



Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Please complete this form to find out if you need consent from Scottish Forestry, under the **Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017**, to carry out your proposed forestry project. Please refer to Schedule 2 Selection Criteria for Screening Forestry Projects under [Applying for an opinion](#). If you are not sure about what information to include on this form please contact your [local Conservancy office](#).

Proposed Work							
Please put a cross in the box to indicate the type of work you are proposing to carry out. Give the area in hectares and where appropriate the percentage of conifers and broadleaves							
Proposed Work	select	Area in hectares	% Conifer	% Broadleaves	Proposed work	select	Area in hectares
Afforestation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	250	25	75	Forest roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Deforestation	<input type="checkbox"/>				Forest quarry	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Location of work		East Schiehallion					

Description of Forestry Project and Location
<p>Provide details of the forestry project (size, design, use of natural resources such as soil, and the cumulative effect if relevant). Please attach map(s) showing the boundary of the proposed work and other known details.</p> <p>Map 1: Location of East Schiehallion in context of wider landscape Map 2: East Schiehallion property boundary Map 8: proposed planting plan Map 9: proposed fencing</p> <p>(Additional maps are included as part of the site's woodland management plan 2022-2032).</p> <p>The proposed woodland creation will be within a strategic boundary fence which will involve constructing a new offset electric stock fence on the southern and western boundaries. Existing stock fencing on the northern boundary will be upgraded to offset electric.</p> <p>An area of approximately 250ha (outwith the Schiehallion SSSI) will be planted at low densities (at overall densities less than 500 stems / hectare) with native conifer (Scots pine and juniper) and native broadleaves. At higher elevations (approximately above 600m) we will focus on restoring a treeline and montane scrub habitat, planting species such as juniper, dwarf birch and montane willows.</p> <p>The project aims to show the potential for mountain woodland in Scotland, therefore planting will also be focused around the main path up Schiehallion alongside increased visitor interpretation.</p>

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Provide details on the existing land use and the environmental sensitivity of the area that is likely to be affected by the forestry project.

Maps 3, 3a and 3b: existing woodland types
Map 4: archaeological features and designations
Maps 6a and 6b: NVC classifications

The current land use for East Schiehallion is for conservation and recreation. Both these land uses will be enhanced by the planned project, thanks to likely increased carbon sequestration in the long-term, benefits to biodiversity and ecosystem services, alongside improved visitor interpretation which is planned as part of the project.

Description of Likely Significant Effects

Provide details on any likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment (resulting from the project itself or the use of natural resources) and the extent of the information available to assist you with this assessment.

Landscape:

The site is within the Loch Rannoch and Glen Lyon National Scenic Area. In the medium to long-term it is hoped that increased, low density woodland cover will benefit the surrounding area thanks to aesthetic value and increased wildlife in the area.

In the short-term, fencing will have an unavoidable visual impact. To reduce this impact the chosen fence design is an offset-electric fence which is only slightly higher than a stock-height fence to reduce this visual impact. We anticipate fencing will be removed once woodland has been established and grazing levels can be controlled at a low level.

Biodiversity:

There is a large black grouse lek adjacent to the project area on Dun Coilich and East Schiehallion is an important area for black grouse. Black grouse lek surveys are ongoing in the area to identify any new lekking sites which will inform the exact location of new fencing to ensure the impacts of fencing on black grouse can be reduced, and whether fence marking will be required. We have taken advice from RSPB on this.

Once the woodland has established, it will have a positive environmental effect, benefiting overall biodiversity of the area, increasing suitable habitat for black grouse, ring ouzel and other birds and mammals.

Carbon:

In the long-term creating a seed source for the future will have numerous benefits on East Schiehallion and wider estates thanks to the increased potential for natural regeneration. The long-term potential benefits of establishing naturally regenerating mountain woodland where at present there is heath, are likely to be significant for carbon sequestration.

Landslides and peat erosion are becoming an increasing issue with climate driven changes in precipitation. Once a mountain woodland has established on Schiehallion, the role of intercepting heavy rainfall by trees and taller vegetation can reduce overland flow of water,

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reducing velocity of flow into burns and rivers, while the binding of soil by deep tree roots increases soil stability.

Include details of any consultees or stakeholders that you have contacted in order to make this assessment. Please include any relevant correspondence you have received from them.

