Forestry and Land Scotland
Coilltearachd agus Fearann Alba

The Yair

Land Management Plan 2024-2034
South Region – V1.0

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We manage Scotland's national forests and land to the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard – the standard endorsed in the UK by the international Forest Stewardship Council® and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification. We are independently audited.

Our land management plans bring together key information, enable us to evaluate options and plan responsibly for the future. We welcome comments on these plans at any time.

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1.0 Objectives and Summary

1.1 Plan overview and objectives

Plan name	The Yair
Forest blocks included	Yair
Size of plan area (ha)	817.4 ha
Location	See Location map (**Map 1**)

Long Term Vision
The Yair has a unique offering within the Tweed Valley Forest Park providing a rich biodiversity trail, a diverse forested structure both in terms of age class and species and also exhibiting forest management incorporating both the traditional clearfell/restock management systems alongside areas of continuous cover forestry. The management objectives of this plan will provide The Yair with the steps in maintaining and increasing a dynamic and resilient forested structure providing medium to large scale economic return but also providing an idyllic and interesting location for recreational access. Diversification of tree species incorporate both single species sub-compartment components and intimate mixtures to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The dependence on any given species will be no more than 30%.
Management Objectives
1. Produce a land management plan that ensures future management coupes provide a dynamic and resilient habitat adaptable to climate change whilst also contributing to the sustainable flow of saw log timber for the Region. 2. Design felling coupes in phased priority particularly focusing on Storm Arwen impacted windblown areas and areas of larch susceptible to *Phytophthora ramorum.* Coupe design to be sympathetic and at a scale appropriate to the surrounding landscape. 3. Building in and maintaining environmental resilience with the use of low impact management approaches alongside strategically allocated broadleaves and open areas to expand and buffer existing environmentally sensitive areas. Long term retentions to be allocated to windfirm and larch free stands.

Critical Success Factors
1. The timely removal of heavily affected windblown areas should be priority. 2. A focus on pre-emptively removing large and difficult larch areas before they succumb to *Phytophthora ramorum* in line with current FLS larch strategy. 3. Retention of mature non-larch areas to be considered where possible to maintain an age class structure suitable for a range of biodiversity. 4. Continued thinning of existing thinned areas and capturing the first thinning window of second rotation crops. 5. Timely ordering of alternative species so that nurseries can successfully provide desired quantities. 6. Effective deer management to protect palatable species will require functions to communicate on restock timings and work together to implement required deer management infrastructure .

1.2 Summary of planned operations

Table 1

Summary of Operations over the Plan Period	
Clear felling (gross)	234.3 ha
Thinning (potential area)	517.8 ha
Restocking (gross)	407 ha
Afforestation	0 ha
Deforestation	0 ha
Forest roads	7430 m
Forestry quarries	2.39 ha

The forest is managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard – the standard endorsed in the UK by the *Forest Stewardship Council and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification*. Forestry and Land Scotland is independently audited to ensure that we are delivering sustainable forest management.

2.0 Analysis and Concept

The planning process was informed by collecting information about the woodland, which is presented in **Appendix I** and on the Key Features map (**Map 2)**. During the development of this plan we have consulted with the local community and other key stakeholders, and a Consultation Record is presented in **Appendix III**.
Below lists the objectives for the site and how the key features present opportunity or constraint. The Analysis of these form the concept for this Land Management Plan.

Objective: **Produce a land management plan that ensures future management coupes provide a dynamic and resilient habitat adaptable to climate change whilst also contributing to the sustainable flow of saw log timber for the Region.**

- **Opportunities:**
- Thinning is viable within much of the LMP area in terms of exposure and soil conditions. This applies to both existing (including transitional continuous cover forestry areas) and coupes coming up to their first thin window.
- A range of diverse productive tree species are viable within the Yair.
- Link the timing of deer control effort to the timing of browsing-sensitive restocks within the wider LMP area.
- **Constraints:**
- Pest and diseases of various tree species are an ongoing threat to the Yair .
- Deer populations are on the increase coupled with relatively minimal forestry activities in the Yair in the last few years make stalking increasingly challenging.
- *Phytophthora ramorum* based statutory plant health notices (SPHN) are forcing the forest structure to change and subsequently reducing the mature crop component.
- **Concept:**
- Prioritise thinning to areas where most benefit would be gained for example the existing LIMA area below Craig Hill and any first thin coupes coming up within the plan period
- Selection of site suited productive tree species and reduction of reliance on one species
- Deer control requires coupe shapes to be favourable to stalking in terms of size and access considerations along with preplanning at the workplan stage to implement appropriate infrastructure.
- Assess the site for suitable future long term retentions.

Objective: **Design felling coupes in phased priority particularly focusing on Storm Arwen impacted windblown areas and areas of larch susceptible to *Phytophthora ramorum.* Coupe design to be sympathetic and at a scale appropriate to the surrounding landscape.**

- **Opportunities:**
- Coupes with storm damage are largely coupes that are also at their maximum mean annual increment (MMAI) making the remainder of the coupe economically viable.
- A good variety of species gives the Yair an appealing diverse aesthetic.
- Linked to the above mature larch areas are largely at their MMAI or very close to.
- Use of surrounding coupes to limit the visual impact of larger visually dominant coupes.
- Roading infrastructure and in-crop pre existing operational access is present.
- **Constraints:**
- Steep ground is present within some of the windblown areas.
- Unofficial bike trails are also present within windblown areas and areas containing mature larch nearby current SPHN sites.
- Windblown areas have a timescale to be removed due to degrading timber.
- Large clearfells in visible areas have an impact on landscape views.
- **Concept:**
- Prioritise windblown and high larch content coupes within phase 1 of the land management plan
- Utilise existing in crop infrastructure and keep up with maintenance of forest roads to enable ongoing access.
- Along with existing features to reduce visual impact utilising forest landscaping tools such as working alongside natural lines of force and organic scallops appropriate to the scale of the coupe to soften the impact.
- Existing mixed mature windfirm coupes without or with minimal components of larch are available as potential long term retention (LTR) this will assist with being in keeping with landscape designations for example the designed garden to the north east.

Objective: **Building in and maintaining environmental resilience with the use of low impact management approaches alongside strategically allocated broadleaves and open areas to expand and buffer existing environmentally sensitive areas. Long term retentions to be allocated to windfirm and larch free stands.**

- **Opportunities:**
- Currently transitioning to a group selection LIMA on the lower slopes of Craig Hill. Natural regeneration is sporadic with higher sapling counts within previous clear fell pockets.
- Natural regeneration of broadleaves evident along sections of the SSSI at Glenkinnon.
- Existing mature windfirm coupes without or with minimal components of larch are available as potential long term retention (LTR).
- Existing diversity of productive species gives a good baseline for future restock aspirations.
- SPHN's adjacent to priority habitats give opportunity to restock earlier with more favourable species more appropriate to the neighbouring habitat.
- **Constraints:**
- Some natural regeneration contains non desirable species especially when in close proximity to the SSSI at Glenkinnon – namely western hemlock.
- The options for long term retention will be reduced given the amount of larch within the block.
- Removing natural regeneration on desired open land disturbs the soil bed and leaves the potential risk of further seed colonisation.
- Establishing broadleaves in remote areas are harder to protect from deer.
- **Concept:**
- Focus future long term retentions on areas where no larch is present but some flexibility will be required and some areas may be chosen where larch is present but with easy access.
- Alongside thinning and other mechanised interventions utilise machinery on site to deliver on other objectives such as removing non natives within environmentally sensitive areas.
- Strategically allocate broadleaves where protection is practical and achievable.
- Where appropriate removing natural regeneration as a biomass crop before it gets a chance to produce seed will reduce the likelihood of a second generation.

Different management options for achieving the plan's objectives were considered against the constraints and opportunities identified during scoping and consultation. The preferred approach is summarised on the Concept map (**Map 3**).

3.0 Management Proposals - regulatory requirements

This land management plan was produced in accordance with a range of government and industry standards and guidance as well as recent research outputs, recognised at the time of its production. A full list of the current standards and guidance which guide the preparation and delivery of FLS Land Management Plans can be found using the link HERE.

3.1 Designations

The plan area forms part of, includes, or is covered by the following designations and significant features.

Table 2

Designations and significant features		
Feature type	Present	Note
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Yes	Circa. 7 ha of the Glenkinnon Burn SSSI to the east of the site is within the Yair boundary. Circa. 1.5 ha of The River Tweed SSSI is within the north of the block boundary. Williamhope SSSI neighbours the block to the east.
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	No	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	No	
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Yes	Circa. 1.5 ha of The River Tweed SAC is within the north of the block boundary.
World Heritage Site (WHS)	No	

Designations and significant features		
Feature type	Present	Note
Scheduled Monument (SM)	Yes	SM2103 Craig Hill scooped Settlement (Canmore ID 54459) NT 439 332 UKFS buffer encroaches onto FLS land from the Oakbank fort monument (Canmore ID 54457)
National Scenic Area (NSA)	No	
National Park (NP)	No	
Deep peat soil (>50 cm thickness)	No	
Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	No	
Biosphere reserve	No	
Local Landscape Area	Yes	Special Landscape Area 3 – Tweed, Ettrick and Yarrow confluences Fairnilee garden and designed landscape present opposite block
Ancient woodland	Yes	Glenkinnon Lindinny
Acid sensitive catchment	No	
Drinking Water Protected Area (Surface)	Yes	

The Key Features map (Map 2) shows the location of all designated areas and significant features. Any deep peats are indicated on the Soils map (Map 9).

3.2 Clear felling

Sites proposed for clear felling in the plan period are identified as Phase 1 and Phase 2 coupes on the Management map (**Map 4**).

