



Woodland Plan (2016 – 2021)



Scottish School of Forestry (SSF) Balloch Campus Woodland

Plan ref no. :

Plan Approval date: 01/01/16

Plan expiry date: 31/12/21

Signed on behalf of Scottish School of Forestry (SSF): Name:

Signature:

Date:

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Inverness College UHI - property

Woodland name: Scottish School of Forestry Woodland

Nearest village/town: Balloch, Inverness

Postal area: Viewhill, Inverness IV2 5EA

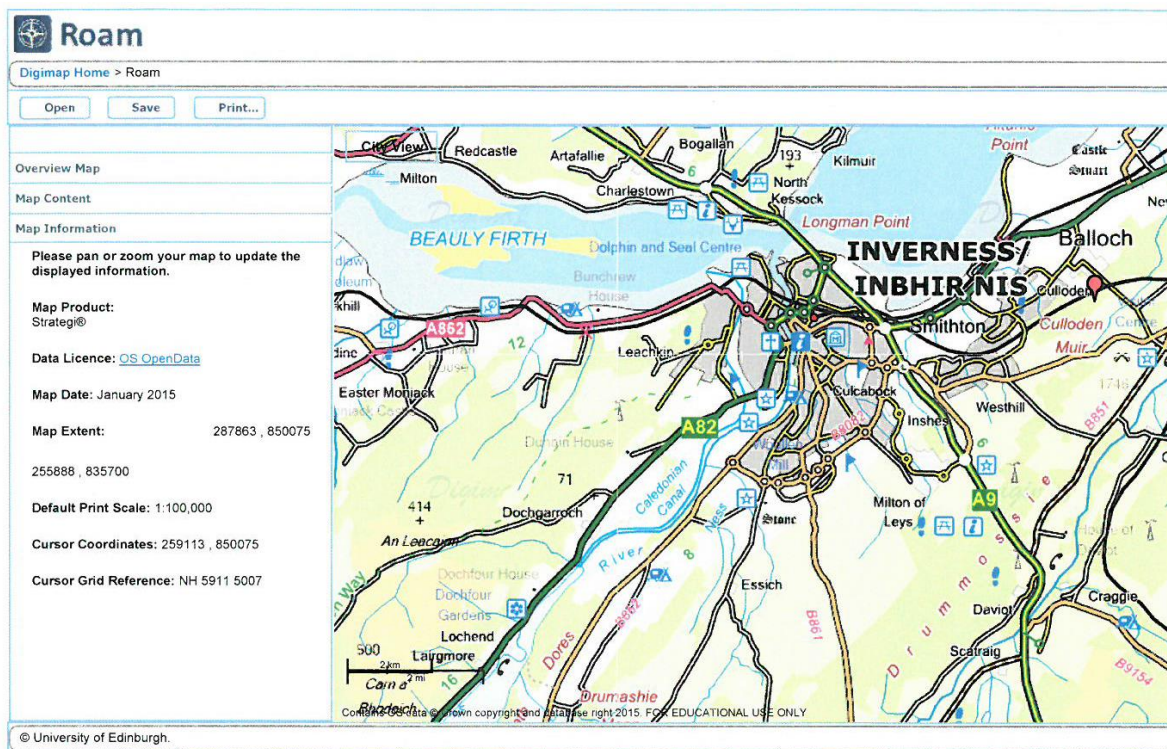
OS Grid reference: NH 738 436

Local Authority area: Highland

Area of woodland: 10 ha

Area covered under new
proposed conservation area: 7.16 ha

Access: via B9006 Westhill to Croy road and Culloden Road leading to
Balloch



Map 1 - Location Map

Description

This area is owned by Inverness College UHI and is adjacent to the Scottish School of Forestry, Inverness College UHI (SSF). (Site Map – Map 2)

Access is from Culloden Road, Grid ref NH 738 436. (Map 1 - Location Map)

The area consists of woodland made up of both deciduous and coniferous blocks and intimate mixtures.

The area has been restocked since 1970 (previously commercial coniferous high forest) by planting and natural regeneration and is now established with a diverse range of tree and ground flora species.

The area has been and will be managed over the long term using Low Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS) to regenerate, enhance and demonstrate tree species resilience of the area.

