Knoydart Forest Trust

20 Year Woodland Management Plan

2006-2025

Final Draft

This plan and the accompanying documents[1] have been funded by a Forestry and Rural Development Grant (FRD Grant) and by Forestry Commission Scotland

Acknowledgements:- Thanks are due to staff of KFT, specifically Grant Holroyd and Lorna Schofied; to staff at the Knoydart Foundation notably Angela Williams and to KFT Trustees for their kindness and patience, especially Roger Trussell and Ian Wilson. Thanks are also due to members of the Knoydart community.

[1] Review of Knoydart Forest Trust; Review of Woodland Management Plan and, Knoydart Forest Trust Business Plan

Glossary

Ancient woodland – Woodland that has been recorded as present on a site for more than 250 years

a.s.l. – above sea level

Continuous Cover - a silvicultural system where the forest contains a variety of structure and where trees are not completely removed at the end of a rotation

National Vegetation Classification (NVC) system – Is a means of categorising existing native woodland on the basis of plant assemblages. It is also used as a planning tool for establishing new native woodland. Woodland names are preceded by the letter W i.e. W18 Scots pine woodland

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Part 1-The Scope of the Plan

1. Introduction

The 20 year Woodland Management Plan 2006-2025 covers areas of woodland activity, shown on the location map in Appendix 6 and provides proposed management detail for period 2006-2010 and general management objectives over 20 years. It will inform and guide Knoydart Forest Trust woodland operations over the next five year period and dovetail with the Knoydart Forest Trust Business Plan. The Business plan includes non woodland management activities and projects, such as timber processing and construction. The Trust is currently preparing a long Term Forest Plan which deals with felling, thinning and restocking; the LTFP will be appended to this plan when complete.

The Woodland Management Plan extends over an area of some 8,000 hectares of land in the West Knoydart Peninsula, most of which is owned by the Knoydart Foundation (7,167 hectares) and also includes a number of private owners. Woodland cover is an estimated 750 hectares (approximately 10.5% of the land area), of which 371 hectares is exotic conifer plantation and 379 hectares is remnant semi-natural woodland and new native woodland. The peninsula contains an unspecified amount of sparse scattered remnant native woodland not currently under management.

The Knoydart Forest Trust has land management agreements with the Knoydart Foundation and a number of the private landowners. These agreements allow the Trust to act as woodland managers on behalf of the community of Knoydart and as woodland agents and managers on behalf of private individuals.[2] The Woodland Management Plan forms the basis of the Management Agreements between the Trust and all landowners; this latest plan will require approval from them.

KFT is a community led Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status which was established in March 1999 as a successor to the Knoydart Forestry Project (KFP) and has been successful in delivering a range of woodland establishment, forest management and timber utilisation related projects since establishment to 2006.

The Trust is directly linked with the Knoydart Foundation, a charitable body which acquired the Knoydart Estate in 1999. In 1999, when the Trust was incorporated, it signed an agreement with the Knoydart Foundation to implement the "20 year Management Plan for the Woodlands of the Knoydart Peninsula and any authorised revisions or adaptations thereto"[3]. The Trust may retain the proceeds of any timber sales from the estate for use in the implementation of the plan. It is also authorised by The Knoydart Foundation to seek and obtain grants from funding bodies in connection with its responsibilities under the agreement.

1.1 Plan structure

The Woodland Management Plan is in three sections. The first section, the Scope of the Plan, describes the background to the plan; the objectives of the plan and the physical character of Knoydart. The second section outlines the woodland management priorities for the KFT during the plan period. The third section describes the Woodland Management

[2] Appendix 1 Land Ownership
[3] *Knoydart Forestry Project, 20 Year Management Plan for the Woodlands of the Knoydart Peninsula, 1999-2019* (1998)

Units'; giving a general description of each woodland unit and the activities to be carried out in the management unit from 2006 until 2010.

The WMP makes general statements regarding the topics covered in the supplementary documents detailed in the Appendices; the Knoydart Forest Trust Long Term Forest Plan, the Knoydart Forest Trust Woodland Deer Management Plan and the Knoydart Forest Trust Recreation Plan. These statements outline the principles that KFT will follow with respect to these activities and the detail of the activities will be included in the plan documents.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 lists woodland units, their area and landownership.
- Appendix 2 contains a list of potential new planting sites, including the size of area and recommended establishment technique.
- Appendix 3 The Knoydart Forest Trust Long Term Forest Plan
- Appendix 4 The Knoydart Forest Trust Woodland Deer Management Plan
- Appendix 5 The Knoydart Forest Trust Woodland Recreation Plan
- Appendix 6 Location Map
- Appendix 7 Map of Woodland Management Units
- Appendix 8 Potential New Native Woodlands Map
- Appendix 9 Rhododendron Clearance Map
- Appendix 10 Woodland Management Work Plan

1.2 Knoydart Forest Trust Principles

KFT aspire to manage the woodlands within their remit to the highest silvicultural standards and to create multi-purpose forests that: function as an economic and environmental resource to the local community; and provide biodiversity, landscape and recreation benefits to the wider community.

1.2.1 The objectives of the Woodland Management Plan

The objectives of the Woodland Management Plan remain the same as those for the 1st Woodland Management Plan. These are:-

- to promote local employment: manage the forest in a way that will provide local employment and help consolidate the community
- to promote environmental management and restoration: manage the forest to increase environmental benefits by enhancing and expanding the native woodland and restructuring and diversifying the non native woodland
- to create a sustainable locally useful resource: this will include sawn timber, fence posts, firewood, etc.
- To promote public benefits: To encourage public access, awareness and enjoyment while promoting the long term health of the ecosystem.

1.2.2 A Vision for the Future

To adopt a vision for the future that can be worked towards during the life of this plan requires Knoydart Forest Trust to work closely with the community landowner, the Knoydart Foundation to jointly agree a common purpose.

The Knoydart Foundation has a vision which states, "*Our Vision for our land is an area of diverse flourishing habitats with their full potential of native flora and fauna, supporting a thriving community that offers a warm welcome to visitors*."

