Castle Hill Forest Design Plan

Introduction

The Castle Hill forest design plan covers 1477 hectares of the forest to the North and East of Kielder village. The terrain of the area is a slope generally to the west, with the lower slopes dominating views to the East of Kielder village and castle. The wind hazard class of the plan area also reflects the variation in altitude, the lower slopes presenting more stable sites. Opportunities therefore exist to employ continuous cover forestry on the lower slopes, though the high wind hazard class 5 of the upper slopes limits the ability to manage crops other than through clearfelling and restocking. The majority of crops are growing well (achieving yield class 12), and are a mixture of younger second rotation crops, and first rotation crops of which the majority are at or past the date of economic maturity. The following table lays out the main features driving the revision of the design plan, and their influence on the felling and restocking plans

Achievements since last revision

1. Kielder Burn and Blakethin Lakeshore : The Kidder Burn and Blakethin Lake Shore represent more stable site types within Kidder, mainly WHC 4 with some more stable areas. Managed as continuous cover on the felling plan.
2. Ancient monuments : the following scheduled monuments are located in the plan area Gibbie’s Knowe (smnr 25191), Devil Leapfull (smnr251 06), (Jowansburn settlement (smnr 25112), Deadman Cairn (smr 25105), Hobbs Knowe (smnr 1111), Butterhaugh (smnr 25107) scheduled ancient monuments. Since the last revision the crop surrounding Gibbies Knowe a pre Roman a defended settlement have been harvested and a buffer of open land left at restocking
3. Moorland Boundary : an element of open woodland is being established at the forest open moor interface
4. Ancient semi natural (ASNW) and ancient replanted woodland (PAW)

Alterations to felling and restocking proposals

Felling proposal : some significant rescheduling the timing of some felling coupes though change in coupe boundaries minor

Restocking proposal : Redistribute No significant change to the restocking proposals
**Gibbie's Knowe**
The first rotation crop around Gibbie's Knowe has now been cleared and a greater buffer to be left at restocking with broadleaf and open space to the North.

**Ancient woodland site**
Maintain and develop native species on or adjacent to the ancient woodland site by the process of species selection during thinning operations.

**Continuous cover**
The less exposed sites within the plan are together with previous thinning history provide the potential for employing continuous cover forestry.

**Moorland boundary**
Mitigate the transition of moorland to high forest, through the introduction of open space and open woodland at restocking.

**Kielder recreation zone**
The forest surrounding Kielder castle and village is an important feature in maintaining the feel of the area. Look to maintain large trees in the landscape.
Windfirm boundaries of the first rotation tend to run straight up the slope. Limiting options to interlock the coupes, however, the restocking of the second will provide greater options for future felling coupe boundaries.
View From Skyspace

Felling Proposals

Restocking Proposals

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