

Yorkshire Forest District

Goathland Forest Plan

FP 24

2015

Outgang Road Pickering North Yorkshire YO18 7EL 0300 067 4300

FOREST ENTERPRISE - Application for Forest Plan Approvals in England



Forest Enterprise - Property

Forest District:	Yorkshire
Woodland or property name:	Goathland
Nearest town, village or locality:	Goathland
OS Grid reference:	NZ 819020
Local Authority district/unitary Authority:	North York Moors National Park

Areas for approval

	Conifer	Broadleaf	Open
Felling			
Restocking		3.0	
Continuous Cover	3.0		

- 1. I apply for Forest Plan approval for the property described above and in the enclosed Forest Plan.
- 2. I confirm that the pre consultation, carried out and documented in the Consultation Record attached, incorporated those stakeholders which the FC agreed must be included. Where it has not been possible to resolve specific issues associated with the plan to the satisfaction of consultees, this is highlighted in the Consultation Record.
- 3. I confirm that the proposals contained in this plan comply with the UK Forestry Standard.
- 4. I undertake to obtain any permission necessary for the implementation of the approved Plan.

Date of Approval	Date approval ends
Date	
District	Area
Forest Management Director	Area Field Manager
Signed	Signed



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Goathland

69.6 Hectares

Period of Plan: 2015 - 2024

1. Background

Goathland Forest is part of a network of forests managed by Forest Enterprise (FE), Yorkshire Forest District, located within the North Riding Beat. It is situated 1 kilometre west of Goathland village and is bounded by farmland to the west and the Murk Esk and West Beck watercourses to the east. It sits within the North York Moors National Park.

The woods were initially acquired by the Forestry Commission in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Planting of then unplanted land took place mainly between 1958 and 1963. Established areas of larch and other conifers were included in the purchase as well as areas of semi-natural broadleaved woodland. This is a freehold property.

2. Describing the Site

2.1 Geology and Soils (FP Map 01)

Underlying bedrock geology is predominantly sedimentary sandstones, siltstones, mudstones from a variety of formations, formed in the Jurassic Period. The presence of ironstone from the Eller Beck Formation points towards the 18th and 19th century iron ore mining within the woods and across the locality.

Superficial glacial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravels of the Quaternary Period can be found along the upper margins.

The soil types have a simple pattern. Brown earths are to be found on the higher, more freely drained slopes while the lower slopes and valley bottoms are surface water gleys. There are a number of areas of rock and scree both geological and as a result of past quarrying. Based on Forest Research Ecological Site Classification, soils have a typically 'moist' soil moisture regime and 'rich' soil nutrient status providing a wide range of broadleaf and conifer species that can be considered as very suitable or suitable for these woods.



2.2 Tree Species (FP Map - 02 and 03)

Deciduous larch and broadleaf species groups are co-dominant across the woods, each accounting for 28% of the planted area followed by non-deciduous spruce (16%), other conifer (16%) and pine (12%).

There are no permanent areas of open space or other land uses within the woods and age structure is limited to recorded planting from 1947 to 1978, although individual specimens or small groups of significant broadleaf trees probably date back to the early 1900's.

2.3 Wind Damage

Generally, wind hazard is not a limiting factor as the woods sit within a sheltered valley and have a Wind Hazard Classification of 1 or 2. However, localised wind blow is occurring on shallow-rooting spruce stands along the exposed western boundary where springs create waterlogged conditions.

2.4 Landscape (Photographic montage)

The woods are situated in the 'Central Valley – Lower Esk' landscape character area¹ within the North York Moors National Park. Landcover is complex and varied and comprises a mixture of farmland with a high density of broadleaved woodland and areas of coniferous and mixed plantations. Elevation ranges from 65 metres in the valley bottom, rising to 155 metres along the upper boundary of Carr Wood.

Their boundaries are generally curvilinear or straight for only short distances and fit in well with the surrounding field and land-use patterns. The woods are an integral part of a larger landscape of forest and farm land.

Being on east-facing sloping ground, the woods are highly visible from the surrounding area; the high number of Public Rights of Way and the presence of well-used tourist routes and attractions underline the woods' visual importance.