It is proposed that the Knoydart Foundation and the Knoydart Forest Trust adopt the following vision for native woodland habitats on Foundation land; such that the land will contain -
''flourishing native woodland habitats along coast, in glens, on crags and up burnsides, within a generally open moorland habitat"

Following agreement on such a vision by both Foundation and Trust it is suggested that the following long term goal be adopted by both; *"we look forward to a day when the relationship between browsing/grazing, seed dispersal and ground disturbance* is such that it allows native woodland regeneration without fencing"*

1.3 Knoydart Physical Environment

The Knoydart peninsula is situated in the north west of Scotland, and lies between two sea lochs; Loch Nevis to the south and Loch Hourn to the north. It is not connected to the road network and is some 10 kilometres north east of Mallaig and accessible only by boat.

The climate is oceanic, with Gulf Stream influences producing: high annual rainfall, moderate mean temperatures, mild winters, wet summers and strong prevailing south westerly winds. There is little snow fall and snow lie and few days of frost.

The topography of the peninsula is rugged; the westerly section is referred to as the 'Rough Bounds', and the character of landscape has been shaped by glaciation and water erosion. The hills rise from sea level to an altitude of 1020 metres above sea level (a.s.l.) and the underlying geology is predominantly metamorphic (Moine origin) with areas of Peltic Schist.

Soils are mainly peaty gleys, peaty podzols and deep peats, with small pockets of valley side brown earths and alluvium on south facing slopes and river valleys.

The peninsula has been described as one of Britain's last wildernesses; and although it contains impressive landscapes, much of the land management, such as deer forest and sheep stock grazing, has resulted in degraded and depauperate vegetation and biodiversity.

The vegetation is typical of low nutrient status soils on the west coast of Scotland, with leaching of soils due to high rainfall and depletion of nutrients and damage to vegetation structure because of intensive grazing. The main vegetation communities include:-

- Upland heath
- Deep and shallow peat communities
- Acid and species poor grasslands
- Sub-Alpine and Montane communities
- Woodland, exotic plantations (Sitka spuce and Lodgepole pine), and native woodland types (willow, birch, hazel, and alder4)
- Fresh and saltwater communities

[4] Areas + National Vegetation Classification Woodland Types : - Cnoc Gorm/Garsley NVC W4 Birch Molinia: Scottas NVC W7a/W7c Alder Ash: Scottas/Samaladan/Cnoc Gorm NVC W11 Oak Birch: Satial/Rubha Raonuilland/Airor Burn NVC W17 Oak Birch

Part 2 – Management

2 Management Priorities

The 20 Year Management Plan identifies the scope and scale of woodland management operations and identifies the management priorities for the Trust in the short term (0-5 years). A listing and rationale for the main priority areas is given below.

The six priority areas for KFT for the short and medium term (2006-2010) are:-

2.1 The Long Term Forest Plan - Clear felling and restocking of unstable conifer blocks within Inverie Forest and continued restructuring of the Glen Guiserein Plantations with Continuous Cover management of appropriate areas
2.2 Management of establishing woodland - Ongoing management of Inverie Forest and outlying new native woodland blocks to ensure successful establishment of new trees
2.3 Deer Management
2.4 Rhododendron ponticum eradication - Where appropriate replacement with non invasive shrubs
2.5 Native woodland expansion - securing and regenerating areas of remnant native woodland on Knoydart Foundation land
2.6 Recreation management - Development of the access network within Inverie Forest and beyond

2.1 The Long Term Forest Plan

Clear felling, thinning and restocking are currently being planned within the KFT Long Term Forest Plan (LTFP) and once completed the LTFP will be appended to this Woodland Management Plan. The felling and thinning and restocking prescriptions described in the LTFP will be carried out within Inverie Woods and the Glen Guiserein Plantations (Guieserein and Follach). None of the other woodland units within the KFT management portfolio will require thinning or clear felling as they are newly established or establishing native woodlands and they will not be covered in the LTFP.

2.1.1 LTFP objectives

The objectives of the Long Term Forest Plan are:

- to restructure the conifer plantations at Inverie and Glen Guiserein to achieve a robust, stable and diverse multi-purpose forest
- to provide multiple benefits in terms of: community, landscape, biodiversity, public access, and quality timber

To achieve these objectives the LTFP has as its aims:-

- the felling of unstable areas of conifer plantation and conversion to Continuous Cover[5] systems

[5] This principally applies to Inverie Wood and will include the use of shelter wood, group felling, small coupe felling, and low input management of native woodland and gradual ancient woodland restoration.

- restocking (replanting/regenerating of felled forest) which is designed to create woodland capable of being managed without large scale clearfell (>1 hectare blocks)
- the management of currently stable areas of Inverie Wood as Continuous Cover woodland

2.1.2 Continuous Cover Management

Continuous Cover is the term given to woodland that is managed without using clear felling as a management prescription. Clear felling commonly describes the complete removal of the tree crop, commonly in the UK of areas greater than 1 hectare (10,000 square metres).

Continuous Cover management is a more intensive silvicultural management than the Clear Felling system commonly used in Scotland; will be applied where practicable in Inverie Woods. This system requires good access throughout the wood, notably many access tracks for timber extraction and access for management of regeneration and young developing trees. An extensive road and track system requires significant investment and will be to critical implementing this type of management. A significant benefit of creating an extensive and high quality access network will be the provision of walks and cycle tracks for locals and visitors.

In this Woodland Management Plan Continuous Cover management will encompass

- areas where quality timber production is an objective, using systems such as shelter wood, group felling, small coupe felling (sites with good access and soils)
- areas of low input management of native woodland where priorities will be landscape and biodiversity enhancement and
- areas where ancient woodland restoration is the priority
- areas such as policy woods where retention of mature mixed woodland will be the priority

2.1.3 Clear Felling

Within Inverie Woods windblow of trees is an issue and in some compartments the poor stability of the trees will mean that clearfelling is required to avoid large scale or catastrophic[6] windblow. Clear felling proposals put forward in the previous Woodland Management Plan were accepted by the Forestry Commission, all statutory consultees and the community however the proposed felling during the 1st (1999-2003) and 2nd (2004-2006) phases has not occurred. Clear felling will facilitate the development of Continuous Cover management within compartments where even aged conifers have been removed and they have been replaced with more diverse and wind firm species.