Table 3

Clearfell Summary by Phase and Coupe Number			
Phase	Coupe Number	Fell Year	Gross Area (ha)
1	72051	23/24	6.19
1	72002	23/24	1.05
1 [SPHN]	72040	23/24	38.3
1 [SPHN]	72026	23/24	13.5
1 [SPHN]	72034	23/24	13.97
1	72050	24/25	0.94
1	72006	24/25	56.7
1	72030	25/26	40.3
2	72046	29/30	13.9
2	72004	31/32	3.53
2	72017	32/33	16.4
2	72047	32/33	11.4
2	72011	32/33	18.2

Total	234.38

Table 4

Clearfell by Species												
		Net Area (ha) by Main Species >20% (or MC, MB)										
Coupe Number	Fell Year	DF	EL	HL	JL	LP	NS	SP	SS	MC	MB	**Coupe Total**
72051	23/24						3.4		0.9	0.6	0.1	5.0
72002	23/24							0.3	0.7			1.0
72040	23/24			3.2	7.3			2.3	5.5		0.8	19.1
72026	23/24				0.2		3.9		5.8			9.9
72034	23/24				6.8		0.3		5.4			12.5
72050	24/25				0.8		0.1					0.9
72006	24/25	7.2		1.7	5.9	1.7			38.5			55.0
72030	25/26	0.4			19.7		0.9	2.7	14.7			38.4
72046	29/30	3.0			8.0			0.1	0.5			11.6
72004	31/32				2.5		0.0	0.4	0.3			3.3
72017	32/33								13.5			13.5
72047	32/33	3.3	1.4	1.6		0.2		2.0	0.9			9.4
72011	32/33	4.5	0.2		10.7			1.3	0.6			17.3
Plan Area Total		**18.4**	**1.6**	**6.5**	**61.9**	**1.9**	**8.6**	**9.1**	**87.3**	**0.6**	**0.9**	**196.9**

NB Coupe totals: Table 3 shows gross coupe area / Table 4 shows net area of species

Table 5

Scale of Proposed Felling Areas										
Total Woodland Area			817.4 ha							
Felling	Phase 1	%	Phase 2	%	Phase 3	%	Phase 4	%	Long Term Retention	%
Net Area (ha)	170.9	20.9	63.7	7.8	27.7	3.3	22.6	2.8	53.51	6.5

3.3 Thinning

Potential sites for thinning in the plan period are identified on the Thinning map (**Map 5**).

This covers an area of 517.8 ha

Thinning will normally be carried out at, or below, the level of marginal thinning intensity (i.e. removing no more than 70% of the maximum MAI, or YC, per year). Higher intensities (no more than 140 % of maximum MAI, or YC, per year) may be applied where thinning has been delayed, larger tree sizes are being sought or as part of a LISS prescription. In all cases work plans will define the detailed thinning prescription before work is carried out and operations will be monitored by checking pre and post thinning basal areas for the key crop components.

3.4 Other tree felling in exceptional circumstances

FLS will normally seek to map and identify all planned tree felling in advance through the LMP process.

However, there are some circumstances requiring small scale tree felling where this may not be possible and where it may be impractical to apply for a separate felling permission due to the risks or impacts of delaying the felling.

Felling permission is therefore sought for the LMP approval period to cover the following circumstances:

Individual trees, rows of trees or small groups of trees that are impacting on important infrastructure (as defined below*), either because they are now encroaching on or have been destabilised or made unsafe by wind, physical damage, or impeded drainage.

**Infrastructure includes forest roads, footpaths, access (vehicle, cycle, horse walking) routes, buildings, utilities and services, and drains.*

The maximum volume of felling in exceptional circumstances over the plan area covered by this approval is 75 cubic metres per calendar year.

A record of the volume felled in this way will be maintained and will be considered during the five year Land Management Plan review.

[N.B. Trees may be felled without permission if they: are of less than 10 cm diameter at breast height (1.3 m); pose immediate danger to persons or property; are completely dead; or are part of Authorised Planning Permission works or wayleave agreements].

3.5 Restocking

Proposed restocking is shown on the Future Habitats and Species map (Map 6).

Table 6

Restocking							
Phase †	Coupe Number	Gross Area (ha)	Proposed Restock Year	Species	Method *	Minimum stocking Density (s/ha)	Note
†	72007	7.78	24/25	MB	R	1600	
				MB|MC	R	1600	MB with an allowance for MC regen
†	72032	81.28	24/25	DF|NS|SS	R/NR/E	2500	DF|NS|SS blocky groups 50|30|20
				MB	R/NR/E	1600	MB|OP 50|50
†	72044	16.26	24/25	DF|NS|SS	R/NR/E	2500	DF|NS|SS blocky groups 50|30|20
				MB	R/NR/E	1600	MB|OP 50|50
†	72033	7.79	24/25	SP	R	2500	SP – Pure crop
†	72618	8.8	24/25	NMB	R	1600	NMB - intimate mix to suit site conditions

Restocking							
Phase †	Coupe Number	Gross Area (ha)	Proposed Restock Year	Species	Method *	Minimum stocking Density (s/ha)	Note
1	72051	6.19	27/28	MB	R	1600	MB - intimate mix to suit site conditions
				DF|NS|SS	R/NR	2500	DF|NS|SS blocky groups 50|30|20
				SP	R	2500	Continued Forest Research provenance trial
				NMB	R	1600	NMB -Low growing native shrubs – Restocked 24/25
1	72006	61.3	27/28	SS|MC	R/NR	2500	SS|MC – Intimate mix MC allocated where site conditions are best suited 70|30

Restocking							
Phase †	Coupe Number	Gross Area (ha)	Proposed Restock Year	Species	Method *	Minimum stocking Density (s/ha)	Note
1	72005	31.72	27/28	SS|MC	R/MC	2500	Restocked 72006.
1	72002	1.05	27/28	MB|OP	R	1600	MB|OP 50|50
1	72040	38.3	25/26	SP|BI	R	2500	SP|BI Intimate mix 70|30
				SS	R	2500	SS – Pure crop
1 (Crop retained during SPHN work if possible)	72026	13.5	25/26	NS	R	2500	NS – Pure crop
				SS	R	2500	SS – Pure crop
				MB|OP	R	1600	MB|OP 50|50
2	72050	0.9	28/29	DF	R	2500	DF – Pure crop
†	72023	14.3	28/29	NS	R	2500	Restocked alongside 72050
2	72034	13.97	28/29	SP	R	2500	SP – Pure crop

Restocking							
Phase †	Coupe Number	Gross Area (ha)	Proposed Restock Year	Species	Method *	Minimum stocking Density (s/ha)	Note
				DF	R	2500	DF – Pure crop
2	72030	40.3	28/29	SP	R	2500	SP – Pure crop
2	72046	13.98	33/34	SS	R	2500	SS – Pure crop
3	72004	3.53	34/35	SP	R	2500	SP – Pure crop
3	72017	16.47	36/37	NMB	R	1600	NMB - intimate mix to suit site conditions
3	72047	11.4	36/37	NF	R	2500	NF – Pure crop
				MB	R	1600	
3	72011	18.23	36/37	NF	R	2500	NF – Pure crop

Total	407.05 ha

† recently felled awaiting restock (F) / Phase 1 (1) / Phase 2 (2)
* replant (R) / natural regeneration (NR) / plant alternative area (ALT) / enrichment planting (E) / no restocking (None)

If the Restock or natural regeneration should fail to reach 1600 per hectare (Native Broadleaves) or 2500 sph (productive Conifers) the site will be beaten-up to the required

planting density. This will be assessed at year 3 and year 5 after planting with beat up by at least year 5.

3.6 Species diversity and age structure

The following tables show how the proposed management of the forest will help to maintain or establish a diverse species composition and age-class structure, as recommended in the UK Forestry Standard. The current woodland composition is shown on Map 8.

Stands adjoining felled areas will be retained until the restocking of the first coupe has reached a minimum height of 2m. Where this is not possible (e.g. due to windblow risk), the planned approach to achieving height separation between adjacent coupes is outlined in section 4.1 – Clear felling.

Table 7

Plan area by species						
Species	Current Area (ha)	%	Year 10 Area (ha)	%	Year 20 Area (ha)	%
Sitka spruce	290.9	35.6%	261.4	32.0%	241.6	29.6%
Other conifers	318.5	39.0%	296.5	36.3%	323.6	39.6%
Native broadleaves	23.8	2.9%	27.2	3.3%	30.4	3.7%
Other broadleaves	54.4	6.7%	58.7	7.2%	66.1	8.1%
Fallow	29.8	3.6%	71.9	8.8%	27.4	3.4%
Open ground	97.9	12.0%	99.6	12.2%	126.2	15.4%
Misc (quarries)	2.1	0.3%	2.1	0.3%	2.1	0.3%
Total	**817.4**	**100**	**817.4**	**100**	**817.4**	**100**

