



Appendix II: Analysis of Previous Plan

The previous Forest Design Plan covering the LMP area ran for the following periods: 2006 - 2016 extended to 31 March 2021

The 2006 – 2016 Leanachan Forest Design Plan was prepared in a short time scale and is fairly broadbrush in its approach. In addition the text was little more than an expanded brief although a full consultation was carried out. It is, therefore, difficult to undertake an objective analysis of the previous plan.

Aims and Achievements of the previous plan

Some general observations

The felling has been completed on most of the identified coupes with some additional coupes felled as amendments due to windblow. The west facing edges of felled coupes in particular have suffered creeping windblow damage in Leanachan. Chapman Wood in particular seems to have suffered from significant wind blow as a result of a storm in late 2012. The topography and pockets of wet soils may have contributed to the damage but it is not entirely clear why this particular area has suffered more than the rest of Leanachan.

Restocking has been undertaken in accordance with the FDP with the exception of lodgepole pine for a few years when it was thought that all LP was vulnerable to Dothostroma Needle Blight. There may be some longer term legacies of planting Sitka Spruce pure on site that would have benefitted from a mixture. There are a number of young crops looking a bit yellow which may be due to nutrient deficiency or poor drainage. Larch has also not been available due to *Phytophthora ramorum* for the latter part of the plan period.

In a number of the restocking sites of the plan period large buffers appear to have been left unpanned for no clear objective other than creating more organic shapes. This is not considered now to be a good use of productive ground and a more targeted approach to open space where it will provide a wider range of benefits will be adopted.

The previous plan did not contain much detail on the designated sites and their management relying on separate management plans. It is proposed to incorporate the management of these sites and therefore their approval into a single plan – the LMP.

Similarly the detail around the recreation provision was light. The increasing importance of Leanachan Forest and Nevis Range in the tourism economy of Lochaber means that more detailed planning of the management of the forest in the western part of the forest, in particular, is needed in this plan revision.

How the previous plan relates to today's objectives

The previous plan objectives were only stated in broad terms and, therefore, need to be fully revised and updated. A number of aspects have changed since the plan was first developed including

- i. The increase in recreation use of the forest and its significance in the local economy.
- ii. The forest has also been designated a red squirrel stronghold which may have implications for felling and restocking plans.
- iii. Windblow has affecting a number of the coupes which has and will continue to affect the rate of felling of the first rotation crop.
- iv. Tree disease has reduced the productive conifer species options for the next rotation crops i.e. larch is no longer available.
- v. A revised policy on the restocking of peat areas has been established and the restocking proposals for parts of Leanachan will need to be reviewed in the light of the policy changes.
- vi. Similarly a revision of the PAWS policy changes the priorities given in the previous plan for woodland restoration.