## WARBLAW WOODLAND CREATION

# AGRICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Produced for:Scottish Woodlands Ltd.<br/>Priorwood<br/>High Road<br/>Melrose<br/>TD6 9EGProduced by:Mark Hamilton Landscape Services<br/>8 Kirkton Avenue<br/>Bathgate<br/>West Lothian<br/>EH48 1ENDate:March 2025

## Contents

Context		Page no. 1
Land Use Type		1
	Table I-Land Use Type - Warblaw	2
Land Capability for Aariculture		2
	Table 2 – Land Capability for Agriculture - Warblaw	3
	Table 3 - Land Capability for Aariculture – 5 km	4
	Table 4 - Land Capability for Agriculture – 10 km	5
Woodland Cover		5
	Table 5 – Woodland Cover in 10km radius	5
	Table 6 – Woodland Cover and Land Quality	6
	Table 7 – Woodland Type	7
Impacts on Agricultural Businesses		9
	Table 8 – Tenancy Details	9
	Table 9 – Impacts on Tenancies	9
Impact on Active Tenancies		10
Tenancy B		10
Tenancy E		10
Tenancy F		11
	Table 10 – Impacts on Active Tenancies	11
Impact on Residual Tenancies		12
	Table TT – LCA/Land Use of Residual Tenancies	12
Impacts on Existing Businesses		12
Business B		12
Business E		12
Business F		13
Commentary on Additional Issues		13
Residual Tenancies Estimated Impact on Stock Holdina		
	Table 12 Land Capability/Land Use on Residual Ten.	13
	Table 13 – Theoretical Impacts on Residual Ten.	14
Retained Agricultural Land		14
Agri. Capacity of Retained Land		14
	Table 14 - LCA/Land Use of Retained Land	14
	Table 15 – Theoretical Impacts on Retained Land	15

Overall Impacts Sign of Impact on Stock Numbers		15
sign. on impact on stock normalis	Table 16 – Impact on Stock Numbers	15
Agricultural Use of Retained Land		16
Impact on Employment		16
Impact on the Wider Economy		17
Summary		17

Map No.	Coverage	Subject	Scale
1	site	Agricultural Retention	1:20,000
2	site	Land Use	1:20,000
3	site	Land Capability for Agriculture (50k and 250k data)	1:20,000
4	5km radius	Land Capability for Agriculture (250k data only)	1:37,500
5	10km radius	Land Capability for Agriculture (250k data only)	1:75,000
6	10km radius	Woodland Extent Analysis	1:75,000
7	10km radius	Woodland Type Analysis	1:75,000
8	site	Tenancies with Agricultural Retention	1:20,000

## Appendix 1

Sample questionnaire used to gather information on impacts on agricultural businesses

## <u>Context</u>

A Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) application has been produced for a site called Warblaw, which lies immediately south Langholm and west of the A7, in Dumfries and Galloway. This Agricultural Impact Assessment has been produced as part of the application process. The requirement for an Impact Assessment stems from the application being classed as 'larger or more sensitive' by Scottish Forestry. This is because the land includes more than 50 ha of improved grassland and more than 100 ha of rough grassland; there is no arable or mixed-use land at Warblaw (which is another trigger for identifying sensitivity).

The site as a whole extends to 1,051 hectares (ha), and it was purchased by James Jones Ltd. from Buccleuch Estates in 2019. Prior to the sale all of the land was, or had been, in pastoral agricultural use, split between six active agricultural tenancies, and a proportion of vacant/untenanted land. Following the sale some tenancies ended, with short limited duration tenancies (SLDT) and annual grazing lets being continued with some of the previous tenants (although not necessarily covering the same land as their previous tenancies). It is understood that there were no long-term leases in place at the time of purchase.

James Jones Ltd. purchased the site specifically for the purposes of timber production, with the timber being used as part of a strategic reserve to facilitate continued supply to the company's sawmills in South Scotland.

Initial scoping was held with the Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division (SGRPID), who agreed that an Agricultural Impact Assessment would be required, and suggested that data from the more detailed Land Capability Classification (@50k scale) should be used for the areas where it is available even although some of the area is only covered at the National Scale (@ 250k scale). SGRPID also highlighted the Woodland Expansion Group Guidelines, and their view that LCA class 4 land and below may be considered sensitive in terms of conversion to forestry.

As the site assessment and woodland design process has progressed, a firmer idea of proposed land uses has been produced. Land that is likely to remain in agricultural use has been identified, including small pockets of land that have been disposed of to neighbouring farmers and householders. This step has been taken partly to reflect the concerns voiced by SGRPID in their scoping response. In brief, it is estimated that 51% of the site will remain in agricultural use. These areas are shown on Map 1. Note that further minor changes may occur during the application process, and that some of the small pockets of disposed land may not remain in agriculture. Further, land shown as being retained in agriculture may be the subject of peat restoration works, which will delay the return to agricultural use in the future.

