

Appendix D.2. Stakeholder Engagement

During the development of this Land Management Plan, we have consulted publicly including with local community representatives and stakeholders known to have an interest in the forest.

Table 1: summary of the issues that were raised during initial, final, and face-to-face consultation.

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
Initial Consultation	DIAGEO (Cardhu Distillery)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Key Features Map is good and clearly defined legend which accompanies the map. Diageo would have a particular area of Interest with regards to Water. From the plan it is highlighted Water: there are several water supply points within the forest including ones for Cardhu Distillery. Where was the data taken for the Key Feature Map for the Water Supply points and pipelines? Diageo would like to be consulted on any developments near our water supply points for the distillery as a relevant stakeholder. 	Water supply points for Elchies supplied by staff at Cardhu Distillery, these have been updated and mapped as some of them fall within the proposed peatland restoration areas.
Initial Consultation	RSPB	<p>We would recommend that Capercaillie be considered in the review of the Land Management Plan. There was until recently an active breeding Capercaillie population in this forest, and it is possible that they may return if habitat improves.</p> <p>The key features that could benefit Capercaillie are:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restocking with Scot's Pine wherever possible and ideally providing continuous cover. As part of our restock proposals we're looking to increase the number of Scots Pine and increase connectivity across Elchies in light of loss of woodland cover from peatland restoration. Improving the bog woodland

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restocking with Scot's Pine wherever possible and ideally providing continuous cover • Improving the bog woodland • Avoiding erection of new deer fences, especially internal fences • A mitigation plan should be considered to manage recreation if Capercaillie do re-establish in the forest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of peatland restoration, we will be looking for opportunities to retain and enhance our existing bog woodland. • Avoiding erection of new deer fences, especially internal fences • These will only be considered where necessary and will be marked in compliance with fencing guidance. • A mitigation plan should be considered to manage recreation if Capercaillie do re-establish in the forest. • All our woods where we have capercaillie are reviewed regularly to try and minimise disturbance. This is based on presence of birds etc... and we follow the managing capercaillie and recreation guidance."
Initial Consultation	SEPA	The LMP should operate in line with UKFS, Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 and best practise when relating to water and soils management.	FLS with manage s its water and soils as per the most up to date UKFS guidelines.
Initial Consultation	Speyside Community Council	At this stage we have nothing to add to the plans, which seem well thought out and in the best interests of managing the forestry together with the peat restoration. We have just one question. Are the turbines from the operational Rothes I/II or do they represent future turbines from the recently consented Rothes III?	Clarified that the turbines on the key features map represented the future turbines recently consented, Rothes III.

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
Initial Consultation	on behalf of Rothes Forest Estate (Peter Graham & Associates) with contribution from Cawdor Forestry Ltd who manage the forestry operation on Rothes.	Most concerning to us is the lack of detail on deer control and how this is to be undertaken - there are vast numbers of stags visible in the local area which need to be culled to manage the land most effectively. It is also noted that there is no mention of grouse or capercaillie in this document at this stage. The lack of any detail on management is also concerning and seems to be superficial at this stage - no management objectives have been outlined and as such, no mention of timber production at all?	As this was an initial external consultation we identify the main key features only, looking for feedback on these. In late summer/early autumn we will be conducting a more extensive consultation exercise with objectives, opportunities, challenges, and concepts outlined in more detail. This will include herbivore control, management of key species, and timber production.
Initial Consultation	Private	My fence borders the SE corner of Elchies, and I mentioned the two Western Hemlocks at the fence. It would be good if they could be felled sometime - they are pushing my fence.	FLS Stewardship team to review and action.
Initial Consultation	Private	We have a domestic water supply that we assume has its origin in the forest but not sure where. The pipeline to our well is not marked on the map. Obviously, we are keen to protect this, it is our only water supply.	Historically, the property had the right to collect water from a mill lade. However, there is no evidence of this lade within our forest. FLS have reviewed records held by Scottish Water and they indicate that your water supply is a borehole (ground water) and does not originate from within Elchies Forest. FLS have applied a 50 m buffer to your water supply, and it is out with which of the forest boundary. This means that forestry operations will not have an impact on your water.
Initial Consultation	Private	I'm keen to coordinate with local stakeholders on issues of native forestry and wildlife. If my neighbouring land can align with activities that you may undertake to support biodiversity, then that would be great.	Acknowledged.

