



Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Please complete this form to find out if you need consent from Scottish Forestry, under the **Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017**, to carry out your proposed forestry project. Please refer to Schedule 2 Selection Criteria for Screening Forestry Projects under [Applying for an opinion](#). If you are not sure about what information to include on this form please contact your [local Conservancy office](#).

Proposed Work							
Please put a cross in the box to indicate the type of work you are proposing to carry out. Give the area in hectares and where appropriate the percentage of conifers and broadleaves							
Proposed Work	select	Area in hectares	% Conifer	% Broad-leaves	Proposed work	select	Area in hectares
Afforestation	<input type="checkbox"/>				Forest roads	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3.1
Deforestation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	75.0	100		Forest quarry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0.3
Location of work		Glenelg Peninsula, Lochalsh					

Description of Forestry Project and Location
<p>Provide details of the forestry project (size, design, use of natural resources such as soil, and the cumulative effect if relevant). Please attach map(s) showing the boundary of the proposed work and other known details.</p> <p>PEATLAND RESTORATION is proposed at three discrete areas of FLS's Ardintoul/Bernera block (see location map at rear of this form/appendix). Analysis and decision-making underpinning restoration is given in Appendix 6 of the Land Management Plan. The restoration (i.e. deforestation) proposals are as follows:-</p> <p>"Bernera Plateau" (gross area: 37 ha; p73/74 LP/SS/OG 66/4/30 i.e. afforested: 25.9 ha): proposed whole-tree mulching in situ of predominantly failed, checked or blighted and defoliating lodgepole pine (and small Sitka spruce component: extensively wind blown or blowing on ploughed/drained deep peat - occupying the gently undulating upland area between Glen Bernera (east) and the afforested west-facing coastal slopes above Kylerhea Narrows. Follow-on operation: single-pass excavator-based ridge/furrow smoothing and drain blocking to reinstate natural watertable and restore peatland function. 100% peatland restoration proposed i.e. 25.9 ha deforestation.</p> <p>"Ardintoul Glen" (gross area: 53.5 ha; p77 LP/SS/HL/OG/Burnt 39/12/1/28/20 i.e. afforested: 38.5 ha) proposed conventional shortwood harvesting to fell and remove timber from trees across the broad glen floor and immediate shallow flanks of the Allt na Daraich catchment. Follow-on operations to re-wet terrain as per 'Bernera Plateau' (above). The terrain includes several freer draining hillocks and ridges where Peatland Edge Woodland is anticipated to re-colonise 10.7 ha of gross area by natural regeneration. The proposal is therefore for 27.8 ha deforestation.</p> <p>"Ardintoul West Flank" (gross: 39.7 ha; p79 LP/SS/OG 61/12/27 i.e. afforested: 29.2 ha) proposed conventional shortwood harvesting to fell and remove timber from trees on loosely terraced plateaus on the western side of the Ardintoul glen. Similar re-wetting operations as per Bernera Plateau (above). Peatland Edge Woodland is expected to re-establish on 7.9 ha (restocking and nat regen to 20% of gross area). Proposed deforestation is therefore 21.3 ha deforestation.</p>

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Within the LMP's first five years (Phase 1: 2024 - 2028), FLS propose construction of two sections of NEW FOREST ROAD road within the Ardintoul/Bernera block - total length: 2,040 m, road corridor width: 15 m - accommodating a nominal 7 m-width Category 1 road formation: 2,040m x 15m = 3.1 ha. A map illustrating the two road proposals is appended to the rear of this form/appendix which comprises:-

310 m: re-application for approval of extension to 'Ardintoul East Spur' Cat 1 road - originally approved by 12-month FPA 10417 but not yet built (FPA expiry 19/5/24 but permission to be superseded by new LMP and associated approvals). The original FPA included an EIA determination request to which a No EIA Required decision was made. However the proposal has been included again here in case the compound effect of the two roading proposals alters this previous assessment/judgment.

1,730 m: new road spur 'Glen Bernera West' - giving permanent access and (timber stacking) road frontage within a productive timber coupe on the sloping west flank of Glen Bernera. N.B. a further 750 m temporary road is envisaged to be constructed during phase 2 - extending north from this new road's end (see LMP section 2.8). This will be subject of a further EIA determination request at LMP Mid Term Review. This temporary extension will allow vehicle access to enable restructuring of the coastal woodlands above the Kylerhea Narrows (currently has significant non-native plantation coupes to be replaced by native woodland).

