

Case Study: Balcorrach Farm

Native Broadleaf Woodland Creation

This case study covers the creation of a 35 Ha native broadleaf woodland scheme near Lennoxtown in 2019, on land previously used for sheep grazing located in the central belt. The farm is highly visible in the landscape, being located on the prominent southern face of the Kilpatrick Hills.

Objectives

The decision to plant this area was made for two primary reasons; to maximise the income from less productive ground; and to help reduce the farming burden for the owner as the ground is some 30 miles from the owner's house.

Constraints

Several constraints influenced the size, layout and design of the new woodland. These included a neighbouring SSSI, archaeological features, local nature conservation site, prominent landscape, views, deep peat (peat over 50cm deep is ineligible for FGS funding), public access, rocky outcrops and drinking water supply.

Prescriptions

The site was deer fenced, with rabbit netting, in order to protect trees from grazing pressure. Bamboo canes were attached to the top half of the fence to make it more visible to black grouse to prevent them from striking the fence. Vole guards were fitted to the trees within the deer fence and those out-with the fence were protected 1.2m tubes.

The ground preparation carried out was a mix of continuous mounding and screefing. Both these options minimise visual impact and the amount of water shed from the hill.

Native species were used, with oak and silver birch being concentrated in drier areas. The overall species composition for this site is as follows:

<u>Species</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>%</u>
Sessile oak	35	Goat Willow	3.4
Downy Birch	31.2	Hawthorn	2.5
Rowan	8.1	Common Alder	1.9
Silver Birch	13.8	Hazel	1.6
Rowan	8.1	Holly	1.6
		Aspen	0.9



Photo 1 – continuous mounding to create planting positions, vole guards shown on trees

Carbon sale funding

Over the course of the next 60 years it is projected that this scheme will result in the sequestration of almost 12,000T of CO₂, the sale of which generated £26,932.

To be eligible for carbon funding it must be demonstrated that the proposal would not be viable, or would generate a lesser income than the site's current use, without it. Carbon funding must also equate to at least 15% of the proposal's 10 year expenditure.

Grants

All grants successfully applied for were:



Photo 2 – looking across planting site and wider landscape

Grant option	Payment rate
Native Broadleaf woodland creation	£1840/Hectare
Maintenance payments (years two to six)	£272/Ha/year
Central Scotland Greening network core area	£2,500/Ha
Deer fencing	£6.80/m
Rabbit netting for deer fence	£1.60/m
Enhancing or modifying deer fence (black grouse marking)	£2/m
Gate for deer fence	£172 each
Self-closing gate for non-vehicular access	£280 each
Bracken control	£225/Ha
Tree shelter (1.2m to 1.8m)	£2/tube
Vole guard	£0.19 each

Cashflow

The project generated an attractive cashflow.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Income	£203,288	£26,751	£9,558	£9,558	£9,558	£9,558	£268,271
Initial planting grant, fencing, CSGN, maintenance, bracken control, carbon funding							
Expenditure	£145,026	£16,546	£12,023	£5,781	£0	£0	£179,377
Fencing, ground preparation, plants, planting, maintenance, management							
Balance	£58,261	£10,205	-£2,465	£3,777	£9,558	£9,558	£88,894
Cumulative Balance	£58,261	£68,466	£66,001	£69,778	£79,336	£88,894	

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