



Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Please complete this form to find out if you need consent from Scottish Forestry, under the **Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017**, to carry out your proposed forestry project. Please refer to Schedule 2 Selection Criteria for Screening Forestry Projects under [Applying for an opinion](#). If you are not sure about what information to include on this form please contact your [local Conservancy office](#).

Proposed Work							
Please put a cross in the box to indicate the type of work you are proposing to carry out. Give the area in hectares and where appropriate the percentage of conifers and broadleaves							
Proposed Work	select	Area in hectares	% Conifer	% Broad-leaves	Proposed work	select	Area in hectares
Afforestation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5.7		100	Forest roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Deforestation	<input type="checkbox"/>				Forest quarry	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Location of work		Brachmont, Durris, within Durris LMP 22. NO 8093 9455					

Description of Forestry Project and Location
<p>Provide details of the forestry project (size, design, use of natural resources such as soil, and the cumulative effect if relevant). Please attach map(s) showing the boundary of the proposed work and other known details.</p> <p>Please see Map 1: Brachmont Location and Map 2: Brachmont Establishment Plan for details of the establishment project. The plan is to establish an ex-agricultural site within our forest block as a native broadleaf woodland to contribute to biodiversity and carbon capture targets.</p> <p>Prescription: 100% Native Mixed Broadleaves Mixture to include Birch, Oak, Aspen, Rowan, Willow and Alder, using local provenances where possible and micro-sited based on conditions. The final percentage split of species will be decided after in-depth investigation of the site can be carried out once gorse and other vegetation is removed. Minimum density to be achieved across the site: 1600p/h</p> <p>Land capability: James Hutton's Land capability for agriculture map (50k) classes this area as Class 4.1 - Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops, primarily grassland with short arable breaks of forage crops and cereal.</p> <p>Three primary soils types present are: - 1z [Podzolic Brown Earth]; x Indurated; g Gleyed; c Cultivated - 3 [Typical Podzol]; g Gleyed; s Stony - 6 [Typical Peaty Surface-Water Gley]; (x) Moderately Indurated</p> <p>Ground preparation: Forest Research Information Note ODW 10.01 Forest Ground Preparation (https://cdn.forestresearch.gov.uk/2022/02/odw1001-2.pdf) will be used to help aid the specific ground prep choice applied across the site. Table 4 within the practice note</p>

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specifically will be used to inform decisions, with the “Best Practice” option the target if possible. The majority of the site is comprised of brown earth soils with some small areas of podzol and surface water gleys, therefore the ground preparation techniques will likely be a mixture of scarifying and shallow hinge or inverted mounding.

Deer protection: The entire site will be protected by a deer fence if budgets allow. Alternatively, tree tubes will be used to protect the most vulnerable species and deer management will be carried out by local wildlife rangers in the area to reduce deer densities present.

Constraints: There are several low value archaeological constraints (stone dykes and cairns) within the plantable area as shown in the attached establishment plan which will have the relevant buffers applied at site planning stage.

There have been badger sets recorded in the establishment area in the past although none have been noted as active in the last 10 years. A full survey of the area will be carried out prior to operations and a 30m buffer applied to any sett entrances as per guidance set out by NatureScot (<https://www.nature.scot/doc/standing-advice-planning-consultations-badgers>).

Provide details on the existing land use and the environmental sensitivity of the area that is likely to be affected by the forestry project.

The existing land use of the site is ex-agricultural fields which have most recently been used for grazing but are now grass covered with gorse and rushes present in damper areas.

There is a small watercourse present to the south of the restock area which will have the relevant buffer applied at operational stage to protect water quality.

Description of Likely Significant Effects

Provide details on any likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment (resulting from the project itself or the use of natural resources) and the extent of the information available to assist you with this assessment.

There will be significant positive effects on the environment as a result of this project, these primarily include increasing the biodiversity and carbon capture potential of the site by transforming it from a grassy field to a diverse native broadleaf woodland. By planting suitable species adjacent to the watercourse which flows adjacent to the site, water quality should also be protected.