## Land Use Type

As noted, pastoral agriculture was, and remains, the dominant land use at Warblaw. The table below provides an indication of the land use types on site, which comprise of a mixture of rough grazing, semi-improved and improved grassland (including occasional silage production), and a

small component of existing woodland. It is understood that there were no functioning farm steadings included in land disposal by Buccleuch Estates.

The table provides an indication of the land use type of the area proposed for woodland creation and the area to be retained in agriculture. See Map 2 for an indication of the land, and land uses, within Warblaw which will be retained in agriculture.

Land Use Type	Area (ha)	% of Total Land Uses	Removed from Agri.	% of Total removed from Agri.	Retained in Agri. use	% of Total Retained in Agri. use
Improved Grazing	165	15.7%	109	21.2%	56	10%
Semi Improved Grazing	100	9.5%	85	16.6%	15	3%
Rough Grazing	751	71.5%	288	56.1%	463	86%
Woodland	35	3.3%	31	6.0%	4	1%
Total	1051		513		538	

Table 1 - Land Use Type - Warblaw

Summarising, rough grazing predominates on the site as a whole, amounting to over 71% of the total area, with improved and semi-improved grazing together covering around 25% of the total. The proposals will result in the loss of around 72% of the improved and semi-improved pasture, and a much smaller proportion of the rough grazing (38%). It should be noted that there are extensive areas of deep peat on Warblaw. Planting of deep peat is prohibited, so a large part of the deep peat ground may remain in agriculture, but the stock-holding capacity of rough grass on deep peat is severely restricted.

Sheep and cattle production is the main land use activity on Warblaw, with small areas of silage production occurring on the best quality land. A small area near Langholm is grazed by horses, and significant areas in the centre of the site have not been grazed in the past couple of years (mainly the deep peat areas mentioned above). The small areas of woodland present are native and amenity woodlands, rather than being productive.

## Land Capability for Agriculture

The table below provides a breakdown of the site in terms of its Land Capability for Agriculture (LCA). This has been calculated using an amalgamation of the available 1:50,000 LCA data (the southern third of the site only) and 1:250,000 LCA data, as after consultation with RPID it was deemed that it would be more precise than using the 1:250,000 data only.

LCA	Total within Site		Removed	from Agri.	Retained in Agri.	
Class	Area (ha)	% of site	Area (ha)	%	Area (ha)	%
3.2	5	0.5%	0	0.0%	5	0.9%
4.1	72	6.9%	62	12.1%	10	1.9%
4.2	47	4.4%	24	4.6%	23	4.3%
all 4	119	11.3%	86	16.7%	33	6.1%
5.2	197	18.8%	156	30.4%	41	7.6%
5.3	310	29.5%	163	31.8%	147	27.3%
all 5	508	48.3%	320	62.3%	188	34.9%
6.3	420	40.0%	108	21.1%	312	58.0%
Total	1051		513		538	

Table 2 - Land Capability for Agriculture – Warblaw

Summarising, in terms of the site as whole, 40% is LCA class 6, and 48% is LCA class 5. A small proportion (11%) is LCA class 4, while a very small amount (<1%) is LCA class 3. In total ~12% of the whole site is LCA classes 3 and 4.

The proposal will result in the loss of 86 ha of LCA 4 land, amounting to 17% of the land removed from agriculture. No 'prime' land will be lost, with the small area of LCA class 3 land remaining in agriculture. Over 83% of the land removed from agriculture is LCA classes 5 and 6, and less than 17% is LCA classes 3 and 4. This indicates that the land being removed from agriculture is slightly better than the average for the whole property. See Map 3.

To provide an idea of the impact of loss of agricultural land on the local area an analysis of the land capability classes on Warblaw compared to that within a 5 km and 10 km radius has been undertaken. For Warblaw, only the land which will be removed from agriculture has been considered, and the 1:250,000 LCA data has been used for the 5km and 10km analysis. Note that the 10 km radius takes in land which is within England (roughly 9% of the radius area), but that only the land within Scotland has been included in this analysis.

The table below provides a breakdown of the Land Capability for Agriculture within a 5km radius of the centre of Warblaw. The 5km radius area contains a higher proportion of better quality (LCA classes 3 and 4) than Warblaw does, and correspondingly, a lower percentage of LCA classes 5 and 6. In essence this suggests that the land at Warblaw is slightly poorer than the average in the locality.