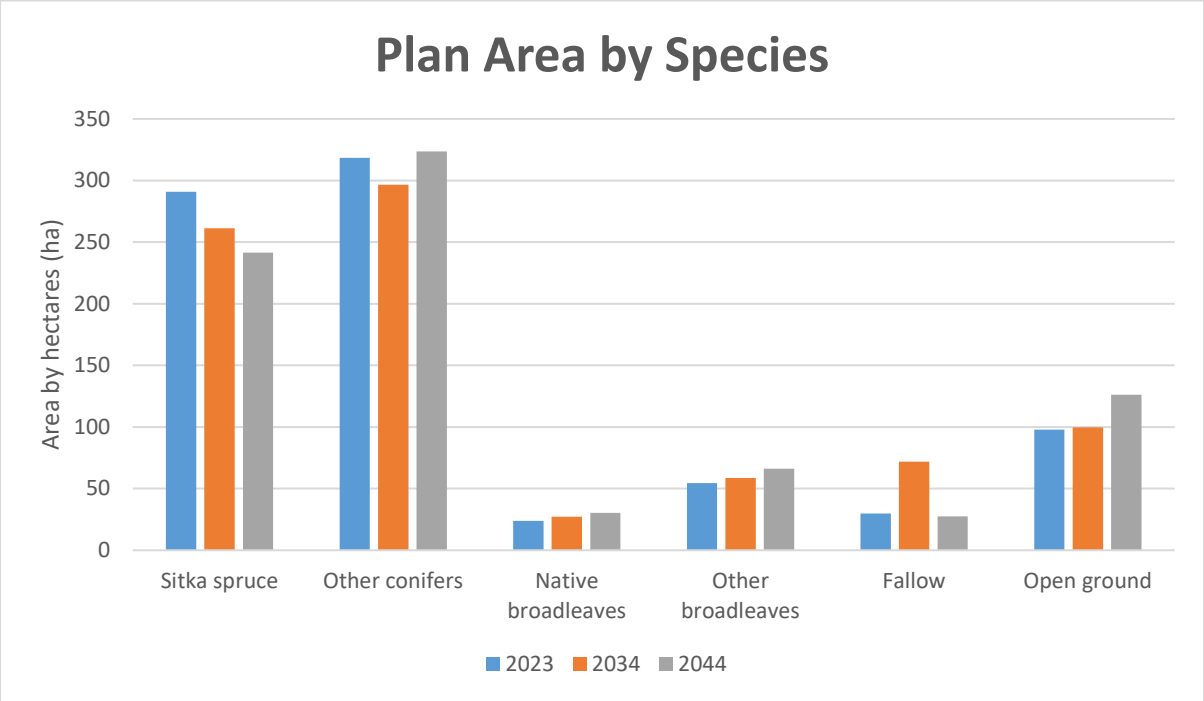
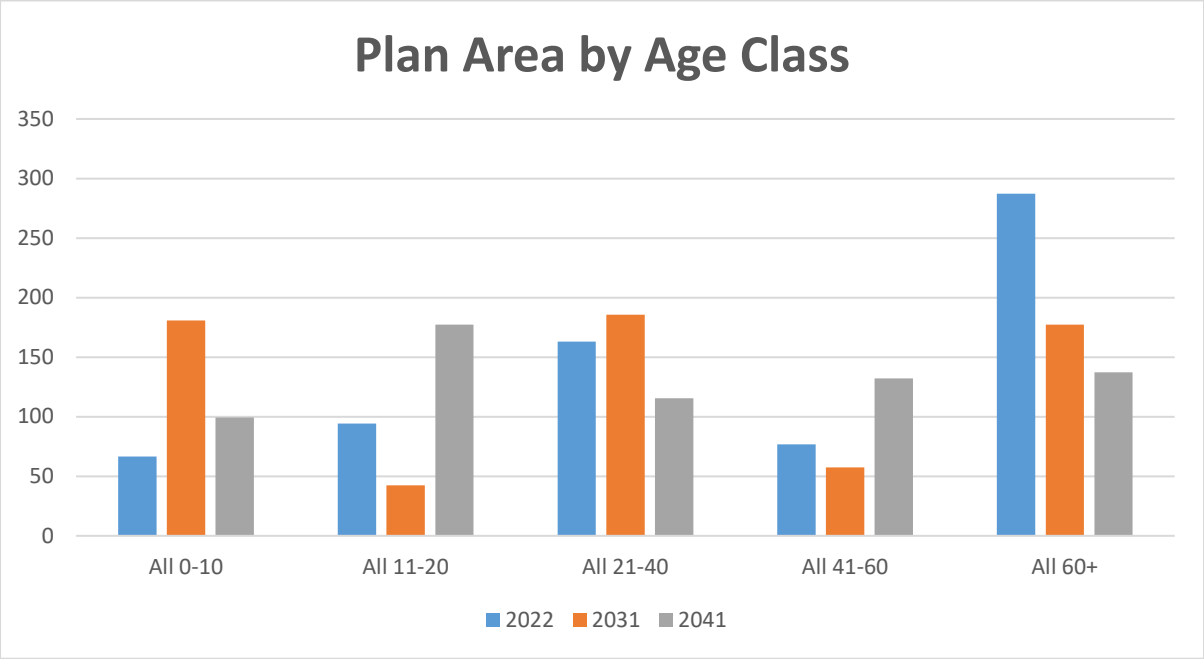


Figure 1,Plan area by species

Table 8

Plan area by Age						
Age Class (years)	Current Area (ha)	%	Year 10 Area (ha)	%	Year 20 Area (ha)	%
0 – 10	66.5	8.1%	180.8	22.1%	99.4	12.2%
11 – 20	94.3	11.5%	42.5	5.2%	177.4	21.7%
21 – 40	163.1	20.0%	185.7	22.7%	115.4	14.1%
41 – 60	76.7	9.4%	57.4	7.0%	132.2	16.2%
60+	287.2	35.1%	177.3	21.7%	137.2	16.8%
Open | Fallow | Other	129.6	15.9%	173.7	21.3%	155.8	19.1%
Total	817.4	100	817.4	100	817.4	100



3.7 Road Operations and Quarries

Planned new roads, road realignments, road upgrades, new quarrying, and timber haulage routes are shown on the Road Operations and Timber Haulage map (**Map 7**).

Table 9

Forest Road Upgrades, Realignments, New Roads and New Quarrying				
Phase	Name / Number	Length (m)	Year	Operation
1	T151/B	1540	2024	Upgrade
1	T153 – Flasses to Old quarry	2310	2024	Upgrade
1	T156	720	2024	Upgrade + new turning point
1	T154	450	2028	Upgrade + new turning point
2	T152	1310	2031	Upgrade + new turning point
1	T153 – Old quarry to New quarry	1100	2024	Upgrade-Rebuild

3.8 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Any operations requiring an EIA determination are shown in the table below. If required, the screening opinion request form is presented in Appendix II.

Table 10

EIA projects in the plan area		
Type of project	Yes / No	Note
Afforestation	No	
Deforestation	No	
Forest roads	Yes	Upgrades and rebuild
Forestry quarries	Yes	Expansion to facilitate road upgrades and maintenance

3.9 Tolerance table

Working tolerances agreed with Scottish Forestry are shown in Appendix IV.

4.0 Management Proposals – guidance and context

4.1 Silviculture

4.1.1 Clear felling

Coupes for clearfelling during the plan period (refer to **Map 4**):

72051 23/24

Clearfelling is proposed to remove a 1.7 ha area of windblow running through this area which has left potentially vulnerable forest-roadside trees. An area of mature standing conifer mixture will also be felled within this coupe so as not to landlock it for future operations.

A small area outwith this coupe within the old Christmas tree field is also being targeted for

Clearfelling. Felling both these areas will allow more appropriate restock of broadleaves around the widely used public car park and informal walks alongside alleviating continued shading out of neighbours nearby.
A small <1ha area of the restock will also give opportunity to expand the Forest Research Scots pine provenance trial.

72002 23/24
A small 1 ha windblown coupe to be clearfelled alongside 72051.

72040 23/24
This coupe is covered for clear felling by a Statutory Plant Health Notice (STH22_0295_0892_1026) for larch infected with Phytophthora ramorum alongside a felling license (FPA-10048) to remove associated non-larch species however is included here for completeness.

72026 23/24
As above for coupe 72040 however where possible non-larch species are to be retained. See section 4.1.2.

72034 23/24
This coupe is covered for clear felling by a Statutory Plant Health Notice (STH22_0039) for larch infected with Phytophthora ramorum alongside a felling license (FPA-10900) to remove associated non-larch species however is included here for completeness.

72050 24/25
A small area (<1 ha) of primarily JL to be clear felled alongside the two nearby SPHN's.

72006 24/25
The Craig Hill coupe is proposed to be clearfelled as a whole hill cap to be in keeping with the surrounding landscape and land use. Various viewpoints have been assessed to ensure scale and coupe boundaries are appropriate (see appendix VI) The sub compartment components are primarily made up of SS however a minor element of HL, JL, LP and DF are also present. There is a large component of windblow from Storm Arwen that is highly visible in the wider landscape along with some smaller elements from historical wind events. The coupes MMAI is within 2024.

72030 25/26

The Sunderland Hill and Cribs Hill coupe have a large component of mature larch species throughout and is at its MMAI felling age. Given the proximity to existing SPHN's it is likely this coupe would become infected with P.ramourum and therefore is a target phase 1 coupe. The boundary has been extended south westwards to assist with better landscape interlocking especially viewable from the Blakehope viewpoint and fleetingly along the A707.

72046 29/30
Phase 2 mature larch felling coupe to assist with reducing larch component within the block.

72004 31/32
Phase 2 pre-emptive mature larch felling coupe (MMAI 2036).

72017 32/33
This is an area within the last plan aspiring to be open space however SS natural regeneration has colonized from the previous and surrounding stands. It is therefore proposed to remove this before the existing crop gets a chance to produce seed and start the cycle again. Likely this will be a bio mass crop.

72047 32/33
Phase 2 pre-emptive mature larch felling coupe (MMAI 2036) alongside other species such as LP, DF and SP.

72011 32/33
Phase 2 mature larch felling coupe in mixture with SS and DF to assist with reducing larch component within the block, retained slightly past its MMAI (2031).

To achieve the UK Forestry Standard of separation between adjacent crops, adjoining coupes should not be felled before the restocking of the first area has reached and average height of at least two metres. We expect this to be achieved in 5 years following planting. Any unforeseen reduction in separation during the period of the plan will be formally agreed with Scottish Forestry as an amendment. Felling will be undertaken once trees in adjacent restocked coupes have reached 2 m height.

4.1.2 Thinning

Refer to **Map 5**.

In total this LMP is aspiring to have 517.8 ha approved for thinning operations. The priority coupes for thinning are those within LIMA areas specifically the group selection within **72032** and all coupes that would be due a first thin within the timescale of the first 2 phases.

The thinning within **72032** should be focused on opening canopy conditions to allow increased light levels with the aim of improving natural regeneration establishment. Along with this larch elements should be a focus (given their plant health susceptibility) along with non-native invasive species such as WH; where they are within or neighbouring to the Glenkinnon SSSI as per the SSSI management plan (agreed alongside NatureScot 2021-2026).

The **72032** thinning area also captures the old Christmas tree field, along with the felling coupe (**72051**) in the top north western corner thinning would be desirable within the remaining 'ex-Christmas trees'. This however, does not include the Forest Research SP trial area – should Forest Research require this to be thinned during the LMP lifetime a separate amendment will be applied for.

The first thin priority coupes likely to have a rack and light matrix thin within the first two phases of this LMP (identified with species and planting year) are as follows:
72012 DF and NS (P1998)
72024 NS and BE (P1997)
72026 SS and NS (P2004). Alongside the SPHN works all larch will be removed and effectively thinned
72028 (P2002) SS
72010 SS and HL (P2002)
72125 SS (P2004)
72013 SS (P2007)

The remaining coupes not identified above are medium or low priority thinning.

