

People

Aside from a single response welcoming the proposal and feedback on deer-related issues there was no response to the community consultation which involved contacting all local residents and neighbouring owners, and Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Community Council

Issues pertaining to the 'people' heading include impacts on private water supplies and recreational use of the site; these are dealt with in their respective sections below. Deer-related issues are discussed within the Deer Management Plan (Appendix 5)

Soils

A soils survey was undertaken, revealing a wide diversity of soils. Brown earth soils predominate on the lower slopes, both in cultivated and upland types. The valley bottom, and flatter high ground in the east, is characterised by cultivated and non-cultivated gleys, with peaty gleys on the southern end of the ridge

Three small pockets of deep peat were found; two located in saddles on the western ridge, and one pocket on the south-eastern margins.

All areas of deep peat are excluded from the application area, and will be retained in an open ground setting and buffered against changes to their hydrology. No drainage works will be undertaken within 20m of these areas

Cultivation will be undertaken at the minimum levels thought to be necessary to establish trees successfully. This will entail shallow mounding or scarifying, and no ploughing or linear cultivation will be undertaken.

Given the steep nature of most of the ground, only limited drainage will be undertaken.

Full details of the cultivation and drainage specifications, and mitigation measures, is given in the Operations Plan.

Water and Drainage

The entire site drains into the Dod Burn. The Burn, which is fast-flowing and between 2-4 m in width, is fed by a number of mapped tributaries, none of which are greater than 1 m in width. The only two of these which are named (Barry Sike and Pyatknowe Sike) are on the eastern slopes, and drain very little of the site itself. The large majority of the site is free draining, but there are few locations where drainage is impeded.

The Dod Burn rises in Priestthaugh Forest to the south, and continues northwards for another 2 km before joining the Allan Water, which flows for a further 4 km before joining the River Teviot at

Newmill. The Allan Water, and the River Teviot, form part of the River Tweed Special Area of Conservation, with the feature being classified due to its population of Atlantic salmon, among other things.

The water quality of the Dod Burn is not classified by SEPA, but the entire length of the Allan Water is classed as being in 'moderate' condition, with the Teviot itself being 'good'.

There are no significant areas at risk of flooding along the Dod Burn, but the lower reaches of the Allan Water, and the Teviot around Hawick, have a high flood risk level (SEPA).

The site lies within the Dodburn Drinking Water Protected Area (DWPA), which supplies the Acreknowe Reservoir. This reservoir acts as a contingency feed for the Robertson Water Treatment Works (WTW). While the Dodburn DWPA catchment covers 499 ha, the Robertson WTW DWPA as a whole extends to 4,270 ha. Scottish Water have stated (in their scoping response) that the Robertson WTW is 'in deficit'.

Dod Burn Farm historically obtained its water supply from a spring located close the northern boundary. While the farm has recently been connected to the mains water supply, due to the poor flow of this service, the owners wish to maintain their private water supply. There are no other private water supplies fed from the site.

In general, all establishment, maintenance, and management works will fully comply with the 'Forests and Water' Guidelines (5th edition) and will adhere to the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations.

In terms of site specifics, the key hydrological issues are thought to be:-

- a) Presence of the River Tweed SAC, 2 km downstream of the site
- b) Location of site within a Drinking Water Protection Area, in terms of water quality and water yield
- c) Presence of a private water supply

a) River Tweed SAC

Full compliance with the Forests and Water Guidelines as detailed in the Operations Plan will ensure that water quality is protected during operations.

The removal of grazing stock from much of the Dod Burn catchment should provide minor benefits in terms of reductions in nutrient and chemical inputs and in sedimentation arising from stock poaching the ground.

Riparian buffers will be established along the Dod Burn, with a width of at least 20m but more generally 30m width, and around smaller watercourses, of at least 10m width. The buffer zone will comprise of a mosaic of open ground (notably wetlands) and broadleaved planting, generally at low densities.