LCA	Removed	From Agri	5km r	adius	% loss of LCA
Class	Area (ha)	% of site	Area (ha)	%	%
3.2	0	0.0%	60	0.8%	0.0%
all 4	86	16.7%	1815	23.1%	4.7%
5.1	0	0.0%	202	2.6%	0.0%
5.2	156	30.4%	2177	27.7%	7.2%
5.3	163	31.8%	2119	27.0%	7.7%
all 5	320	62.3%	4498	57.3%	14.9%
6.1	0	0.0%	123	1.6%	0.0%
6.3	108	21.1%	1354	17.2%	8.0%
all 6	108	21.1%	1477	18.8%	8.0%
Total	513		7850		6.5%

Table 3 - Land Capability for Agriculture – 5 km Radius

The 5km radius data is shown on Map 4. As noted above, the 5 km radius area contains a higher proportion of better quality land (LCA classes 3 and 4) than does Warblaw (24% compared to 17%).

The proposals at Warblaw will result in the removal of 6.5 % of the total area from agricultural production. In detail, there will be a loss of 4.7 % of the LCA class 4 land, and 23% of the LCA classes 5 and 6 land. There will be no loss of LCA class 3 land. This indicates that the land removed from agricultural use is generally poorer than the average land quality in the immediate locality.

In addition to consideration of the 5km radius, a similar analysis was undertaken over a wider area; namely a 10 km radius. The 10 km radius area covers four times the area of the 5km radius,

Table 4 below provides a breakdown of the Land Capability for Agriculture (within a 10 km radius of the centre of Warblaw (excluding land in England, where the land is notably of higher quality). The 10 km radius area contains a much higher proportion of the highest quality land (LCA class 3, mainly to the south of Warblaw) than Warblaw does, but also contains a higher proportion of the poorest land (LCA 6), largely to the north of Warblaw. Warblaw contains a higher proportion of limited quality (LCA class 5) land. In essence this suggests that the land at Warblaw is slightly poorer than the average in the locality.

LCA	Removed	From Agri	10km r	adius	Loss of LCA
Class	Area (ha)	% of site	Area (ha)	%	%
3.2	0	0.0%	2802	10.1%	0.0%
all 4	86	16.7%	4580	16.5%	1.9%
5.1	0	0.0%	307	1.1%	0.0%
5.2	156	30.4%	5990	21.5%	2.6%
5.3	163	31.8%	6903	24.8%	2.4%
all 5	320	62.3%	13200	47.4%	5.0%
6.1	0	0.0%	1608	5.8%	0.0%
6.2	0	0.0%	8	0.0%	0.0%
6.3	108	21.1%	5630	20.2%	1.9%
all 6	108	21.1%	7246	26.0%	1.9%
Total	513		27829		1.8%

Table 4 - Land Capability for Agriculture – 10 km Radius

The 10km radius data is shown on Map 5. The proposals at Warblaw will result in the removal of 1.8% of the total area from agricultural production. In detail, there will be a loss of 1.9% of LCA class 4 land, and 6.9% of LCA classes 5 and 6 land, with no loss of LCA class 3 land. This indicates that the land removed from agriculture is generally poorer than the average land quality in the wider locality.

#### Woodland Cover

An analysis of woodland cover within a 10km radius of Warblaw has been undertaken, as set out in the table below, using data supplied by Scottish Forestry. The land which lies within England has been excluded (it has very limited woodland cover).

#### Table 5 – Woodland Cover in 10km radius

Woodland Cover	Area (ha)	% of Area	Cum. %
Woodland on NFI	7,905	28.4%	28.4%
Recently planted (via FGS and EIA)	745	2.7%	31.1%
Combined Existing Woodland	8,650	31.1%	31.1%
Proposed at Warblaw	513	1.8%	32.9%
Potential Schemes	1,013	3.6%	36.6%
Total Potential Woodland Cover	10,176	36.6%	
Total Area with 10km (Scotland only)	27,837		-

Existing established woodlands, recently planted woodlands, and potential woodland creation sites are shown on Map 6.

The existing woodland cover is roughly 8,650 ha, which is 31.1% of the total area within the 10km radius. This figure includes woodland shown on the National Forest Inventory (NFI) and recently planted woodland creation schemes (notably at Cockplay, Albierigg, and Glencartholm). Note that the area given for woodland cover includes integral open ground; while this ground is open, it is not available for agricultural use.

The proposals for Warblaw would see the overall figure rise by 1.8%, from 31.1% to 32.9%.

Detailed up to date figures for woodland cover in Dumfries and Galloway as a whole are not available, but the Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy (2014) suggested a figure of 31%, while the Office for National Statistics give a coverage of 28% in 2019. Undated data produced by Friends of the Earth give a figure of 27.9%. These figures, coupled with a consideration of their baseline data indicate that the proportion of woodland cover, including for Warblaw, in the 10km radius is not significantly higher than the regional average.

