



Rhu And Shandon Community <rhuandshandoncc@gmail.com>

Commercial Forest Creation at Letrault and Stuckenduff

Emma.Gray@forestry.gov.scot <Emma.Gray@forestry.gov.scot>

21 December 2023 at 17:41

To: secretary@rhuandshandoncommunity.org

Cc: Cameron.Maxwell@forestry.gov.scot

Jean

Thank you for your email and letter of 17th December 2023

To address your concerns in the letter:

Can you describe how public access has been prevented? We couldn't see any obvious impediments to access when we visited the site.

1. Archaeology

The concerns raised around archaeology have now addressed through discussions between Scottish Forestry and Scottish Woodlands and some further archaeological advice obtained by Scottish Woodlands. We're satisfied that all the archaeological features have now been identified and appropriately buffered to protect them from operations.

2. Water

Scottish Forestry is satisfied that the ground preparation and establishment of woodland on the site will not bring about an increased risk of flooding. Although I appreciate it may look like linear cultivation from a distance, in fact the ground preparation carried out is by continuous mounding. This does not create a linear channel and will not increase water flow down the hill.

Mature woodlands can take up significant volumes of water and it is likely that the site will become drier rather than wetter over time. Conifer woodlands take up and transpire more water, because of their generally greater size and the fact that the trees are physiologically active for most of the year. In a wider sense, there is some evidence that suggests woodlands provide natural flood management. The role of woodland in flood control: a landscape perspective (forestresearch.gov.uk)

For the road construction (and quarries) environmental impact assessment, Scottish Forestry is in the final stages of assessing this proposal and is speaking to Scottish Woodlands in relation to the outstanding issues.

From the due diligence phase, peatland was assessed and removed from the planting scheme as per the UK Forestry Standard. This is something we will check on as the ground preparation works progress.

We visited the top reservoir, which is clear as is the water running into it. The burn adjacent to the recently felled larch is also running clear and the harvesting operations have been carried out to a good standard.

We will re-visit this area in January.

Insecticide isn't used in new woodland creation as there isn't a weevil presence on the ground to protect against.

3. Movement of forestry vehicles, construction materials and timber

There is an agreed timber transport management plan in conjunction with Argyll & Bute Council and Scottish Woodlands: Highlandman's Wood (argyll-bute.gov.uk). Scottish Forestry dealt with the principle of the appropriateness of timber transport when assessing the woodland creation proposal itself. We asked Scottish Woodlands to provide detailed information on the likely volumes and timings of timber produced from the new woodland to assess these in conjunction with likely future timber volumes from Highlandman's wood. We were satisfied that the additional timber volumes would be accommodated within the existing restrictions and conditions applied under the current timber transport management plan. This is in part because, timber from the new woodland will be harvested over different time periods from Highlandman's wood.

Scottish Forestry, through the Scottish Government's Strategic Timber Transport Fund, has provided funding to investigate the feasibility of an alternative timber haul route for both the new woodland and Highlandman's wood.

The woodland creation proposal approved by Scottish Forestry has not changed and Scottish Woodlands are now carrying out the operations to deliver that. Scottish Forestry have inspected the ground preparation works being carried out and will continue to monitor the works as they progress and act on any non-compliant practices should they occur.

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4. Tree species selection

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The selection of species has been approved through the EIA and FGS process (2021). The broadleaf/native component of the proposal, will use the numerous native species you mentioned. The tree species planted are chosen for their appropriateness for the woodland type that is being created. We provided a general breakdown of the planting on the site in our email of 7 May 21.

Requested next steps

Scottish Forestry approved this woodland creation proposal in 2021 and there has been no change in the project. All the work has to be carried out to the UK Forestry Standard and we will be visiting the site periodically to check that the work is being carried out to that standard.

Kind regards, Emma

Emma Gray

Operations Manager

Argyll, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park

Perth & Argyll Conservancy

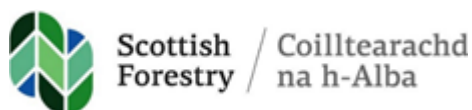
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Scottish Forestry is the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulation.

From: Secretary of Rhu and Shandon Community Council <secretary@rhuandshandoncommunity.org>
Sent: Sunday, December 17, 2023 11:17 PM
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Subject: Commercial Forest Creation at Letrault and Stuckenduff

Please find attached our current thoughts on the situation at Letrault and Stuckenduff.

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