Cultivation will be restricted to hinge or inverted mounding, with no drainage. Planting within the buffer zones will be restricted to broadleaved tree and shrub species (generally but not exclusively of native species).

In their scoping response NatureScot noted the presence of marshy grassland by the watercourses, and the recommendation in the Ecological Report that an open ground corridor should be maintained along the upper stretch of the Dod Burn. However, due to concerns over rising water temperatures affecting fish, especially salmon, within the SAC, NatureScot encouraged the inclusion of native woodland along the watercourses, while maintaining some open areas of marshy grassland.

In the light of this recommendation, native broadleaves will be planted within the riparian buffer zone, including some planting within the 'high sensitivity' areas on the southern reaches of the Dod Burn and by Barry Sike. This planting will be at a low stocking density (500 per ha), and will be targeted at areas of bracken and rough grasslands.

Larger areas of native woodland planting will be undertaken both within the remaining riparian buffer zones, and in other locations, at higher densities, to assist in the creation of a habitat network extending both from the existing woods by the farmhouse in the north of the site up the Dod Burn to Priesthaugh Forest, and from the valley floor to the open ground on the western ridgeline.

b) Drinking Water Protected Area

Dod Farm's location within a Drinking Water Protected Area raises two issues. Firstly, there is a requirement to protect water quality, and secondly, in the light of Scottish Water's assertion that the catchment is in deficit, then there are concerns over the impact on water yield.

- Water Quality

All works will comply with the Forest and Water Guidelines and the 'Guidance on Forestry Activities Near Public Water Sources and Scottish Water Assets'. Compliance details are set out in the Operations Plan, but in brief, precautions include

- Maintaining close liaison with Scottish Water during all preparatory, implementation and maintenance works
- Provision of toolbox talks covering water-related issues to be given to all contractors
- No storage of herbicides, fertilizers, or chemicals within 50 m of any watercourses
- No use of herbicides, fertilizers, or chemicals within 10 m on any watercourse
- No refueling within 50 m of any watercourses, and in general refueling will follow approved methods and agreed precautions (Guidance for Pollution Prevention)
- All vehicles will have spill kits available
- Installation of a temporary log bridge during implementation works, to avoid the use of a ford

- Water Yield

An impact assessment has been produced in order to estimate the maximum impact of the proposals on water yield within the Robertson Water Treatment Works (WTW) catchment. This document is contained as Appendix 4. Whilst accepting that the assessment is based on a less than full working knowledge of the supply infrastructure and of the extent to which the catchment is in deficit, it is estimated that the maximum decrease in yield that could arise from the proposal is 0.29% of the total yield. This figure is therefore held to be insignificant. It should also be noted that changes in the age-class structure of the woodlands within the Robertson WTW, and a planned decrease in the extent of coniferous cover within the larger woodlands will be mitigating factors on any decline in yield.

In terms of positive impacts, the proposals will result in a minor decrease in peak flow rates as well as overall flows within the Teviot catchment, which will assist in reducing flood risk in areas around Hawick, which are at high risk of flooding.

C) Presence of a Private Water Supply

Dod Burn Farm historically obtained its water supply from an intake located close the northern boundary of the site. While the farm has recently been connected to the mains water supply, due to the poor flow of this service, the owners wish to maintain their private water supply. In addition, they are developing a couple of rural enterprises (a pheasant hatchery and kennels) which will require new water supplies.

In the light of the private water supply (PWS) serving Dod Farmhouse, EnviroCentre were commissioned to investigate the private water supply, and to assess the potential impact of the woodland creation proposals. A copy of their initial report is contained in Appendix 3a. In the light of concerns raised by Scottish Forest in respect of the catchment area used in the initial report, which was based on surface water flows, a more caution approach to the catchment area calculation was taken, involving subsurface flows as well. An addendum to the initial report was produced, updating certain sections of the initial report, including the 'Summary of Effects on Private Water Supply. A copy of the addendum is contained as Appendix 3b.

It should be noted that it is difficult to define the area of contribution from groundwater, but groundwater fed PWS are less susceptible to impacts of planting.