The table also includes data on potential woodland creation schemes. If these were all planted along the lines indicated on Map 5 then the woodland cover figure would rise to 36.6%. However, there is a degree of uncertainty in regard to the likely size of some schemes (e.g. Cleuchfoot) and to the likelihood of the schemes being taken forward (e.g. Mouldyhills).

The locality already contains extensive woodland cover, and an analysis of this in relation to land quality is set out below.

The table below contains a brief analysis of the land capability for agriculture in terms of existing and proposed woodland cover (both Warblaw and other pipeline schemes) in relation to land that potentially remains open for agricultural use.

LCA	Total LCA (ha)	Total % LCA	Existing Wood (ha)	Planned Warblaw (ha)	Comb. Total (ha)	% Wood in LCA	Pot. Schemes	total	% of LCA
3	2,802	10.1%	277	0	277	9.9%	204	481	17.2%
4	4,580	16.5%	1,062	86	1,148	25.1%	76	1224	26.7%
5	13,200	47.4%	4,548	319	4,867	36.9%	558	5,425	41.1%
6	7,247	26.0%	2,764	108	2,872	39.6%	175	3,047	42.0%
Total	27,829	100%	8,651	513	9,164	32.9%	1,013	10,177	36.6%

#### Table 6 – Woodland Cover and Land Quality in 10km Radius

As noted above, existing woodland cover, together with the addition of Warblaw, covers just under 33% of the land within a 10km radius (excluding England). While this doesn't necessarily

imply that the remaining 67% of land is all in agricultural use, land uses other than agriculture (e.g. urban land, open water) are strictly limited in the locality.

Existing woodland cover within the 10km tends to occupy the poorer quality land (e.g. ~40% of the woodlands are on LCA 6 land, while LCA 6 land covers 26% of the total area).

The addition of the woodland creation at Warblaw would reflect this characteristic; the existing woodland area, combined with Warblaw, takes in less than 10% of the LCA class 3 land (Warblaw has none in this LCA) and just over 25% of the LCA class 4 land, and between 37% and 40% of LCA class 5 and 6 land. This indicates that the large majority of LCA class 3 and 4 land remains available for agricultural use. The addition of the potential schemes would slightly alter this picture, but woodland cover would remain predominantly on LCA class 5 and 6 land (over 83%).

While noting that the displacement of agricultural use will occur regardless of woodland type, an analysis of the broad woodland types within the 10Km radius of Warblaw has been undertaken. The reasoning behind the relevance of this analysis is in part to provide background information to assess impacts on the wider rural economy, in that the creation of woodland will create and sustain employment, notably but not exclusively through timber production. The table below provides a basic snapshot of woodland types within a 10km radius of Warblaw. In brief, just over 91% of the existing woodland cover is coniferous, and 8.7% broadleaved. It should be noted that the allocation of woodland types is simplistic; woodlands classified as coniferous will invariably have a broadleaved component, and there will be considerable areas of open ground included. In this way both the overall extent of woodland cover and the proportion of coniferous woodland are thought to be over-estimated, but the figures should still provide a reasonable assessment of woodland types.

Woodland	Existing V	Voodland	War	blaw	Combined	
Types	area	%	area	%	area	%
Conifer	7,900	91.3	280	72.7%	8,180	90.5%
Broadleaf	750	8.7%	105	27.3%	855	9.5%
Total	8,650	100%	385	100%	9,035	100%

#### Table 7 – Woodland Type

The proposals for Warblaw contain a significantly higher proportion of broadleaves (~27%) than is currently present, which when added to the existing woodland total means that broadleaved cover will rise by 0.8% to 9.5% of the total woodland cover. The relatively diverse composition of Warblaw's proposal will deliver biodiversity and amenity benefits, while the major coniferous component will deliver in terms of timber production and related employment.

The large majority of the proposed planting occupies land that is classed as F3 and F4 in terms of Land Capability for Forestry (Land with good/moderate flexibility for tree growth), with a smaller area on F5 land (limited flexibility). The overall classifications indicate that the site is capable of

being very productive in terms of timber production, and provides the opportunity for a reasonable degree of species diversity.

#### Impacts on Agricultural Businesses

As noted in the introduction, historically Buccleuch Estate leased various parts of Warblaw to a number of different parties. It is understood that at the time of the sale there were no long-term tenancies in place, and that some land was not let out. Since purchasing the land, James Jones Ltd continued a number of inherited short limited duration tenancies and subsequently let out land on annual grazing licences. The location of the tenancies, at time of purchase, is shown on Map 8, and are detailed below.

