

**Land Management Plan Brief
Lochaber Forest District (LFD)
LMP Unit: CAMISKY
Date: 31/3/16**



**Planning Team:
Lead Christina Tracey
Henry Dobson (environment)
John Jackson (deer mgt)
Iain Stewart (harvesting)
Jeff Hancox (roads)
Jim MacIntosh (restocking)
Sam Wilson/Sarah Hood (GIS support)**

It's important to keep people informed about management proposals affecting their local forests.

Forestry Commission forests are independently certified as being responsibly managed. We're regularly audited against the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard – the standard endorsed in the UK by the international Forest Stewardship Council® and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

Keeping in touch with our stakeholders is an important part of the standard. We welcome comments on these proposals.



The mark of
responsible forestry



Description

The Camisky Land Management Plan (LMP) area lies in the Great Glen between the river Lochy and the A82 to the north east of Fort William. It comprises 4 separate woodlands totalling 980ha previously called the Great Glen Cattle Ranch forest.

Camisky = 756ha
Dalvenvie = 154ha
Tomacharich = 39ha
Hill Farm Wood = 31ha

The land was purchased in 1975 from the Great Glen Cattle Ranch. 2 small areas sold in 2001 to the then North of Scotland Water authority for infrastructure improvements.

The forest is predominantly conifer plantation woodland. Felling of the first rotation crop has begun along with the associated restocking. Wind damage for the remaining crop is significant and some of the LP stands are suffering from extensive Dothostroma needle blight attack.

The forest area also contains Coille a'Cham Uisge, an oak and birch woodland on an ancient woodland site. There are areas of deep peat and bog woodland within the forest, particularly in the smaller woodland areas.

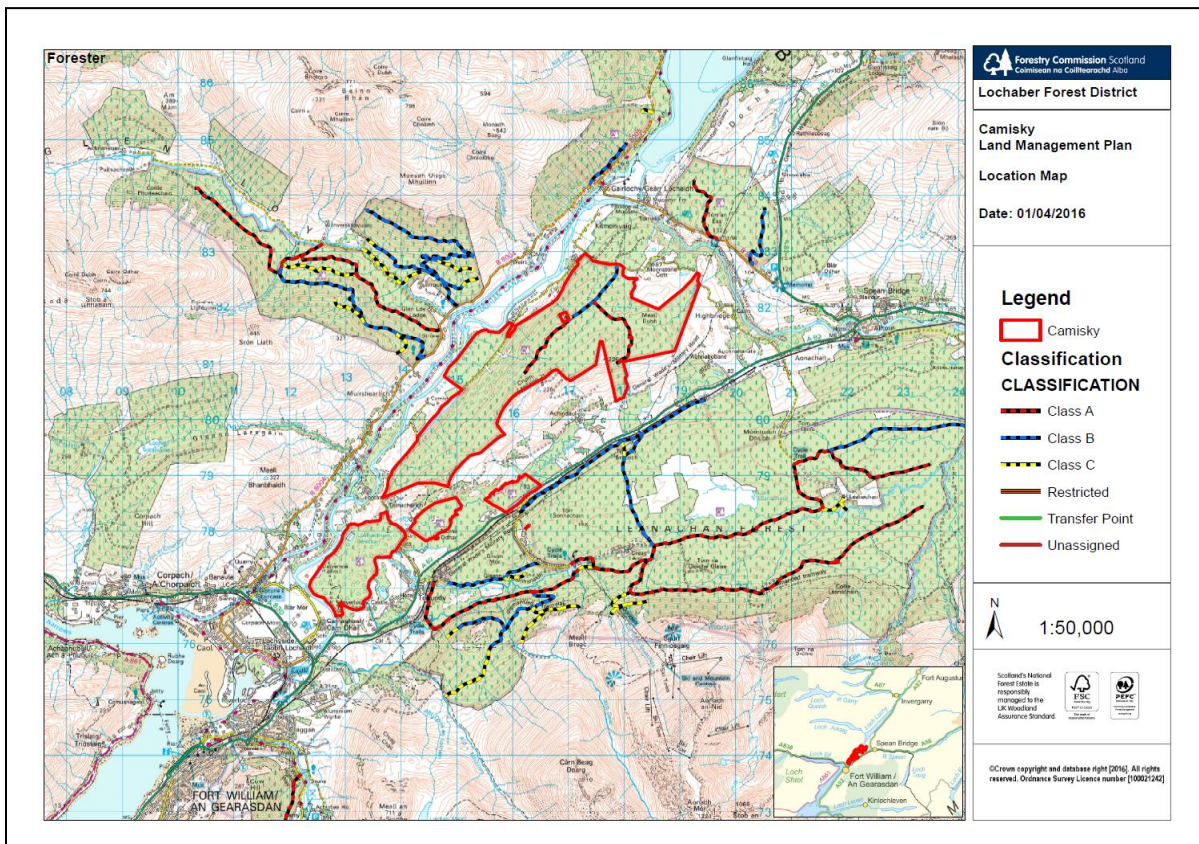
Climatically the forest is in one of the more favourable locations of Lochaber FD with DAMS scores below 16. More the half the forest area has an accumulated temperature above 1200 degree days and very little less than 1000. Moisture deficit is not an issue! The level of windblow in the forest does not reflect the DAMS scores and further investigation with research will be carried out.