The report's assessment of impacts was based on a 20% reduction in yield due to climate change, and to coniferous woodland resulting in a decrease in yield of 4% for each 10% of the catchment covered (while the Forest and Water guidelines suggest a 2% reduction for each 10% planted in conifers). In terms of calculating the potential demand, both the existing and new usage requirements were included, and a 300% contingency was included. Taking these factors in account, it would be fair to say that a precautionary approach has been taken to the impact assessment.

The addendum report notes that '*the results of the assessment suggest the impact on the PWS is minimal compared to the available yield, with demand comprising 2.9% of the available Q₉₉ flow after the establishment of (coniferous) woodland across the entire catchment*'.

Using the method outlined in the Addendum Report, the PWS covers 1.4 ha. The proposals includes for planting 0.36 ha of this with native broadleaves, 0.30 with Scots pine mix (85% coniferous), and with the remaining 0.74 ha being left as open ground. In terms of impact on yield, 2.55 ha of coniferous planting covers 18% of the catchment, which using the figure of 2% decline in yield for every 10% planted in coniferous woodland, means that the decline would be 3.6%.

Given that there will be no planting within 50 m of the intake, and that the nearest coniferous planting will be ~130 m distant, then there should be no significant impacts on groundwater input.

Biodiversity - Designations

There are no statutory conservation designations affecting the proposed site, but the site drains into the Allan Water 1 km north of the site. The Allan Water forms part of the River Tweed Special Area of Conservation (SPA).

The mitigation employed to address water-related issues should also ensure that there are no negative impacts on the SPA.

NatureScot requested that native riparian woodlands should be established along the site's watercourses to reduce water temperatures through shading. For the most part this recommendations has been followed, with blower-density broadleaved planting being targeted along most watercourses, avoiding the small pockets of wetland habitat which exhibit floristic diversity.

Biodiversity - Habitats

A Habitat Survey was undertaken by Max and Sian Carstairs Ecological Consultants to identify and assess areas of interest and to inform the design. The survey covered a slightly larger area than has been included in the application, and copy of the Report is contained in Appendix 1.

The survey identified that improved and semi-improved grass covered around half of the surveyed area, with modified bog and marshy grasslands being the other main open ground habitats present. In addition, over 8% of the surveyed area was broadleaved or mixed woodland.

The Report identified seven habitat types present as being of interest; the first five of these habitat types (following the listing in the table below) are mapped in the Ecological Report as being of 'High Sensitivity' whilst the sixth habitat's presence is targeted noted (being too small to map). The seventh habitat's value is dependent on deep peat underlying it, and it has been mapped as being of 'intermediate sensitivity'.

The table below sets these habitats out, along with a note of how they have been treated in the design:-

Habitat	Notes	Treatment
1. M23a mire, in mosaic with M25 and M10	Large areas of this habitat mosaic are located by Scar Plantation and on the gently sloping ground south of Barry Sike	The areas next to the south and west of Scar Plantation will be retained in agricultural grazing, with the timing and intensity of grazing designed to retain the existing floristic diversity, in line with the Ecology Report's recommendations. The large majority of the area south of Barry Sike will be retained as open ground, with a buffer protecting against hydrological impact. Given this areas small size, convoluted shape and remote location it is not feasible to continue low-intensity grazing and it will be left to develop naturally in the longer term. A small area of this habitat around Barry Sike will be planted with native riparian woodland in line with NatureScot's recommendations.
2. M23a, with M37 mire	Species rich marshy grasslands with flushes are found in two small flat areas in the centre of the site	These two small areas will be retained as open ground, with a 10m wide buffer, with most surrounding woodland planting being broadleaved.
3. M23a with U20	The upper stretches of the Dod Burn are flanked by species rich marshy grassland with pockets of bracken	In line with NatureScot's recommendations, native riparian woodland will be established along the banks of the Dod Burn, but the areas of wetland habitat (M23a) will be retained as open ground.
4. M17/M20 blanket bog	Small pockets of bog occur on the high ground, mainly lying on deep peat.	All areas of M17 and M20 habitat will be retained as open ground and buffered against hydrological impacts, as will

