



Forest Design Plan GLEN NEVIS 2015-2025 SITE ANALYSIS

Cowhill. Important Area for informal recreation with links to the edge of Fort William. Several footpath links into the communities with a long circular path running around Cowhill and linking to the telecommunications mast affording views over the town and surrounding area.

Cowhill Allotments Scheme developed in partnership with the community to provide allotments on FC land.

Cowhill is an important site for Chequered Skipper. Habitat is being managed through cattle grazing.

Cowhill is highly visible from many parts of Fort William including the main approaches from the north. The view often includes an intrusive ribbon of young conifers poking up in the skyline on the eastern shoulder of the hill.

Braveheart carpark. Principal access point to FC landholding. Highly sensitive visitor zone.

Young stand of spruce adjacent to service industry businesses currently un-thinned but at thinnable age.

Ben Nevis. Major viewpoint across onto the Glen Nevis Forest. The path to the Ben provides extensive opportunities for constant viewing of the forest.

Long steep ridge contains stands of un-thinned mature conifers. These have been broken up by successive fellings over recent years. There have been occurrences of landslips and instability.

Landscape character is steep and rugged on middle and upper slopes. Land ownership at the northern end of the glen includes the middle and lower slopes but not the ridge.

Tollie is the last large area of even aged conifers - this is now serviced by a forest road and is in the process of being re-structured by phased felling.

There are several areas of heritage value which speak of the long history of human interaction with the glen. Notably the Tollie township and the Dun Deardail hill fort.

Scale at which the landscape is perceived is highly variable. Along the road on the bottom of the glen the scale is relatively fine scale. When viewed from higher elevations the scale increases significantly.

Area felled by previous owner and restored with native broadleaves. This has included some new planting of native woodland extending into the corrie.

There are considerable areas of remnant upland birch woodland scattered among the plantations, particularly on the upper slopes and in less accessible area.

Some of the lower slopes and sheltered corries of Blar a Chaorrainn offer opportunities for the expansion of productive conifers and new native woodland.

The ownership boundary highlights disparity of landscape types and past objectives of management in the glen. This often includes harsh boundaries between plantation conifers and open hill as at Achriabhach.

Felled plantation not in FC ownership. Not currently restocked.

Planting of conifers and broadleaves has taken place on felled sites over recent years although natural regeneration of both is prolific within the glen.

West Highland Way runs through the FC ownership for a significant length. This now passes through the new acquisition in Blar a Chaorrainn before descending into the woodland area.

Much of the harvesting in Glen Nevis is on steep slopes and is consequently expensive to implement.

The whole of the glen is a major tourist destination. The forest provides a backdrop for a range of visitor experiences from mountaineering to low level walking coach tourism and local visits.

Forest operations over recent years have focussed on breaking up the age structure of even-aged conifer plantations despite this the FC land holding is still dominated by commercial conifers.

The whole of the forest is an important area for red squirrels. These are strongly associated with Scots pine and larch.

Large recent acquisition of Blar a Chaorrainn