Aspect of the main forest is predominantly NW facing moderate slopes. The 3 outlying woods along with Camisky riverside are all on flat valley or floodplain terrain.

The soils of around 75% of the forest are classed as very poor nutritionally and 20% of the area classed as very wet and a further 30% as wet. Further investigation of the potential of these poor soils to carry another rotation of productive conifers will be undertaken.

This is a revision of a plan approved in 2006.

Location map



Social Factors:

Dalvenvie is designated as a WIAT woodland although no formal access provision has been made. Access to the forest is on an informal basis from the track at Carrs Corner and off the minor public road at Tomacharich. The track and the riparian corridor are favoured routes.

Access is also taken through the Camisky riverside coupe by the River Lochy angling association

Despite its location in the Great Glen Camisky is not a prominent feature of the landscape when viewed from the A82 and only a small length of the northern edge is visible from the Commandos' memorial. The forest does, however, form the foreground to the views of the Ben Nevis and Aonach Mor massif from the B8004 to the north and at various points on the Caledonian canal path.

Holiday cabins neighbour the woodland at Tomacharich and there are a number of private houses adjacent to the forest boundary. The forest lies within the Inverlochry and Torlundy Community Council area.

Environmental Factors:

Coille a'Cham Uisge, c42ha oak and birch woodland with a further 35ha of plantation on an ancient woodland site (PAWS) in the main forest area. Dalvenvie also has 14.5ha of mixed conifer and birch on an ancient woodland site.

Open bog areas occur in all the woodlands with work currently being undertaken to restore the natural bog habitat within Dalvenvie under the Peatland Action Fund. There is scope for further bog restoration and the creation of bog woodland. Other open ground is associated with management rides and roads.

There are a couple of small lochans within the forest with reasonable riparian buffer areas. Further work is needed to make sure the riparian areas for the Rivers Lochy and Lundy are robust.

Rhododendron is present in Dalvenvie and work has started to eradicate this from the woodland as part of the wider FCS policy to control invasive plant species.

Black grouse leks within 2km of the SE forest boundary on Great Glen Cattle Ranch and on the NE boundary on Brackletter.

Deer populations are currently not a major issue in Camisky but this may change as more restocking with palatable species takes place. Deer fencing of the oak wood in the past allowed a pulse of natural regeneration to establish.

The northern end of the forest falls with the Parallel Roads of Lochaber SSSI and contains some of the glacial features of this Earth Science site.

Economic Factors:

90% of the forest is planted with conifer with Sitka spruce and lodgepole pine make up the bulk of the woodland species 35% and 42% respectively generally in pure stands with some mixture in the south.

Age structure of the woodland is limited with 86% planted in 5 years between 1977 and 1981. The other main forest component is P74 plantation above the river, planted just before the FC took ownership. There has only been a limited amount of felling to date

within Camisky with only 1 of the original 7 planned coupes felled due to a lack of road infrastructure.