We undertook a public consultation in January-February 2022 as part of our engagement plans for this project. The documents shared with stakeholders are included as part of this EIA screening opinion. Invitations to provide feedback were emailed to neighbouring land owners, members of the Heart of Scotland Forest Partnership, chair of the Breadalbane Deer Management Group, Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust, Scottish Raptor Study Group, Mountaineering Scotland, RSPB, and members of the Mountain Woodland Action Group. Details of the consultation were also shared on the John Muir Trust's social media channels.

We received supportive feedback from a range of consultees including the Chair and individual members of the Mountain Woodland Action Group. Concerns were raised by a variety of individuals, including the Breadalbane Deer Management Group and four neighbouring estates.

We engaged with the following stakeholders about our plans as they developed, prior to the public consultation in early 2022: Kynachan Estate, Garth Estate, Glen Lyon Estate, Crossmount Estate, Forestry & Land Scotland and Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust and the Breadalbane Deer Management Group.

The Trust works closely with other stakeholders who are members of the Heart of Scotland Forest Partnership, in addition to Kynachan, HPCLT and FLS mentioned above, these include Scottish Wildlife Trust, Garth Wood Wilding Project, Woodland Trust Scotland, Grenich Estate and National Trust for Scotland Ben Lawers.

Discussions have been ongoing with NatureScot since the project concept to gain statutory permissions to reduce grazing in the SSSI. Discussions have been with Area Officers Helen Taylor and Chrissie Valluri, in addition to Operations Officer, Mike Smedley. NatureScot granted permission to reduce grazing in the SSSI in January 2022 and thanks to their guidance we began a new habitat monitoring programme in the SSSI in 2021 for ongoing monitoring of the effects of reducing grazing on sensitive habitats.

We consulted with RSPB's David Hunt (Senior Conservation Officer) who has offered advice to mitigate potential issues fencing may have on black grouse populations. We have also spoken with Wendy Mattingly from the Scottish Raptor Study Group who did not suggest any necessary mitigations for the project at this stage.

Discussions with Davie Black, Mountaineering Scotland's Access Officer, have again been positive. He gave good advice regarding access points in any fencing and appropriate signage to allow walkers to easily navigate around the fence. Any fencing will avoid the main path up Schiehallion, ending before the ridge to reduce impacts on walkers.

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Mitigation of Likely Significant Effects

If you believe there are likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment, provide information on the opportunities you have taken to mitigate these effects.

Landscape:

The chosen fence design is only slightly higher than stock-height fencing, which will reduce the visual impact. Existing fences will be upgraded where possible, to reduce the need for new fencelines in the landscape.

As discussed with Mountaineering Scotland, appropriate crossing points for walkers / cyclists will be incorporated. The fence will not cross the main footpath up Schiehallion minimising the impact on access up this popular mountain.

Biodiversity:

Fencing will avoid areas close to known lekking sites and if required fencing will be marked to reduce the likelihood of fence strikes. Lek surveys will be ongoing to monitor populations and to identify any new lek sites.

Fence construction is planned outwith the breeding bird season to reduce disturbance, dialogue with the Scottish Raptor Study Group will be ongoing to ensure impacts on raptors are minimised.

Carbon:

All planting will be done by hand and organic soils will be avoided to reduce initial carbon losses. A soil survey of the site has informed key areas to avoid planting, and habitats associated with peaty soils (see public consultation appendices).

Sensitive Areas

Please indicate if any of the proposed forestry project is within a sensitive area. Choose the sensitive area from the drop down below and give the area of the proposal within it.

Sensitive Area	Area
National Scenic Area (NSA)	250ha
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	
Select...	

Property Details

Property Name:	East Schiehallion		
Business Reference Number:	140229	Main Location Code:	79/464/0007 (Schiehallion code 89/677/0106)

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Grid Reference: (e.g. NH 234 567)	NN 752 554	Nearest town or locality:	Tummel Bridge
Local Authority:		Perth and Kinross	

Owner's Details			
Title:	Dr	Forename:	Liz
Surname:	Auty		
Organisation:	John Muir Trust	Position:	East Schiehallion Property Manager
Primary Contact Number:		Alternative Contact Number:	
Email:			
Address:	Tower House, Station Road, Pitlochry		
Postcode:	PH16 5AN	Country:	Scotland
Is this the correspondence address?	Yes		

Agent's Details			
Title:		Forename:	
Surname:			
Organisation:		Position:	
Primary Contact Number:		Alternative Contact Number:	
Email:			
Address:			
Postcode:		Country:	
Is this the correspondence address?	Select...		

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