West Loch Awe Land Management Plan Summary

West Loch Awe (WLA) LMP was approved on 8-4-2021 and runs for 10 years.

Vision

West Loch Awe Land Management Plan (LMP) area comprises a landscape scale unit of 10,494Ha (See Map 1). The plan area comprises of four forest blocks, Collaig, Inverinan, Loch Avich and Inverliever and is located to the west of Loch Awe, between the villages of Ford, Kilchrenan and Kilmelford. While Sitka Spruce is the dominant productive species due to site constraints, opportunities do exist to diversify both species and age structure. The forest has a comprehensive road network which has enabled restructuring to be carried out across most of the mature forest area. Due to the location it is a popular area for locals and tourists to visit, with facilities at Dorlin Point (Loch Avich), Dalavich, MacKenzies Grove and Kilmaha.

Much of the forest area comprises of predominantly similarly aged Sitka Spruce (52%), with ~ 22% of the area open ground. A number of areas have been felled and 2nd rotation crops now successfully establishing, though it may require another rotation to fully implement a more robust and resilient coupe and age structure. Species diversity is a priority as is improving the linkage and connectivity between riparian corridors and open ground across the forest where it contributes to bio-diversity and landscape. The LMP area also contributes to meeting the District’s timber production targets.

There are renewables schemes within the plan area, both commercial and private. There is the Loch Nant hydro scheme, Dalavich Improvement Group (DIG) hydro scheme on the River Avich and multiple private supplies. The West Loch Awe Timber Haul Route (WLATHR), a 35km timber haul route, runs through the plan area north to south to facilitate environmentally sustainable and economic extraction of timber as well as access to the Carraig Gheal windfarm.

The forest area is predominantly surrounded by agriculture with areas of private commercial forest adjoining also. Agricultural enterprises are mainly sheep farming. This offers some limited interaction between forestry and agriculture. Stock fencing and sheep trespass will remain important factors within the LMP area in relation to the success of restock establishment.

WLA is a key area for Forestry and Land Scotland’s (FLS) West Region in terms of timber production, but also in terms of habitat restoration, deer management and habitat management. It provides opportunities for renewable energy sources and as an area for local communities and visitors to enjoy.

The primary objectives for the plan area are:

* Sustainable productive forest
* Diverse species range, taking into account resilience from threats of future climate change and disease
* Improve public road resilience‐ C29 & C30
* Larger coupes where appropriate with less road spurs
* Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) restoration
* Peatland restoration
* Protect and enhance cultural assets
* Enhance water quality of rivers, protect/enhance water features, fisheries and private water supplies
* Protect and enhance key wildlife species & develop habitat networks
* Adopt Low Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS) where practical

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| --- | --- |
| **Total Plan Area** | 10,494 hectares (ha) |

#  **Summary of Land Management Plan Proposals**

| Species Group | Current - 2020 | Year 10 - 2029 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Area (ha) | % | Area (ha) | % |
| Sitka Spruce | 5433.9 | 52 | 4586.62 | 44 |
| Diverse conifer | 977.01 | 8 | 1149.65 | 11 |
| Mixed Broadleaves | 727.54 | 7 | 998.07 | 10 |
| Open | 2401.92 | 23 | 2587.17 | 28 |
|  |  |  |  |  |

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| --- | --- |
| **Planned Operations** | **2020– 2029 plan period** |
| Felling Thinning- SilviculturalThinning- Site managementRestocking Road construction Road maintenance | 2,513ha802.3ha2,082ha2,513ha7,590m40,000m |
| **Significant Environment / Conservation Features** |  |
| Designated sites (See Map 4)Natural Reserve (See Map 9) Priority habitats/species  | 5 Scheduled Monuments (SM) and Numerous Unscheduled Monuments (USM)7 NR areasPriority habitats & priority species |

**Critical Success Factors:**

* Timber production of 2049.48ha/ 1,190,424.00m3.
* 1665.49ha restocking.
* 222.38ha natural regeneration.
* Construct 7.59km new road.
* Ensure road access into the Eleraig section of Loch Avich by building a 3km road from the existing internal road network.
* Ensure all new/replacement water crossings be bottomless or arched culverts (or bridges) sized to accommodate the 1 in 200 year flood event.
* Improve the resilience of C29 along the river road corridor through removal of conifers.
* Improve the resilience of C30 by removing roadside conifers and dangerous broadleaves.
* Continue current levels of deer control. New deer fences in the north west area of Collaig and Eleraig area of Loch Avich .
* Diversify the current species structure where site conditions allow to improve future forest resilience in relation to climate change, pests and diseases.
* Control invasive species and monitor plan area for other invasive species.
* Restore 49.53ha deep peat areas identified as habitat restoration areas, highlighting other areas identified during operations.
* Seek to improve the water quality status of water bodies by ensuring full compliance with UKFS Forest & Water Guidelines and best industry practice.
* Restore priority PAWS through clearfell, removal of conifers off Low Impact Silvicultural System (LISS) areas and protecting remnants.
* Enhance and re‐open Dorlin Point, planting the grassed areas with BL and thinning the existing BL areas to open sightlines.

#  **Consultation and Further Information:**

Council area: Argyll & Bute Council

Community council: Southend Community Council

Consultation: Public consultation February 2019

For further information on the Plan, please contact:

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**Location Map**

