

# Glen Tanar Estate

## Long Term Forest Plan Renewal 2019 – 2039

### Scoping Information

#### Location

Glen Tanar Estate is situated to the south of the River Dee, between the villages of Aboyne and Ballater in Aberdeenshire. The main access to the Estate is at the Bridge of Ess on the B976 South Deeside Road at grid reference NO 504 972. The Estate covers 10,365ha and extends 11 km south from the River Dee to the summit of Mount Keen, taking in most of the catchment of the Water of Tanar. The Estate woodlands lie in the northern and central parts of the estate in the valleys of the River Dee, the Tanar and the Alt Roy.

#### Site Description

The total mapped area of woodland on the Estate is 3,943.54ha. A total area of 2,186.95ha are within the boundaries of the Glen Tanar National Nature Reserve (NNR). Of this, 1,564ha are included in the core area of the Caledonian Pinewood Inventory. Over the last 8 years, the woods have been managed in accordance with an approved Long Term Forest Plan.

Scots pine is the main species on the Estate comprising 52% of the total woodland area. Almost all Scots pine on the Estate is from Glen Tanar seed. The remainder is made up of mixed conifer species with a proportion of native broadleaves.

The woods on Glen Tanar form an important part of the Estate and perform a number of vital roles including: economic, sporting, recreation, habitat (for species such as red squirrels, a number of important birds & rare plants) and landscape.

The area within the NNR is managed under a Reserve Management Plan primarily for wildlife and biodiversity. Timber harvesting operations are also carried out within the NNR. These are predominantly thinning operations aimed at improving the crop and providing additional biodiversity benefits and reduced disease risk (*Dothistroma* Needle Blight is present in the Scots pine).

Out with the NNR, the woods are managed primarily for timber production. Under the existing forest plan, a programme of thinning and selective felling for natural regeneration has been carried out. Windblow has affected some of the stands that were selectively felled and these have been clear felled and restocked.

All forestry operations have to be managed with public access in mind. There are a number of Public Rights of Way and waymarked paths on the Estate. The internal road network is heavily used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders and responsible public access is welcomed on the Estate. Much of this is overseen by the ranger service provided by the Glen Tanar Charitable Trust.

Deer management is key to encouraging natural regeneration and the Estate's policy is to maintain the woodland deer numbers at under 5 per km<sup>2</sup>. Deer are presently managed under an approved SRDP deer management plan. Other sporting interests on the Estate include grouse and salmon fishing.

The woods are home to a number of important wildlife species including capercaillie and Schedule 1 bird species. All are managed in accordance with best practice and following Forestry Commission and SNH guidance notes. There are also a number of rare plants in the woods and these are protected during forestry operations.

### **Designated Sites**

The Caledonian pinewoods are one of the qualifying features of the Glen Tanar National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation. The Caledonian pinewood also helps to support important wildlife species that are qualifying features of these sites and the Glen Tanar Special Protection Area. In addition to these designated sites, the Water of Tanar, Water of Gairney and Water of Allachy form part of the River Dee Special Area of Conservation and the Dinnet Oakwood is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The majority of the Estate also lies within the Cairngorms National Park.

### **Aims & Objectives**

The management aims are:

- To grow a high yielding crop of quality timber and other forest products in a sustainable way
- To create the right conditions for natural regeneration to occur without the need for deer fences
- To enhance the extent and diversity of the woodland and its associated wildlife habitats, with particular attention given to the needs of qualifying species.
- To enhance the biodiversity interest of water and river features, with particular attention given to qualifying species.
- To protect the qualifying plant and wildlife species from significant detrimental impacts.
- To make provision for sporting use of the woodland.
- To make provision for informal public recreational use.
- To maintain the aesthetic and amenity value of the woodland.
- To conserve archaeological features.

The objectives are:

- To fulfil all legal and contractual obligations committed to within the plan period
- To comply with the UKFS and UKWAS in all forestry planning and operations
- To grow and harvest a regular crop of quality saw logs, small roundwood and other forest products
- To increase the area of woodland by natural regeneration of the adjacent moorland
- To create a dynamic interface between open and forested areas that allows areas to shift, in both directions, between the forested and open habitats.
- To support the retention of individual old trees throughout the forest and areas of "old-growth" forest
- To conserve a diversity of life class structures of forest and shrub layer that reflects the pattern and scale of natural disturbances, especially wind and fire, on Glen Tanar, consistent with the scale of Glen Tanar
- To maintain sufficient areas of the shrub layer in early successional stages to support qualifying species
- To ensure satisfactory development of the stands of trees by regular thinning
- To improve light levels in the understorey and reduce the risk of disease through regular thinning

- To increase age and structural diversity in the NNR through identifying possible group felling to create gaps big enough to encourage natural regeneration
- To maintain the populations of deer and other browsing animals to levels at which the woodlands are able to regenerate satisfactorily without internal fencing.
- To maintain habitats for wildlife, including a minimum of 10% open space, 10% native broadleaves and 1% retentions.

### **Constraints and Opportunities**

There are a number of constraints and opportunities on the Estate. These are highlighted on the accompanying Concept Maps – 2a Conservation Woods and 2b Commercial Woods.