		small areas of deep peat encountered outwith of these habitats.
5. Ancient, Semi-Natural Woodland	The vestiges of Scar and Pyat Sike Planation's, which contain mature broadleaved trees (inc. exotics) and younger ash/alder dominated woodland of both natural and planted origins	The section of this woodland within the site will be enclosed within the deer fence, which will allow natural regenerated trees to develop
6. CG10 Calcareous grasslands	Small areas were recorded by target notes (being too small to map), notably on the eastern flank of Gray Coat	See treatment of target notes below
7. M25 mire	This habitat would be of value if it occurs on deep peat; small pockets occur in the south of the site	No deep peat found in areas identified as being M25 mire.

The above treatments will also protect the ground water dependant terrestrial ecosystems noted in the Ecological Report (CG10, M23a, M25, and M37).

A number of features of habitat value deemed to be of interest were target noted rather than mapped (due to their small scale) in the Ecological Report). These include the above-mentioned calcareous grasslands. In addition, a couple of 'features of interest were noted in a similar manner. The table below shows how these features are treated in the design.

Feature	Description	Treatment
TN1	Carex flacca flush	retained in open ground, with broadleaved planting in vicinity
TN2	Carex flacca flush	retained in open ground
TN3	Rock knoll	no action/planted (no noted ecological interest noted)
TN4	Base enriched grassland	retained in open ground within larger clearing
TN5	Species rich MG5c	retained in open ground
TN6	CG10 grassland	retained in open ground by track
TN7	CG10 grassland	retained in open ground within larger clearing
TN8	M23c	retained in conservation grazing area

FOI 1	base rich grassland	retained in conservation grazing area
FOI 2	base rich grassland	retained in open ground within larger clearing, but not grazed due to impracticality of doing so

In terms of positive impacts, native woodland planting will extend to around 10 ha (15% of the planting), with the locations being focused around the Dod Burn (a tributary of the Allan Water, which is within the River Tweed SAC) and other minor watercourses. Broadleaved planting (of native and non-native species) is also focused by existing woodlands, and is used elsewhere within the coniferous mixes to soften the more visible woodland edges.

The planting of native woodlands aligned to existing woods and watercourses will bolster the local forest habitat network.

Biodiversity – Birds

A breeding bird survey was conducted as part of the ecological assessment, involving three visits, taking in the site and a 100 m buffer as standard, with the buffer extended to 500 m for waders. A copy of the ecological assessment of the site is contained in Appendix 1.

In terms of birds of BoCC red or amber conservation status, the table below gives a note of the survey results and a prediction of the impacts of the woodland creation proposals:-

Species	BoCC Status	Details	Predicted Impact
Skylark	R	~15 territories within site, 5 more in buffer	loss/displacement most pairs on site, with some retained on open ground within scheme.
Curlew	R	1 pair in buffer zone	no impact – location is more than 350 m from nearest planting.
Meadow pipit	A	~38 territories within site, 8 more in buffer	loss/displacement most pairs on site, with some retained on open ground within scheme.
Oystercatcher	A	1 pair in buffer zone	no direct impact, nest site more than 250 m from nearest planting.

Given the open nature and habitat types of much of the land to the north and west there is the potential for the species note above to be displaced rather than lost.

Buzzards, kestrels, and ravens were spotted overflying the site

No signs of Black grouse were recorded, although NatureScot the presence of a lek more than 2 km north of the site. In the light of this relative remoteness, fence marking has not been included. The inclusion of native broadleaves, along with Scots pine and Sitka spruce mixes containing native broadleaves on the northern margins may provide foraging for Black grouse should their population expand.