4.1.3 Low Impact Management Approach (LIMA)

Refer to **Map 4.**

The main LIMA area with the Yair block is the western and northern slopes of Craig Hill within coupes **72032/44**. This area has been transitioning towards a Continuous Cover Forestry system since the early 2010's with thinnings and later small group selection thinnings. A recent Continuous Cover Transformation survey has taken place (IN45) with a

particular assessment focus on success of natural regeneration. This has provided us with invaluable information regarding where enrichment and full restocking should be allocated within the area whilst also highlighting where natural regeneration is not successfully establishing - primarily this is within areas with a denser canopy cover. Therefore this LMP seeks to focus the attention of this LIMA area on thinning interventions to increase light levels and improve natural regeneration conditions. Group selection clear fells will be focused primarily on areas where larch is a pure species and where appropriate INNS close by the Glenkinnon SSSI.

Other LIMA within the plan area are focused around group selections around larch removal and where possible on-going thinnings this includes coupes **72009** and the Lindinny/Raelees Wood (ASNW/PAWS -LEPO) area within coupe **72031** – this is discussed further in section 4.2.3.

4.1.4 Long term retention (LTR) / Minimum intervention (MI) / Natural reserve (NR)

Refer to **Map 4.**

Given the Yair has had 3 years of consecutive SPHN's one of the objectives of the plan is to remove areas of larch likely to become infected with *Phytophthora ramorum.* This has resulted in selecting some coupes that in the previous plan were long term retentions this has slightly reduced the amount of future LTR within the LMP area (7% to 6.5%). Additional substitute areas are windfirm and primarily without larch as a component (if larch is present it would be operationally viable to remove without compromising the remaining LTR) and therefore embeds resilience to the plan area in terms of age class structure.

Additional Minimum Intervention areas have been allocated primarily to riparian zones such as Shorthope Burn and tributaries of the Yair Burn.

The Natural Reserve within coupe **72618** has been reviewed and is to remain as such. An area previously felled will be included within the phase 1 restocking program, restocked with native broadleaves.

4.1.5 Tree species choice / Restocking

Refer to Map 6.

Species for restocking throughout the lifetime of this plan period are a mixture of alternative conifer, broadleaf and spruce. All the species are highlighted as either suitable or very suitable for the Yair as per the Ecological Site Classification Decision Support Tool, as well as appropriate for the LMP's management objectives. Within 20 years this plan aims to have no single species dependency higher than 30% furthermore, the Shannon Index score (with values typically ranging from 0 to 5, usually ranging from 1.5 to 3.5) for diversity will increase to 2.1 from a current score of 1.9.

All broadleaf planting will be native to the area and should complement and/or enrich existing naturally growing scrub and woodland to give the most ecological value.

The Restocking Strategy for Scotland's National Forest Estate explains that we will minimise chemical usage in restocking (insecticides and herbicides) by considering options at the site scale, and using tactics such as delayed planting to achieve this.

4.1.6 Natural regeneration

Natural regeneration of the desired species in LIMA areas will be recruited as the next rotation, and it will be important that thinning/LIMA interventions avoid damage to young trees.

There should be a preference for natural regeneration of broadleaf areas (to maintain provenance and improve the chances of establishment) but where this is unlikely or has not been successful then these areas should be planted/beaten up to the required stocking density and site requirements.

It is expected that some of the riparian zones, designed open ground and broadleaf areas will fill in with natural regeneration of both conifers and broadleaves. This will be managed in such a way as to ensure that, where practicable, it does not significantly impose a negative impact upon the objectives of the plan.

There are some productive sites where natural regeneration is occurring. These will be monitored and recorded in the FLS sub-compartment database. Where this is the desired species, we will endeavour to use it to establish the required stocking density. If stocking density is too low it will be beaten up by year 5. If the natural regeneration is too dense it may be necessary to clear and restock. Where the natural regeneration is not the desired

species it will be considered against the plan objectives and tolerance table and either accepted (with a plan amendment if necessary) or removed.

4.1.7 New planting

There is no new planting within the plan area

4.1.8 Protection

Deer

There is a significant challenge to establishing broadleaves and soft conifers due to the impacts of deer. One of the critical success factors of the plan is to ensure young trees are protected from browsing damage.

Yair forms a part of the wider Tweed Deer Management Unit (DMU) with roe deer being the frequently recorded species. However, the population of sika on the south side of the River Tweed is slowly spreading east from Tweedsmuir and it is more than likely that sika will be observed/culled in the Yair within the next five years.

The DMU protection objectives are to support;

- The achievement of a dynamic and resilient forested structure providing economic return but also providing an ideal and interesting location for informal recreational access.

- The diversification of tree species and establish intimate mixtures to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

The Yair forest block cull is set to be circa. 70 roe per annum for the next 3 – 5 yrs.

These targets have been set in line with population models, should deer impact monitoring suggest rises in impact levels the cull target may be revised to reduce population levels below these estimates. Culling is on-going with culls set based on population modelling cull data evidence.

Venison

- FLS subscribe to the Scottish Quality Wild Venison (SQWV) scheme. This sets the standards for our larders and actions of our staff and contractors to ensure we provide a safe food item to market.
- All venison is quality assured and sold to Highland Game or Tweed Valley Venison where it is further processed.
- All animal by-products are sold to Highland Game or Tweed Valley Venison along with the venison.

Tree Pests and Diseases

Phytophthora ramorum has been identified in the Yair and three Statutory Plant Health Notices have recently been issued. The first was issued in 2021 and has since been felled and the remaining two were issued in 2022 and 2023 and are currently (at time of writing) still in effect.
The Yair is in the more vulnerable Priority Action Zone. Throughout Scotland FLS are aiming to pre-emptively remove at least 20% of mature larch within this zone by April 2027, as per the FLS larch strategy. Within the lifetime of this plan we are aiming to remove approximately circa. 55% of larch from the Yair through primarily clearfell operations.

Dendroctinus micans (great spruce bark beetle) has also been reported and confirmed within the west of the block. The native biological control *Rhizophagus grandis* has been released close to the Yair block and throughout the Tweed Valley in recent years.

Hymenoscyphus fraxineus (ash die back) is present throughout the Yair block. Annual condition surveys since 2020 have shown a gradual decline in the condition of ash with the majority now in the stage 3 and 4 categories of decline (50%-26% cover & 25%-0% canopy cover respectively).

Monitoring of *P.ramorum*, *D.micans* and *H.fraxineus* will continue throughout the life of this plan as well as continued vigilance around noting any other suspect tree pests and disease.

Fire

FLS continues to work closely with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to prevent and tackle wildfires that threaten Scotland's National Forests and Land. FLS support SFRS in their lead role for fire prevention and suppression through creating annual fire plans,

maintaining a duty rota, and providing additional logistical support. FLS's primary objective is always to protect people's health, safety and wellbeing.

4.1.9 Road operations, Timber haulage and other infrastructure

Map 7 shows the existing forest road network, planned new roads, main egress points, agreed Timber Transport Routes and proposed quarry expansion.

See table 9 in section 3.7 for a list of all upgrades and associated infrastructure. Construction will be in line with the guidance laid out within the FLS Civil Engineering handbook 2019 and will be constructed to meet the specification detailed in the 'Timber Transport Forum - design and use of structural pavement of unsealed roads 2014' and meeting the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard. Forest and Water guidelines will be strictly adhered to during construction, mitigation tools such as diffuse pollution culverts, ditch relief culverts, silt settlement sumps and silt fencing will be used where necessary.

To maintain existing forest roads and provide material for road upgrades a quarry extension will be required; an expansion approximately equivalent to 2.39 ha. It is proposed this expansion would be carried out in phase 1.

4.2 Biodiversity

4.2.1 Designated sites

See **Appendix I section 3.1** for detail of the SSSI conditions.

Glenkinnon Burn Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
The main management prescriptions for this area include the control of non-native species within the SSSI itself and removal of invasive species seeding in to the area with a particular focus on western hemlock. Removal of non-natives will be on-going but focused alongside adjacent thinning operations within coupe **72032**. Halo thinning around suppressed mature broadleaves is proposed along with acceptance of broadleaf natural regeneration and, where appropriate supplementary planting throughout the boundary of the SSSI. It is important that this is a gradual process maintained through thinning interventions and not clear fells to maintain suitable habitat for the associated lichen assemblage.

River Tweed Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation(SAC)
With the small 1.6 ha of land that has the River Tweed SSSI and SAC running through it, it is proposed to maintain this area as minimum intervention. Currently the condition is favourable with a mixed broadleaf and open habitat. The SAC is also throughout the Glenkinnon Burn with the management prescription mirrored as per the SSSI detail above.

4.2.2 Native woodland

Native woodland is scattered throughout the block however the bulk of the native woodland falls under Ancient semi-natural designations and therefore is detailed below.

4.2.3 Ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW)/ Plantation on Ancient Woodland sites (PAWs)

See **Appendix I section 3.1** for detail of the ancient woodland conditions.

The main management prescriptions for the Glenkinnon ASNW are reflected within the prescriptions laid out for the SSSI and SAC above (**section 4.2.1**)

Lindinny Wood (ASNW) and Raeless Wood (Long existing of Plantation Origin) within coupe **72031** is to be managed within a similar strategy to the LIMA coupe within **72032**. Whereby it is proposed to focus interventions on thinning and again this would focus on both the non native conifer species and specifically the larch components. In some areas where the ash is dyeing back due to *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (ash die back) 'natural' openings are being created to allow light levels to facilitate further natural regeneration – monitoring of the ash die back especially within this regeneration will need to be assessed and supplementary planting may need to be considered. Within the lifespan of this LMP the primary focus will be the removal of the *Rhododendron ponticum* invasive scattered throughout the coupe

4.2.4 Protected and priority habitats and species

All forest management operations involve a planning process before work commences which includes checks for wildlife and important habitats. Work plans will be adjusted if

necessary to avoid disturbance, and opportunities to further protect species or enhance habitats will be identified.

