

KNOCKGARDNER WOODLAND CREATION COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Scottish Woodlands Ltd. have produced draft design maps for woodland creation at Knockgardner, near Straiton.

The views of the local community are being sought via this public consultation event and through information sent to the Community Council and neighbours.

Context

The **Scottish Government** supports woodland creation as part of future land use in Scotland. This will contribute to:

- Fulfil targets on **Climate Change** (carbon sequestration – 15,000 ha of new woodland per annum by 2024/25)
- Fulfil targets on **Biodiversity**
- Help underpin a **sustainable supply of wood products** to the Scottish forestry industry

Ayrshire & Arran Forestry & Woodland Strategy

- Strategy highlights site as being within the “potential” area for woodland expansion
 - Design has undertaken careful, site-specific consideration to ensure they are of an appropriate type and scale to be accommodated
- Strategy highlights opportunities for new softwood forests and new native and riparian woodlands
- A steady supply of timber will help retain key processors within Ayrshire, securing employment and economic benefits

The proposals will be progressed through the **Forestry Grant Scheme** and submitted to Scottish Forestry for their approval.

Objectives

Objective	Notes
Timber production	
Protect and enhance biodiversity values	The proposals have been informed by specialist independent surveys on birds, archaeology and ground vegetation, which have led to the exclusion of specific areas of the site
Protect cultural heritage interest	
Create an attractive woodland	Whilst the landscape will be changed by increase in woodland cover, a landscape appraisal and 3D landscape perspectives will be carried out as part of the application process to inform the design.
Safeguard water quality and soils	There are private water supplies rising within the site. Protection measures to their infrastructure and water availability have been agreed on with South Ayrshire Council and SEPA, and this is reflected in the planting design.
Carbon sequestration	

Site Description

- Knockgardner is located west of Straiton, in South Ayrshire
- It extends to roughly 188 hectares, comprising a mixture of semi-improved and improved pasture
- Around 128 hectares are proposed for planting, with some land being left open to protect biodiversity and archaeological interest



Other Information

Employment

- An Agricultural Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the application process, and it is predicted that current employment levels will not change

Roads

- The establishment works will necessitate very few lorry movements
- Internal forest roads will be constructed, and timber harvesting would most likely start in earnest the 2060s.
- Scoping has been undertaken with Ayrshire Council Roads Alliance, and it was agreed that upgrade works to the U23 will be required prior to felling works
- Any timber haulage will take place to the east towards the two consultation routes the U31 and U68

Landscape

- The woodland will be designed to fit with the local topography and to include a range of woodland types and open ground.

Access and Recreation

- Access will be permitted throughout the site
- Feedback on any existing current recreational routes is welcomed to help inform the design