2.5 People and Community

There is no formal provision for recreation across these woods although it is dedicated as Open Access land through the Countryside Rights of Way Act (2000). This is a popular forest for residents of nearby towns and villages to drive to for recreational walking and dog walking with visitors seen on most days. The woods are also situated within an important tourist centre being

¹ North York Moors National Park Landscape Character Assessment 2003



close to popular visitor attractions including the North York Moors Railway and Mallyan Spout Waterfall.

Although these are freehold woods, there is limited potential to develop recreational use for people and businesses where these do not conflict with physical constraints (i.e. topography) and the plans' aims and objectives.

2.6 Natural Heritage (FP Map - 04)

Goathland Forest is important for a wide range of flora, fauna and bio-diverse habitats. Statutory sites within the forest include Beck Hole Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), important for a range woodland and grassland habitats. Details of the citation and associated features can be found at http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk. Collectively, more than half the woodland area is classified as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) or Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

A complex network of streams, water courses and drains pass through the forest, supporting an increasing area of riparian habitat. These sites typically support a more diverse woodland structure where native broadleaf tree species and ground flora can naturally regenerate. The Murk Esk is currently classed as 'Good' overall as reported under the Water Framework Directive, whereas West Beck is yet to be assessed.

2.7 Cultural Heritage (FP Map 04)

The Forest District maintains an extensive Historic Environment Record (HER) in conjunction with the North York Moors National Park Authority (NYMNPA) and all identified features are considered during the forest plan process. Of particular note in Goathland's woods are the related iron ore workings in Coombs and Carr Wood. These sites are large enough and of significant importance to ensure any operational impact on forest design is given due consideration within the plan.

There are no scheduled monuments within the woods.

3. Describing the Project

3.1 Project Brief

- increase the proportion of native broadleaf cover, particularly across areas of PAWS, areas of high conservation value including riparian zones and along steep-sided scarp slopes
- manage natural and cultural heritage sites in accordance with their requirements as per agreed management plans
- increase the diversity of the age structure by use of appropriate small-scale felling interventions.



3.2 Objectives

- Maintain the land within our stewardship under UKWAS certification, to be measured by independent surveillance audits.
- Maintain and improve the cultural heritage value of these woods, to be measured by Historic England, North York Moors National Park Authority, Non-Government Organisations and FC systems accordingly.
- Improve the resilience of the natural environment and realise the potential of these woods for nature and wildlife, to be measured by Natural England, North York Moors National Park Authority and FC systems accordingly.
- Maintain the woodlands contribution to the wooded character within the NYMNPA Lower Esk Valley character type, through the maintenance and development of structural and species diversity that responds to landform. To be measured by the sub-compartment database and fixed-point photography.
- Encourage communities to become involved across these woods, its management and direction though consultation in planning and participation in volunteering, to be measured by stakeholder engagement.

3.3 Constraints

- Physical access, both to the county highway road network and within woods, is very restricted due to a lack of formal infrastructure and steep-sided terrain likely to challenge future management.
- The potential threat of *Phytophthora ramorum* on the highly visible component of larch could have a significant impact on the woodlands contribution across the local landscape.

3.4 Implementation

3.4.1 Conservation

Protect and, where appropriate, enhance all known sites of archaeological and ecological importance:

Archaeological sites

All sites, regardless of their designation, will receive the same level of care during the planning and execution of forest operations. The operational planning system will ensure they are recognised and the proper measures for their protection are in place before work begins. This planning system also ensures that, where possible, opportunities to enhance the condition of archaeological interest are taken during routine forest work. For Goathland this could include:



Working through the NYMNPA 'This Exploited Land HLF project', there are significant
opportunities to extend our knowledge of industrial heritage and to conserve and enhance
at-risk features.

Ecological sites

All work sites are surveyed prior to any operations being carried out, both to audit the accuracy of information already held on record and to identify opportunities to further improve the ecological value of the woodlands. For Goathland this will include:

- Managing Veteran trees and PAWS as set out in 'Ancient Woodland on the Forestry Commission Estate in England (March 2002)' and 'FEE Operations Instructions No. 3 (rev.2012), Ancient Woodlands'. See Appendix 2 for Forest Research, Ecological Site Classification NVC Woodland type analysis for ranking of appropriate woodland types that match conditions at Goathland.
- Increase and improve the deadwood resource as set out in 'Managing deadwood in forests and woodlands Practice Guide (2012)'. Areas of high ecological value across which deadwood resources could be encouraged include SSSI's and riparian zones. The woods already have a high proportion of standing and fallen deadwood and the potential to increase this through future management is significant.
- Maintaining watercourses in target condition as identified through the Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessment. The implementation of low impact systems will avoid significant lengths of watercourse being felled at any one time. Targeted thinning and group-felling along heavily shaded riparian buffers will increase light levels and improve the development of native ground flora.