Moyle QUARRY EXTENSION: proposed extension of current 0.68 ha quarry by 0.3 ha - providing access to additional aggregate as extensive road upgrade works within the last Plan period has used the majority of win-able stone. The quarry has been identified as the long term resource for all roading (new, maintenance and upgrades) within Moyle, Ratagan and Leachachan forest areas into the future (currently 28 km of forest road). A map illustrating the proposal is appended to the rear of this form/appendix.

Provide details on the existing land use and the environmental sensitivity of the area that is likely to be affected by the forestry project.

The PEATLAND RESTORATION areas were original ploughed and afforested with non-native conifers for timber production in the 1970's and - as soil and peat depth surveys have confirmed - are a mosaic of Tussocky and Non-Tussocky Molinia-, Eriophorum- and Calluna bog with pockets/hollows with Calluna blanket bog and some localised (drier) mounds/ridges with remnant wet heath and mire vegetation as ground cover where underlying soils are peaty surface water gleys. The restoration process aims to reinstate the functionality of these predominantly peat-based, tree-less open ground habitats set in a wider landscape of open ground hills/ridges and a patchwork of native broadleaved and non-native (productive) conifer woodlands.

The two NEW FOREST ROAD proposals are within existing non-native conifer plantations (1970's afforestation): 'Ardintoul East Spur' proposed extension follows a grassy ride through an imminent Phase 1 clearfell coupe (prescribed restock: productive non-native conifers) and the new 'Glen Bernera West' spur will be constructed to give a gently climbing roadline cut through the existing first rotation spruce/pine crop (restock: productive non-native conifers) upto its termination just below the furthest/highest afforested part of the coupe.

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The QUARRY EXTENSION proposal at Moyle is onto terrain currently following after 2019 clearfelling of first rotation (p1980's) Sitka spruce plantation situated around the current quarry (restocking: productive non-native conifers) and consequently of comparatively low environmental sensitivity.

No terrain involved in any of these proposals is on designated terrain or with resident or seasonal occupancy by scheduled or designated wildlife species. There are designated and/or sensitive species habituating other areas within the locality (e.g. badgers, white-tailed eagle, badger, otter, pine marten).

Description of Likely Significant Effects

Provide details on any likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment (resulting from the project itself or the use of natural resources) and the extent of the information available to assist you with this assessment.

As with previous PEATLAND RESTORATION projects in the area (on FLS' neighbouring Kinloch Hills landholding) use of a whole-tree-mulching-in-situ methodology has been chosen at 'Bernera Plateau' to avoid multiple machine passes over soft, wet ground (and with no or very limited brush material arising to 'float' machines) to otherwise recover felled trees - of negligible volume and biomass export value. A key sensitivity is the potential of nutrients released from decaying mulched material leaching into nearby watercourses with consequent potential impacts on downstream biota and ecology.

The 'Ardintoul Glen' and 'Ardintoul West Flank' peatland restoration areas have tree 'crops' with a greater component of recoverable timber and also more brush/lop and top material available to repetitively thatch brush mats for flotation of harvesting/forwarding vehicles. The use of tracked excavator-based machinery to undertake furrow smoothing and drain blocking on all three areas - and whole tree mulching at 'Bernera Plateau' - has the potential to compact wet soils and disturb peat-forming vegetation and disturb soils/peats in waterlogged hollows and mires. Ground smoothing of historically ploughed ground has the potential to deposit peaty sediments into drains and ultimately on into downstream watercourses.

There is potential for ground- and tree- nesting birds, small mammals, amphibia, otters and pine marten to be disturbed or driven from the restoration area by the operations if present at that time (some permanent and some seasonal presence possible).

FLS' Environment team staff have surveyed proposed NEW ROADLINES in respect of any species and habitats of conservation status and no such constraints have been identified within proposed roadline corridors. An golden eagle eyrie (inactive since 1999) lies within 1,500 m of the 'Ardintoul West Spur' extension proposal as does a regularly seasonally-active white-tailed sea eagle nest at 500 m from the nearest point of this new road. As a consequence construction of this road will be restricted to the Sept-Feb period outwith any raptor breeding-to-fledging periods if nests are occupied or likely to become so.

The QUARRY EXTENSION proposal is within an expansive and productive conifer (i.e. evergreen) forest. Local topography combined with the location of the Glenelg-Shiel Bridge public road directly above the in-forest quarry site mean that the quarry is currently fairly conspicuous and incongruous when viewed from a short section of this road near to the forest road junction/entrance. However this visibility is transient: offered only on account of the intervening clearfelled/fallowing ground between the quarry and public road vantage

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point(s) and where non-native conifer restocking is programmed after five year following and so will become obscured once more by establishing conifer woodland.

Include details of any consultees or stakeholders that you have contacted in order to make this assessment. Please include any relevant correspondence you have received from them.