#### Table 8 – Tenancy Details

Unit	Business	Extent (ha)	Removed from Agri. (ha)	Retained In Agri. (ha)	Notes on Retained Land
Langholm	Business A	25	0	25	All land retained, largely LCA 4.2
Tenancy B	Business B	423	245	178	Mainly hill land (LCA 6), with some improved grass (mainly LCA 5)
Tenancy C	Business C	36	33	3	Limited extent, lower quality (LCA 5)
Tenancy D	Business D	269	37	232	Generally LCA 5 and 6 land (inc. on peat) but small area of high quality ground as well
Tenancy E	Business E	55	55	0	None retained
Tenancy F	Business F	51	37	14	Generally LCA 4 and 5 retained
Tenancy G	Vacant	192	106	86	Largely poor ground (LCA 5 and 6)
Total		1,051	513	538	

While the table notes the amount of land from each tenancy that will remain in agricultural use, it does not mean that this land will necessarily remain within the tenancy. Table 9 sets out a brief note of the general impact of the woodland creation proposal on each of the tenancies that were in place at the time of the sale.

#### Table 9 – Impacts on Tenancies

Unit	Business	Notes
Langholm	Business A	Unaffected by the proposals, but understood land is used for equestrian rather than agricultural grazing.
Tenancy B	Business B	Significant area lost (~58%), including most of the better ground, but tenants are likely to continue grazing rump of tenanted area, and possibly additional ground, in conjunction with their other farms. Some good quality land sold to neighbouring householder.
Tenancy C	Business C	Tenancy is believed to have lapsed some time ago: some land will remain in agricultural use.
Tenancy D	Business D	Tenancy is believed to have lapsed some time ago. Limited impact on this tenancy (less than 15% being removed), but land generally of low quality, and peat restoration project being considered. High quality land by Hagg Plantation will be farmed by a neighbour.
Tenancy E	Business E	No retained land, tenant will continue to operate from their tenanted farm in the locality.
Tenancy F	Business F	Small amount of land retained in agriculture, including land sold to neighbouring farmer. Tenant will continue to operate from their own farm which is adjacent.
Tenancy G	Vacant	Over half of the vacant land will remain in agricultural use, but this land is generally of low quality, and part likely to be combined with similar land on Tenancy D.

The impacts on current agricultural enterprises is greatest on three tenancies: the Business B (Tenancy B), Business E (Tenancy E) and Business F (Tenancy F) The remaining lands were in smaller packages, lapsed leases, in vacant tenancy, or unaffected by the proposals. Meetings were held with the three affected tenants to ascertain information on the impacts of the loss of currently rented land from their current agricultural operations. A copy of a sample questionnaire used to guide discussions is attached

## - Tenancy B

The Business B have farmed Tenancy B for over a decade, originally under a SLDT, and thereafter on annual grazing leases. Their business is based at Hog Hill Farm, roughly 5km north of Langholm and Warblaw. As well as farming at Hog Hill (which they own), they also lease Sorbie Farm from Buccleuch Estate, farming a total of 1,200 ha. Their total number of sheep in the business is in the region of 2,500, with 160 cattle, with roughly 70 ha of land in silage. There are five workers in the business; all are family members.

## - Tenancy E

The Business Es have farmed the western part of Tenancy E for over ten years, under a SLDT, and then under annual grazing leases. They operate their business from their home farm at Bloch, 3 km to the north-east of Tarcoon. The Bloch Farm has been rented by the Business Es from Buccleuch Estates since 1942. The farm extends to 800 ha, with most of the land being lowquality rough grazing. They rent a small additional area of ground elsewhere in the area for summer grazing. There are two full-time workers, and two part -time workers in the business: all are family members. Additional labour is taken on at peak times (primarily at lambing). Total stock numbers are roughly 90 cattle with 60-80 followers, and 1,000 ewes. There is roughly 20 ha in silage. The land at Tenancy E is used to raise the followers for sale for fattening elsewhere.

#### - Tenancy F

The Business Fs have farmed the eastern part of Tenancy F for roughly 9 years, initially under a SLDT and latterly under annual grazing leases. They operate their business from their own home farm at Brockwoodlees, which lies adjacent to Tenancy F. Brockwoodlees extends to 170 ha, and is generally under good quality grass, with 28 ha of silage. The stock carrying capacity is in the region of 400 cattle and 650 ewes. The farm employs one full-time and one part-time (60% of time) workers (both family members) and occasional temporary labour.

Table 10 below sets out the given impacts in terms of loss of stock numbers (sheep and cattle), silage land, and labour input on the three tenancies. Note that for the two Tenancy E/F sections at least, cattle are by and large grazed seasonally, and sheep all-year-round. Further, it is understood that the cattle grazed on Tenancy E are yearlings, which are the equivalent of 0.6 LSU's. The stock carrying capacities at Tenancy E/F are higher than the regional figures set out in 'Stocking Rates of Land Capability for Agriculture Classes (James Hutton Institute, 2012), while those for Tenancy B are lower.