The creation of over 11 ha of native broadleaved woodland, and to a lesser extent, the creation of larger areas of relatively diverse coniferous woodland, will in the longer term create valuable habitat for a range of woodland and woodland edge species, as well as suitable foraging habitat for a range of raptor species. This ecological development will be hastened and strengthened by the presence of a variety of existing woodlands and mature individual trees

Biodiversity – Protected Species

Signs of badger activity (snuffle holes) were recorded during the ecological and site surveys, while the archaeology survey noted the potential presence of a single hole badger sett. The location was subsequently checked, and no badger setts were found.

A pre-implementation badger survey will be undertaken, and a badger licence will be obtained if required. The fence line will be checked on its completion, and at regular intervals thereafter, and badger gates will be fitted if required. No grant assistance is being requested in this respect.

No signs of water vole or otter activity were noted in the survey report, but it is highly likely that otters forage along the Dod Burn on occasion. The retention of open ground and native woodland creation along the riparian corridor should provide enhanced habitat for otters,

It is most likely that bats use mature trees on site for roosting purposes, but as no trees will be removed, no negative impacts are predicted.

Red squirrels are present in the wider area, having been spotted in Priesthaugh Forest. The creation of over 60 ha of mixed coniferous woodland will provide further habitat for red squirrels.

Landscape

There are no known statutory landscape designations affecting Dod Farm. The core of the farm is listed in the Council's Schedule of Designed Landscapes; this listing is addressed in the 'Archaeology' section below.

Guidance

NatureScot places Dod Farm within Landscape Character Type (LCT) 93 – 'Southern Uplands with Scattered Forests', with the land to the south being in LCT 96 – 'Southern Uplands with Forest', while LCT 101 – 'Rocky Upland Fringe' lies to the north (around the River Teviot). While these LCT assessment provide a clear picture of the landscape types present, they do not provide anything by way of management guidance.

In terms of the 'Borders landscape assessment (ASH,1998), Dod Farm lies within the 'Southern Uplands Type – with scattered forest.

The 'Borders landscape assessment' does not set out LCA-specific management guidelines for trees and woodlands. The relevant 'key landscape issues' for the 'Southern Uplands Type-with Scattered Forest' landscape type are set out in the table below, together with a note on how each issue has been treated in the design process:-

- **Guidance**

Issue	Treatment
Potential threat of visual intrusion into core wild land areas from forest expansion	Dod Farm does not lie within or near to a recognised 'wild land' area, and it is classed as being 'medium' in the 'Wildness Composite'. While the proposals will increase overall woodland cover the limited visibility and relatively low setting of the site will limit any intrusion into the uplands.
Potential threats to vulnerable areas of semi-natural vegetation	Over half the farm comprises of improved or semi-improved pasture, and a further 8% is already wooded, with these areas being the more visible ones. Area so recognised habitat value will be protected (although these areas are not noticeably visible). Heather moorland is evident outwith the site, on the west side of Grey Coat, and the unplanted parts of this hill within the site are likely to develop heather cover in time, which will assist in reducing the constraints between the two sides of the hill.
Decline of existing broadleaf woodland fragments	All of the existing woods on site will be retained. Some of the existing broadleaved woodland on the farm are clearly visible from the public road to the north. The most notably of these woods is Scar Plantation; this woodland will continue its prominence, and will be bolstered by additional broadleaved planting north of Brae Plantation (which itself will decline in prominence). The upper section of Heather Wood (dominated by mature beech) will remain visible. New broadleaved and Scots pine woodland planned for the face of Grey Coat will become visually prominent in time.

The Borders Forestry and Woodland Strategy highlights landscape issues amongst others, with the 'Priorities for Woodland Expansion' elaborating on these issues. The manner in which these issues have been addressed is set out in the Operations Plan in the 'Woodland Strategy' section.

- **Addressing Site Specific Landscape Issues**

A list of existing and potential landscape issues are contained in the table below, along with notes of how they will be addressed in the design.

