

NORTH LOGIEALMOND WOODLAND CREATION AGRICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Context

The land holding at North Logiealmond extends to roughly 2,185 ha and is managed under a mixed land-use regime, with pastoral agricultural production, sporting use, and a small-scale forestry element.

Most of the land within the landholding is currently farmed under a contract hill sheep farming agreement, encompassing an area of 2,170 ha, and supporting 1,500 breeding ewes.

Initially, woodland creation was considered over the majority of the contract farming area, but following consultation with the contract farmer, the east end of the farm was deemed to be the preferred woodland creation area, and it was agreed that farming operations would continue over the bulk of the landholding

The identification of woodland creation as an alternative land use to agriculture, and the areas targeted, arose following a strategic review of the estate's land management enterprises. The Estate does not wish to convert too much of the land from farming to forestry such that it makes the farming enterprise unprofitable. The remaining land left in agriculture will be heavily invested in, with new stock fencing, liming and improved drainage works proposed for in-bye land and a new hill lambing park, as well as ensuring a well-designed deer fence and (if required) a bridge crossing of the Dullator Burn for the hefted hill flock. These investments (excluding the deer fence) are at the Estate expense.

The proposal will remove 397.65 ha of land from the agricultural enterprise, amounting to ~18% of the total land holding. A further 172 ha will have some form of restrictive grazing regime as part of mitigation for potential on waders.

Land Classification

The table below sets out an estimate of the land classification areas of the estate as whole, and of the proposed divisions between future forestry and agricultural use. The Land Capability for Agriculture 50k resolution data from James Hutton Institute was used to derive the data in the table below.

Classes	Description	Total Area	Woodland Proposal
		% of total area	% of LCA total
4	Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops, primarily on grassland with short breaks of forage crops	9%	0%
5	Land capable of use as improved grassland.	42%	16%
6	Land capable of use as rough grazings.	49%	22%

In brief, most of the land included in the woodland creation proposal is a class 5.1, 5.2, 6.1 and 6.3. The remainder of all higher quality land (4.1 and 4.2) will remain in agricultural use.

One historic field system and land to the east within the enclosed woodland creation area will be stock fenced and will remain in agricultural use. Access to these fields will be improved by the upgrading of existing roads as part of the woodland creation works, and they will also benefit from the erection of new fences.

Land Use

The proposal will result in an increase in the extent of woodland at North Logiealmond, rising to roughly 22% of the holding, from the current 9% of woodland cover

The land encompassed by the woodland creation proposal is largely classified as 'moorland', and it is managed as such in an AECS scheme. The moorland element of the AECS scheme on Logiealmond covers roughly 2,200 ha of land, and the proposal will remove around 18% of this area from the scheme.

Infrastructure Issues

The forestry proposal covers mainly rough and less accessible ground to the east of the property, accessible only by rough tracks. Most of the proposal area is internally unenclosed, and most of the boundaries are poorly fenced; these are factors making stock and pasture management more difficult.

Impact on Stock Numbers

The contract farming area at North Logiealmond (around 2,170 ha) supports roughly 1,500 breeding ewes. The Estate does not envisage a reduction in flock size after the woodland creation area is removed from the contract farming area, with grazing being intensified on the better land. Therefore, no reduction in stock numbers is predicted to arise from the new planting scheme.