Include details of any consultees or stakeholders that you have contacted in order to make this assessment. Please include any relevant correspondence you have received from them.

Please see attached consultation record for details of all consultees approached as part of the present Land Management Plan renewal.

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Mitigation of Likely Significant Effects

If you believe there are likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment, provide information on the opportunities you have taken to mitigate these effects.

There is a watercourse which flows adjacent to the site. This will be protected during establishment by applying guidance from the UKFS Forestry and Water guidelines and establishing suitable species within the riparian zone.
Table 6.7.2 within chapter 6 of the UK Forest Standard gives a recommendation of a minimum of 10m buffer along this watercourse as the channel is less than two meters wide so this is what will be applied.

Sensitive Areas

Please indicate if any of the proposed forestry project is within a sensitive area. Choose the sensitive area from the drop down below and give the area of the proposal within it.

Sensitive Area	Area
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	

Property Details

Property Name:	Durriss		
Business Reference Number:		Main Location Code:	
Grid Reference: (e.g. NH 234 567)	NO 7916 9292	Nearest town or locality:	Kirkton of Durriss
Local Authority:	Aberdeenshire Council		

Owner's Details

Title:	Mr	Forename:	Euan	
Surname:	Stewart			
Organisation:	FLS, East region.	Position:		
Primary Contact Number:	0300 067 6200	Alternative Contact Number:		
Email:	enquiries.east@forestryandland.gov.scot			
Address:	Portsoy Road, Huntly, Aberdeenshire.			
Postcode:	AB54 4SJ	Country:	Scotland	
Is this the correspondence address?	Yes			

Agent's Details

Title:		Forename:		
Surname:				
Organisation:		Position:		

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Primary Contact Number:		Alternative Contact Number:	
Email:			
Address:			
Postcode:		Country:	
Is this the correspondence address?	Select...		

Office Use Only	
GLS Ref number:	