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
Initial Consultation	Private	I feel the move to mixed planting and higher proportion of native planting will be beneficial both for amenities use as well as biodiversity enhancement.	Acknowledged.
Initial Consultation	Private	Pleased to see the increase in native planting. I would like to see more peat restoration and ditch damming.	Acknowledged.
Initial and Final consultation	Scottish Water	A review of our records indicates that there are Scottish Water assets in the area. There is a distribution main present within the site.	Records have been updated to reflect live and abandoned Scottish Water assets in Elchies.
Initial and Final consultation	Archaeologist / HER Officer Archaeology Service for Aberdeenshire, Moray, Angus & Aberdeen City Councils	The Key Features map shows features recorded by FC (many of which are yet to also be added to our Historic Environment Record (HER)), but not I think all of those recorded as FC SMR sites (unless as is possible, they are just obscured by other elements on that Key Features map). The HER also records several other sites which are not shown on the Key Features map: and I was not clear from the Plan Review text whether the HER has been checked albeit not all recorded features will necessarily raise management issues. Appreciated it may not be feasible to show all archaeological features on the Key Features Map given the scale, in which case it would be preferable for the report to include a note of the historic environment sources checked, for features to be included on operational plans as appropriate.	On the Key Features map we highlight heritage features that have been identified in previous forestry operations, this is why there is a mismatch between what is on the Key Features Map and the data held on HER. Before an operation begins, the Environment Ranger checks HER to identify any heritage features not previously identified. If this is the case, these are mapped, and forestry operations mitigated as per UKFS.

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Initial and Final consultation	Open Space, Access, and Policy Officer Moray Council	I am commenting in relation to public access which is largely informal at Elchies although there are several more formal Core Paths and promoted paths. In relation to these I ask that improvements to the Core Paths be considered particularly localised surface and drainage improvements and where there has been encroachment by tree growth, fallen trees etc. Additionally, the promoted path to the Cairn Cattoch viewpoint is now nearly impassible and a programme of vegetation clearance is required particularly of young tree saplings to re-establish the route and allow people to enjoy this fine viewpoint once again.	<p>FLS will ensure the integrity of these routes, and if any paths are damaged because of FLS forest operations then we would repair them. Should opportunities arise to improve paths whilst other work is being carried out in the vicinity this will be considered. However, as routes are not promoted/managed directly as a visitor service asset we will not be actively upgrading or improving paths during the plan period.</p> <p>Cairn Cattoch as part of the LMP review is due to be opened during the second phase of the plan (2029-2033).</p>
Final consultation	Strategic Planning & Development Moray Council	I have reviewed the documents and, on behalf of Strategic Planning & Development, have no comments to make. All the key constraints are acknowledged and integrated into the proposals, which is welcomed.	Acknowledged.
Initial and Final consultation	Moray Council: Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a roads authority our main concerns are that access/egress locations and transport of timber along public roads should broadly follow the principles of “Transporting Timber on Public Roads - Consultation and Engagement Guidance” published by the Timber Transport Forum. The LMP has recognised that for Elchies both the B9102 Dandaleith to Grantown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All requirements to notify Moray Council of works acknowledged. The bellmouth at Blackhillock, will have a surface apron applied as per the request. There is discussion internally and with Fred Olsen as to the practicality of using the Rothes III roads infrastructure to transport timber via the A941 Elgin to Rothes Road near Gedloch.

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		<p>Road through Archiestown and the U144E Cottage Road are currently agreed timber routes. As such The Moray Council would only seek notification a few weeks in advance of when any timber haulage is planned on these agreed routes, to seek to minimise any disruption from road maintenance activities. However, it should be noted that the access/egress route via Moss Street, Archiestown (Grid Ref 322950,844306) is a consultation route and early dialogue with the road's authority, an absolute minimum of two months prior to haulage commencing, must be made to allow consideration of any restrictions in use, such as those listed in "Transporting Timber on Public Roads". These restrictions can only be further considered when reasonable estimates of timber to be extracted over the consultation route are known to the road's authority, so ongoing dialogue with the road's authority prior to felling/thinning throughout the LMP duration will be required. The Moray Council within the first 10-year period of this LMP will likely be required to undertake resurfacing works on this consultation route and this will require a</p>	

