woodland's structure in line with the UK Forestry Standard. Increased restocking with alternative tree species will provide improved resilience to the effects of climate change, pest and disease. Opportunities for thinning intervention and conversion to LISS management will become more readily available as second rotation stands reach first thinning age. Expansion and maintenance of the forest road network will facilitate timely management.

Increases in open ground and tree species diversity along natural features (e.g. watercourses) aims to improve habitat linkage across the Gala Lane valley for protected species. Potential for future restoration of peatland within the core riparian zone will be considered further in line with Scottish Government policy and where the environmental benefit will be greatest.

Phased felling and restocking programmes within water catchments draining to Loch Doon will help meet the objectives of the SSSI's Designated Site Management Plan.

Maintenance of open hillsides and softening of the plantation edge (via restocking with a range of site suitable species, conforming to land form, and natural regeneration forming a transitional woodland fringe habitat) will assist with managing the Merrick Kells SSSI/SAC as per the Designated Site Management Plan.

While timber production will remain the primary objective for the block, external woodland views and visitor experience from across Loch Doon and the neighbouring Carrick Forest Drive will be gradually improved via the presentation of a range of colours, textures, and a varying forest structure. The future forest design aims to be more sympathetic to site topography and to achieve a better landscape fit, particularly along the upper reaches of the plantation.



Potential to initiate thinning of second rotation and expand future LISS management (potential presented by natural regeneration)

Where site conditions permit, establish alternative tree species to enhance resilience and external woodland views, and to benefit biodiversity

When restocking, improve fit with the surrounding landscape

Opportunity to expand forest road network to reach inaccessible coupes

Mature even-aged stands and site conditions limit thinning and long term retention potential

Maintain access along Loch Dee to Loch Doon Core Path (ID CARS/209/5)

Re-couping and open space presents opportunity to reduce the risk of damage from anti-social behaviour (e.g. fire)

Target removal of Larch and windthrow. Retain mature, wind-firm stands for structural diversity and to benefit biodiversity

Improve habitat connectivity using natural features (e.g. riparian corridors)

Poor site conditions limit species choice

Continue establishment of riparian zone and plantation buffers within acidified catchments draining to Loch Doon SSSI

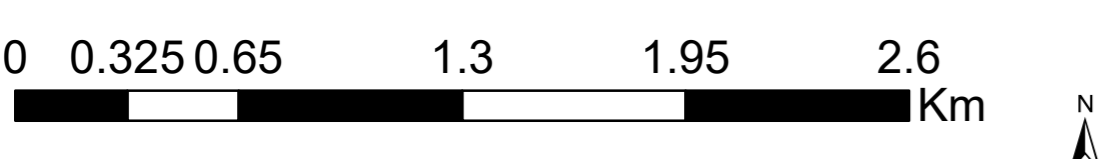
Difficulty establishing broadleaved species in remote areas (e.g. upper woodland fringe)

Maintain open hilltop to enhance Merrick Kells SSSI/SAC

Map 3: Concept
Gala Lane LMP 2024-2034

Scale @ A1: 1:22,000
Date: May 2024
Author: C. Finch

- Legend**
- Forest Roads
 - Merrick Kells SSSI / SAC
 - Core Timber Production
 - Core Riparian Zone
 - Open Hill Tops
 - Gala Lane Block
 - Areas with key external views of the woodland



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Scotland's National Forest Estate is responsibly managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard.

The mark of responsible forestry