Priority Habitats and Species

The main section of Upland Heath UKBAP habitat is primarily located around the three brethren and is largely free of tree natural regeneration however within the central area of coupe **72021** and the southern areas of **72125** and **72019** tree regeneration is apparent. It is proposed that either during the coupes clearfell operation or alongside an adjacent clearfell operation this regeneration would be tackled.
Where practical and site suited native species will also be allocated within the restocking adjacent to priority habitat areas.

Red squirrel
FLS has a single licence to cover forest management activities that may affect red squirrels on the national forest estate (NFE). This is in accord with the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy's aim to resolve species management issues. All works within the Plan area will follow the assessment and mitigation actions set out as conditions of this licence.

Schedule 1 Raptor
Previous years have seen various Schedule 1 raptors within Yair, these are recorded and monitored. As per the work plan process coupe checks are carried out prior to operations commencing and mitigation will be put in place including timings and buffers.

Black grouse
Although not within the Yair block, known leks are nearby. The proposed management of coupe **72017** and subsequent restocking with open and shrubby broadleaf will benefit this species.

Badgers
Badgers are present within the Yair, these are recorded and monitored. As per the work plan process coupe checks are carried out prior to operations commencing and mitigation will be put in place including timings and buffers.

4.2.5 Open ground

Currently open ground contributes to 12% of the plan area, over the next twenty years this is expected to increase to 15.4%. The increase is largely due to removing the natural regeneration that has encroached within **72017** where FLS had previously proposed would be open given its proximity to the Southern Upland Way and Upland Heath priority habitat. The primarily focus for other open areas are alongside riparian areas integrated with pockets of native broadleaves and on Priority habitats. Where managed open is allocated there is an expectation that resources will be allocated to maintaining it as open. A combination of techniques will be used to maintain the open condition, including vegetation management and scrub removal.

Of note is the Coronation meadow and associated field within coupe **72042.** Details of the site and our proposed management can be found here.

The plan area also incorporates areas of successional open, where natural regeneration will be tolerated. This is located within rides, upper margins and along riparian zones of side tributaries, where deer control will be very challenging. Monitoring of these areas will allow us to identify any significant changes, and Scottish Forestry will be notified if these require amendments to the plan.
Fallow clearfell sites will contribute to transitional open space throughout the forest.

4.2.6 Dead wood

Opportunities for retaining or creating deadwood will be identified during the planning of all felling and thinning works, favoring areas with the highest deadwood ecological potential. Valuable deadwood and deadwood areas will be marked on contract maps. Areas of natural reserve will offer some of the best opportunities for the development of standing and fallen deadwood. Where it is safe to do so, standing mature dead trees will be retained as these offer excellent potential for a range of species.

4.2.7 Invasive species

See section 4.2.1 and 4.2.3 for detail on management of invasive species

4.3 Historic Environment

Refer to **Map 2**.

Our key priorities for archaeology and the historic environment are to undertake conservation management, condition monitoring and archaeological recording at significant historic assets; and to seek opportunities to work in partnership to help to deliver Our Place in Time: the historic environment strategy for Scotland (2014) and Scotland's Archaeology Strategy (2015). Significant archaeological sites will be protected and managed following the UK Forestry Standard (2017) and the FCS policy document Scotland's Woodlands and the Historic Environment (2008). Harvesting coupes, access roads and fence lines will be surveyed prior to any work being undertaken in order to ensure that upstanding historic environment features can be marked and avoided. At establishment and restocking, work prescriptions remove relevant historic environment features from ground disturbing operations and replanting. Where appropriate, significant historic assets are recorded by archaeological measured survey, see active conservation management and may be presented to the public with interpretation panels and access paths. Opportunities to enhance the setting of important sites and landscapes will be considered on a case-by-case basis (such as the views to and from a significant designated site).

The Regional Historic Asset Management Plan includes conservation management intentions for designated historic assets on the National Forest Estate. Details of all known historic environment features are held within the Forester Web Heritage Data and included within work plans for specific operations to ensure damage is avoided. Significant historic environment features will be depicted on all relevant operational maps.

Areas of historic environment interest should be checked both on FLS's internal historic environment records and also with the Council's HER prior to the commencement of forestry activities. Any upstanding features should be clearly marked, both on the ground and on operational maps. Care should be taken to avoid any damage to surviving structural elements.

4.3.1 Designated sites

Details of designated sites can be found within **Appendix I section 3** and **Appendix V.**

The coupe (**72008**) that contains the Craig Hill settlement is proposed to be managed as a long term retention. Thinning is however being applied for within this LMP however this thinning would be a low priority and is primarily to facilitate access to the low percentage of the larch component to the south. Increasing the buffer to UKFS standards at this stage would likely result in windblow encroaching on the monument. Felling is notionally scheduled for phase 4 at which point the restock will accommodate a larger open buffer to meet the requirements of the UKFS (20 m).

4.3.2 Other features

The Oakbank Wood fort is outwith the Yair boundary however the UKFS 20 m buffer does encroach into the Yair boundary of coupe **72009.** This coupe is currently a group selection, following any group fellings or thinnings the buffer would be cut back to accommodate the monument.

4.4 Landscape

4.4.1 Designated areas

See **Appendix I Section 1.0** and **Map 2** for landscape designations. **Map 1** identifies the viewpoints referenced below. See **Appendix VI** for modeled visualisations of the future forest.

Various design viewpoints have been evaluated with the development of the plan with the following 4 viewpoints being deemed most significant and included where change within the block can be seen within the plan period. These viewpoints include within Clovenfords, the A72 leaving Clovenfords heading south, Blakehope Hill and a view from the Southern Upland Way.

All four of these views take in the most dominant feature of change which is the hill cap felling of Craig Hill (**72006**). Clearfelling is the desired approach from a silvicultural and operational point of view; with the maximum mean annual increment (MMAI) of the crop reached and the impact of windblow present but also from a visual point of view a larger hill cap being in keeping with the scale of the landscape feature itself. The scale of the hill cap is however visually reduced given the height of the crop below (with coupe **72032|44**) which can be seen from both the Clovenford visualisations. Furthermore forest landscaping techniques such as large scallops have been used to soften the visual impact but also work

with the natural lines of force present. During the fallow period the clearfell area will also be framed by existing woodland throughout this again further reduces the visual impact.

Within phase 1 Sunderland Hill (**72030**) is also proposed to be felled as an entire hill cap. Although this can be seen from the 3 Brethren as well as fleetingly along the A72 at points the inclusion of the Blakehope Hill viewpoint exemplifies the clearfell within the context of the adjacent hill caps Yair Hill and Craig Hill. The clearfell has been put forward primarily due to the susceptibly of the crop succumbing to *P.ramorum* given the proximity to nearby infections. An extension to the original coupe shape has been included which takes in a section below Sunderland Hope, this removes the previous straight edge along the western boundary and provides a more organic fit. The restock for this hill cap has also been considered for landscape impact with a slower growing native species being allocated, in contrast to the neighbouring Craig Hill coupe having a faster growing spruce.

4.4.2 Other landscape considerations

Taking the designed garden landscape opposite the site at Fairnilee into consideration the mixed woodland opposite at Lindinny Wood (**72031**) is largely to be retained with continuous forested cover- albeit in time the non native coniferous element will be removed there will still remain a diverse structure to mirror the landscape across the River Tweed. Similarly the mixed conifer/broadleaf long term retention (**72007**) being retained above the Flasses and below Craig Hill serves the same purpose.

4.5 People

4.5.1 Neighbours and local community

A public drop in event was hosted in 2017 along with the wider Tweed Valley land management plan however further engagement through the summer of 2023 has been sought with a press release and on site posters highlighting an online feedback form along with letter drops and community engagement on site.
Several neighbours have taken an active interest in the development of the plan and their aspirations have been incorporated where they do not conflict with the objectives of the plan and are consistent with FLS's approach to land management.
See **Appendix III** for all feedback during the plan development, this captures all public and other stakeholder groups.

FLS visitor services are actively involving the local community and stakeholders around interpretation signage around Glenkinnon alongside upcoming works planned to further improve the walking facilities in and around the Glenkinnon biodiversity trail.

4.5.2 Public access

The Yair is frequented by a variety of recreational users including walking, cycling and horse riding. Notably a section of the Southern Upland Way comes in from the south western corner and exits through to the Yair bridge. The forest management associated with the SUW include the phase 2 removal of the natural regeneration of SS within coupe **72017** this will in time provide a varying structure when walking into the forest block with the restock proposed to include scattered broadleaf within two separate blocks.

Any unofficial trails will be managed under the Tweed Valley Recreation Zone with guidance used from FLS policy and the National Access Forum.

Visitors are welcome to explore FLS land, and will only be asked to avoid routes while certain work is going on that will create serious or less obvious hazards for a period (e.g. tree felling). Scotland's outdoors provides great opportunities for open-air recreation and education, with great benefits for people's enjoyment, and their health and well-being. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 ensures everyone has statutory access rights to most of Scotland's outdoors, if these rights are exercised responsibly, with respect for people's privacy, safety and livelihoods, and for Scotland's environment. Equally, land managers have to manage their land and water responsibly in relation to access rights and FLS will only restrict public access where it is absolutely necessary, and will keep disruption to a minimum.

4.5.3 Renewables, utilities and other developments

No renewable schemes are present within the Yair forest block. A SPEN sub station is located to the east out with the block boundary however associated overhead infrastructure intersects the forest block. Wayleave agreements are in place for the management of these.

Current car parking infrastructure is detailed within **Appendix I section 5.0.** Future developments of improved landscaping and an increased formal trail offering are proposed at and around the Glenkinnon car park.

4.5.4 Support for the rural economy

The Yair is part of the local landscape that attracts visitors to the Tweed Valley Forest Park, who take advantage of local businesses and services. It also provides a dynamic backdrop for those following the Southern Upland Way. Careful forest design with these factors in mind, along with responsible delivery of forestry operations will provide a positive visitor experience and encourage return visits to the area.

FLS supports a sustainable rural economy by managing the national forests and land in a way that encourages sustainable business growth, development opportunities, jobs and investment.