Increasing levels of windthrow throughout the forest will be a limitation on the options for future felling. C18% of the main forest area is recorded as windblow. This is likely to result in the felling of the main crop areas more rapidly than would have been desirable to achieve good restructuring or a full economic rotation.

A further 2.5 km of roading is programmed over 16/17 and 17/18 which will allow access to the full length of the main Camisky forest. None of the small woodlands have access for timber haulage at present.

Public road access is constrained by the minor public road which is classified as a consultation route for the haulage of timber. All the timber of the main forest will be brought through the wood to the northern access to minimise the use of this road. Any timber from the smaller woods will also need to access the A82 at Brackletter not Torlundy.

River Lochy is the most productive fishing river in Lochaber with Spring and Autumn runs of salmon. River Lundy is one of its main spawning tributaries.

Dalvenvie, Hill Farm and Tomacharich are all potential candidates for rationalisation sales by FCS.

The pylon line carrying electricity to the Western Isles and the Fort William smelter runs along the NE edge of the forest. The water treatment plant and distribution tank and pipes lie adjacent to or within the forest area but the water itself is drawn from the River Lochy.

See [Appendix 1](#) for details of how the forest can contribute to the Strategic Directions for the National Forest Estate

Objectives:

- Retain a strong core of commercial conifers suitable for the site to support the local forest and timber industry. Ensure that resilience to climate change, in particular increasing storm events and pest and disease attack is tested through the planning process.
- Maintain and expand the native oak and birch woodland of Coille a'Cham Uisge. Identify opportunities to manage some of the broadleaf woodland for wood production. Use native woodland expansion to enhance the riparian zones for fishery protection.
- Review the deep peat areas of the forest to optimise the potential of both the soil and the trees to lock carbon following the FCS guidance on peatland management.
- Recognising the wider landscape context of the forest design the future coupes to fit with the landscape as seen from key viewpoints.
- Consult and work with local communities and stakeholders.

Stakeholders & consultation:

There are a number of key groups and organizations that will be able to contribute to the project through support and advocacy:-

Forestry Commission Scotland
Inverloch and Torlundy Community Council
Local Deer Management Group
Historic Environment Scotland
River Lochy Fishing Association
Scottish Water
Neighbours and Stakeholders

Highland Council
Scottish Natural Heritage
SEPA
CONFOR
Scottish & Southern Electricity

Forestry Commission Contact

Christina Tracey
District Forester planning
Lochaber Forest District
Torlundy
Fort William
PH33 6SW
Tel 07767 251 380
E mail : christina.tracey@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Appendix 1 Achieving national priorities locally

The management of the Forestry Commission Scotland's national forest estate is guided by the FES National Strategic Directions (2013-16). These directions form the basis of the Lochaber FD Strategic Plan (2014-17):-

1. **Healthy**, achieving good environmental and silvicultural condition in a changing climate
2. **Productive**, providing sustainable economic benefits from the land
3. **Treasured**, as a multi-purpose resource that sustains livelihoods, improves quality of life, and offers involvement and enjoyment
4. **Accessible**, local woodlands and national treasures that are well promoted, welcoming and open for all
5. **Cared for**, working with nature and respecting landscapes, natural and cultural heritage
6. **Good value**, exemplary, effective and efficient delivery of public benefits.

The individual forest areas of Lochaber differ in the contribution they make to achieve the different national directions. The following highlights the contribution that Camisky and the other Great Glen Cattle Ranch forests can make to deliver these national priorities.