Unit	Tenancy	Area (ha)	Cattle	Sheep	Silage (ha)	Labour input (FTE)
Tenancy B	Business B	423	40	800	12	0.75 - 1.0
Tenancy E	Business E	55	60-80	300	0	0.3 - 0.5
Tenancy F	Business F	51	100	140	0	0.5
Total		529	200-220	1,240	12	1.55 - 2.0

Table 10 - Impacts on Active Tenancies – Loss of Stock Numbers and Labo	our
---	-----

The figures indicate that the three active tenancies support roughly 220 cattle and 1,240 sheep, and provide employment for up to two full- time equivalent jobs.

Table 11 provides an analysis of three LCA's and Land Uses on the three active tenancies.

Unit	Tenancy	Total	LCA	LCA	LCA	Imp.	Semi-	Rough	Wood
		(na)	4 (ha)	5 (ha)	6 (ha)	(ha)	ımp. grazing	grass (ha)	-lana (ha)
Tenancy B	Business B	423	10	215	198	49	55	291	28
Tenancy E	Business E	55	0	52	3	36	14	5	0
Tenancy F	Business F	51	13	34	4	30	11	10	0
Total		529	23	301	205	112	80	306	0

## Table 11 – Impacts on Active Tenancies – LCA and Land Use

In total approximately 112 ha of improved grass, and 80 ha of semi-improved grass is found within the three active tenancies, with LCA 5 land covering 57% of the land, and LCA a further 4%. Over 90% of the land at Tenancy E is either improved or semi-improved grass, with Tenancy F corresponding figure being over 80%. Roughly a quarter of Tenancy B is in improved or semi-improved grass, but it should be noted that Tenancy B is roughly 12 times the size of the other active tenancies

None of these tenancies benefited from good stock-handling facilities as no steadings were included in the land sold by Buccleuch Estates.

## Impacts on Existing Businesses

## - Business B

The loss of all land at Tenancy B will reduce the farmed area by a third, with the loss of between 25-30% of cattle and sheep numbers, and 20% of labour input. Opportunities for intensification on the remaining land holding are limited, so the loss of Tenancy B could result in the loss of these resources from the agricultural economy. In practice, it is anticipated that the Business B will lease large parts of the retained agricultural land on Warblaw (including areas outwith of Tenancy B) which will minimize the actual losses.

## - Business E

The loss of land at Tenancy E will reduce the farmed area by roughly 7%, with the loss of roughly 30% of sheep numbers and over 40% of cattle numbers. The disproportionate loss in numbers compared to land results from the land at Tenancy E/F generally being much better than the land at the Bloch. It should also be noted that the cattle lost would be yearlings, which have a

LSU of 0.6 compared to a mature cow's LSU of 1.0. There would be a loss of up 0.5 FTE jobs from the enterprise's 3.0 FTE posts. In the absence of other land being available, then the losses above will occur. Further, the loss of the land at Tenancy E/F will result in changes to the farming regime operated at the Bloch, notably in terms of cattle rearing. It is understood that the farming operations at Bloch will most likely change in any event, due to the impending development of the proposed 21- turbine wind farm on and around the property.

#### - Business F

The loss of land at Tenancy F will reduce the farmed area by almost 25%, with the loss of roughly 20% of sheep numbers and 25% of cattle numbers. There would be a loss 0.5 FTE jobs from the enterprise's 2.0 FTE posts. In the absence of other land being available, then the losses above will occur.

## **Commentary on Additional Issues**

In addition to the provision of information on the impacts on stock numbers and labour, the tenants highlighted other potential impacts, including:-

- o loss of members from the agricultural community
- o concerns over farm security
- o an increase in predator issues
- o an increase in the incidence of flukes and ticks
- o an increase in the badger population
- o an increase in deer numbers
- o a lack of ground available to let in the locality.

In terms of the last-noted issue, only one of the tenant expressed an interest in grazing on the retained agricultural land at Warblaw. Additionally, all the tenants have been aware of the likelihood of the loss of land at Warblaw for the past five years.

#### **Residual Tenancies**

## - Estimated Impact on Stock Holding Capacity of Residual Tenancies

While the current stock carrying capacity is known for Tenancy B and Tenancy E/F, the same details are not available for the remaining lands, including the vacant tenancies, the Tenancy D tenancy, and the Tenancy C Tenancy. Information on the land use type and Land Capability for Agriculture classification of the combined areas has been calculated, and estimates were made of the likely stock holding capacities, silage land, and labour input on this area as a whole, as shown in the two tables below.