4.6 Soils

4.6.1 Protection and Fertility

There will be minimal soil disturbance and machine movement on sites with clayey soils to reduce the risk of compaction or damage to the soil structure. Brash mats (or alternative measures) will be used to protect sensitive soils. Felling residue will usually be left on site to allow nutrient recycling, with consideration for the practicalities of restocking.

4.6.2 Cultivation

Where required, the choice of ground cultivation technique will consider the short-term benefits for establishment against any long-term side effects on tree stability, access for future forest operations and the environment. There will be a preference for the least intensive technique.

4.6.3 Deep peats

No deep peats are present within LMP area.

4.7 Water

4.7.1 Drinking water

All private drinking water supply points (and pipes) are recorded as a layer in our Forester Web GIS (included in **Appendix VII** and **Map 11**). This is consulted during the work plan process for all forest operations to ensure there protection. Affected neighbours will be consulted prior to any works commencing. Features will be clearly marked on all contract maps, as well as on the ground. The design of the future forest has incorporated an open space or broadleaf buffer of at least 50m around these supply points to minimise future disturbance.

4.7.2 Watercourse condition

See Description of Woodlands. All forestry operations will meet the requirements of the UKFS Guidelines on Forests and Water.

4.7.3 Flooding

There are no specific flood prevention considerations within the plan area at this time (See **Appendix I section 1.4**) The scale and timing of felling in the forest, along with an increasingly diverse age structure is likely to have a beneficial impact on downstream flood risk and may contribute to flood alleviation.

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Appendix I: Description of Woodlands

1.1 Topography and Landscape

The topography of the Yair is primarily comprised of Northerly, Western and Eastern aspect facing slopes summited by 3 main hills comprising Craig Hill, Yair Hill and Sunderland Hill. These summits exhibit relatively strong ridgelines. Somewhat typically of the Tweed Valley Forest Park steep slopes are present within the plan area with over 20% being 35 degrees or more.

The landscape is primarily that of large scale rolling landform with dome shaped summits most significantly represented by Craig Hill and large areas of Upland Heath being present neighbouring the south marches of the block. The forest block itself is largely that of productive conifer and lies on the outer eastern fringe of the Tweed Valley Forest Park. The predominant neighbouring landuse is that of permanent pasture on largely un-improved grazing, with occasional arable fields, this is dissected by small scale broadleaf and coniferous shelter belts.

The scale of the site itself would be considered large scale alongwith the surrounding pasture. However, varied perspectives of the site are given depending on the location the site is taken in from. There is a strong intimate and enclosed feel throughout both the A72 and A707 with the site just in view within the upper margins of the viewshed. In contrast, up within the local hills and some of the local settlements the sites full large scale is taken in.

The landscapes visual diversity is relatively high with the higher ground comprising various shades and textures of coniferous green, areas of clear fell forest management and various pasture regimes dividing larger forested blocks. The middle slopes again show a variety of coniferous diversity along with varied pasture but in this area being intersected with diverse shelter belts leading into the lower valley. These areas showcase a higher degree of tree diversity in terms of broadleaf forest generally following the profile of the Tweed River. Individual to small scale settlements are also intimately scattered within the lower valley.

The area is within the landscape designation; Tweed, Ettrick and Yarrow Confluences SLA 3
The key forces for change and management recommendations relevant to the Yair LMP are the recognition of changes to forestry management places, the promotion of sustainable

land management balancing biodiversity, recreation and tourism and consideration for visual impacts of proposed management in highly visible areas such as hilltops.

The area is also described within various Nature.Scot Landscape Character Types:
Landscape Character Type 93: Southern Uplands with Scattered Forest
Landscape Character Type 116: Upland Valley with Woodland
Landscape Character Type 118: Settled Upland Fringe Valley

Although outwith the plan area the Fairnilee garden and designed landscape lies just north of the Tweed River toward the south side of the block. This area is noted as an excellent example of walled and formal garden of Edwardian design, with the surrounding woodland around the house and grounds contributing to the local upland valley landscape.

Map 2 shows the SNH Landscape Character Types relevant to The Yair

1.2 Geology and soils

The underlying geology is typical of the Tweed Valley being primarily composed of a bedrock of Wacke mudstone. This is primarily made up from the Hawick Group with a minor element of Gala group Wacke. Superficial deposits of Till are also present primarily throughout lower to mid slopes and focused within the south of the block.

The primary soil type composition along with weighted Soil Nutrient and Moisture regimes (SNR & SMR respectively) is brown earth (64% SNR 5 | SMR 3), Iron pan (20.5% SNR 6 | SMR 1), Surface water gley (14.3% SNR 3 | SMR 3), Upland brown earth (0.9% SNR 5 | SMR 2) and Podzol (0.3% SNR 6 | SMR 1).

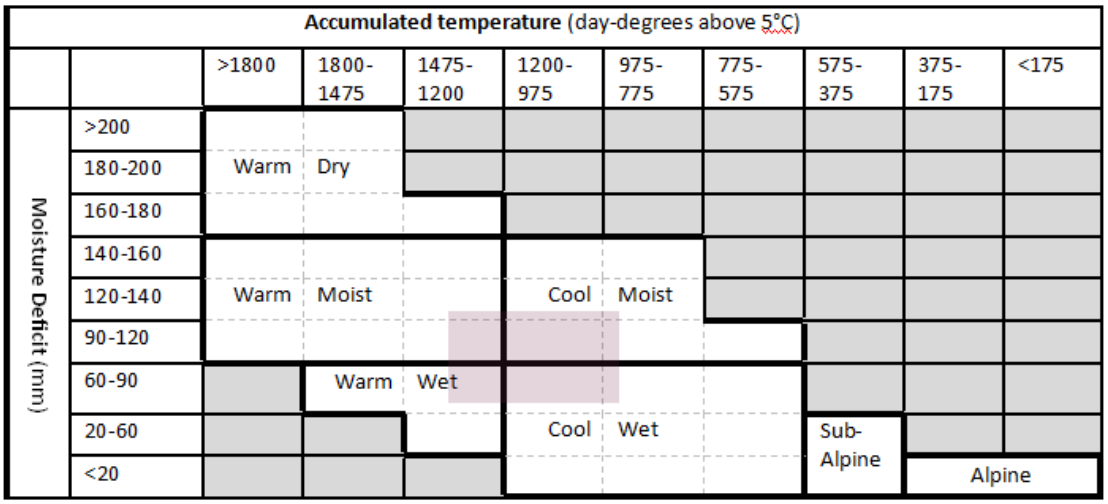
Soils types within the forest block are shown on **Map 9**

1.3 Climate

Accumulated temperature (day-degrees above 5°C)
Min: 945, Max: 1320, Mean: 1132 (cool)

Moisture Deficit (mm)
Min: 62, Max: 127, Mean: 94.5 (moist)

The climate of the LMP area is highlighted pink on the figure below



Climatic Zones in Great Britain (shading indicates combinations not present)

1.4 Hydrology

The Yair sits within the Tweed Catchment, part of the Solway-Tweed River Basin District. All watercourses drain into the River Tweed, directly or via main tributaries to the Tweed including Williams hope Burn, Glenkinnon Burn, Yair Burn and Shorthope Burn.

Water quality

Bodies of surface waters (as identified by SEPA) in the plan area:
Name: The Tweed River Overall Condition: Moderate

Impacted condition / Responsible pressures (Responsible activity):
Unknown pressure on water animals and plants

Name: Glenkinnon Burn Overall Condition: Good

Flooding

The Yair block lies upstream of the 'Potentially Vulnerable Areas' of Galashiels and Stow, according to the Scottish Borders Council Tweed Local Flood Risk Management Plan within these PVA's there are 3 target areas two of which the Yair are upstream of Galashiels and Melrose. The main objectives for these areas are to avoid, prepare and reduce flooding risks and improve data and understanding of flooding.

Water supplies

There are no public water supplies present, a reservoir is noted due south of the block but outwith any catchment of the plan area. There are a number of private water supplies associated within the Yair forest block many of these are currently not in use or without infrastructure on the ground however these are marked on maps within Appendix VII along with any other supplies outwith the Forest block but within its catchment.

Map 2 shows all watercourses and open water.
Appendix VII and Map 11 give further detail on Private Water Supplies

1.5 Windthrow

A range of Detailed Aspect Method of Scoring (DAMS) values for windiness are present throughout the Yair block however, over 80% of the site are within ranges that are sheltered (35%) or moderately exposed (51%).
The November 2021 high wind storm event of Storm Arwen impacted Yair forest relatively lightly with 2% of the plan area being windblown however, this is focused primarily on the visually dominant North-Easterly face of Craig Hill.

Map 10 illustrates the DAMS measurements for the Plan area.

2.0 Adjacent land use

According to Scotland's Historic Land Use map much of the surrounding land use is classified as rough grazing especially towards the southern sides of the Yair forest block. Closer to the Tweed River improved pasture areas considered rectilinear fields and farms are present with designed landscapes around the Peel village and Yair estate with a designated designed landscape across the river to the east of the block.

2.1 Public access

Yair is frequented by walkers, dogwalkers, cyclists, horse riders and wildlife enthusiasts. There are options throughout the forest network with forest road and informal trails alike. Most notably is the section of the Southern Upland Way (SUW) taking in the Three Brethren site and following the Shorthope Burn North towards Galashiels.

Car parking is located at the Glenkinnon site, the main Yair entrance (also known as the Peel) and also at the Lindinny Woodland opposite the Yair Bridge. There is an FLS promoted biodiversity trail within Glenkinnon which is graded as a blue strenuous trail.

Other trails include Scottish Borders Council (SBC) promoted trails:
The SUW is an SBC core path with multiple diversion options from the three brethren onto various other promoted paths and public Rights of Way outwith the Yair block.

Other promoted paths include a loop around the old Christmas tree field and the National Cycle Route 1 which the Yair take s in from the Ashiestiel bridge to the Yair bridge.

Map 2 and **Appendix VIII** show the location of promoted and core trails.