Durriss LMP 2024

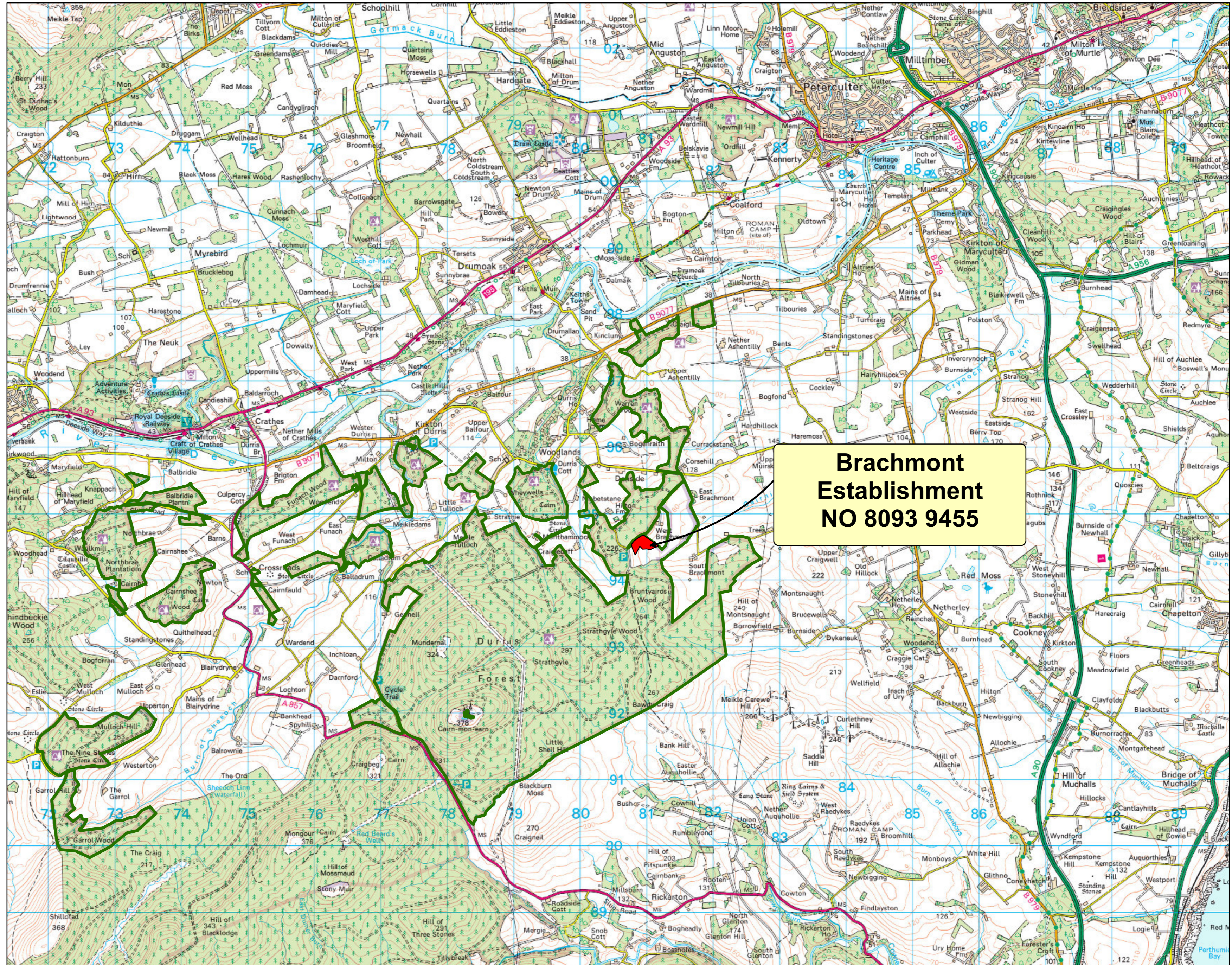
Brachmont Location

Scale @ A2: 1:40,000

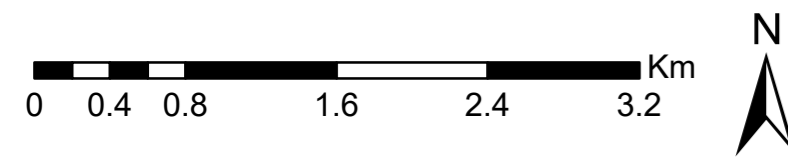
Date: April 2024

Legend

- Establishment Area
- Block Boundaries



**Brachmont
Establishment
NO 8093 9455**



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Durriss LMP 2024

Brachmont Establishment

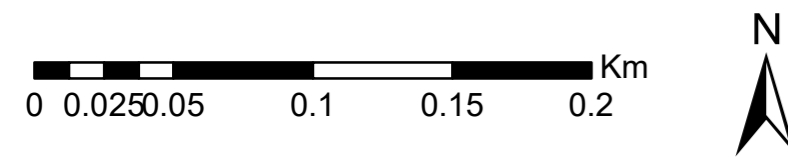
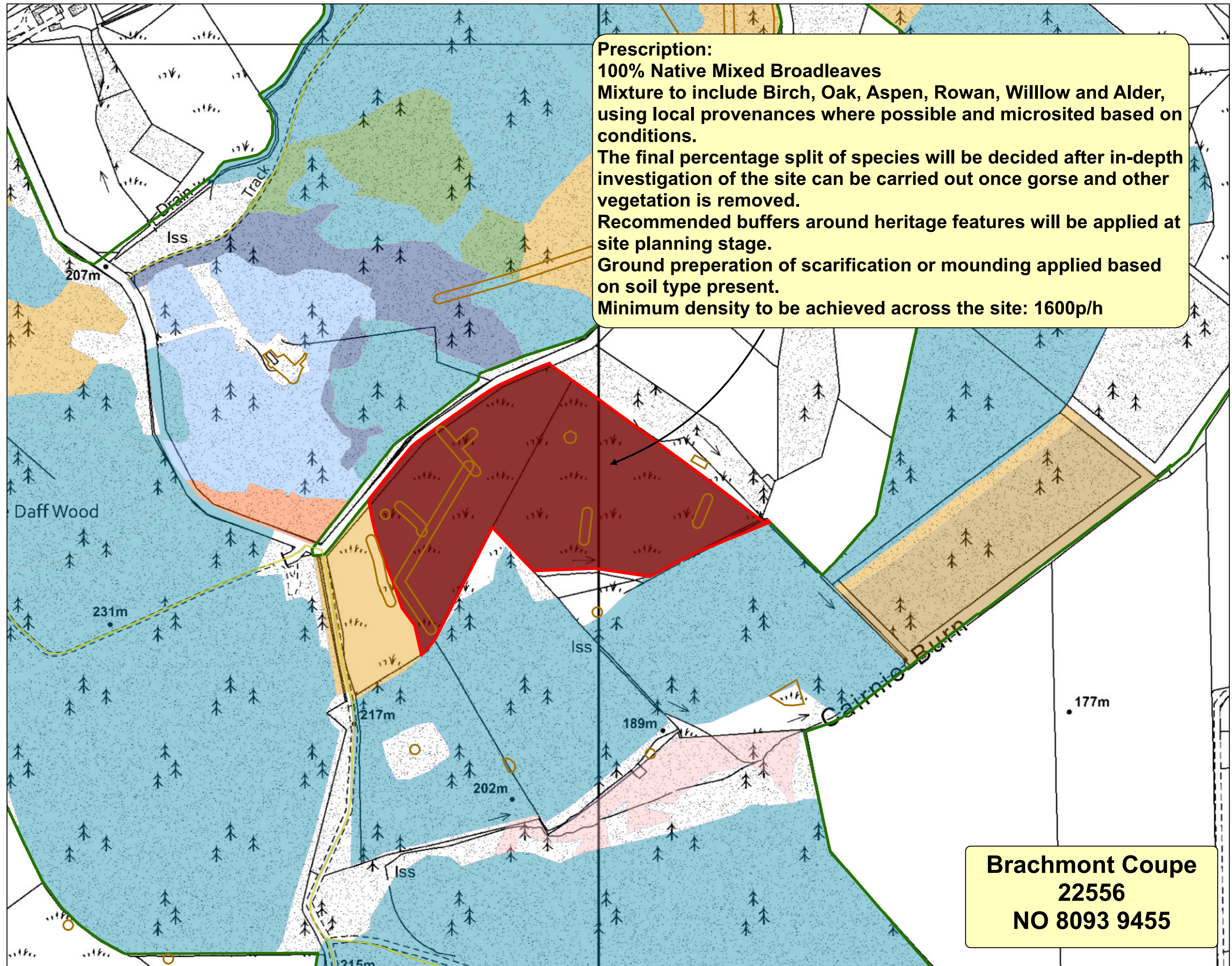
Scale @ A2: 1:2,500

Date: April 2024

Legend

- Block Boundaries
- Forest Roads
- Stone Dykes and Cairns
- New Establishment Area**
- Native Mixed Broadleaves
- Current Species (largest component)**
- Beech
- Birch
- Other/Mixed Broadleaves
- Other/Mixed Conifers
- Larch
- Norway Spruce
- Scots Pine
- Sitka Spruce
- No Species

Prescription:
100% Native Mixed Broadleaves
 Mixture to include Birch, Oak, Aspen, Rowan, Willow and Alder, using local provenances where possible and micro-sited based on conditions.
 The final percentage split of species will be decided after in-depth investigation of the site can be carried out once gorse and other vegetation is removed.
 Recommended buffers around heritage features will be applied at site planning stage.
 Ground preparation of scarification or mounding applied based on soil type present.
 Minimum density to be achieved across the site: 1600p/h