Objectives:

- 1 Maintain and manage this area as a training and education resource for the SSF and Inverness College UHI.
- 2 Provide practical forestry training with hand tools, forest motor manual equipment and a variety of forestry tractors and all-terrain vehicles.
- 3 Provide training in practical arboriculture through tree climbing and aerial tree works incorporating crown lifting, crown pruning, sectional tree felling and invasive tree diagnostic techniques.
- 4 Provide education on practical tree and plant identification.

This small woodland is managed with care and attention as an educational and training resource incorporating single tree or group selection methods. This means that the area within the site is never without tree cover but has a dynamic variety of tree, shrub and ground flora. When windblow occurs however, this is cleared away and regeneration of the woodland actively encouraged.

The prime objective is education and training and this means that groups of our students and from other organisations that we support are regularly working within the areas doing a number of agreed small scale operations over an extended period of time to meet their educational needs and those of the land based industries.

The small scale training operations that are commonly employed are as follows but the list is not exhaustive:

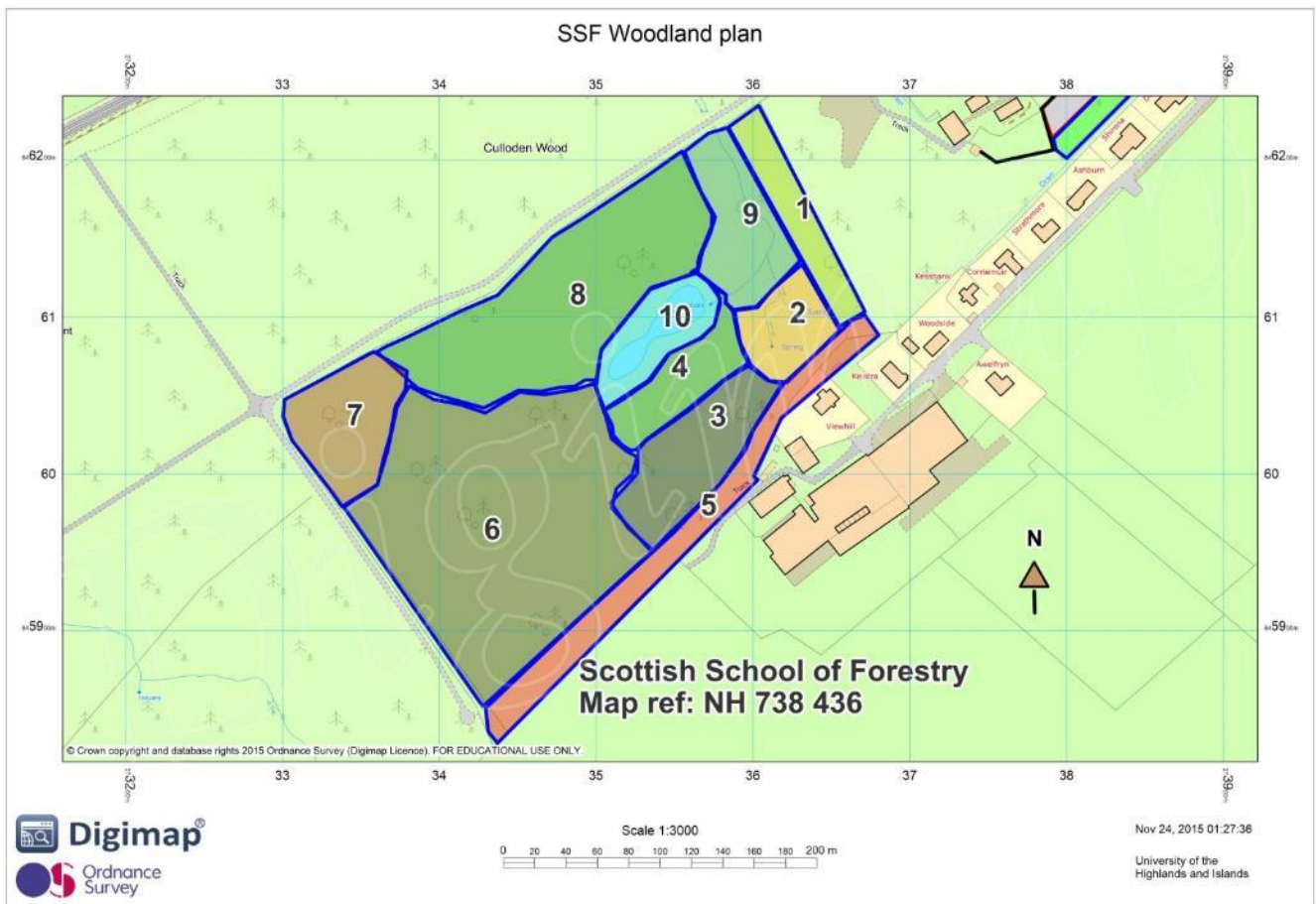
- Tractor driving on tracks
- ATV driving on and off tracks
- Chainsaw felling and crosscutting
- Timber extraction by tractor, forwarder, ATV and cable crane
- Clearing saw
- Planting
- Individual tree protection
- Weeding
- Coppice working
- Draining
- General maintenance operations