There will be areas within Inverie Woods, specifically in the western compartments remote from road access; where it will be impractical or perhaps undesirable to clear windblown trees (e.g. outlying areas of young, poor timber quality Lodgepole Pine).

2.1.4 Thinning

Thinning has been carried out by KFT within Inverie Woods since 1999. The [refered method of thinning is by ring barking the live stem and leaving the tree standing. The tree dries out and is of use for fuelwood.

[6] Where many hectares of the forest are blown over

2.1.5 Restocking

2.2 Management of establishing woodland

The ongoing management of young trees and seedlings within the Knoydart Forest Trust managed woodlands is critical to get new trees established. Management for the period 2006-2010 will be targeted at areas where new planting has not been successful and where tree regeneration is not occurring. Deer browsing, weed competition and smothering by bracken are some of the main reasons for tree failure, however soil fertility and lack of microsites for tree seed establishment are also factors.

KFT will manage establishing, and existing woodland to maintain and enhance the ecological value and biodiversity within native woodland.

2.3 Deer management

Deer (and herbivore) control for woodland establishment is a publicly sensitive and emotive issue within the Knoydart Peninsula. This is because changes in deer management practices (increased culling to achieve lower deer stocking densities) are perceived to negatively impact incomes and livelihoods of those associated with estate sport stalking.

Areas of new woodland and areas replanted after felling will not establish without deer fencing or deer control. A Knoydart Forest Trust Woodland Deer Management Plan will be written before September 2006 and it will:-

- describe the current situation with regard to the deer population
- provide an index of deer levels and impact within specified woodland areas in order to inform cull and other management requirements
- Set out deer management requirements in order to achieve woodland establishment within the specified woodland areas
- Detail facilities that aid deer management e.g. high seats, lawns, licks, jump outs
- consider risks from other herbivores e.g. rabbits and goats

2.4 Rhododendron ponticum eradication

Community consultation regarding the control and potential eradication of an exotic invasive, namely *Rhododendron ponticum* was carried out during winter 2005/6. It is recommended that in the first period of this plan (2006-2010), Rhododendron is completely removed from the peninsula. This will involve some replacement planting in public areas (e.g. policy woodland) with other attractive Rhododendron/Azalea species and beneficial native shrubs.

For this removal and replacement policy to be fully effective and to prevent recolonisation of forest areas from seed blown from garden bushes, Rhododendron plants within private gardens need to be removed. Such removal will require sensitive public engagement and gentle encouragement. KFT should make available replacement shrubs and should seek grant funding to assist in the outreach programme and replacement planting, to encourage individuals to remove rhododendrons from their gardens.

The change in Rhododendron policy (from containment to eradication) has been due to a number of factors. These factors include:-

- an understanding amongst national organisations (Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage) that the biodiversity of native and non native woodlands is being negatively affected by the spread of Rhododendron
- Acknowledgement of the importance of rhododendron control within the Local Biodivesity Action Plan (LBAP).
- that partial or incomplete clearance will inevitably lead to recolonisation of cleared areas by Rhododendrons from remaining seed sources
- that recolonistaion would mean that time and KFT resources and public money have been wasted and
- that once cleared, soils within restored areas of woodland recover from degradation and acquire biodiversity and aesthetic benefits from recolonisation of ground flora such as bluebell, wood anemones and primroses

2.5 Native woodland expansion

2.5.1 Rationale and previous projects

The rationale behind the location of new native woodland establishment, undertaken within the last Woodland Management Plan period (1999-2003), was determined by the need to secure small and valuable native woodland remnants (mostly riparian). The choice of sites of the new native woodland planting / regeneration was to a degree dictated by whether the planting/regeneration scheme was of sufficient size to be financially viable (> 35 hectares). The scale of the individual sites was determined by local site factors particularly their setting within the landscape. Three new native woodland schemes were established on Knoydart Foundation land between 2002 and 2005:-

- Cnoc Gorm – 43.19 hectares
- Croulin Burn – 53.17 hectares and
- Sandaig Burn – 35.37 hectares

Securing remnants and expansion of forest area on Knoydart Foundation land, by new native woodland planting and regeneration, could (if the new scheme is applicable) be achieved using the Forestry Commission Scotland, Locational Premium (Highland Region), which will be administered through the SFGS during the current year (2006). Without a locational premium and in the absence of sufficient public grant funding KFT will need to fund raise for the capital required to establish new woodlands. The future of new native woodland planting is less certain in Scotland post 2007, when the new European Union Rural Development Regulations come into force.

Knoydart Forest Trust is committed to the principle of using locally sourced seed

2.5.2 Potential new projects

Two new areas of regenerating and planting, submitted to the Forestry Commission under the previous grant scheme (Woodland Grant Scheme), at Airor Burn (~40 hectares adjacent to a crofting township) and at Abainn Bheag (~16 hectares adjacent to the Follach Plantation, with possibility to extend to include Folach road end), will be resubmitted under the new SFGS grant scheme.

An extension at the east of Inverie Woods (White Gate) is identified as a potential site in the current Landscape Design Plan. This site would give benefits in terms of landscape improvement of the existing conifer plantation, development of existing rich woodland flora and small scale quality timber growing (e.g. Douglas fir, European larch, oak, ash).

A potential Coastal Woodlands regeneration projects without fencing, at Rubha Raonuill (Inverie to Reigh an darach), and from Doune to Airor (where regenerating trees have been being monitored for the past 4 years) would be a significant move away from the current silvicultural practice of establishing woodlands behind deer fences and would greatly reduce the amount of grant required to restore degraded habitats. The cost of managing deer and goat numbers is unclear, however because of the long thin nature of sites it is suggested that herbivore control rather than fencing would be preferable in terms of landscape and ecology.