Table 12 –	- Land Capability	and Land Use	of Residual Tenancies
------------	-------------------	--------------	-----------------------

Unit	Area	LCA				Land Use			
	(ha)	3	4	5	6	lmp. grass	Semi. imp. grass	Rough grass	Wood land
Residual Tenancies	495	5	6	277	207	35	20	434	6

The following values have been used to calculate the theoretical agricultural capacity of the residual tenancies, with the same estimations being used for the agricultural capacities of the retained agricultural land:-

- Rough grazing 1 ewe per ha (0.1 LSU)
- Semi-improved grass 3 ewes per ha (0.3 LSU)
- Improved grass 1 cow per ha (1.0 LSU)

#### Table 13 – Theoretical Impacts on Residual Tenancies

Unit	Tenancies	Area (ha)	Cattle	Sheep	Silage (ha)	Labour input (FTE)
Residual	Vacant Hag Hill Tenancy C	495	35	500	15	1.0 FTE

## Retained Agricultural Land

## - Agricultural Capacity of the Retained Agricultural Land

A similar exercise has been undertaken to estimate the agricultural capacity of the retained agricultural land.

Table 14 below contains a breakdown of the retained land by Land Capability for Agriculture and by current land use cover.

#### Table 14 - Land Capability and Land Use of Retained Land

Unit	Area	LCA				Land Use			
	(ha)	3	4	5	6	lmp. grass	Semi. imp.	Rough grass	Wood land
Retained Land	538	5	33	188	312	56	15	463	4

Based on the above the LCA and Land Use data in Table 14, and using the same assumptions on carrying capacities as used in table 13, an estimate has been made of the theoretical stock holding capacity of the retained agricultural land (Table 15 below).

Table 15 – Theoretical Impacts of Retained Agricultural Use

Unit	Area (ha)	Cattle	Sheep	Silage (ha)	Labour input (FTE)
Retained Land	538	56	510	15	1.0 FTE

The land being retained in agricultural use on Warblaw appears to have very similar agricultural capacity and characteristics to the residual tenancy land (i.e. Tenancy D, Tenancy C, and vacant land).

## **Overall Impacts**

## - Significance of Impact Assessment on Stock Numbers

To assess the significance in the decrease in stock numbers, information on sheep and cattle numbers was obtained at the regional and local scale. The most up to date data from the agricultural census indicates that there were 425,642 cattle and 961,894 sheep in Dumfries and Galloway.

Warblaw is split between the parishes of Langholm and Canonbie; information provided by SGRPID indicates that there are 1,048 cattle and 13,478 sheep within the Langholm parish, and 4,656 cattle and 18,162 sheep within the Canonbie parish.

The significance of the forecast loss is stock numbers on a regional and local level is detailed in table16 below.

#### Table 16- Impact on Stock Numbers

Factor	Cattle	Sheep
Loss from Tenancy B/E/F	220	1,240
Estimated loss from Residual Tenancies	35	500
Estimated capacity of Retained Land	56	510
Overall stock reduction	199	1,230
Numbers in Dumfries& Galloway	425,642	961,894
Percentage Loss	0.046%	0.12%
Number in combined Langholm and Canonbie Parishes	5,704	31,640
Percentage Loss	3.48%	3.89%

As it was thought unlikely that there is any scope for intensification of stock numbers on the three tenancies that operate from remote units, it has been assumed that these numbers would be lost from the agricultural economy.

The results suggested that the reduction in stock numbers is not significant at a regional scale, and of minor significance at a local (parish) scale.

## Agricultural Use of Retained land

The exact details of how the retained land will be farmed have yet to be fully planned and confirmed. As noted, there are no available steadings available on site to support agricultural operations, this will restrict the type of, but not prevent, continued grazing.

It is hoped that the Business B will continue to farm the remainder of Tenancy B (and they have expressed a firm interest in doing so) and it may be that they also take in the retained land at Tenancy C, Tenancy D and the adjoining vacant tenancy land (which they have intimated that they may have an interest in doing).

If this doesn't happen, James Jones Ltd now have their own flock of sheep, so farming in-house would be an option.

Smaller areas of good quality land have been sold, including land south of the public road at Tarcoon, to the neighbouring farmer, and at Middleholm, to the householder. Leasing out smaller areas to neighbouring farmers may also be considered.

As highlighted, the potential for peatland restoration will be investigated on lands which were in Tenancy D and vacant tenancies. This ground currently has very limited stock carrying potential, and if the peatland restoration was advanced, this would likely prevent agricultural grazing for a limited period, after which future stock grazing would be beneficial, but only at a low intensity.