3.0 Historic environment

The Yair has one designated scheduled monument:
SM2103 Craig Hill, Enclosure (CANMORE: 54459)
The monument is a prehistoric scooped enclosure, representing the remains of a farming settlement site likely dating to the latter half of the 1st millennium BC. It is sited on the southern slope of Craig Hill. In plan it is a subrectangular platform, constructed by quarrying into the hillside, with stony banks on the W and E sides. Within the enclosure are possible traces of up to four house platforms.
It is a scheduled monument of national importance given the likelihood of buried archaeological deposits within and immediately surrounding the earthworks.

The below feature is outwith the boundary of The Yair however, its UKFS associated 20 m buffer encroaches into the block.

SM2122 Yair, fort, Oakbank Wood (CANMORE: 54457)
This earthwork is situated on the SE shoulder of Craig Hill at a height of 740ft. Shown as an oval structure on the OS map (of 1900 and 1958) but the only sign now remaining is a ridge in the ploughland which marks the east side of the defences.

Although not scheduled the Three Brethren cairns monument is worth noting as asignificant landscape feature. The three large cairns denote the boundaries of Buccleuch, Yair and Selkirk burgh. The first constructed in 1512 with the other two built at a later date; all three are noted on the 1752 Roy lowland maps.

Historic environment records for the forest are shown in **Appendix V** and on **Map 2**.

3.1 Biodiversity

Glenkinnon Burn Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
There are 7.2 ha of this SSSI within the Yair boundary.
Features and condition:
Lichen assemblage - Unfavourable no change
Upland birch woodland – Unfavourable recovering
Upland mixed ash woodland – Unfavourable declining (management measures in place set to improve status to favourable)

River Tweed Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
1.6 ha of The River Tweed SSSI is within the north of the block boundary.
Features and condition:
Atlantic salmon – Favourable maintained
Brook lamprey - Favourable maintained
Otter - Favourable maintained
Beetle assemblage – Unfavourable recovering
Fly assemblage - Favourable maintained
River lamprey - Favourable maintained

Williamshope Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
This SSSI neighbours onto the Yair forest block to the west and is noted here for completeness.

River Tweed Special Area of Conservation(SAC)
2.7 ha of the River Tweed SAC is within the Yair block which includes the Glenkinnon Burn
Features and condition:
Atlantic salmon – Favourable maintained
Otter – Favourable maintained
Brook lamprey – Favourable maintained
River lamprey – Favourable maintained
Sea lamprey – Unfavourable declining
Rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot – Unfavourable no change

Ancient semi-natural Woodlands

Glenkinnon is noted on the Ancient Woodland Inventory as Ancient of Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) Origin. It is noted for its regionally rare altitudinal gradients of woodland types including ash and elm with pedunculate oak and hazel on lower slopes through to wet

valley alder into upland birch and rowan and juniper on higher slopes. Within the FLS ownership (of which comprises 15.6 ha) it is primarily the alder (W7), upland mixed ash (W9) and upland birch (W11) components present. The primary negative pressures on the SSSI/SAC ASNW are invasive non native tree species such as spruce and hemlock.

Linndinny is also noted on the AWI as both ASNW origin and also Long Established of Plantation Origin (LEPO). The ASNW area within he Yair boundary comprises 23.7 ha, the native component is primarily birch and ash species other broadleaves present are sycamore and beech there is also a mixture of non native conifer species including Norway spruce, Douglas fir, Sitka spruce and various larch species. The planted coniferous elements is considered Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

To the east and on higher ground an area known as Raelees Wood is considered as LEPO along with another area of LEPO to the west of Lindinny along the Shorthope Burn. The former comprises a similar component assemblage to Lindinny with the Shorthope comprising a mixture of open and primarily native broadleaf. These areas collective make up 18.8 ha.

Priority Habitats

Upland Heath is present towards the upper margins and locally prominent around the Three Brethren and along the ridge line of Yair Hill.

Upland birch is also present throughout the block although primarily within the Glenkinnon ASNW area.

Priority Species

Squirrel

The Yair is within the Upper Tweed Valley Priority Area for Red Squirrel Conservation (PARC). There are a number of dreys recorded within the Yair block.

Raptor

Various schedule 1 raptors are either present or have been recorded within the Yair block.

Bats

Bat boxes have been erected in the Yair within the last 7 years.

Other species records not within priority status but worth mentioning are that of butterfly and other invertebrates along with other macro fauna such as other bird species and badger.

Natural Reserves

An area of 8.7 ha has been set aside as Natural Reserve to the north of CraigHill and running alongside the National Cycle Route 1. The site is noted as a good riparian and wet woodland beside the Tweed River SSSI. It comprises 60+ year old Douglas fir and Norway spruce with a minor component of hybrid larch. A small area of windblow and recent clearfell is also present.

Deadwood potential
The deadwood ecological potential of the site is spread throughout the High, medium and low classes. High areas are focused throughout the riparian burn sides with medium areas spread throughout the mature crops and ASNW areas and Low Impact Silvicultural areas. Low areas are throughout the remainder of the block.
An area of just over 1 ha is currently listed in the subcompartment database as dead high forest.

Open ground
Open ground currently comprises 97.9 ha (11.98%) this comprises elements of open within forested sub compartments along with larger managed open areas the bulk of the latter are made of the Upland Heath area along the Yair Hill and the Coronation meadow and associated conservation grazing meadow to the north.

3.2 Invasive species

An element of western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) is located close to the Glenkinnon Burn within coupe 72032.

Rhododendron ponticum has been recorded in the Lindinny/Raelees Wood area (72031).

Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) has been noted within the northern field associated with the Coronation Meadow within coupe 72042

4.0 Woodland composition

See the table above within section 3.6; Species diversity and age structure for detailed species breakdown. There is a relatively high diversity of tree species present with a Shannon Index score of 1.9. The species richness score is 18 (how many tree species present) and the dominant species (within tree species) makes up 36%.

YC

Average Yield Class distribution per species is as follows: Douglas fir 14; European larch 10; hybrid larch 8; Japanese larch 10; lodgepole pine 6; mixed conifer 18; Norway spruce 14; Silver fir 14; Scots pine 9; Sitka spruce 16. Generally it can be seen the site is quite productive.

Rotation

The Yair comprises 817.4 ha of mixed forest of which 590 ha were planted with mainly exotic conifers between 1951 and 2966. Restructuring of the forest started during the first and second revisions of the plan. Currently appx 45% of productive high forest is still within its 1st rotation with 39% in its 2nd or subsequent rotation.

Management types

Currently 65% of the forest is managed as clear fell, 18% is under a Low Impact Silvicultural management approach, Long Term Retentions cover 7% and Minimum Intervention 5%. Natural Reserves and primary open land currently make up approximately 3%.

The current species composition of the forest is illustrated on **Map 8**.

4.1 Plant health

The Yair has recently been subjected to infections from *Phytophthora ramorum* which has impacted larch trees within the block and the wider Tweed Valley. The Yair had its first Statutory Plant Health Notice in 2021, followed by a further two in 2022 and one issued in 2023.

Dendroctinus micans (great spruce bark beetle) has also been reported and confirmed within the west of the block. The native biological control *Rhizophagus grandis* has been released close to the Yair block and throughout the Tweed Valley in recent years.

Hymenoscyphus fraxineus (ash die back) is present throughout the Yair block. Annual condition surveys since 2020 have shown a gradual decline in the condition of ash with the majority now in the stage 3 and 4 categories of decline (50%-26% cover & 25%-0% canopy cover respectively).

5.0 Infrastructure

Three carparks are located (from west to east) at Glenkinnon, Main Yair (Peel) entrance and Lindinny, these are all well used by a variety of forest users. The block is well roaded and in

good condition with no current requirement for additional roading, road maintenance and upgrades have been carried out through the previous LMP alongside felling operations.
A SPEN sub station is located to the east of the block with an underground power cable exiting the sub station but this does not go through FLS land. Overhead powerlines (OHPL) however do dissect through the block nearby with these being managed under a wayleave agreement. Likewise OHPL are located towards the north of the block opposite Caddonfoot. An underground gas pipe is also present is this area.
Telecom and gas pipeline are also present around the Main Yair entrance /Glenkinnon entrance areas.

Appendix II: EIA screening opinion request form

Attached if required

Appendix III: Consultation record

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response: comment or reference to LMP section that addresses the issue
Scottish Water	12.07.23	12.07.23	No issues	-
SBC – Infrastructure and Environment	12.07.23	12.07.23	Make reference to extraction points onto public roads. Suitability of agreed timber transport road infrastructure with future extraction.	See map 7. Contacted the Timber Transport Forum to comment on road suitability however with no response.
SEPA	12.07.23	13.07.23	Improve riparian zones. Good site planning to reduce pollution risk. Incorporate low impact ground cultivation. Public and Private Water supply mitigation. Avoid disturbance of peatland habitat. Machinery wash down in relation to INNS. Correct machinery for allocated job (thinnings). Waste to be removed from site.	See sections 4.1.4 | 4.2.3 | 4.1.6 All operations carried out accordance with the UKFS and UKWAS. See section 4.6.2 See section 4.7 No peat present All operations carried out accordance with the UKFS and UKWAS.

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response: comment or reference to LMP section that addresses the issue
Clovenfords Community Council	12.07.23	12.07.23 21.10.23	CC in recess at time of contact and requesting extension to mid September for formal comment. Private water supply concern raised	Extension agreed but encouraged earlier comment if possible. See section 4.7
SBC - Archaeology	12.07.23	14.07.23	Inclusion of Oakbank and designed landscape on key features Historical significance unclear around features such as Cairns and quarries. Should anything be found during operations to contact SBC.	See map 2, section 4.3 and Appendix V See section 4.4
SBC – Tree Preservation Orders	14.07.23	31.07.23	TPO layer shared and all outwith Yair block	-
Historic Environment Scotland	12.07.23	08.08.23	Comments on Craig Hill, Enclosure. Noted conifer encroached right up to the boundary of this feature with the likelihood of further encroachment damaging the monument. Recommend immediate removal of any trees,overhanging branches, and rank vegetation which has encroached within	See section 4.3 and Appendix V. Followed up with FLS Archaeologist; 20 m is the UKFS standard - in this case 50m is unnecessary. Restock proposals include an unplanted buffer. Oakbank buffer included in future restock.