The Coastal Woodlands project could form part of a wider Knoydart Foundation deer/land management plan which would take a holistic approach to deer and goat control and may avoid simply pushing deer/goats onto sensitive sites. Small reductions in goat and hefted hind populations can produce increased natural regeneration. Were this project to go ahead then stringent monitoring of browsing would be required.

Such schemes and indeed the all the woodland plans will require consideration by the Knoydart Foundation Land Management Group and approval from KF that a reduction in deer and goats can be carried out.

Appendix 2 contains a Table of Potential New Native Woodland Sites; most are situated on Knoydart Foundation owned land.

2.6 Recreation Management

KFT will continue to work towards integrating public access with woodland management such that felling and extraction routes will be used as part of an extensive path network through Inverie Woods. Within the Inverie Woods Management section there are details of some access operations which have been approved by the Knoydart Foundation.

The Knoydart Forest Trust has commissioned a Recreation Plan from the Knoydart Foundation which will inform the long term objectives; and the work required to meet the objectives over the 2006-2011 period. When the Knoydart Forest Trust Woodlands Recreation Plan is completed it will be appended to this document.

2.7 Potential new projects/activities

Wild boar grazing for bracken control; orchards; specimen trees, sculpture projects

Part 3 Woodland management units

3.1 Inverie Woods

3.1.1 Site Description

(Grid reference NM 768 000; area 239.72 hectares)

Inverie Woods form the backdrop to Inverie village and combined with Sgurr Coire Choimnichean they present a vista, which viewed from the Mallaig sea ferry access, forms part of the designated Knoydart National Scenic Area (NSA). Inverie Wood is mixed woodland with 140 hectares of mixed species conifer plantation, planted between 1961 and 1979; and some 100 hectares of ancient and semi-natural woodland area, situated mostly at the western end of the wood (Scottas). It also contains a small area of Policy Woodland at the eastern end where there is an area of conifer which is classified as Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). The PAWS area retains associated native woodland flora in the seed bank and when Rhododendron is cleared this seed bank manifests itself in new growth of woodland flowers.

The forest rises from sea level to 200 metres (a.s.l.) and is on gentle to steep south westerly facing slopes. These slopes face in the direction of the prevailing wind and they contain wet hollows, scree slopes and heath knolls. The trees have been planted on organic soils (peat, peaty gleys and peaty podzols) with brown earths on some lower slopes.

The woodland is complex in topography and forms a buffer between the settlement of Inverie and the hill land north of the village. There is multiple ownership of the woodland area (see Appendix 1 Land Ownership), and most of the wooded area is within Knoydart Forest Trust management. Consequently Inverie Woods have been intensively managed since 1999, when KFT were formed.

Many of the conifers are mature and some blocks and sub compartments have reached terminal height. This is the height that trees begin to experience catastrophic wind blow as a result of storm events. The forest has been well managed over the last six years but suffers from numerous wind blow events. Some sections of the wood are more stable than others (generally on slopes at the eastern end), where trees have been planted on better soils. The western area, where trees have been planted on wet soil and where there is greater exposure, has experienced large (>0.5ha) windblow patches.

The woodland is heavily colonised with *Rhododendrum ponticum,* mostly in the central and eastern sections, with plants spreading through the wood and onto the open hill. Bracken is dominant adjacent to the ancient native woodland at Scottas where tree regeneration is planned.

3.1.2 Strategic Vision for Inverie Woods

The woods and woodland of 2025 will be: - diverse in tree species and physical structure; more robust than at present and resilient to wind throw and climatic changes and will have an extensive network providing tracks for timber extraction, paths for walking and cycling and infrastructure for all ages, such as bench seating and viewpoints. It will be biodiverse and will be home to a wide range of plants and animals; it will contain trees of economic value which will be of use locally.

3.1.3 Inverie tree establishment and protection

New planting and regeneration of trees within Inverie woodland are being done as part of the restructuring of the predominantly conifer woodland. Replacement of exotic conifers, such as Sitka spruce, is intended to create a diversity of species and structure.

Table 1 Inverie tree establishment

(beating up, new planting and natural regeneration)

Operation	Forestry Commission Contract	Compartment	Area	Comments
Beating up	WGS (carried over from 1st Plan)	42 and to include 40-43 (Millburn-Scottas)	1.3 hectares	New trees planted in tubes
New planting	WGS (carried over from 1st Plan)	40-43 (Millburn-Scottas)	8.7 hectares	New trees to be planted in tubes
Natural Regeneration	WGS (carried over from 1st Plan)	40-43 (Millburn-Scottas-Cramp) Wood)	36.3 hectares	Regeneration will be encouraged by direct seeding (with local seed) in small areas
New Planting	SFGS (new application)	This will be an extension on the eastern edge of Inverie Wood (Coire na Cloiche)	13.48 hectares	Area will be regenerated (or planted) with new native woodland and quality conifer species

New native woodland planting within Inverie will be of native species, mostly broadleaves, and will include where appropriate planting of a minor element of conifer species such as larch and Douglas fir (adjacent to existing conifers).

It is recommended that tubes and tree stakes are used in new planting and the pre planting treatment will be hand screefing and weeding. If mechanical preparation is not successful the spot spraying with glyphosate is recommended. Rock phosphate will be applied to newly establishing plants at the time of planting.

Bracken control to allow natural regeneration will be by knapsack spraying and the quantity and location of bracken clearance will be reviewed when the annual tree seedling survey is carried out. Hand weeding using a sickle will also be necessary around planted trees.

Table 2 lists operations, most of which have been carried over from the first WGS period (1999-2005). The bracken spraying and weed control elements will continue until such time as the newly planted or regenerating trees are established.

