Analysis:-
The main deep peat areas are associated with the open heath land on the higher ground. Elsewhere peat areas are not priority sites, as they are fragmented and more suitable to planting woodland.

Concept:-
On non priority deep peat sites restocking will be undertaken to comply with the FCS Peatland guidance, UK Forestry Standard and the Scottish Governments policy on control of woodland removal.

Analysis:-
There are planted ancient woodland sites within the forest.

Concept:-
The planted ancient woodland sites will be enhanced/restored as appropriate to site.

Analysis:-The forest has a number of areas suitable for LISS. Other areas are unsuitable due to steep terrain, limited access, unthinned stands and limited natural regeneration.

Concept:-
Identify areas within the forest most suitable to low impact silviculture systems.

Analysis:-
There are different categories of dophistroma infected crop within the forest.

Concept:-
Prioritise diseased crop for removal in order to maximise timber value and reduce inoculum levels.

Analysis:-
The forest is a major contributor to both the Bervie and Cowie water catchments.

Concept:-
Smaller coupes along the Cowie and Bervie watercourses will have a positive impact on water catchment and flooding.

Analysis:-
Black Grouse can be found on adjacent land to the north west of the block.

Concept:-
Opportunities should be taken for edge prescriptions for Black Grouse.

Analysis:-
The Cowie, Finglennie and Bervie are the main riparian veins of the forest, however the biodiversity value is low.

Concept:-
Restructuring and increased species diversity will improve the environmental value of the Finglennie, Cowie and Bervie.

Analysis:-
There are a number of long term contracts for timber that need to be met.

Concept:-
The production of timber from the forest will need to be optimised in order to meet demands. New roads will be constructed to facilitate harvesting programme.

Analysis:-
The forest has two scheduled ancient monuments.

Concept:-
Maintain the scheduled monument areas as open as per agreed management plans.

Analysis:-
There is a designed landscape lying in proximity to Drumtochty glen, and in association with this there are stands of big trees on the forest estate.

Concept:-
The big tree country in Drumtochty glen will be maintained where they do not infringe on other objectives.

Analysis:-
The forest is currently below the 5% level for broadleaves. Elsewhere there is acceptable species diversity which could be buillt upon.

Concept:-
Where there is opportunity utilise the ecological site classification to increase species diversity and specifically to meet the 5% broadleaf target.

Analysis:-
South Drumtochty is more visible and sensitive within the landscape. Other areas such as Fetteresso and Glenfarqhar are still seen from the roadside as forest edges. Powerlines/pipelines are located within the design plan but there is limited scope for improvement without loss of productive land.

Concept:-
For the forest to tie in with the landscape character its shape, scale and diversity should relate to dominant characteristics of the landscape.

Analysis:-
The forest is important to forming a restriction to grey squirrels moving north.

Concept:-
The forest will favour species more suited towards red squirrels. However, it will still be possible to plant large seeded trees where there are no linkages created.

Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba
Forestry Commission Scotland

Moray & Aberdeenshire Forest District

Mearns Forest Design Plan

Map 4: Analysis and Concept

Scale: 1:25,000

Date: August 2014

Legend

- Midhill wind farm area
- Scheduled monuments
- Water courses
- Block
- Powerlines
- Forest Roads
- Gas pipeline
- Planted ancient woodland sites
- Designed landscape
- Diseased crop
- Peat
- Existing low impact silvicultural systems
- Better soils
- Substation

0 1,850 3,700 7,400 11,100 14,800 Metres

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