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		<p>short term (probably under one week) road closure to be implemented, that will impact timber haulage. This work on completion may allow an easing of restrictions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a roads authority we have an obligation to other road users to ensure that existing access junctions with a public road, that are to be used for timber haulage manoeuvres, continue to provide a safe means of access and egress. It is not necessarily the case that an existing access previously used will still meet a range of criteria such as visibility splays, junction radii, access width, horizontal and vertical alignment, protection to public road edge/minimising detritus drag onto the public road. Whilst all criteria could be reasonably met by provision of a Moray Council forestry access standard previously supplied and available on the Grampian TTG website, roads authority officers will attempt to be pragmatic on what improvements may be required to reasonably provide a safe access and egress depending on specific circumstances at each location, such as current layout and anticipated vehicle numbers. This consideration can only 	

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		<p>usually be made when reasonable estimates of timber to be extracted at each access/egress point is known, after final felling and thinning tonnages and time of year extractions are shared with the road's authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The latest Elchies LMP Civils Map appears to show that the main access/egress point to the public road network, in addition to Moss Street, Archiestown will be at Blackhillock (Grid Ref 320559,843641). Whilst this is an existing junction and considered to have a suitable layout for timber vehicles taking access/egress directly from the nearby B9102, there is no surfaced apron to protect the edge of the public road and help minimise detritus drag onto the public road. The roads authority would therefore seek cooperation from FLS to have a 3 m width of apron surfaced across the bellmouth of this forest access point, prior to the indicated Phase 1 felling plan, that's likely to use this access/egress point in 2025/26. The visibility splay looking west would also require to be kept clear of vegetation growth to a minimum visibility splay of 2.5 m x 160 m. 	

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="663 225 1234 719">• The latest Elchies LMP Civils Map indicates that there are no other proposals to use any of the possible alternative forestry access points as listed in my previous communication on 13 Dec 2022. If that position changes during the duration of the Elchies LMP, further dialogue will be required with the roads authority to ensure that these alternative locations do continue to demonstrate a safe means of access/egress as per the criteria listed in the fourth paragraph above. <li data-bbox="663 735 1234 1385">• I have noted on several maps the proposed Fred Olsen Renewables windfarm development which has been approved by Scottish Ministers. It is my understanding that this Rothes III wind farm has a planning condition that all construction and maintenance access must be taken from the north via the A941 Elgin to Rothes Road near Gedloch and new access tracks. Considering the further information about the peatland restoration in much of the higher ground of Elchies, I am prepared to withdraw the previous road authority comment about FLS consulting with your neighbours to the north to determine whether future timber traffic, especially 	

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
		from the northern half of Elchies could by negotiation be routed to the north.	
Initial and Final consultation	Spey Fishery Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would ask if there were any targets for deer management in the area. Preferably to bring the deer population within the area <3/km² to allow natural riparian regeneration. Given the number of wind turbines (some very close to the Ballintomb burn) and forestry works going on, I am concerned about potential sedimentation of the Ballintomb burn and Roy Burn, consequently impacting the river Spey. Are there any plans to monitor the aquatic diversity of both invertebrates and fish to evaluate the success of habitat restoration and the impacts of construction? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated Deer Utilisation (EDU) for Elchies is currently at 7-9 deer per km². This would be considered, low-medium density. Nationally we aim to reduce to populations of 5 deer per km². To support natural riparian regeneration, we will be carrying out enhancement planting of more unpalatable species e.g. Alder, Willows, Birch, and Rowan. It is not FLSs responsibility to monitor the impact of the windfarm development on the environment. The Fred Olsen will have a planning condition around environmental monitoring. FLS will be managing all forestry operations as per UK Forestry Standard (UKFS), Confor: Forest and Water Scotland Initiative and Know the Rules 2nd Edition and Managing Forest Operations to Protect the Water Environment. We currently do not have the capacity or resources to monitor the aquatic diversity of both invertebrates and fish to evaluate the success of habitat restoration and the impacts of construction. However, we would be interested in partnership working with the Spey Fishery Board to explore this further.
Initial and Final consultation	Scottish and Southern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two of the possible powerline adjacency areas for felling and restocking at Brackenhoves and above Robertstown, I 	FLS have reviewed the maps provided, and the powerlines are all mapped on our internal systems, FLS will ensure that should any felling be completed within 2

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	Electricity Networks (SEN)	<p>note are down for felling after 2058. I suspect there will be a few more consultation amendments before this date. All that I would ask is that any re-planting would try to account for the likely terminal height of any trees to avoid any possible contact with the adjacent network when felling commences. It is possible that there is already a sufficient gap and a site visit when required would address this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The low impact silvicultural area above the crossroads at Archiestown appears to have a transformer on its edge and I would hope that any selective felling could remove the adjacent trees to eliminate the threat of possible storm damage when applicable. • The properties above Tomlea are all supplied by underground services and should therefore not provide any constraints to any felling or forest operations in the adjacent coupe. • If any tree felling is required within 2 tree lengths of any part of the network, then the attached 010 FWN form should be completed and submitted, and this will start the process for finding a safe method of removal. 	tree lengths of the network that the 010 FWN form is submitted.

