Humble Hill Forest Design Plan

Introduction

The Humble Hill forest design plan covers 2918 hectares in the centre of the southern section of Kielder Forest. The terrain of the area is generally of rolling hills though becoming more pronounced towards the northern section of the plan area. The area is not dominant in any external views or from any major view point. The wind hazard class of the plan area is generally high (the majority being design as class 5), opportunities to employ continuous cover forestry are therefore limited. The majority of crops are growing well (achieving yield class 12), and are a mixture of young second rotation crops, and first rotation crops. The majority of first rotation crops are at or approaching 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 plan.

Achievement since last revision

1. Border mires : SSSI border mires that where afforested have now been clear of forest cover drains blocked and cleared of any natural regeneration. All are now in unfavorable recovering condition and meet the Public Service Agreement (PSA) 2010 target. The mire and a minimum of a 30m buffer will be maintained as open space habitat
2. Moorland Boundary : an element of open woodland is being established at the forest open moor interface
3. Ancient monuments : The following scheduled ancient monuments fall with the plan area Medieval shielings West of Paddaburn crags (smr 25120), Two medieval shells NNW of Tom’s Craggs (smr 25121)and Woolfe Kennel Cave natural cavity utilised as a shieling (smr 25122) no works have been carried out since the last plan review
4. Right of way are being left unplanted at restocking, the width of the unplanted land along rights of way will be varied, but never less than 3m for footpaths and 4m for bridleways. Trees planted adjacent to public rights of way will be pruned as required to maintain free access.

Altering to felling and restocking proposals

Felling proposals : Some minor changes to coupe boundaries

Restocking proposals : Redistribute the restocking of Sitka spruce and other conifer in light of the moratorium on restocking with Lodgepole pine due to the disease Red Band Needle Blight.
Through mire clearance, diversifying the forest edge, the introductions of a proportion of open woodland, and transient open space through clearfelling. Look to provide a forest structure with the potential to support a black grouse.

Border Mines
Clear the former extent of the mines at clearfelling and leave open through subsequent solutions.

Legend

Concept

- Early 1930s planting
- Upper forest margin
- Border mines
- Main watercourses

The main watercourses running through the Forest form the main structural feature. Additional open space and broadleaf planting can emphasise these. Conifer regeneration will be allowed in small pockets so long as this does not affect the overall visual and ecological integrity.

Early Planting
A small area of 1930s planting exist on a relatively stable site and provide an opportunity to silviculte the area to minimum intervention.

Scale
1:30,000

Date
Jan 2011