



**Summary of Operations
For
Smiddy Wood Landscaping**

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1. Introduction

Smiddy Wood (NG 716443) forms part of the Applecross Woods owned by Applecross Trust and for which a Forest Plan proposal is currently being discussed. The restructuring area was felled under felling licence 030/46/05-06, covering 9.36 ha with a restocking deadline extended to 30th June 2011.

The area has been included in the HLF Landscape Partnership Project to maintain the historical parkland interest and enhance the community benefit by the inclusion of open space and fruit & nut bearing trees. The southern part of the area is of ancient woodland origin and therefore most of the area will be restructured as native woodland.

The unclassified singletrack public road from the Beallach na Ba forms the east boundary of the site. This is the main access road into Applecross but the site is also readily viewed from the North coast road on the other side of Applecross Bay where it is seen as the backdrop to the village. The site's visibility and proximity to Applecross village justify a high standard of site clearance and restoration..

Mulching is proposed to clear the brash and stumps from the 4 ha site proposed as open space and "fruit forest". This area was once species rich grassland before being planted with conifers in the 1960s. Following cultivation, the area will be reseeded with hill grass species and an open woodland which will be layed out as individual specimen trees and roundels. A pathway will be constructed through the area to link with the Keppoch track that provides recreational access to the other woodlands around Applecross Estate.

The remaining 4.8ha of the felled area is to be cleared of invasive species and cultivated by excavator mounding as per normal forest practice. Native species of local origin including oak, hazel, ash, birch and wych elm will be planted at 1600stems/ha and protected from deer damage by a perimeter deer fence.

2. Area Statement

Restructure planting of native broadleaf (incl OG)	=	8.84 ha
Retention of existing conifer woodland	=	35.47 ha

3. Summary of Operations

3.1 Fencing

The exclusion of deer by fencing is essential due to the risk of damage to the young trees by high numbers of red deer in the area. This work has been carried out during April 2011 and completed by 29th April.

Internal stock fencing has been added to the proposal in view of the need to manage the grassland in future years. Grazing is considered to be a realistic and sustainable method to maintain the grassland particularly with the use of slower growing hill species of grass.

3.2 Cultivation & Mulching

Large volumes of branchwood and stumps remained on site after the clearance of fallen timber in 2006. Gorse & rushes have also been invasive so the agreed plan has been to carry out mulching to obtain a cleaner, level surface for establishing the new vegetation cover. Root raking and scarification will provide sufficient soil disturbance for re-establishing grassland as a recreational area with an overstorey of fruit & nut bearing broadleaved trees.

The mulching operation was commenced in late December 2010 and completed by the end of January 2011. This left a layer of chips and surface material that needed mixing with soil and larger logs removed for local use. The surface treatments have been the matter of much local discussion to ensure that expectations are achieved as closely as practically possible. This has involved some coming and going with the excavator operator over the period March-May but all cultivations have been scheduled for completion to allow grass seeding in the first week of June.

3.3 Planting

The planting mix comprises the following species:

Sessile oak	3000
Wych elm	500
Silver birch	1000
Scots pine	700
Ash	1500
Norway maple	800
Field maple	200

These trees were held in cold store until ready for planting except for the elm and maples which were cell grown (= in peat pots). The planting was commenced on 28th April, when the deer fence was closed and all sheep and deer removed. Planting was completed on 9th May 2011.

3.4 Fertiliser & Lime

The site is sufficiently fertile for the establishment of trees without further input. However, for grass, lime will be required to control rush infestation and possibly a top-dressing with nitrogen to encourage initial growth.

3.5 Weeding

It is expected that gorse will recover within the next 18 months and need control with herbicide applied from a hand held knapsack. The growth will be monitored to ensure that the trees are always above the level of competition but benefiting from any shelter and nitrogen-fixing characteristics of gorse species.

Grassland areas may require treatment with a selective herbicide to ensure that docks, rush and thistles are kept under control.

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