Landscape Issues	Addressed by:-
The march boundary runs straight up the terminus of Grey Coat, with clear views onto this from the C24. The hill fort on the summit is a Scheduled Monument.	The presence of archaeological features on the hill's summit and lower slopes will necessitate the retention of open ground, so avoiding the establishment of a linear edge to the woodland. The employment of Scots pine and broadleaves will create a relatively soft woodland feature in the most prominent location on the mid-slopes of the hill.

The western march runs along the top of a steep ridge which is visible from a short stretch of the C24.	Planting will be held well back from the ridge line for the northernmost 1 km of the boundary, and the planting below will not breach the skyline as seen from the north-west. While the planting will extend, and become visible, towards the ridge line in the south, on Muckle Knowe, this section is much less visible than the stretch around Grey Coat.
The farm contains a patchwork of small woods which are primarily of broadleaved character.	The proposals will result in a coalescence of the woodlands. There will be loss of open ground, but the use of broadleaved and diverse coniferous woodland along the lower part of the valley will create a visually diverse woodland, notably when viewed from the southbound C24.
The linear edges of Priesthaugh Forest are visible both on Muckle Knowe, at the southern end of the site, and on the slopes of Peelhope Brae, where the forest has a 'hanging' edge.	The proposal includes for planting on the northern slopes of Muckle Knowe; in time trees here will become visible, but they will assist in reducing the prominence of the existing trees on the hill's summit. The proposed planting will also lower the existing woodland edge of Peelhope Brae, bringing it down below the summit of Grey Coat as viewed from the C24 on the west side of the Allan Water valley. While the northern boundary here is linear, the use of broadleaves, open ground, and a Sitka/Aspen mix will reduce this linearity.
The Dod Burn forms an attractive feature running the length of the site	The presence of the Burn will be emphasised by establishing a corridor of broadleaved woodland, with open ground retained around wetlands.

- **Visual Impact**

For the most part, the main body of Dod Farm is of very low visibility, being completely contained within a steep sided valley, open only to the north. Further, there are very few visual receptors in the area, even to the north. There are no houses with direct or intimate views onto the site, although the D 24 road does allow for views up the Dod Burn valley, and onto the ridge line occupied by Gray Coat and Muckle Knowe.

That said, parts of the site are of visual sensitivity, including:-

Gray Coat- the site occupies the eastern half of this hill overlooking the D 24, and the ownership boundary runs straight up the hillside. Its importance is heightened by the presence of a hill fort, which brings intervisibility issues into play

Western Ridge – this runs between Muckle Knowe and Gray Coat- while the site itself is not visible from the north west, this ridgeline is, and trees planted on or near the boundary will become visible in time, although the higher hills to the south-east will continue to form the skyline

Boundary with Priestthaugh Forest – While the current edge of the forest is very linear and visually uniform, only the trees on the summit of Muckle Knowe, and the lower edge on Peelhope Brae have any real visual sensitivity.

The table below sets out key locations in the locality where parts of the sites can be seen, and where relevant, details how the design has addressed any landscape issues. In addition, perspective images showing the current and future landscapes have been produced for key views onto, and out from, the site. These are contained in Appendix 6