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Brachmont Coupe
22556
NO 8093 9455

Appendix A: Land Management Plan Consultation Record

Statutory Consultee	Date contacted	Date response received	Issue raised	Forest District Response
NatureScot	July 2023, January 2024	August 2023	<p>Our advice is that this proposal is likely to have a significant effect on freshwater pearl mussels and salmon. Consequently, FLS, as competent authority, is required to carry out an appropriate assessment in view of the site's conservation objectives for its qualifying interests. To help you do this we advise that based on the information given in the LMP, our conclusion is that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.</p> <p>The appraisal we carried out considered the following factors:</p> <p>Forest operations such as felling have the potential to generate silt which may be washed into the SAC. Both freshwater pearl mussels and salmon are susceptible to the effects of siltation; fine material can smother mussel beds and salmon redds, and freshwater pearl mussels and juvenile salmon/salmon eggs may be killed by sediment deposition.</p> <p>However, adhering to the 'Forests and Water' elements of the UK Forestry Standard will protect water quality and ensure the proposal does not have an adverse effect on any of the interests of the SAC. We therefore advise that, in accordance with the forest and water guidelines, at an appropriate stage, an operational plan is prepared, which includes the site specific measures necessary to adequately reduce the risk of sediment entering watercourses during forest operations.</p> <p>In relation to otter, we advise that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on this species as a feature of the SAC. However, checks for signs and holts should be carried out prior to work commencing and standard Scottish Forestry guidance in relation to otter should be followed.</p>	All points covered by following UKFS Forests and Water guidelines and carrying out standard environmental surveys.
Aberdeenshire Council	July 2023, January 2024	August 2023, March 2024	<p>Initial Scoping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land within Durriss block identified as reserved site as preferred location for regional mountain bike center - LEPO and PAWS areas identified, would support restoration - Suggested lee.watson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk as contact for flood works - Highlighted areas in Funach wood of high environmental value - Noted area of species rich pasture adjacent to forestry in center of Durriss block - Noted Sitka spruce encroachment in open habitat areas which would benefit from removal - Noted record of some invasive species present within woods and adjacent - Noted proposed core path with strong public support linking Kirkton of Durriss with entrance of Woodlands Wood <p>Final Consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area found covering much of Mundernal Hill and Cairn-mon-earn. No major operations planned within zone aside from windblow removal. council to be contacted as part of planning process if more operations are added. - LEPO and PAWS areas already identified and are already being considered as part of design. - Contact added to consultee list. - Noted that areas highlighted had been identified for retention or conversion from conifer to broadleaf - Pasture highlighted is adjacent to potential peat restoration zone pending further investigation.

Statutory Consultee	Date contacted	Date response received	Issue raised	Forest District Response
			"Many thanks for the opportunity to comment on this Plan. I am pleased to see that our earlier comments have largely been incorporated into the plan and have no further comments to make."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - much of Area identified already included in non-native clearance program, other Area flagged to Env team. - flagged invasive species with environment team to check they are in-hand. - Proposed core path to be discussed more with relevant teams and community council as part of planning process.
Regional Archaeologist	July 2023, February 2024	August 2023, March 2024	<p>Initial Scoping</p> <p>"There are numerous historic environment features recorded on the Historic Environment Record within the LMP area which, if not already, should be incorporated into the plan. I note that the constraints table does not refer to undesignated historic environment features, although they are referenced in Secondary Objectives. Probably already in hand - Historic Environment Scotland will need to be consulted regarding Scheduled Monuments within/abutting the LMP areas."</p> <p>Final Consultation</p> <p>"Noted that the Secondary objectives includes 'Protect all scheduled monuments and other archaeological features from damage and improve setting where possible' – but does explicitly state the need to identify and manage non-designated historic environment features (just SMs), which should include check/incorporation of features recorded on the Historic Environment Record."</p>	No resolution required, all unscheduled monuments will be picked up at work planning stage and scheduled monument permissions requested prior to any relevant operations.
Local Authority Roads	July 2023, February 2024	No response	N/A	N/A
SEPA	July 2023, February 2024	August 2023, March 2024	<p>Initial Scoping</p> <p>No issue - Standard guidance attached with response.</p> <p>Final Consultation</p> <p>No issue - Standard guidance attached with response.</p>	No response needed
Scottish Forestry	July 2023, February 2024	No response	N/A	N/A
RSPB	July 2023, February 2024	No response	N/A	N/A
Historic Environment Scotland	July 2023, February 2024	August 2023, March 2024	<p>Initial Scoping</p> <p>Noted 5 Scheduled Ancient Monuments with plan area and added comment: "From the information provided, the Land Management Plan does not involve any specific works to scheduled monuments at this stage and therefore our consent is not required. However, it will be important when planning future works to avoid any damage to the monuments</p>	<p>Final Consultation</p> <p>- Additional open space added to long term restock map, this will not be achieved within this plan period but is noted for future reference.</p>