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the short term, any interaction with the network will likely be on the access roads (Blackhillock) for either access or upgrading and I would expect a request to be placed with our general enquiries department to get the line height checked and safe guidance issued. 	
Face-to-Face Final Consultation in Archiestown Village Hall	Private	How are FLS going to communicate harvesting and restoration operations to the local community, given how much of the village use the forest for daily walks etc...	FLS have standard operational signage that we use at forest entrances and closer to the operational site. In addition, information will be posted in the local post office/shop, on the village hall notice board and via the community council.
Face-to-Face Final Consultation in Archiestown Village Hall	Private	Circular walking routes and additional walking routes.	The peaty soils are not suitable for additional tracks in much of Elchies.
Face-to-Face Final Consultation in Archiestown Village Hall	Private	South-west area of the forest, the forest road could be connected with the Mannoeh Road to allow the community to walk from Archiestown, through Elchies and then down to Knockando via the core path.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FLS have no issues if this is something the local community want to pursue. Our position in Visitor Services is to help facilitate communities who want to undertake projects on FLS land. It is important that they understand what they will need to do to progress this and that there are several considerations which need to be made. They will need to submit to us a proposal of the route, construction specifications and management proposal they are proposing to build

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			<p>including whether they have consulted the planning authority whether planning permission is required (which if we approved the project they would also need to obtain). Once we had that we could commence the Work Planning process, and once that is completed issue them a license to undertake the works with a contractor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the most important elements will be a management agreement for whatever they do as we would not be looking to adopt, maintain or inspect a path they installed in this area. Therefore, they would need to provide info as to how they intend to inspect, maintain, and potentially remove if they, ceased at any point to manage this path (if community interest withered in future years) as this would require a formal agreement with Estates. Potentially working with Moray Council this may be adopted as a core path for example. • The level of detail all this requires does heavily depend on the scale of their project and levels whether/how they are looking to promote it as a formal route.
Face-to-Face Final Consultation in Archiestown Village Hall	Private	Concern regarding the extent of operational activity due to the large felling required for restoration. Size of wind turbine and visual impact on the landscape 'vandalism'.	The size, shape, and phasing of felling in Elchies for peatland restoration was carefully considered during the LMP review, including the impact on landscape and the wider riparian landscape. Areas which are already sitting as open, due to felling for plant health were identified for restoration early in the plan period and have been

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
			incorporated into felling coupes to pick up any non-native conifers or undesirable re-generating trees.
Face-to-Face Final Consultation in Archiestown Village Hall	Private	Expansion of the path network in Elchies to connect the forest, over the moor to Allachrow or Hunt Hill to Burn of Rothes.	The suggested routes are not on FLS ground, but neighbouring landowners, who can be approached by the Archiestown community.
Face-to-Face Final Consultation in Archiestown Village Hall	Private	Displays explaining the work and visitor interpretation at Key Points e.g. Cairn Cattoch.	Elchies is not managed as a FLS visitor service asset, and so visitor interpretation boards will not be installed. As part of forestry operations, we have our standard operational signage that we use at forest entrances and closer to the operational site. We will also inform the community of planned operations via the post office/local shop, notice board at the village hall and the community council, for example.
Face-to-Face Final Consultation in Archiestown Village Hall	Private	Consultation with the Archiestown community regarding times and number of timber lorries passing through. Meeting with village council.	Consultation Routes are roads which are key to timber extraction but, for a variety of reasons, are not up to Agreed Route standard. Consultation with the Local Authority is required before any timber haulage takes place, and it may be necessary to limit the amount, timing, or frequency of timber haulage, or to specify lower impact vehicles, to prevent damage. All minor roads ("B" "C" and unclassified roads), should be treated as Consultation Routes by default, unless covered by one of the other categories (e.g. Severely Restricted Route).
Final Consultation and Face-to-Face Final	Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We welcome the consultation and details we have received so far, however were disappointed that the consultation 	<p>Native hedging and fence</p> <p>As an immediate neighbour our Harvesting Forester/Peatland Restoration Forester will be in touch prior to felling to discuss any concerns with you, I'll pass</p>