Table 2 Inverie tree protection and weed control

Operation	Forestry Commission Contract	Compartment	Area	Comments
Bracken Control	WGS (carried over from 1st Plan)	40-43 (Millburn-Scottas)	10ha	Knapsack spraying and hand weeding
Weeding (grasses and herbs)	WGS (carried over from 1st Plan)	40-43 (Millburn-Scottas)	10ha	Screefing and hand weeding, Kerb granules (pepper pot) and Glyphosate spraying
Tree protection	WGS (carried over from 1st Plan)	40-43 (Millburn-Scottas-Cramp	36.3ha	70cm tubes will be placed over regenerating seedlings

3.1.4 Inverie Fencing (new)

New fencing will be required for the proposed new native woodland planting and regeneration on the north eastern edge of Inverie. A new planting and regeneration area of 13.48 hectares (134,800 m2) will require a new deer fence of approximately 1,469 metres in length (estimated on the basis that the area is rectangular).

3.1.5 Inverie Fence (maintenance)

Some 3250 metres of replacement fence is required at the western end of Inverie Wood (Scottas/Millburn) due to fire damage and this operation will be carried out within the current financial year (2005-2006). The damaged portion of the fence will be removed.

Maintenance of the Inverie Ring Fence, including sections of sea fence is of paramount importance in the efforts to control deer population and excluding goats. It should be noted that even with high maintenance deer and goats will still be able to get around sea fence at low tides. The siting and design of gates, access points and deer jump outs at Inverie Forest will be considered in relation to; the Deer Management Plan, the Knoydart Foundation Goat Management Plan and to the Recreation Strategy. Deer drives (to push out deer) prior to closing of any new fence will be standard practice

Table 3 Inverie fencing

Operation	Forestry Commission Contract	Compartment (location)	Fence Length	Comments
Fence replacement	WGS (carried over)	Scottas/Millburn	3250m	Completed by April 2006
Fence removal	WGS (carried over)	Scottas/Millburn	3250m	Old burnt fence
New fencing	New SFGS contract	Inverie Eastern Extension	1469m	Required if the area is to be established 2006-2011
Fence maintenance	New SFGS contract	Inverie ring fence	4350m	Ongoing maintenance

3.1.6 Inverie control of invasive exotic plants

Rhododendron clearance is carried out by cutting and burning (of large plants in dense areas) followed by two years of spraying of regrowth and hand pulling where spraying with chemicals is inappropriate. Therefore continued maintenance by hand puling new seedlings will be required for an estimated 10 years.

Table 4 lists the operations required during the next 5 yrs to clear Rhododendrons.

Japanese knotweed is present in small areas within Inverie notably on the shore line at Donalds Corner. This will be removed, to prevent further colonisation, by chemical spraying and cutting in accordance with FCS guidance.

Table 4 Inverie and Knoydart wide Rhododendron & Japanese Knotweed clearance

Operation	Approximate Area	Comments
Maintenance of cleared areas (spraying and hand pulling)	77.8 hectares	This includes areas cleared under WGS and SFGS
Clearance of dense rhododendron areas (cutting, burning, chemical spraying of regrowth)	50 hectares	Including the policy woodland at the eastern end of Inverie
Removal of colonising plants (hand pulling or spraying)	500 hectares	Including areas at Scottas (individual plants), Sandaig maintenance of ~0.5ha) Glen Guiserein (occasional colonising plants), open hill outside plantation
Removal of colonising plants (Gardens and woodland edges)	10 hectares	This operation requires special attention as it deals with the most visible and sensitive areas
Sourcing of replacement plants and shrubs	0.25 hectare	It is estimated that there may be a requirement for some 400 replacement shrubs
Clearance of Japanese Knotweed (cutting and chemical spraying for three seasons)	0.5 of a hectare	From the Eastern end of the woodland

3.1.7 Inverie Herbivore Control

The Knoydart Forest Trust Woodland Deer Management Plan will be most applicable to Inverie Forest but will make reference to the wider deer management and deer control issues. Goats are not currently a problem within the Inverie Forest fence; however incursions did take place during the winter of 2005/2006. Any future incursions will be dealt with promptly by shooting. Goats are present on adjacent areas of Knoydart Foundation land and the Foundation is in the process of producing a Goat Management Plan.

Actions recommended for the Deer Management Plan include:-

- all year shooting
- night shooting
- deer drives
- deer lawns
- deer licks
- consideration of provision of jump outs where suitable sites exist

3.1.8 Inverie recreation and access

As previously mentioned the Knoydart Forest Trust has commissioned a Recreation Plan from the Knoydart Foundation which will inform the objectives; and the work required to meet the objectives over the 2006-2011 period.

Inverie Woods offers excellent opportunities for enhancing the extent and quality of recreation and access to visitors to the Knoydart Peninsula, especially those visitors who step off the ferry at Inverie. The forest is adjacent to the pier and hill walkers wishing to access Ladhar Bheinn use a path through the woodland to gain the open hill. There are many day and short stay visitors to Inverie from Mallaig, who wish to go on short walks (less than 1 hour) and medium length walks (1-2 hour) in the vicinity of Inverie.

The wood to the east behind Inverie Village has a reasonable path and track system but improvements to signage, path surfaces and visitor facilities, such as benches and viewpoints are desirable.

The following improvements have been proposed by KFT and were agreed by the Knoydart Foundation in January 2005

- New path linking the Primary school with the existing path network.
- New path linking Village (behind the Village Hall) and existing path network.
- A new path from the Kissing Gate to the Larder (within Sawmill Wood)

3.1.9 Inverie Thinning, felling and restocking

Transformation of Inverie Woods from their present structure, age and species mix will be achieved through three areas of silvicultural management: thinning, felling and restocking. It is envisaged that over the short term (2006-2011) there will be significant changes brought about by the start of the clear felling and restructuring process within Inverie Wood. Over the longer term (2010-2020), the woodland will undergo continued restructuring which will result in:-

- A robust multi-purpose woodland
- A woodland landscape of higher aesthetic value than at present
- Areas of productive, quality conifers
- Restoration of semi-natural native woodland
- Maturing, well spaced conifers on stable soils
- An increase in associated habitats within the woodland

The Long Term Forest Plan is under construction by KFT and a Scoping Meeting was held in September 2005 with a Scoping Report produced as a result of community, stakeholder and agency consultation. The LTFP will specify the scale, timing and methods of carrying out thinning, felling and restocking within Inverie Woods and once completed it will be appended to the Woodland Management Plan.