Impact on Employment and Population

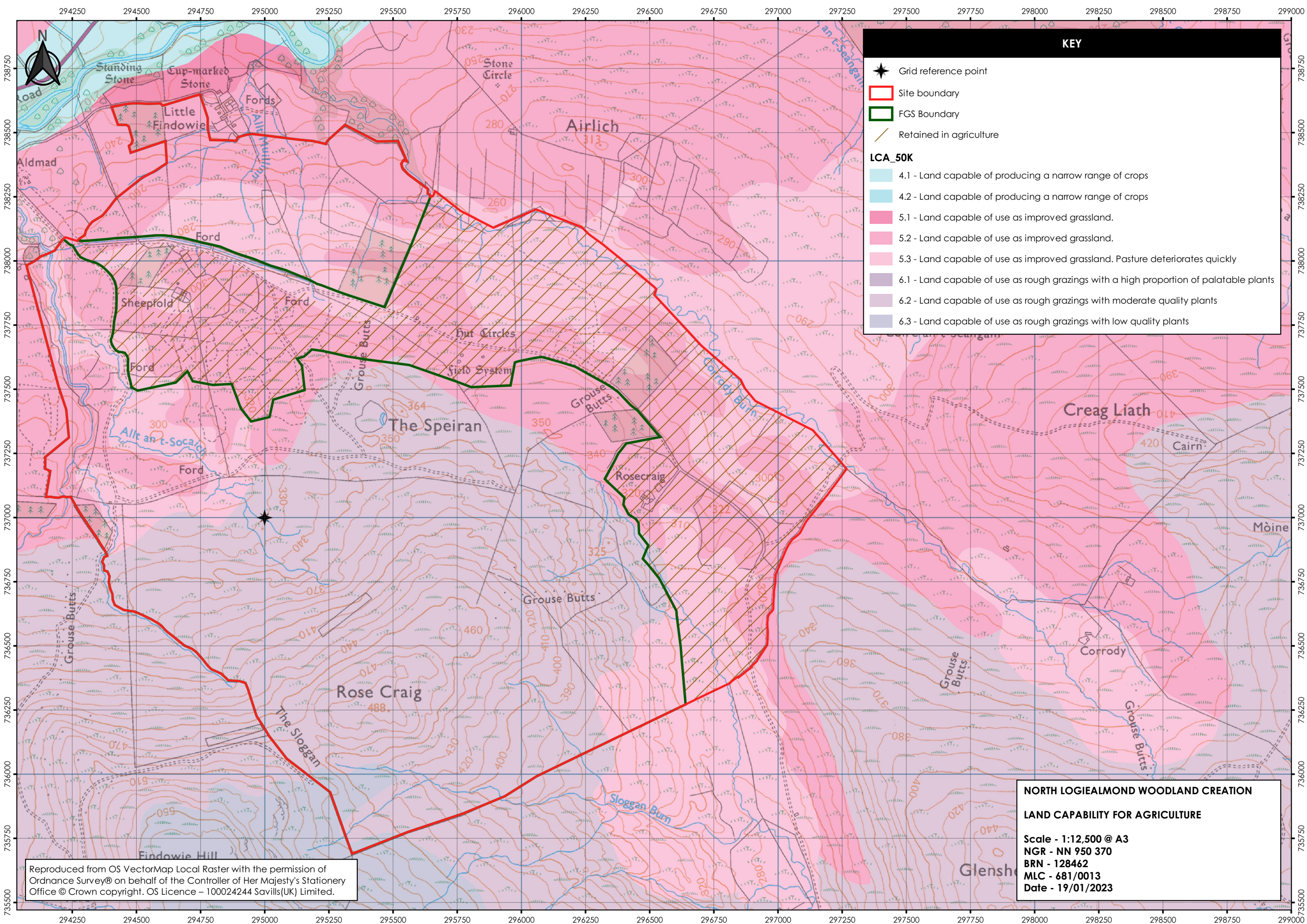
As the impact of the woodland creation proposals on stock numbers will be limited, and as the farm is managed under a contract agreement, and no loss in stock numbers is planned, it is thought that there will be no measurable impact on agricultural employment. As predator control will continue to be undertaken by estate staff there will be no impact on direct employment. No loss in local population is envisaged, and as overall employment levels will increase, it is feasible that there will be an increase in local population.

The woodland creation proposals will result in the creation of 1.0 FTE averaged out over the rotation period.

Agriculture will remain as the dominant land use and economic activity in the local area. Given the current relatively low expenditure levels generated by the land proposed for the woodland creation proposal it is unlikely that its removal will have a significant effect on the agricultural economy, while the forestry proposals will generate some expenditure in the local economy.

Summary

- **The proposals will result in the loss of ~397 ha of agricultural land, including some of the estate's poorer quality and less accessible land**
- **There will be no loss in stock numbers or agricultural employment**
- **There will be net gain of up to 1.0 FTE jobs arising from the establishment of productive woodland**



KEY

- ★ Grid reference point
- ▭ Site boundary
- ▭ FGS Boundary
- ▨ Retained in agriculture

LCA_50K

- 4.1 - Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops
- 4.2 - Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops
- 5.1 - Land capable of use as improved grassland.
- 5.2 - Land capable of use as improved grassland.
- 5.3 - Land capable of use as improved grassland. Pasture deteriorates quickly
- 6.1 - Land capable of use as rough grazings with a high proportion of palatable plants
- 6.2 - Land capable of use as rough grazings with moderate quality plants
- 6.3 - Land capable of use as rough grazings with low quality plants

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NORTH LOGIEALMOND WOODLAND CREATION
LAND CAPABILITY FOR AGRICULTURE
 Scale - 1:12,500 @ A3
 NGR - NN 950 370
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