



## Text for DRAFT Map 3: Concept

### Carrick Forest Drive LMP 2025 -2035

#### Management Objectives

- Sustainable timber production
- Management of the Merrick Kells SSSI / SAC as per the Designated Site Management Plan
- A safe and enjoyable visitor experience, including access to the Loch Doon Castle Scheduled Monument, is maintained.

#### Site observations and concept

- Woodland structure is more weighted towards young trees. Where appropriate, opt to retain a component of mature, wind-firm stands to enhance the overall structural diversity of the woodland.
- Susceptibility to wind damage limits thinning potential. Target thinning of existing stands to where site conditions allow, with any non-standard treatments typically focused on benefiting biodiversity and visitor experience.
- While poor site conditions limit species choice, species diversity across the block is generally good. Where conditions permit, continue to establish a range of tree species to benefit biodiversity and improve general forest resilience.
- Infected Larch is present within the woodland. Prioritise the removal of Larch in the revised felling programme.
- Broadleaved species are in competition with naturally regenerating non-native species and are struggling to establish, particularly in remote/inaccessible areas.
- Improve habitat connectivity using natural features (e.g. riparian corridors).
- Generally good access from the existing forest road network with only a small number of inaccessible coupes. Explore re-couping options to facilitate access, opting to expand / maintain the forest road and quarry network as necessary.
- Maintain open hilltop to enhance the Merrick Kells SSSI/SAC and remoteness of Merrick WLA.
- Block overlaps multiple water catchments, including those used for drinking water and draining to designated sites. Continue establishment of riparian zones and plantation buffers to benefit the water environment.
- Maintain Scheduled Monuments and heritage features as per the Regional Historic Asset Management Plan and the UKFS
- Within core visitor zones, present a variety of woodland experiences and views (e.g. of lochs and the surrounding open hills). Maintain recreation facilities to a high standard.