The previous Woodland Management Plan recommended thinning of at least 20 hectares and the felling of 5 hectares within the 1st five year programme. The thinning programme was carried out using a mixture of techniques including; ring barking of trees, feller select cutting and small coupe felling. Thinning will continue and it is anticipated that a further 20 hectares of forest will thinned from 2006-2010.

The planned clearfell within Inverie Forest for the 1st five year and a portion of the 2nd five year period was not carried out. This was in large part due to financial constraints caused by poor timber prices.

Planned thinning and felling over the 2006-2025 period are dealt with in the Long Term Forest Plan. The potential area of clear felling over the first five year period of the plan could extend to ~20 hectares and could yield some 8,000 tonnes of timber. The scale of felling is to a great extent influenced by the pattern of wind blow across the forest and will be guided by the stability of the tree crop, landscape analyses and extraction practicalities.

3.1.1.1 Inverie Restocking

Restocking (planting and regenerating after felling) within Inverie forest will match tree species with site type. This type of forestry will result in a mixed forest estate with key features such as ecological restoration (through native woodland planting), good soil and water management (through habitat restoration and sensitive planting) and best use of a second rotation site (planting valuable timber species on good soils).

Restocking is dealt with in the LTFP and the general guiding principles for replanting include:-

- Matching the tree species to be established with the site conditions (soil, drainage, aspect, altitude, etc.)
- Using locally sourced seed and seedlings of an appropriate provenance
- establishing low input native woodland (birch and willow) on poor soils with poor access
- establishing quality timber species, such as Scots pine, oak, larch, Douglas fir and ash on good soils
- protecting seedlings and young trees from deer and other herbivores

3.1.1.2 Inverie Monitoring and survey

Tree survival and the impact and size of the Red and Roe deer populations will be assessed by: -

- A baseline tree seedling survey carried out during 2006 and yearly thereafter
- Established fixed circular seedling plots (Deer Grazing Intensity Index) and
- Dung counts using established fixed transect (2) (Deer Population Index)

3.1.1.3 Inverie General Management

This category includes: - Archaeology; enrichment planting; community use and engagement; biodiversity management (including dead wood); policy woodlands and maintenance.

Table 4 General management activities and timing

Topic	Activity	Scale	Timing	Comments
Archaeology	Mapping and marking of archaeological sites Maintain areas around sites free from tree cover	Marked sites	2006-2010	Working with Highland Council and Historic Scotland
Enrichment planting	Establishment of new trees	10 hectares	2006-2010	To be carried out within the Policy Woodland (East end) and within sites of Ancient and Semi-natural woodland restoration areas
Biodiversity management	Felling to waste and creation of brash hedges Retention of standing and fallen deadwood for specialist woodland invertebrates, fungi and lichens	20*0.2 hectare plots Within areas of thinning and clear fell	2006-2010	High cost operation which requires adequate match funding To be continued within thinning areas
Policy Woodlands	Installation of tree tags with specific names	20 trees	2006-2010	
Tree and woodland improvement	Brashing	Adjacent to and within Recreation areas, quality timber areas and Continuous cover areas Inspection racks Across all wooded area	2006-2025	Woodland Improvement /Stewardship Grant
Tree and woodland improvement	Pruning	Adjacent to and within Recreation	2006-2025	Woodland Improvement /Stewardship Grant

		areas, quality timber areas and continuous cover areas	
Maintenance	Ditching	As required	2006-2010

4 Sandaig Burn

(Grid Reference NG722 027) (cpt47)

Sandaig Burn is a woodland compartment with an area of 35.37 hectares in the eastern area of the peninsula. Being adjacent to the Inverie – Airor road the site has good access and it was deer fenced in 2003/2004. It contains 28.36 hectares of new native woodland planting and natural regeneration. The new planting extends to some 13.45 hectares and the area under natural regeneration is 11.06 hectares with 0.65 ha designed open ground and other open ground of 3.2ha. The woodland is an NVC W17

4.1 Sandaig Burn New Planting/Regeneration

Beating up of the native woodland planting will be carried out and, following an assessment of tree regeneration, screefing and direct sowing of birch/alder/Scots pine seed may be required. Survey will determine the need for weeding

4.2 Sandaig Burn Fence (maintenance)

Fencing will be checked on a regular basis. A timetable for fence checking will be drawn up for all sites and volunteers/Foundation/ Trust personnel allocated different sites.

4.3 Sandaig Burn Exotic control

Individual Rhododendron plants have been cleared form this site in the October 2004 (from a steep sided gully using rope access) and regular checks will be made for seeding plants.

4.4 Sandaig Burn Tree protection and weeding

Tree growth will be assessed by survey and weeding and/or tree protection (such as vole guards) and/or application of fertiliser be carried out.

4.5 Sandaig Burn Herbivore Control

Regular checks need to be made on the exclosure to ensure that deer have not gained access to the site and that seedlings are not being damaged by voles, rabbits or hares.

4.6 Sandaig Burn Monitoring and survey

Monitoring will establish tree mortality (planted and regenerated trees) and locate regenerating seedlings. Surveys will be carried out in early-mid spring annually.

4.7 Sandaig Burn General management

Checks on plant health will be made during site surveys, and weed control (using Kerb or Roundup) and /or fertiliser application will be applied

5 Satial

(Grid reference NG 726 002)

This is a small native woodland site located in the south western coastal zone of the Peninsula. It is 4.3 hectares in size and was deer fenced for natural regeneration in 1994/95, the remnant and regenerating woodland is NVC W17 Oak Birch woodland. Access is by 15 minute walk from the road end at Glaschoille.

5.1 Satial New Planting/Regeneration

The native woodland has been established by natural regeneration and requires no beating up or enrichment planting

5.2 Satial Fence (maintenance)

The fence is in need of maintenance and the extent of this maintenance needs to be evaluated and fencing may be removed in the next 2 to 3 years.