Minimum Intervention - Natural Reserves

Natural Reserves are sites that are predominantly woodland which have been set aside where biodiversity is the primary objective. As far as reasonably practicable this is a permanent designation and will be managed on a minimum intervention system.

Although there are currently no Natural Reserves designated at Goathland, 11.65 hectares are designated as 'candidate' natural reserve. These sites will be reviewed over the lifetime of this plan with a view to moving them towards Minimum Intervention - Natural Reserves at some point in the future.

Long Term Retentions (LTR)

These are stable stands or clumps of trees that are important to retain for landscape or biodiversity reasons and will be retained beyond their economic rotation but still managed under an appropriate silvicultural system i.e. thinning may still be carried out.

Through this plan 5.23 hectares at Rhea's Plantation are designated LTR.

Invasive species



Priority will be given to control and progressively remove invasive species (e.g. Western hemlock) across Ancient Woodland Sites and other sites identified as being of High Conservation Value.

3.4.2 Timber Harvesting

Due to limitations of the site through topography, lack of roading infrastructure and ecological sensitivities, conventional harvesting for timber production would not be appropriate for these woods. Small-scale thinning and group-felling to recycle will be considered as a management option where this will achieve the plans objectives. Timber extraction will be significantly limited due to access issues throughout the site. These operations will be planned and controlled to ensure due regard for all objectives of management at Goathland.

Where thinning to recycle will create barriers to natural regeneration and ground flora recovery (FC Practice Guide – Restoration of native woodland on ancient woodland sites), alternative methods such as chemical thinning will be considered.

3.4.3 Landscape

The woods at Goathland lie within the North York Moors National Park, a designated landscape. As set out in section 2.4, the woods at Goathland lie within a complex landscape and are highly visible within an area important for tourism.

Middle-distance views are experienced from vehicles travelling along the minor road network and near-distance views by walkers and horse riders using the numerous rights of way within the forest and wider landscape. On a scale of low/medium/high, landscape sensitivity is considered to be high.

Although the woods are dominated by evergreen conifer species, there is a high proportion of deciduous broadleaf and larch species that make a positive contribution to the mixed-woodland landscape. Although a little over 10% of the woodland area was replanted with broadleaf species in the late 1970's, there is limited structural diversity.

Potential infection by *Phytophthora ramorum* on the larch component within these woods and surrounding locality would have a significant negative landscape impact.

Future small-scale felling and thinning operations are unlikely to have a significant impact across the wider landscape, although near views from within the forest will benefit from improving canopy structure and developing semi-natural ground flora.

3.5 Plan (FP Map 06)

The design concept map shows the key factors we need to address. These are taken forward and used to form the basis of a practical plan set out in the fell and restock maps.



3.6 Areas (FP Maps 07 and 08)

3.6.1 Breakdown of felling areas within the period of the plan.

As there are no specific felling coupes within this plan, the proposed felling map found in the Forest Plan folder will only show areas where small-scale, group-felling as part of Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) will be carried out.

Felling Continuous Cover	Area - hectares	% of total area	Projected volume (m³)
Es Illiano	A		Desired

^{*} Due to adverse access issues (see 3.4.2) felled timber is likely to be left in situ to recycle.

3.6.2 Breakdown of constituent areas.

A Future Habitat and Species map showing the location and detail of the constituent areas can be found in the Forest Plan folder.

Habitat type (ba on principal spec established)	ised Area – hectares cies	% age of total area
Conifer	12.63	18
Broadleaf	56.97	82
Heathland, and plan	ned	
open areas		

3.7 Methods / Forest Operations

3.7.1 Planning

Before any major forest operations are undertaken an "Operational Site Assessment" is completed. This document details the proposed work and outlines all known environmental, social and operational considerations. The "Operational Site Assessment" then becomes an important reference document during the planning phase, at the pre commencement meeting before scheduled works begin and for supervisory visits during the operation. The "Operational Site Assessment" is kept along with other documents relating to the operation in the main office. Specific operational activity will be managed and progress monitored as part of our existing contract management systems.