Consultation Stage	Organisation	Comments	Response
<p>Consultation in Archiestown Village Hall</p>		<p>in Archiestown could not go ahead. We may not be able to attend on the rearranged date, so are submitting our comments and questions by email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As our home and land adjoins the forest, we have several questions about your proposed work and a few concerns that we hope you can allay. Please will you clarify exactly how close to our boundary your work will be and provide assurance that the tree and hedge roots are not dug up or damaged by heavy machinery, by leaving an appropriate distance between any work and our fence? We do hope that reasonable arrangements can be made that protect our planting whilst enabling your objectives to also be met. Please confirm that our fence will not be damaged or removed to facilitate your installation of the additional fence that seems to be proposed. We have several concerns about the impact of your proposals on local wildlife. Putting a 6-metre boundary fence around the forestry area will close off existing wildlife corridors and exclude 	<p>on your relevant comments to them from this email too.</p> <p>Forest perimeter fence The wildlife management map shows a perimeter fence around the boundary of Elchies, this is the existing fence, a combination of stock and deer fencing. We are not proposing erecting any additional fencing around the perimeter of Elchies.</p> <p>Access We will be using the existing forest road network to access all felling coupes in Elchies via the entrance at Archiestown.</p> <p>Re-planting As part of the proposed peatland restoration in the management coupe to the north of your property we will be felling all non-native conifers, primarily Sitka Spruce and Lodgepole Pine to restore the area back to peatland. As part of this restoration, we will be restocking native mixed broadleaves as indicated in the future species map. There are some native broadleaves close to the perimeter of Elchies, and where operationally possible these will be retained. That coupe is due to be felled in 2024/25 and is currently programmed to be restocked within 2-3 years of felling.</p> <p>Wildlife We will adhere to the following guidance published by Scottish Forestry (the regulator). Prior to any forestry operation taking place our Environment Ranger carries out a coupe check, if any species of note are identified e.g. Red Squirrels, then we will follow the relevant guidance to minimise and then mitigate any impacts on</p>

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		<p>many of the species that currently rely on that area for refuge, water, and shelter. Whilst we understand that red and roe deer browsing in the forest would be of concern to you, we are dismayed that you say nothing in your proposals about how their impact could be mitigated other than by total exclusion from the area. Were other measures considered?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you undertake a species survey and review of the impact your proposals will have? Red squirrel, pine marten and badgers also live within the forest, we see them regularly coming onto our land from the forest and then returning. Your current proposals would appear to prevent these species from travelling across their wider habitat and foraging routes. This approach seems completely at odds with the current move in Scotland to consider and protect wildlife in land management schemes. Red Squirrels are a protected species, yet you say nothing about any plans to preserve their habitat and foraging routes, which extend beyond the forest boundary. Can you advise how you intend to maintain the existing access routes of these above species? The proposed fencing would 	<p>wildlife.</p> <p>During the review of the Land Management Plan, we have considered the presence of species like Red Squirrel, Badger, and Pine Martin. Norway Spruce and Scots Pine, including mature stands are being retained where possible. The currently fragmented riparian habitats are being enhanced by the felling of Sitka Spruce and Lodgepole Pine and the planting of native broadleaves and Scots Pine to increase habitat connectivity across Elchies. Restored peatland will also have a 60 m native broadleaf buffer to also increase habitat connectivity.</p> <p>Water</p> <p>All forestry operations adhere to the following guidance 'Managing Forest Operations to Protect the Water Environment'.</p>

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		<p>not appear to enable that, especially for badgers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please could you confirm what is your planned route for access to work on the areas adjacent to our north and east boundaries? • Will you be removing all existing deciduous trees adjacent to our boundaries, or will some remain as a narrow buffer zone? We are concerned about being completely exposed to the north. • Your proposals talk about replanting. If you are removing all existing deciduous trees, do you plan to replant with a narrow belt of the same and when would that be replanting take place? 	
Email	Private	Will forest operations impact our private sewage treatment?	We have engaged with colleagues and external stakeholders for guidance. We will maintain an open dialogue with the homeowners as operations progress.
Initial, Final and Face-to-Face Public Consultation	CONFOR	No comments.	NA
Initial, Final and Face-to-Face Public Consultation	Knockando Estate	No comments.	NA

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Initial, Final and Face-to-Face Public Consultation	Moray Equestrian Access Group	No comments.	NA
Initial, Final and Face-to-Face Public Consultation	NatureScot: North	No comments.	NA
Initial, Final and Face-to-Face Public Consultation	Moray Equestrian Access Group	No comments.	NA