#### Impact on Employment

In terms of employment generated within the forestry sector, a study undertaken by SAC Consulting on behalf of ConFor<sup>1</sup> (and based in the Eskdalemuir area) states that, in comparison to sheep production, forestry can provide enhanced economic output and receives significantly less public subsidy, while the initial establishment works will provide additional employment over and above the standard agricultural employment.

The current proposal, while still the subject of change, includes for the establishment of productive coniferous woodland on ~300 ha, as well as 15 ha of productive broadleaves and 95

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Eskdalemuir - A comparison of forestry and hill farming; productivity and economic impact. Julian Bell, SAC Consulting, February 2014.

ha of native broadleaves. The Eskdalemuir suggest that 184 ha of woodland will create 1 FTE job in the forestry sector. This would suggest that Warblaw will provide roughly 2.25 FTE jobs.

It is understood that the levels of employment vary significantly over the rotational period, with peaks at establishment and harvesting periods, and troughs in the period between establishment and first thinning.

Warblaw's owner, James Jones Ltd., own and manage very significant areas of both mature and recently planted woodland in the locality, as well as operating a major sawmill. At Lockerbie. There is a similarly diverse forestry structure in the wider area outwith of James Jones' ownership. Managing a range of woodlands at different growth stages will assist in sustaining levels of employment within the local forestry and timber processing sectors.

There were no residential properties or steadings included in the land sale, and as no net decrease in employment is anticipated, there should be no negative impact on local population levels.

#### Impact on the Wider Economy

The proposals will result in a reduction in farm business turnover resulting from a decrease in livestock sales and government support. This reduction in turnover will be lost to the local and wider economy as a result of the proposal. The retention of roughly half of the site in agricultural use will limit the reduction, albeit that the reduction will be considerably more than half of turnover, as a higher proportion of better/more productive/more heavily subsidised land will be removed from agricultural use.

The forestry proposals will generate significantly higher levels of turnover, albeit again skewed if examined purely on an annual basis, with very high levels of turnover at the establishment and harvesting period, and very limited turnover in the period following establishment. However, as noted with employment impacts, over a wider area these peaks and troughs will level out.

It would be expected that afforested land will provide significantly more return than can be achieved from agricultural rents, which will be reflected in the monies available within the local economy. This is supported by the SAC Consulting/ConFor Study, which indicated that over a 40 year period (a single forestry rotation) forestry had a significantly better surplus per employee than sheep farming, and that grant and subsidy inputs for forestry were considerably less.

#### <u>Summary</u>

- The property at Warblaw occupies 1,051 ha. It is estimated at roughly 538 ha of land will remain available for agricultural use.
- The land included within the scheme will cover 513 ha, with roughly 450 ha of planting and related open ground.

- The planting proposals takes in proportionality more of the better ground (LCA 4 and 5) on Warblaw, while omitting all of the small area of the highest quality land (LCA 3).
- The land included in the application is proportionally poorer in terms of LCA than the land within a 5km and a 10Km radius of Warblaw
- The proposal to create roughly 450 ha of new, largely, productive woodland on Warblaw will involve the removal of 199 cattle and 1,230 sheep from the local farming economy. This is not held to be significant on a regional scale, and of limited significance on a local scale.
- There will be negative impacts on three tenants, who have annual grazing leases on land at Warblaw.
- These negative impacts will be offset in part through the retention of 538 ha agricultural land, albeit that much of this land is of low quality.
- No negative impacts on overall employment are anticipated, with the loss of up to 2.0 FTE jobs in the agricultural sector being more than balanced by employment in the forestry sector.
- Agriculture will remain the predominant land use in the locality; the proposal will result in woodland cover in a 10km radius rising by approximately 1.8% to 32.9%.
- While there will be a large increase in the level of public subsidy required in the short term, there will be a very significant decrease overall in the longer term.
- There will be a negative impact in terms of expenditure on agricultural goods and services: this will be balanced by a positive impact in terms of the rural economy as a whole, and by significantly greater revenue generation in the longer term.

## Glossary

FTE: Full-time equivalent

## LCA: Land Capability for Agriculture

**3.1:** Land capable of producing consistently high yields of a narrow range of crops and/or moderate yields of a wider range. Short grass leys are common

**3.2:** Land capable of average production though high yields of barley, oats and grass can be obtained. Grass leys are common

**4.1:** Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops, primarily grassland with short arable breaks of forage crops

**4.2:** Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops, primarily on grassland with short arable breaks of forage crops

**5.2:** Land capable of use as improved grassland. Few problems with pasture establishment but may be difficult to maintain

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

LSU: Livestock units

SGRPID: Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division

SLDT: Short limited duration tenancies (SLDT)