For routine maintenance operations (e.g. fencing, ride mowing, survey work etc.) the Yorkshire District policy on timing of operations to minimise wildlife disturbance will be followed.

3.7.2 Standards

All operations within the forest will be carried out in accordance with the certification standard for the U.K. Woodland Assurance Standard and the U.K Forestry Standard 2011 i.e. Forests and biodiversity, Forests and climate change, Forests and historic environment, Forests and landscape, Forests and people, Forests and soils, Forests and Water.

3.7.3 Harvesting

See 3.4.2. Forestry Commission staff will monitor work through regular site visits to ensure all guidelines and contract conditions are adhered to.

Clearfell V's Continuous Cover Forestry

There are no intentions to manage any part of Goathland Forest through a high-forest, clearfell silvicultural system. Instead, selective thinning and small-scale group felling as part of an irregular shelterwood silvicultural system, will enable the gradual transformation from a predominantly conifer to site-native, broadleaf dominant woodland.

3.7.4 Haulage

See section 3.4.2. As only small-scale thinning/felling operations are likely to be carried out within these woods, it is extremely unlikely that we will be hauling any timber out of Goathland.

As in our other woodland blocks we will continue discussions with the relevant Highways Authority to agree haulage routes and discuss annual tonnages.

All timber traffic will be managed in line with the Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice, Fourth Edition (2012), which aims to improve the safety and environmental standards of the timber haulage industry.

3.7.5 Restocking

Broadleaf

The areas of PAWS at Goathland will be restored to the appropriate range of native woodland types where this is influenced by underlying soil nutrient and moisture regimes. The impact of *Chalara* on ash natural regeneration will be monitored during the life of the plan. The acceptance of other site-native species, and up to 20% by canopy cover of 'naturalised' species i.e. sycamore and beech will be considered as an acceptable alternative to achieve PAWS restoration.



On non-PAWS sites planned for conversion to broadleaf woodland, we will accept natural regeneration of both native and 'naturalised' species.

Species regeneration on PAWS areas

More favourable Ash/Alder (lower slopes) Ash/Oak/Birch/Rowan (mid to upper slopes) Beech/Sycamore Larch Pine Fir/Spruce Hemlock Less favourable

Natural regeneration in PAWS woodland will be assessed and the risk it poses to the objectives of the plan considered. Where densely shading or invasive species threaten the native woodland community (i.e. Western hemlock, rhododendron), it will be removed as soon as practicable.

Conifer

There are no proposals to actively restock with conifer species across these woods. However, natural regeneration of appropriate conifer species will be accepted across those parts of the wood that will continue as conifer-dominant woodland and as a minor component in future broadleaf-dominant woodland unless it poses a risk to other objectives within the plan.

4. Monitoring

4.1 Continuous Cover

Continuous cover areas will be monitored using low key monitoring techniques such as transects, fixed-point photography and visual walk through as stated in OGB4 - Plant Density, surveys and monitoring. If natural regeneration does not achieve the required objectives, enrichment planting with appropriate site-native species will be used.

4.2 Forest Plan

All forest plans are formally reviewed as part of a "5-year mid term review" and the plan's aims and objectives and its success at achieving those aims and objectives. This plan will be formally reviewed in 2019. This time period can be shortened if circumstances change significantly or if parts of the plan prove detrimental to the overall aims and objectives.

^{*}Operational Guidance Booklet



5. Determination of Impact Significance and Mitigation

5.1 Native Woodland

Threats to our native woodlands can be immediate and absolute (e.g. loss to infrastructure or development) or slower and more subtle (e.g. shading from conifer species or invasive species such as Rhododendron). There are also more widespread environmental changes, such as diffuse pollution and climate change, which may threaten in the long term. (www.forestry.gov.uk/keepersoftime)

Major threats to ancient and native woodland are:

- Climate change and fragmentation
- Excessive browsing and grazing by deer & livestock
- · Inadequate or inappropriate management
- Invasive and problem species
- Diffuse pollution
- Loss

Through this plan, we will continue to apply local and national policy and best practice guidance for the management and development of our native woodlands.