Statutory Consultee	Date contacted	Date response received	Issue raised	Forest District Response
			<p>from vehicles, fences, or by the planting of felling of trees in the scheduled area. Further information on protecting scheduled monuments from accidental damage is provided in the Addendum.</p> <p>We would also draw your attention to the UK Forestry Standard which outlines best practice for good management of the historic environment to ensure that it is preserved for future generations and fully integrated into the forest planning process. This includes having the appropriate procedures in place to ensure that they protected from inadvertent damage during forestry works, active management of the physical condition of monuments and the protection or enhancement of their settings.</p> <p>I hope this is of assistance to you. Please contact us if you have any questions about this response. The officer managing this case is Luke Dale who can be contacted by phone on (07500) 585978 or by email at luke.dale@hes.scot "</p> <p>Final Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request for some additional future open space around Nine-Stanes scheduled monument and Clune Wood cairn. - Request that the LMP makes provision for a regular monitoring and control of other regenerating trees program - Advised that Scheduled Monument consent may be required prior to operations adjacent to Cairnshee wood cairn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section added in text to add details of program of monitoring and removal of vegetation around scheduled monuments - Works should not encroach into scheduled area but advised that this will be looked at in detail during the work planning process to see if SMC is needed.
Scottish Water	July 2023, February 2024	No response	N/A	N/A
SSEN	July 2023, February 2024	March 2024	<p>Final Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standard letter received detailing safe working distances from powerlines and FISA guides for reference 	No response required
Neighbouring landowner	July 2023, February 2024	August 2023	<p>Initial Scoping</p> <p>No issue - Thanked for involvement and noted that he was happy that boundary issues were being looked at, asked to be kept in contact with in future</p>	Thanked for reply and advised I would include the estate in plans going forward.
Neighbouring landowner	July 2023, February 2024	August 2023	<p>Initial Scoping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlighted high public use of Funach wood, including from those with mobility problems. - Highlighted that they have a private water supply which may originate within Funach woods 	<p>Email sent requesting further details on private water supply and request to add details to consultee list. 29/08/23</p> <p>Water supply located, to be investigated on ground and watercourse highlighted as supply. 29/08/23</p> <p>Visited property to investigate water supply and discuss plans for Funach wood. 13/12/23</p> <p>Water supply point added to local layers.</p>

