

The Planting Plan

The planting plan is focussed at increasing diversity of tree species across the site, it has been guided by the research and surveys undertaken by Andrew Potter and is based on the grounded Ecological Site Classification (ESC) for Forestry that he has carried out. This has been used to predict tree species that will be best suited to the site conditions as well as determining suitable quantities.

The site is dominated by *Pinus sylvestris* Scots Pine and *Betula pendula* Silver birch, there are a limited number of Willows *Salix Caprea*, one Aspen *Populus tremula* and Juniper to a lesser extent all of which have regenerated from abundant seed sources across the boundaries. The number of existing trees reflects the dominant species in the locality. The woodland in the area between the house plots and the road will retain most of the existing trees to retain screening and habitat. Allowing animals such as squirrels uninterrupted passage and cover for other types of animals and birds.

As the housing is based on local community affordability it would be unreasonable to impose planting specifications of standard and above tree sizes which would significantly increase costs with little habitat gain over a 10 year period. A more pragmatic and long term planting proposal has been put forward which focusses on the sustained community aspirations of the group's stakeholders and fosters interest in developing this woodland over their lifetimes.

The introduction of an extended inventory of native tree species will give a new structure within the woodland. It will be planted at 40 to 60 cm feathers from plant plugs or bare root stock. Plant plugs have a better start as the roots are ready to grow from the outset whereas bare root stock has had fibrous root disruption. Plant plugs can also have slow release fertiliser applied within the soil at planting out. Using plant plugs allows trees to be planted in any season, allowing faster start up times. The specified tree sizes are available in both bare root and plant plugs.

Site and Plot Boundaries

The main boundary line of the site which is shown in Red will be a stock fence, where possible felled timber from the site will be used in the stock fence.

Split logs can be stacked in creative ways along the plot boundaries to create habitat for insects whilst drying out. Logs from trees on site can be used in many ways to link the plots and define the individual plots. This can define the character of the community site and also maintain a cultural link to the Sawmills heritage.

Landscape Management Plan

Method Statement for Relocation of Juniper and Logs

Time has been taken by the group to identify Juniper plants in a favourable condition that can be relocated.

1. Prior to any works on site identify Juniper bushes from the Juniper relocation plan and flag mark them for identification, prune where required.
2. With reference to the tree protection plan identify site access to Juniper locations. Access these locations by foot, using a mini digger or where possible use the reach of larger excavator.
3. As the ground has been mechanically compacted in the past it is likely that root penetration is not deep, however a deep excavation at around 500mm will be needed to determine depth. Where possible excavate the individual plant root system at twice the branch spread. Allowing the capture within the rootball for more delicate fibrous roots.
4. Relocate Individual bushes to the nearest location as determined in the planting plan.
5. Reinstall Juniper plants at determined locations as soon as possible. Avoid storing Juniper for long periods to avoid drying out.
6. Mark Juniper at new location to protect them during the construction phase.

Logs

As the site was used as a Sawmill there are some large logs (likely to be oak) within grassland near the edge of the Southern boundary. Not only do these provide a good habitat for invertebrates they link to the cultural heritage and essence of the place. It is important to the Sawmill cooperative group that these are retained and can be accessed to retain a link to the past use of the site. It is important to transfer the surrounding turf and soil horizons to the new locations as the mycorrhizal associations formed within the decay will enhance the Biodiversity.

For more detail on why this is important for retention refer to Ern Emmett Ecological survey.

1. Locate the new area for logs (Area B) and de-turf and store the excavated material. Remove soils to a depth of around 400mm. Transfer in tandem to existing log site (Area A).
2. Remove logs and store near to the new location. Excavate turf to 700mm from the foot print of the logs area on all sides excavate large turves where possible.
3. Store turf at the new location (Area B). Excavate the de-turfed area (area A) to around 500mm depth and back fill using soil horizons from area B.
4. Make good the surrounding levels, re-turf the old log locations with turf won from Area B.
5. There is a shortage of turf in area A spot turf from the immediate vicinity this will encourage seeding into bare ground increasing diversity.

6. Any bare areas to be sown with Specified seed mix for site grassland meadow.
7. Transfer to the allocated site.
8. Protect logs during the construction phase.

Tree Planting, Growth and Protection

Alba trees Albacote is recommended for the tree plugs. It is a blend of NPK suitable for all types of tree and sites. It releases slowly ensuring excellent establishment and growth. It should be applied at the time of planting under the roots. This means that the tree gets the full advantage of the fertiliser and does not feed surface weeds. It is applied in a single operation of both planting and fertilizing. Albacote tree fertiliser is delivered in 1.2kg bags and measured at around 10g per tree which is enough for 120 trees.