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response: comment or reference to LMP section that addresses the issue
			the monument. Request to contact HES prior to removal. Recommend the establishment of an unplanted buffer at the end of the current crops fell/restock cycle. UKFS buffer is a minimum of 20m but in this context 50m is recommended. Expectation of an ongoing commitment to keep scheduled area clear of regen\rank vegetation etc. Comments on Oakbank Wood – add 20m managed open ground buffer around feature on FLS land.	
Forest research	03.08.23	08.08.23	No issues with removal or thinning of trees around existing Scots pine trial site. Request for a further trial site to be included in design (0.75-1 ha)	An area of SP has been proposed with the restock design nearby current trial plot where a further experiment could be located. See section 4.1.1 **72051**
RSPB – Senior conservation officer	12.07.23	11.08.23	Black grouse recorded historically and recently within neighbouring land. Request for suitable forest edge grouse habitat to be included within the plan.	See section 4.1.1 **72017** and section 4.2.4 **Black grouse**

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response: comment or reference to LMP section that addresses the issue
			This habitat type should be incorporated within the edges closest to the priority species leks.	
Member of public via online consultation/e-mail Glenkinnon resident	19.07.23	02.08.23 Followed up with a site visit 06.09.23	More promotion of Yair forest within the Tweed Valley Forest Park Promotion of Glenkinnon oak and clearance around the tree Campsite at Glenkinnon maintenance Plans around the old Christmas tree field Maintenace around the exterior of the Glenkinnon car park Anti social behaviour noted around the Glenkinnon and Yair car parks Tie up points and mounting stands for horses to be considered within upcoming car park re developments	Following site visit – agreeable with all plans presented. The Glenkinnon oak will receive a periodic halo thin. Campsite is useable under SOAC See section 4.1.1 **72051** See section 4.5 This has been put forward to the relevant department for consideration
Glenkinnon resident	19.07.23	15.08.23	Maintenance of forest roads relating to water and felling plan query	Recent works have been carried out to rectify this issue
Owl Group	17.08.23	17.08.23 – replied via online	Maintenance and trail repairs through the Glenkinnon biodiversity trail Introduction of cycle trail signs	See section 4.5

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response: comment or reference to LMP section that addresses the issue
		survey form	Retention of ATC area (Alternative to Clearfell) throughout the lower slopes of Craig Hill Suggestion to clear fell the cap of Craig Hill to also deal with the windblow to the east Further public education around venison	See section 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 See section 4.1.1 **72006**
Yair estate resident	19.07.23	11.09.23 Followed up with a site visit 10.11.23	Impact on PWS at Yair estate	See section 4.7 and map 11
Comments from online form	11.07.23	Survey closed 08.09.23	17 responses ranging from locals to infrequent users of the forest. Most commented on the quiet nature of the Yair Forest with multiple recreational options including walking, dog walking, horse riding and biking. Many comments around the variety of biodiversity also present at the site. Issued raised relevant to the plan include: Trails and trail waymarking. Some conflict with other recreational users in terms of informal trail creation.	See section 4.5

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response: comment or reference to LMP section that addresses the issue
			Informal use of the campsite. Request for FLS to work alongside trail builders at the Yair. Plan should incorporate management for biodiversity.	 See section 4.5 TVTA contacted with no response See section 4.2
Comments from previous drop in event held	11.07.2017 event held at Caddonfoot		Similar responses to the most recent survey however slightly more weighted to user conflict – walkers and bikers. A frequent comment regarding communication to public in terms of when operations are live and trail diversion signage. Querry regarding Christmas tree field. Some comments around tree species diversity. More trails requested Horse facilities to be installed	 See section 4.5 See section 4.1.1 **72051** See section 4.1.5 See section 4.5 As per above: This has been put forward to the relevant department for consideration.
SPEN	09.10.23	No response	-	Any potential impact on sub station upgrades requested but with no response.
SBC-	12.07.23	No response	-	-

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response: comment or reference to LMP section that addresses the issue
>Planning and regulatory services >Landscape >Access >Ecology/Biodiversity >Flooding/water management				
Neighbouring Community councils >Ettrick ad Yarrow >Selkirk and District	12.07.23	No response	-	-
Fishery management Scotland	12.07.23	No response	-	-
Confor	12.07.23	No response	-	-

Consultee	Date contacted	Date of response	Issues raised	FLS response: comment or reference to LMP section that addresses the issue
Timber Transport Forum	12.07.23	No response	-	-
Scottish Wildlife Trust	12.07.23	No response	-	-
Saving Scotlands Red Squirrels	12.07.23	No response	-	-
Tweed Valley Trail Association/Scottish cycling	17.08.23	No response	-	-
SF Public register	22.01.24 – 19.03.24 Plan on PR	26.02.24	SBC Access department requesting commitment to clearing windblow	FLS will endeavor to respond to windblow over Core paths and other SBC promoted trails within the Yair in as timely manner as practicably possible.

Appendix IV: Tolerance table

	Maps Required (Y/N)	Adjustment to felling period *	Adjustment to felling coupe boundaries **	Timing of Restocking	Changes to Restocking species	Changes to road lines	Designed open ground ** ***	Windblow Clearance ****
FC Approval normally not required	N	• Fell date can be moved within 5 year period where separation or other constraints are met.	• Up to 10% of coupe area.	• Up to 3 planting seasons after felling.	• Change within species group e.g. evergreen conifers or broadleaves.		• Increase by up to 5% of coupe area	
Approval by exchange of letters and map	Y	• Advance felling of Phase 2 coupe into Phase 1	• Up to 15% of coupe area	• Between 3 and 5 planting seasons after felling, subject to the wider forest and habitat structure not being significantly compromised.		• Additional felling of trees not agreed in plan. • Departures of > 60m in either direction from centre line of road	• Increase by up to 10% of coupe area • Any reduction in open space of coupe area by planting.	• Up to 5ha
Approval by formal plan amendment may be required	Y	• Felling delayed into second or later 5 year period. • Advance felling (phase 3 or beyond) into current or 2nd 5 year period.	• More than 15% of coupe area.	• More than 5 planting seasons after felling, subject to the wider forest and habitat structure not being significantly compromised.	• Change from specified native species. • Change Between species group.	• As above, depending on sensitivity.	• In excess of 10% of coupe area. • Colonisation of open space agreed as critical.	• More than 5ha.

NOTES:

* Felling sequence must not compromise UKFS, in particular felling coupe adjacency

** *No more than 1ha, without consultation with FCS, where the location is defined as 'sensitive' within the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) 1999 Regulations (EIA)*

*** *Tolerance subject to an overriding maximum 20% open space*

**** *Where windblow occurs FCS should be informed of extent prior to clearance and consulted on where clearance of any standing trees is required*

Larch Tolerance Table

	Adjustment to Felling period	Timing of Restocking and species component	Felling of larch within a mixed coupe	Changes to Road Lines
FC Approval normally not required	Fell date for phase 2 can be moved forward where larch comprises 50% or more of the coupe species component.	changes to restocking proposal that exclude larch and closely related species in the same genus, eg Sitka and Norway Spruce. Up to 3 planting seasons after felling		
Approval normally by exchange of letters and map	Felling moved between phases 1 and 2 where larch comprises less than 50% of the coupe species component	Changes to restocking proposals that include larch or closely related species in the same genus, eg Sitka and Norway Spruce. Between 3 and 5 planting seasons after felling	Areas of pure larch up to 20% of coupe area within phase 1 and 2 can be felled to remove the sporulating host, with restocking deferred until the rest of the crop is felled. Where the Larch constitutes more than 20% of the coupe component, then the whole coupe must be felled and restocked together.	New road lines (subject to EIA screening opinion) or tracks within existing approved plans necessary to allow the extraction of Larch material. Where necessary Prior Approval should be dealt with directly with the relevant Regional Council
Approval by formal plan amendment is required	Advance felling into current or 2nd phase for pre-emptive larch removal			Where a new public highway entrance or exist is required. Where necessary Prior Approval should be dealt with directly with the relevant Regional Council

Larch felled in the autumn and winter, when the presence of P ram cannot assessed visually must be treated as infected and will therefore require a movement licence. When carrying out operations where the clearance has not been on the Public Register or through the consultation procedure it is important that due diligence is undertaken to identify sites that will require to be protected.

Appendix V: Historic Environment records

Refer to **Map 2**

Historic Environment Records					
Designation	**Name**	**Feature Description**	**Grid Reference**	**Importance**	**Area (ha)**
Scheduled monument	Craig Hill	Craig Hill Settlement - A scooped settlement measures 150ft E-W by 125ft transversely, surrounded by the remains of a drystone wall. Entrance was in E. Interior divided by 2 or 3 linear scarps 0.4m high. CANMORE ID: 54459	NT 439332	National importance	0.29
Undesignated	Hartsike Bog	Hartsike Bog Possible building aligned E/W	NT 439348	Regional importance	0.01
Scheduled monument	Oakbank Wood	Oakbank Fort (Buffer of)- This earthwork is situated on the SE shoulder of Craig Hill at a height of 740ft O D. Shown as an oval structure on the OS map (of 1900 and 1958) but the only sign now remaining is a ridge in the ploughland which marks the E side of the defences.	NT 447 332	National importance	0.47

Appendix VI: 3D Visualisations

Attached

Appendix VII: Private water supply detail

Attached

Appendix VIII: Glenkinnon promoted trails route card

Forestry and Land Scotland | Coilltearachd agus Fearann Alba

Glenkinnon

Tweed Valley Forest Park

Facilities

Parking

Picnic area

Location

Nearest postcode: TD1 3LH

How to get here

The car park is on the south side of the A707 just west of Caddonfoot. Follow the sign for 'Glenkinnon' - the forest is ¼ mile from the main road.

Trail Information

Glenkinnon Biodiversity Trail ●●●

Starting by the 500-year old Glenkinnon Oak, explore an ancient woodland of ash, alder and oak.

Largely uneven earthy and grassy surface. Narrow paths with tree roots, muddy patches and a number of bridges. Some steep slopes on uneven ground.

strenuous

1 mile / 1.6 kms
Allow ¾ hour