All proposals are being submitted for consideration as part of the full revision of FLS' Glenelg Peninsula Land Management Plan. As such they have been discussed at local scoping meetings as well as proposals being notified to all statutory and local stakeholders as part of the Plan revision process.

Prior Notification is still to be made to the Highland Council for all described proposals (except 'Ardintoul East Spur' extension - notified at previous Plan amendment) in line with local authority regulations for forest development works including peatland restoration, and FLS will work within any conditions stipulated in confirmatory correspondence.

Mitigation of Likely Significant Effects

If you believe there are likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment, provide information on the opportunities you have taken to mitigate these effects.

PEATLAND RESTORATION

Use of comparatively light (maximum 8-tonne) excavator to undertake drain blocking and furrow smoothing - to minimise unwanted compaction of peat/soils and lower-plant-rich wet heath vegetation on both access routes and operation sites. This methodology has already proven successful on other peatland restoration sites on the FLS Kinloch Hills LMP area (Kyle Farm, 2019 and 2020; Coire nan Cuilean 2021/22; Bealach na Cruinn-Leum, 2022). Both the tree mulching and ground smoothing/drain blocking phases will be done as single pass operations to limit unnecessary ground disturbance and/or compaction. Ground smoothing of old furrow/ridges will only be undertaken after temporarily blocking main drains from the site to minimise sediment risk to downstream watercourses.

Operations will be undertaken during the habitually drier months (May-October) with operations paused during periods of prolonged inundation that result in surface water flooding and sediment flow risk and excessively waterlogged operating conditions.

All peatland restoration contract work will be let and supervised to rigorously enforce UK Forestry Standard with regard to re-fuelling and working within the vicinity of open water and on wet and waterlogged soils within the catchment of these watercourses.

Mulched tree chip material will be distributed to avoid any discrete piles of chips (with higher localised nutrient leaching potential) and all chips to be kept away from drain edges. A walkover of all ground within the peatland restoration area - and the access routes to and from the restoration areas - will be undertaken prior to operational works to ensure there are no resident, seasonally resident or scheduled species or associated features (i.e. otter couches/holt sites, pine marten dens) at risk. FLS routinely monitor the estate for presence and movement of scheduled raptor species and the nearest golden eagle eyrie is 2.5 km from the nearest peatland restoration area and 1.2 km from a habitual sea eagle nest site.

NEW ROADING & QUARRY EXTENSION

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UKFS Forests and Water guidance, SEPA regulation and the Timber Transport Forum's Design and Use of DStructural Pavement of Unsealed Roads will be used and adhered to in all aspects of new road and quarry extension construction and will mitigate the most potentially significant negative environmental effects of development: diffuse pollution. Surface water run-off from constructed and impermeable surfaces will also be designed to channel water to settlement ponds and soakaways (i.e. not directly connecting to natural watercourses) to also limit possible sedimentation risk over the longer term. The provision of two new constructed roads will reduce the need for ATVs (for forest and deer management) and harvesting/haulage machinery to repetitively cross long distances over unprotected soils and side slopes in these areas - thereby reducing the longer term potential for consequent diffuse pollution from routine access for forest management operations. Expanding the current quarry at Moyle will reduce the requirement to source and transport stone aggregate from greater distances in the future with all the associated impacts of longer distance haulage and associated public road wear/tear and traffic increase.

Sensitive Areas

Please indicate if any of the proposed forestry project is within a sensitive area. Choose the sensitive area from the drop down below and give the area of the proposal within it.

Sensitive Area	Area
Deep peat soil	132.2
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	

Property Details

Property Name:	Glenelg Peninsula LMP		
Business Reference Number:	n/a	Main Location Code:	n/a
Grid Reference: (e.g. NH 234 567)		Nearest town or locality:	Kyle of Lochalsh
Local Authority:	The Highland Council		

Owner's Details

Title:	Mr	Forename:	Christopher	
Surname:	Marsh			
Organisation:	Forestry and Land Scotland	Position:	Planning Forester	
Primary Contact Number:		Alternative Contact Number:		
Email:	chris.marsh@forestryandland.gov.scot			
Address:	FLS North Region Office, Tower Road, Smithton Inverness			
Postcode:	IV2 7NL	Country:	Scotland	
Is this the correspondence address?	Yes			

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Agent's Details			
Title:		Forename:	
Surname:			
Organisation:		Position:	
Primary Contact Number:		Alternative Contact Number:	
Email:			
Address:			
Postcode:		Country:	
Is this the correspondence address?	Select...		

Office Use Only	
GLS Ref number:	