5.3 Satial Exotic control

An annual check will be made for seeding exotic plants and any plants found will be removed by hand.

5.4 Satial Herbivore Control

As with all woodlands; regular checks need to be made on the exclosure to ensure that deer have not gained access to the site and that seedlings are not being damaged by voles, rabbits or hares.

5.5 Satial monitoring and survey

Fixed Point photographs will be taken once a year, preferably in early summer, and a photographic record of the woodland development maintained by KFT.

6 Cnoc Gorm

(Grid reference NG766 088)

Cnoc Gorm is a large and remote site of new and remnant native woodland some 46.73hectares hectares in area, which is located in the northern coastal area of the Knoydart Foundation landholding, below Bean na Caillich. The site is accessible by boat from Inverie or on foot from the road end at Inverguseran (30 minutes). The remnant woodland is composed of NVC W4 Birch Molinia woodland and NVC W11 Oak Birch woodland, which was fenced in 2002/2003.

6.1 Cnoc Gorm new planting/regeneration

There is no planting within this site and regeneration is reported to be doing well.
Following an assessment of tree regeneration, screefing and direct sowing of birch/alder/Scots pine seed may be required.

6.2 Cnoc Gorm fence (maintenance)

Fencing will be checked on a regular basis. A timetable for fence checking will be drawn up for all sites and volunteers/Foundation/ Trust personnel allocated different sites.

6.3 Cnoc Gorm exotic control

An annual check will be made for seeding exotic plants and any plants found will be removed by hand.

6.4 Cnoc Gorm Tree protection and weeding

Tree growth will be assessed by survey and weeding and/or tree protection (such as vole guards) and/or application of fertiliser be carried out.

6.5 Cnoc Gorm herbivore control

As with all woodlands; regular checks need to be made on the exclosure to ensure that deer have not gained access to the site and that seedlings are not being damaged by voles, rabbits or hares.

6.6 Cnoc Gorm monitoring and survey

Monitoring will establish tree mortality (planted and regenerated trees) and locate regenerating seedlings. Surveys will be carried out in early-mid spring annually. The remote nature of Cnoc Gorm and Croulin present a challenge for surveys visits and a minimum number of four visits per annum by KFT staff or contractors are suggested.

6.7 Cnoc Gorm general management

Checks on plant health will be made during site surveys.

7 Croulin

(Grid Reference NG 780 088)

Croulin is a fenced (deer fenced in 2002/2003) area of 53.71 hectares immediately south east of Cnoc Gorm and like its neighbouring woodland exclosure, Cnoc Gorm, it is a native woodland conservation and expansion site. It is more remote than Cnoc Gorm, being situated further inland and more distant from the coast or track, higher up the slopes of Bein na Caillich. The remnant woodland is similar in species composition to that within Cnoc Gorm, with woodland types, NVC W4 Birch Molinia woodland and NVC W11 Oak Birch woodland.

7.1 Croulin new planting/regeneration

Following an assessment of tree establishment, screefing and direct sowing of birch/alder seed may be required within regeneration areas and beat up of planting areas may be required.

7.2 Croulin fence (maintenance)

Fencing will be checked on a regular basis. A timetable for fence checking will be drawn up for all sites and volunteers/Foundation/ Trust personnel allocated different sites.

7.3 Croulin exotic control

An annual check will be made for seeding exotic plants and any plants found will be removed by hand.

7.4 Croulin Tree protection and weeding

Tree growth will be assessed by survey and weeding and/or tree protection (such as vole guards) and/or application of fertiliser be carried out.

7.5 Croulin herbivore control

As with all woodlands; regular checks need to be made on the exclosure to ensure that deer have not gained access to the site and that seedlings are not being damaged by voles, rabbits or hares.

7.6 Croulin monitoring and survey

Monitoring will establish tree mortality (planted and regenerated trees) and locate regenerating seedlings. Surveys will be carried out in early-mid spring annually and will be carried out at the same time as site surveys of Cnon Gorm (4 per annum).

7.7 General management

Checks on plant health will be made during site surveys.

8 Folach and Guiserein

Follach (Grid Reference NG 795 035), Guiserein (Grid reference NG 766 024)

Folach is one of the two exotic conifer plantations, referred to as the 'Glen Guiserein Plantations'. It sits on the south west flank of Ladhar Bheinn and is 42.64 hectares in area. Guiserein is situated further east, adjacent to the Inverie to Inverguseran track, and as the largest single forest block in West Knoydart it dominates the valley floor of Glen Guiserein, covering an area of 188.26 hectares.

The conifers were planted between 1974 and 77 and are a mix of Lodgepole pine (South coastal provenance) and Sitka spruce. Much of the crop is at or beyond pole stage (or first thinning stage) although site conditions have held many of the trees in check; Lodgepole pine in some sections exhibits classic 'bushy' form and it is unlikely that the plantation will yield commercially viable timber. Windblow, especially of Lodgepole pine on peat soils is present. Occasional small rhododendrons are present, colonising from Inverie, which is approximately 2 kilometres away.

The Guiserein plantations have environmental and landscape value, providing shelter for wildlife and a significant woodland feature in an otherwise treeless landscape. The previous management prescriptions of small scale coupe felling, felling to waste, ring barking spruce (to favour Scots pine and birch) and creation of brash hedges with new native tree planting within the brash palisades will be continued over the next 5 year and 20 year periods.

8.1 New planting/regeneration

Within brash hedges there will be planting of native broadleaved trees (birch, alder, rowan and oak where soil permits), using flat planting with vole guards on oak. The quantity of enrichment planting (restocking) will correspond to the area of land enclosed by brash hedges (see below). Carefully sited small clumps of individually protected native trees will be established between existing conifer plantations to form habitat and landscape links, where fenced areas are not practical.

8.2 Exotic control and weeding

An annual check will be made for seeding exotic plants and any plants found will be removed by hand.