5.2 Other Objectives

Concentrate on developing habitat-rich riparian corridors with marshes, meadows, woodlands, trees in farmlands. These would pass through both woodland and farmland.

(G. Peterken – Native Woodland Development in the North York Moors and Howardian Hills)

We will continue to apply local and national policy and best practice guidance to the management of riparian corridors across Goathland. This will improve and enhance the habitat network within the woodlands and benefit protected species. Continuing development of both species and structural diversity will benefit habitats for priority woodland bird species throughout the woodland.

Appendix 1- Goathland Forest Plan Consultation Record

Historic England

29/09/2015

22/10/2015

Date Contacted	Date Response Received	Issues Raised	Forest District Response to Issues
sultees			
29/02/2015		Draft proposals sent for informal consultation.	
	23/10/2015	How will open ground be created/managed and where.	Response provided 29/10/2015 detailing where temporary OG will be created/managed.
29/02/2015		Draft proposals sent for informal consultation.	
11/09/2015		Draft proposals sent for informal consultation.	
	15/09/2015	Request for copy of FEE OPS3, Ancient Woodland guidance note.	Copy emailed 17/09/2015
30/09/2015		Attended NYMNPA Joint Parish Council Forum at which ppt. given on Forest Plans using Goathland as an example. Senior NPA officers and Planning Committee members also attended.	
	Contacted sultees 29/02/2015 29/02/2015 11/09/2015	Contacted Response Received sultees 29/02/2015 23/10/2015 11/09/2015 15/09/2015	Contacted Response Received Sultees

Draft proposals sent for informal consultation.

No comments as there are currently no

scheduled monuments across the property.

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Consultee	Date Contacted	Date Response Received	Issues Raised	Forest District Response to Issues
Neighbours				
Egton Estate	01/06/2015		Project brief and objectives sent to inform process of Forest Plan renewal.	
Mr A Fletcher, Julian Park Farm	14/07/2015		Project brief and objectives sent to inform process of Forest Plan renewal.	
The Occupant, Thackside Farm	14/07/2015		Project brief and objectives sent to inform process of Forest Plan renewal.	
Others				
Yorkshire Forest District staff	07/05/2015		Overview of previous plan performance provided, draft objectives and issues/opportunities agreed for plan renewal.	A range of internal operational issues were discussed including the issue of plant health, in particular the potential impact of <i>Phytophthora</i> .
Non Governm	nental Organis	sations		
Environment Agency	29/09/2015		Draft proposals sent for informal consultation.	

Consultee	Date Contacted	Date Response Received	Issues Raised Forest District Response to Issues
Community G	Groups		
Goathland Parish Council	01/06/2015		Draft proposals sent for informal consultation.
	30/09/2015		Attended NYMNPA Joint Parish Council Forum at which ppt. given on Forest Plans using Goathland as an example. Senior NPA officers and Planning Committee members also attended.

Appendix 2 – ESC, [Goathland, NZ820018] NVC Woodland Type Analysis

Woodland Type		alysis Summary					actors		
	Suitability	Lim. Factors	Rank	AT5	СТ	DAMS	MD	SMR	SNR
W1 Sallow with marsh bedstraw		- SMR							
W2 Alder with common reed		- SMR							
W3 Sallow with bottle sedge		- SMR							
W4 Birch with purple moor-grass		- SNR							
W5 Alder with tussock-sedge		- SMR							
W6 Alder with stinging nettle		-	2						
W7 Alder-ash with bottle sedge		-	2						
W8 Mixed broadleaved with dog's mercury		- SMR SNR							
W9 Mixed broadleaved with dog's mercury		- MD							
W10 Mixed broadleaved with bluebell/wild hyacinth		-	1						
W11 Oak-birch with bluebell/wild hyacinth		-	2						
W12 Beech with dog's mercury		- SMR SNR							
W13 Yew		- SMR SNR							
W14 Beech with bramble		- SMR							
W15 Beech with wavy hair-grass		- SMR SNR							
W16 Oak-birch with bilberry/blaeberry		- SMR SNR							
W17 Oak-birch with bilberry/blaeberry		- MD SNR							
W18 Scots pine with heather		- SNR							
W19 Juniper with wood sorrel		- SNR							
W20 Salix lapponum-Luzula sylvatica		- AT MD SNR							