Key Directions	Relevant issues identified for LMP
Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving the right balance between bog restoration and woodland for locking up carbon will be an important consideration in the development of the plan. • The forest has suffered from wind blow and disease pressures in its first rotation and building in resilience to climate change is another key driver in the design considerations. Storm events are likely to intensify over the next rotation and the threat from pests and diseases affecting tree growth and mortality are already impacting on the current crops. E.g. Dothostroma needle blight in pine and Phytophthora ramorum in larch. • Species well suited to the current site conditions while still meeting the plan objectives will be selected. Coupe boundaries designed to avoid increasing the risk of wind damage e.g. by selecting low points on the ridge. • Thinning of the current stands of trees is not possible due to their age and vulnerability to further wind damage but it should be possible in the next rotation provided that the first thinning is undertaken at the right time.
Productive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camisky is well situated close to the main A82 route north – south and to the sawmill at Fort William. The terrain is suitable for harvester/forwarder and is low lying giving straightforward operational working conditions. The current felling plan for the next 10 years is an average of c8k m3 per year. • The principle challenge in the first rotation crops is to optimise the return with stands already compromised by wind damage and disease. The lack of road access has meant that felling proposed in the previous plan has not been carried out. This delay together with the wind damage already occurring will limit the degree to which the forest can be restructured this rotation. A felling from NE to SW is more likely to be required rather than a patchwork of coupes and may necessitate bringing forward felling areas. • Although climatically suitable for a wide range of tree species, the main challenge for the future forest here is the poorer quality of the soils and the amount of deeper peats. Consideration of mixtures such as SS/LP and the use of fertiliser for establishment will need to be considered alongside species choice. The good access and straightforward working conditions will allow lower yield class crops still to be economic. • With the improved road access there may be scope for thinning some of the birch regeneration and remove fire wood material. The area of broadleaf woodland will be expanded as part of the restoration of PAWS area to native species. The opportunity to

	<p>establish some of this woodland with a view to obtaining timber in the future will be considered. The stands will generally only be of fuel wood grade but with careful management some better stems will emerge. Regeneration will be through natural regeneration and planting, the latter in particular to increase the species diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deer management will become increasingly important as the amount of vulnerable woodland increases with restocking and regeneration. • There are currently no renewable energy development proposals being considered for Camisky and its potential is low with current technology. • The importance of the River Lochy for salmon fishing is recognised and the design of the woodland adjacent to the river will take this into account. • Camisky itself is only used to a limited extent for recreation but it does form part of the view from a number of key points including the Commando memorial, the A82 tourist route and the upper station at Nevis Range. It is most significant in the view of Ben Nevis and Aonach Mor from the B8004 Banavie to Gairloch road. The impact of the design of the felling and restocking will be taken into account from these views.
<p>Treasured</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coille a'Cham Uisge with its mature trees is one of the larger oak woodlands in the area and its local value recognised. The plan will seek to protect and expand this woodland area. • Dalvenvie is the closest wood to Fort William of the forests in this plan and has potential for created community involvement. It is one of the 3 woods that are under consideration for sale by FCS at present. • Tomacharich woodland has an interesting mix of oak and birch on the drier knolls with pine on the bog as well as riparian and bog woodland. It forms the backdrop to the cabin site which needs to be taken into account in planning the management of the current crop and the future development of the woodland. • The lochan near Brackletter is already an open area of water and wetland and could be further enhanced once the current crop is harvested

<p>Accessible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dalvenvie is designated as a WIAT woodland due to its proximity to Fort William but the access is limited by a lack of suitable parking areas. The focus for recreation and access by FCS has been Cow Hill above the town. Dalvenvie is nevertheless well used locally for walking along the track. • Access to the River Lochy is taken along the edge of the forest at Camisky – the river banks themselves are not part of the national forest estate.
<p>Cared for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past work in Coillie a'Cham Uisge has removed conifer from part of the woodland and encourage birch regeneration to take place. There is further work to be done to manage the regeneration and to encourage a wider variety of site native trees. The plan will also look to expand the area to native woodland and fully restore all the PAWS areas. Opportunities to link the other broadleaf remnants will also be looked at. • Restoration of some of the bog area planted with conifers has already begun. Other areas will be reviewed during the development of the plan to see if they have potential for full restoration or for the development of bog woodland. Not all areas will be suitable and provided these will grow a productive crop will continue to be managed for timber and fully restocked. • Expansion of the riparian zones will be a feature of the plans recognising the importance of the River Lochy and its tributaries for salmon. • Black grouse are one of the priority species for FCS and design of the forest edge in the proximity to the leks will seek to improve the woodland edge habitat for this species.
<p>Good Value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The production of timber will be the principle source of income generation from Camisky with the addition of some venison sales.