8.3 Thinning and felling

The felling to waste and brash hedging management is effective but labour intensive and high cost. If grant funding can be sourced to allow this type of operation then it should be continued. A target area of some 2-5 hectares (between both plantations) of felling to waste and brash hedging per annum is suggested. Thinning by ring barking and selective felling will be continued to favour Scots pine and native broadleaves within the plantations.

8.4 Monitoring and survey

Survey is required to check the mortality and growth of trees planted within brash hedges. This type of survey is less of a priority for KFT than the surveys of trees within large fenced exclosures. This type of information is important and surveys could be carried out by a summer student or local volunteers

9 Garsley

(Grid Reference NG 793 031)

Garsley (c100ha) lies within Glen Guiserain and covers the lower, northern slopes of Sgurr Coire Choinnichean. It is an area of natural regeneration and new panting, with much of the woodland being at thicket stage. It was deer fenced in 1993 and 1994 with the objective of conserving existing woodland remnants and regenerating new native woodland. Most of the site (60%) having achieved Woodland Grant Scheme stage 3 payment, is now deemed by Forestry Commission to be established with most of the area covered with woodland type NVC W17 oak birch, W 4 Alder. (Scots pine planted to create W18).

9.1 Garsley fence (maintenance)

The fence does require maintenance and the extent of this maintenance needs assessing. The fencing round this woodland will be removed when it is judged that there would be no, or minimal damage to newly established trees from increased browsing. It is estimated that this may be in 2010/2011 and the decision to remove the fencing will partly depend on deer density on the wider estate.

9.2 Garsley exotic control

An annual check will be made for seeding exotic plants and any plants found will be removed by hand.

9.3 Herbivore Control

Herbivore control at Garsley, whilst important does not appear to be critical. The trees are established and deer (Roe) have been seen within the plantation without any obvious damage to plants. Monitoring and survey will determine whether there is a requirement for deer control.

9.4 Monitoring and survey

Following on from the above management statement; a survey of plant condition and a deer assessment, to establish an estimate of resident animals, would guide KFT about the potential action required during the 2006-2010 period. Fixed point photography should be considered to record woodland development.

9.5 General management

There is potential to extend the new native woodland scheme (when existing fences are being removed) by recycling existing fence material to create an exclosure immediately to the east.

9.6 Recreation and Access

Informal access routes at Garsley will be constructed by strimming paths, cutting of regenerating trees; which will require cutting to achieve tree respacing and the construction of styles?

Appendix 1 Land Ownership

Table of Landownership and status of management agreements

Woodland Management Unit Number	Site name	Ownership	Management Agreement Signed /status	Site Area (Hectares)
	Inverie	*All ownerships*	*n/a*	*205.8*
	Inverie	Knoydart Foundation	Yes	108.9
	Croulin	Knoydart Foundation	Yes	53.17
	Garsley	Knoydart Foundation	Yes	143.55
	Cnoc Gorm	Knoydart Foundation	Yes	43.19
	Sandaig Burn	Knoydart Foundation	Yes	35.37
	Guiserain & Folach	Knoydart Foundation	Yes	230.9
	Inverie (Aultvoulin/Millburn)	Ken Talbot	Yes	19.32
	Inverie (Chapel Woods)	Matt & Samantha Humphrys	New owner, under discussion	12.8
	Inverie (Cramp Wood - Kilchoan Estate)	Eric Delwart	letter of agreement that Estate will manage the area within their ownership according to the agreed plan (ie fence maint and deer mangt within)	16.14
	Inverie (Torrie)	Roger and Anne Trussell	Yes	8.5
	Inverie (Creag-Ira)	Geoff Hayward	under discussion	4.01
	Satial	Knoydart Foundation	Yes	5.31
	Inverie (Scottas Wood)	Tom Craigmyle	Yes	37.51
	TOTAL AREA			**717.29**

Appendix 2 Potential New Native Woodland Sites

Table of potential new native woodland sites

Number	Site name	Ownership / tenure	Establishment works	Area (Hectares)	Comment	Proposed Timescale
1	Airor Burn	Crofting/Private/ Knoydart Foundation	Fencing and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	40	Crofting issues require resolution & Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation required.	2006-2010
2	Samadalan Burn	Crofting /Knoydart Foundation	Fencing and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	8.3	Crofting issues require resolution & Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation required.	2006-2010
3	Croulin Wee Burn	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	8.63	Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation required.	2006-2010
4	Coire na h Aisre (link between Croulin and Cnoc Gorm)	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	60	After Cnoc Gorm fence removed. Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation required	2016-2020
5	Torr Liath (Extension to Cnoc Gorm)	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	25	After Cnoc Gorm fence removed. Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation	2016-2020

					required	
6	Imireachan	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	12.92	Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation required	2012-2015
7	Fank Burn	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	14.8	Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation required	2011-2015
8	Abhain Bheag Potential to extend to take in Folach road end	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing, access, planting on knolls	15.95	Approved under WGS. Extension to be considered	2006-2010
9	Garsley extension	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	46	After Garsley fence removed. Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation required	2011-2015
10	Rubha Raounuill (Coastal Woodlands Project)	Knoydart Foundation / Private	No fencing, reduced grazing pressure and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	~126	Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation and private landowners required. The coastal woodlands projects require incorporation within the Knoydart Foundation Deer Management Plan	2006-2010
11	Doune/Airor (Coastal woodlands Project)	Knoydart Foundation/Private / crofting	No fencing, reduced grazing pressure and regeneration from native woodland seed sources	~50	As above	2006-2010
12	Leathad Mhor	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing, regeneration and planting (possible to increase	~4ha (~15ha)	Consideration and approval from	2006-2010

		(private)	to take in section of Guiserein river riparian)		Knoydart Foundation required	
13	Mam Uidhe	Knoydart Foundation	Fencing small clumps of individual trees	~2ha	Consideration and approval from Knoydart Foundation required Linkage of Inverie and Guieserein woodland habitats	2006-2010
			TOTAL AREA	**313.6ha**		