Archaeology

There is evidence of field boundaries on both the eastern and western edges of the site plus two quarry sites close to the southern boundary.

Recreational Facilities:

There is a national network path along the northern boundary of the area. Gates and styles give access to the area but as this is primarily a forestry training site with machinery use no waymarked paths have been incorporated for the general public.



Map 2 – Zone Site Map

Operations by Zone (Map 2 – Zone Site Map)

All activities are for educational and training purposes in relation to Forestry and Arboricultural operations and management and for rural training by other bodies.

Zone 1	Mixed woodland - east
Zone 2	Broadleaved woodland - east
Zone 3	Conifer plantation
Zone 4	Arboretum
Zone 5	Veteran trees
Zone 6	Broadleaved woodland - west
Zone 7	Open conifer woodland - west
Zone 8	Millennium conservation area
Zone 9	Coppice
Zone 10	Pond

Zone 1 - Mixed woodland - east

Description:

Predominantly mature conifers with and understory of mainly birch, holly and rowan. Brown earth soils on NW facing slope.

Operations:

1. Tractor driving on recognised tracks and ATV driving on tracks and off tracks.
2. Tree climbing and crown lifting/deadwooding of large conifers.
3. Limited felling operation.
4. Brashing and pruning of all trees

Zone 2 - Broadleaved woodland - east

Description:

Predominantly birch, beech, holly, willow, poplar with some conifer content. Brown earth soil on N facing slope.

Operations:

1. Tractor driving on recognised tracks and ATV driving on tracks and off tracks.
2. Tree climbing and crown lifting/deadwooding of large conifers.
3. Limited felling operation.
4. Brashing and pruning of all trees

Zone 3 - Conifer plantation

Description:

Predominantly high forest plantation conifers aged c40 years (Sitka spruce, Norway spruce, Douglas fir and Grand fir). Devoid of ground flora bar some mosses, ferns and light grasses.

Shallow skeletal soils on sandstone bedrock as evidenced by the two small quarry borrow pits. N facing slope.

Operations:

1. Tractor driving on recognised tracks and ATV driving on tracks and off tracks.
2. Tree climbing and crown lifting/deadwooding of large conifers.
3. Limited felling operation to remove sub-dominant/suppressed and windblown trees and to open up natural spaces for natural regeneration or planting as they become available.
4. High pruning of selected trees.

Zone 4 - Arboretum

Description: Predominantly grasses and gleyed soils supporting a wide variety of mainly broadleaved trees planted in groups as an arboretum resource to the south of the man-made pond. Approx. 30 years of age (ash, sycamore, hazel, willow, poplar, cherry, southern beech, oak)

Operations:

1. Tractor driving on recognised tracks and ATV driving on tracks.
2. New planting small in blocks (up to 20 trees per species per block) to enhance arboretum and resilience for the area.
3. Limited felling operation to remove and windblown trees and to open up natural spaces for natural regeneration or planting as they become available.
4. Pruning of selected trees.

Zone 5 - Veteran trees

Description:

Southern boundary with veteran pine and beech to the western end.