Tubex Treeguard mesh shelters should be used for protecting trees against mammals, protecting against winds until the tree gets established whilst minimising visual impact on the landscape. The Guard also allows good ventilation around the tree. The moulded top lip prevents abrasion of the tree stem. The shelters are to be fixed using one pre-fitted tie on 60cm shelters and two on larger sizes, for attaching to a stake which should be driven 30cm into the ground. Within the fenced site boundary the height of the protection will be 60cm and will be doubled to 120cm out with the site boundary to protect against deer grazing.

The guards are fully degradable and will become brittle and break within a few years, ensuring that the treeguards do not strangle the tree.

Access track to house sites

The track will be cambered to the following specification;

- The road surface will be shaped to a smooth profile and the surface cambered with 5% (1:20) falls from the crown, or with a 5% (1:20) crossfall.
- Minimum camber slope shall be 4.5% (1:22). If possible the road should be made up of sub base from the Gravel quarry across the road, with pink granite surfacing from Alvie quarry both of which would be sourced from areas that are in keeping with the locality.

In engineering projects, house building or creation of ponds where soil is being moved and there is a choice of subsoil and topsoil available, a mixture of topsoil and subsoil (about 50:50) for a depth of about 30 cm overlying subsoil is usually ideal, provided the topsoil is not excessively weedy (especially with Docks and other perennial weeds). Subsoil alone can be used but if the structure is poor and the fertility very low there will be a very slow establishment of wildflowers and frequently domination by plants such as clovers which do not depend on nitrogen in the soil for their growth.

Landscape Management

For the duration of this management plan; The area of woodland between plots 1-4 and the minor road to the East will be managed by the four affordable house owners under the direction of the land owner. The areas around plots 5 and 6 will be under the management of the land owner.

Landscape management: 0 to 3 years.

Existing trees should be monitored as directed by Andrew Potter's tree report and where appropriate poorer specimens that were to be reviewed should be removed if they are not developing or in good condition. The new structure planting through the screening belt should take place within the first year and could be done prior to ground works. Further new planting should be undertaken as soon as practically possible in relation to individual site plot's construction. In periods of long dry weather new planting may require watering. Any plants that have failed should be removed and replanted within the first 3 years, care should be taken to determine the reason for the failure and for any ground issues like water logging then an alternative planting site in the vicinity should be considered.

Landscape management: 3 to 5 years.

Areas that were planted for screening around the bins should now be trimmed at least once a year normally in the Autumn this will allow Holly and Yew trees to bulk up in the lower third of the plant and they will become managed as if they were hedging. Further plants should be considered if gaps are apparent. Spring and autumn checks of tree guards and where necessary any damage made good to provide continued protection against grazing especially in areas outside the boundary stock fence. Mulch mats should still be in good order to keep herbage suppressed in the grassland and outside the boundary fence within the rough grazed areas.

Landscape management: 5 to 10 years.

Rowan trees and wild cherries should be providing food in late summer early autumn increasing bird visits. If this food source is not sufficient further planting should be considered. Some thinning may be required to increase light levels for trees with fruit and berries and also allow newly planted species to grow and not be dominated by the original spindly birch and pine trees. Areas of disturbed ground around planted trees should be showing signs of improved ground cover with increasing blueberry. If this is not happening then further surface disruption should be considered where appropriate allowing the abundant seed sources to increase diversity. If the moratorium on planting Juniper has been removed within Badenoch and Strathspey then further planting should be considered based on overall cover and densities. Tree guards within the site boundary should be reviewed annually and should be removed if there is any conflict with the girth of the tree or if they are damaged. Tree guards outside the Site

boundary are likely to need new guards to accommodate growth rates if the field system is still used for grazing animals.

Landscape management: 10 to 15 years.

There should now be an age diversity of trees across the site as the original trees start to mature and the first planting phase starts to emerge in the tree canopy. Further thinning of trees in a poor condition should be considered. Scots pine has likely seeded into disturbed ground along with other species and this will allow a healthy regeneration of younger plants. Additional planting could be added to increase the habitats diversity. Plants that should be considered are honeysuckle as a rambling climber and Hawthorn to be introduced to openings along the roadside barrier planting. Further planting between Collie Cottages and the site boundary should be reviewed with the landowner in the areas where the past dumping of soils, boulders, concrete and industrial rubbish has been cleared. If natural seeding has not improved this ground by increasing a range of young seedlings then further planting of plugs with the same range of species should be considered. This would improve the condition and would be further landscape mitigation by the Sawmill cooperative group who have a keen interest in securing healthy woodland habitats around the Sawmill site.

This planting scheme and management plan aim to create a unified landscape across the site which has the potential to improve the habitat within the sawmill site boundary considerably. By creating a landscape in keeping with the surrounding character and providing spaces where individuals can develop gardens around their homes that reflect individuality whilst maintaining the landscape values of the cooperative as a whole. This will mirror the architecture styles in each plot.

Lighting

The development will endeavour to minimise light pollution, this will be achieved by only using external lighting that directs light towards the ground. All external lighting will be LED and down lighters on the north side of houses will be used with sensors to minimise visibility from minor road to the East.