Statutory Consultee	Date contacted	Date response received	Issue raised	Forest District Response
Neighbouring Landowner	July 2023, February 2024	September 2023	Initial Scoping - Would like to see storm arwen damage cleared in Northbrae and Balbridie - Would like to see area on North boundary felled and more suitable riparian planting established	- Advised that Northbrae roads are being cleared imminently, with Balbridie to follow once the plan is approved - Advised that it is likely the area along the northern boundary associated with the watercourse will be cleared early in the next plan period but that design was still underway
Neighbouring Landowner	February 2024	February 2024	Final Consultation Advised would like to see Balbridie and Northbrae windblow coupes cleared ASAP Confirmed mains water supply	- Advised of timescales for felling of Northbrae and surrounding Arwen coupes.
Neighbouring Landowner	February 2024	February 2024	Final Consultation Advised of private water supply location and asked for further details of felling in vicinity of her property.	- Advised no clearfelling planned nearby for at least 15 years and that I would record location of her water supply for future reference.
Neighbouring Landowner	February 2024	February 2024	Final Consultation - Provided map showing location of private water supply point and pipeline - Expressed concern over increased HGV traffic related to quarry expansion	- Private water supply details added to internal layers to be highlighted at work planning stage - Advised that quarry expansion shouldn't result in significant increase of HGV traffic in area
Neighbouring Landowner	February 2024	February 2024	Final Consultation - Advised that they are on mains water supply and highlighted comms cable running along boundary	No resolution required, comms cable already in records

Table A. 1: Statutory consultee responses

Non-Statutory Consultee	Date contacted	Date response received	Issue raised	Forest District Response
Forest Research	July 2023	August 2023	Initial Scoping "Thanks for the heads up. Our only interest is the PZ billet site which will not impact any of your future plans."	No response needed
CONFOR	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Saving Wildcats	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Crathes, Drumoak & Durris Community Council	July 2023, February 2024	August 2023	Initial Scoping "We have been working in the background for a number of months / years on creating a plan / community to improve the path networks and connect the communities within our area and as such would be absolutely delighted to arrange a meeting with you to discuss the plan further and see how the two could potentially link together and provide input to your plan where possible."	Meeting held 11th September 2023. Discussed provision of core path and what FLS's responsibilities would be along with several smaller issues/ideas. Not much to be added to LMP permissions wise but agreed to keep in contact with how plan develops.
Stonehaven and District Community Council	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Gravitate North-East	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
The Mearns Leader and Kincardineshire Observer	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Durris Schools (forest school areas)	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Grampian Forest Rally	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Midsummer Cycle Sportive	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Independent ecological survey	July 2023, February 2024	August 2023, February 2024	Initial Scoping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requested a reduction or elimination of pesticide use within the block - Recommended occasional dead or small trees left as songposts/perches - Would like to see increased diversity in habitats and tree species, including open woodland and standing water - Identified Stan Burn area as potential for re-wetting as well increasing coverage of bogs and pools throughout woodland Final Consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the peat restoration areas are very welcome, with the implied creation of standing water which would come with that; I would urge that the areas of restoration and standing water be as generous as possible and not hemmed in by trees; and that more ponds of any size, even very small and filled with sphagnum, be created elsewhere within the forest as opportunity exists, surrounded by small open areas; public access to the wet areas should not be too easy, to reduce disturbance to wildlife and the inadvertent contamination of the water by neonics used as anti-flea/tick medication on dogs - the use of Scots Pine and native broadleaf trees is also welcome, but I noticed that in only a few of areas did you explicitly indicate a % of open areas; open woodlands, especially as the trees mature, are particularly important habitat for a variety of wildlife and this would bring species into the area which do not like closed woods 	Replied advising that I would take his comments on board during the design process, mentioned our policy of retaining deadwood, both standing and on the ground, and advised that we have already identified 40-50ha of potential peat restoration within the block.

Non-Statutory Consultee	Date contacted	Date response received	Issue raised	Forest District Response
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the retention of old, standing, large trees of various species should be encouraged, as nest sites for raptors and other species, and feeding for woodpeckers and other wildlife; fallen dead wood should also be retained for its biodiversity/carbon value - the retention of song posts in areas being clear felled will similarly benefit biodiversity - explicitly stating your non-use of pesticides and herbicides would do FLS no harm 	
Brook Forestry	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Scottish Woodlands	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A
Fountains Forestry	July 2023	No response	N/A	N/A

Table A.2: Non-Statutory Consultee Responses