Operations:

- 1 Fence maintenance
- 2 Arboricultural tree climbing and deadwooding
- 3 Tractor and ATV access
- 4 Natural regeneration and planting with groups of conifers and broadleaves to maintain the nature of the area and to protect the whole site from SW gales

Zone 6 - Broadleaved woodland - west

Description:

Mature birch woodland with intermittent mature conifers and veteran beech. Grass vegetation, gley soils on a level site.

Operations:

- 1 Fence maintenance
- 2 Arboricultural tree climbing and deadwooding of veteran and mature conifers
- 3 Tractor and ATV access
- 4 Harvesting and extraction of windblow and suppressed trees.
- 5 Natural regeneration and planting with groups of conifers and broadleaves to restock site over the long term using low impact silvicultural systems (LISS) tree shelters and small fenced enclosures for training purposes.
- 6 Draining

Zone 7 – Open conifer woodland – west

Description:

Flat area of gleyed soils subject to windblow of conifer and birch crop.

Operations

- 1 Fence maintenance
- 2 Tractor and ATV access
- 3 Harvesting and extraction of windblow and suppressed trees.
- 4 Natural regeneration and planting with groups of conifers and broadleaves to restock site over the long term using low impact silvicultural systems (LISS). Incorporating tree shelters and small fenced enclosures for training purposes.
- 5 Some mechanical mounding cultivation for planting or regeneration as training on small digger operation.
- 6 Draining

Zone 8 - Millennium conservation area

Description:

Mainly podsoles and surface water gleys to the north of the pond, supporting a wide variety of native species of all age classes. Currently managed as LISS and used for conservation training and species ID. Area includes good woodland indicator species and has colonies of creeping ladies tresses and chickweed wintergreen. Long term aim is to slowly remove all non-native tree species

Operations:

- 1 Fence maintenance
- 2 Arboricultural tree climbing and deadwooding and pruning of mature conifers. Removal of the 2 large beech near pond (see Fig 7)
- 3 Tractor and ATV access
- 4 Felling and extraction of non-native trees, a few at a time, over a long period of time to create small openings for natural regeneration.
- 5 Natural regeneration of native conifers and broadleaves to restock site over the long term using low impact silvicultural systems (LISS) tree shelters and small fenced enclosures for training purposes.
- 6 Removal of 2 medium sized beech trees near pond (See Fig. 7)
- 7 Removal of exotic natural regeneration.

Zone 9 – Coppice

Description:

Mainly brown earth and ground water gley soils to the east of the pond, mainly birch currently being converted to a working willow coppice woodland for training purposes.

Operations:

- 1 Fencing and other physical protection methods
- 2 Arboricultural tree climbing and deadwooding and pruning of mature high forest conifers
- 3 Tractor and ATV access
- 4 Harvesting and extraction of trees to create small openings for coppice establishment
- 5 Planting of coppice species and their establishment by tree shelters and small fenced enclosures as necessary.

Zone 10 - Pond

Description:

Small man-made pond of around 0.2ha.

Conservation

Operations:

- 1 Educational pond dipping
- 2 Wildlife monitoring
- 3 Cleaning of excess algal growth

Map 3 – Site Access Tracks



Legend for Access Tracks

Plan Boundary

Dyke

Main Tracks

Minor tracks

Pond

Representative photos of the zones



Figure 1 - Zone 1 - Old Dyke



Figure 2 - Zone 2 - site entrance track



Figure 3 - Zone 9 - Coppice working



Figure 4 - Zone 2 - East Quarry



Figure 5 - Zone 4



Figure 6 - Zone 10 – Pond



Beech to
Fell



Figure 7 - Zone 8 - Millennium Conservation Area (a)

Figure 8 - Zone 8 Millennium Conservation Area (b)



Figure 9 - Zone 8 –
Millennium Conservation Area (c)



Figure 10 - Zone 7- Open Conifer Woodland - West



Figure 11 - Zone 6 - Broadleaved Woodland - West



Figure 12 - Zone 5 - Veteran Trees



Figure 13 - Zone 3 - Conifer Plantation (a)



Figure 14 - Zone 3 - Conifer Plantation (b)



Figure 15 - Zone 4 - Arboretum



Figure 16 - Zone 4 - Quarry to west



Figure 17 - Windblow