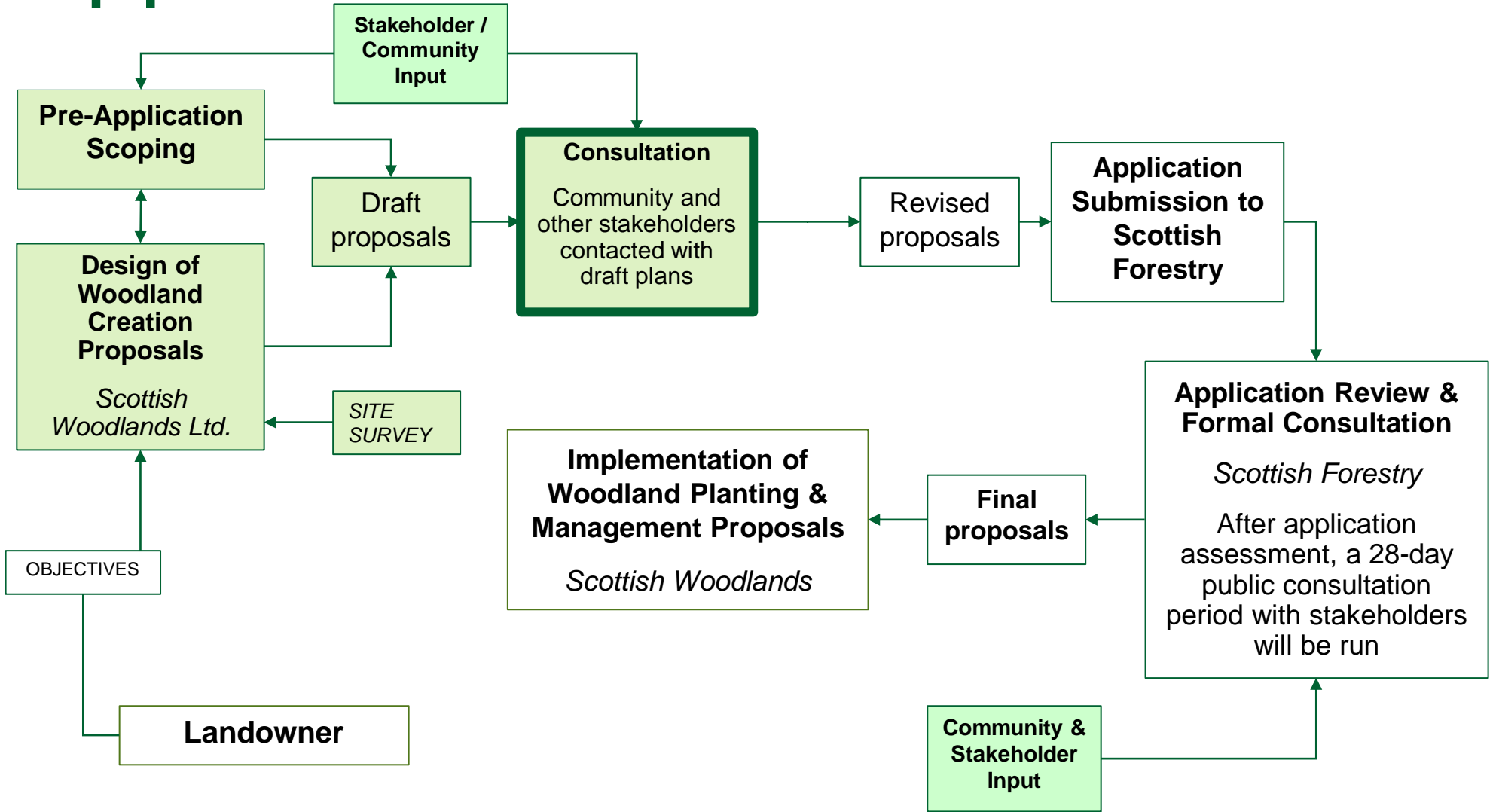
Design Process

The design process for has included specialist surveys and assessment of:

- **Soils and Peat**
 - All deep peat will be been excluded from the planting area
 - No ploughing will be proposed as part of the application
- **Habitats, Birds and Animals**
 - Any areas of national and local interest will be protected and retained in open ground
 - New habitats will be created through establishment of new native and riparian woodlands
- **Archaeology**
 - All identified features of interest will be protected
- **Landscape**
 - The woodlands will be designed to fit with the local topography and to include a range of woodland types and open ground

Copies of completed surveys are available to view at this consultation event.

Application Process



Proposal Summary

- Roughly **20%** of the proposed planting consists of **native broadleaved woodland**, significantly exceeding the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard
- **At least 65% of broadleaves will be of native species**, and these will be focused on land near watercourses and to increase visual amenity
- Most of the coniferous element will be **Sitka spruce**, however other species such as **Douglas fir**, **Scots pine** and **Norway spruce** will be used as the diverse conifer element in the more fertile / sheltered areas and more visible parts of the site
- The **Right of Responsible Access** will be exercised through the woodland, and self-closing gates for recreation access will be provided throughout the woodland

Proposal Summary

Total Site Area	188 ha	100%
Planted	127 ha	67%
Unplantable – <i>woodland, peat</i>	18 ha	10%
Open	43 ha	23%

Total Planting Area	127 ha	100%
Sitka spruce	65 ha	51%
Other conifers	24 ha	19%
Broadleaves	13 ha	10%
Native broadleaves	25 ha	20%

How to Comment

Your questions, comments and feedback on the proposals are welcome.

Forms have been provided for your use – please leave them in the box provided.

A note of all comments received will be passed on to Scottish Forestry, along with a note of any design amendments proposed.

If you wish to copy Scottish Forestry into your correspondence, their contact details are:

Scottish Forestry, 55/57 Moffat Road, Dumfries DG1 1NP
southscotland.cons@forestry.gov.scot

All documents and maps can be found in:

<https://www.scottishwoodlands.co.uk/public-consultations>



Further Information

Should you wish further information on the proposals, you can also contact us directly:

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