No. and Location	Visibility	Visual Impact
North - Distant	Travelling southwards on the eastern leg of the C 24 road the site first becomes visible about 5 km to the north. The view is characterised by large, grass covered hills with rounded summits. Priestthaugh Forest is visible on the skyline above Gray Coat, and the woods on the sites western slopes (shown in green) are the only broadleaved woodlands visible in the landscape, although small-scale, linear coniferous woods break up the foreground.	The proposed planting will clothe the eastern slopes of Dod Hill, but the retention of open ground around the Scheduled Monuments will prevent the occurrence of harsh lines on the prominent hill top, as well as retaining intervisibility between Scheduled Monuments. The use of broadleaved and Scots pine mixes will create a soft and attractive woodland edge, tying into the existing woods.
North - Intimate	Clear views onto the northern end of Gray Coat, and up the Dod Burn valley towards the northern edge of Priestthaugh Forest, become available from the road roughly 500 m north of the site. Existing broadleaved woodlands within the site provide a degree of diversity and enclosure that is lacking elsewhere in the locality, with the landscape being dominated by large steep-sided hills with rounded summits, and uniform landcover.	As with the view above, the woodland will fill the valley sides above the Dod Burn, but will be held back from the more visible ridgeline of Grey Coat. The existing broadleaved woodland by the Burn will be bolstered by further broadleaved planting, while the open ground above the steading will break up the woodland mass.
North-West-Middle Distant	Gray Coat is visible from the western leg of the C 24 from 2.5 km distant, with its visibility diminishing towards the site. The rigid north-western and northeastern margins of Priestthaugh Forest sit on the far skyline (occasionally overtopped by higher open hills to the south-east), while the smooth-sided ridge between Gray Coat and Meikle Knowe dominates	The upper woodland edge will in time become visible from a short stretch of the road, but the ridgeline summit on Grey Coat itself will remain open. Further south, the woodland will visually tie into Priestthaugh Forestry both on Muckle Knowe, and in the far side of the Dod Burn valley. The new planting will also lower the existing woodland edge on Peelhope Brae.

	the middle distance. The site itself is not visible, but its western boundary sits on the ridgeline.	
Other Locations – west, south, and east	Visibility from the west, south, and east is largely prevented by the presence of higher ground, while there are very few visual receptors in these locations. That said, the western boundary sits on the ridgeline visible from a few houses to the west of the site	The impact on views from the aforementioned houses will be similar to that described above -North-West middle distance
Other Locations – north and northwest	While the higher parts of the site are visible from a large area to the north and northwest, there are few visual receptors, with no houses having clear and intimate views of the site, and all such views are distant.	No significant impacts will occur.
View out from Grey Coat	While the summit and hill fort doesn't appear to be frequently visited there are panoramic views available to the north and east. The viewshed takes in a number of similar historic features from Burgh Hill in the north to Penchise Pen in the east, as well as providing attractive views over the Teviot valley	The removal of agricultural activity, and the provision of access gates, may encourage greater use of the hill. The planting to the north and north-east has been held on 330m contour, almost 50 m below the hill summit. This will allow for uninterrupted views from the hill fort. While the planting will extend further up the hill to the east, views onto the hill forts across the valley will be retained. The use of broadleaved groups within the mixes on the hill will soften the appearance of the wood's upper margins from the hill top.

Cultural Heritage

The area around Dod Farm has a rich cultural heritage, and there are numerous scheduled and recorded features within and near to the site. In the light of this known interest, and as large parts of the land are unimproved, an Archaeological Survey was undertaken by Calluna Archaeology in 2024. The survey detailed the 16 previously recorded features within the farm, as well as describing 33 other sites noted during the survey. These features are briefly described below, along with a note of their Scheduled Monument and Canmore numbers where relevant.

Scheduled Monuments are noted in red text. All features which require mitigation are shown on Map 2a - Constraints

Site no.	Canmore ID (SAM)	Description/ interpretation		
1	354615 and 344523	Road (medieval) – 'Thieves Road'	5m buffer either side of route	a ~15m wide corridor of open ground will be maintained
2	54024 (SM3391)	Cairn (period unassigned)	10m wide buffer outwith scheduled area	Mitigation significantly exceeded -see SM section below
3	54043	Cord rig (prehistoric)	now recorded, so no further mitigation required	some retained within open ground around sites 2 and 5
4	344533	Pele house (medieval), two structures	buffer of 5m and tree removal	set within existing woodland, trees growing on structure will be removed
5	54101 (SM3459)	Settlement (prehistoric)	10m wide buffer outwith scheduled area	mitigation significantly exceeded -see SM section below
6	54096	Cord rig (prehistoric) – within SAM	none required	included within large clearing around site 5
7	54093	Flint arrowhead findspot	none required	none
8	344506	Drove road (period unassigned)	5m buffer either side of route	route within site is not discernible but 10m wide ride will be maintained
9	54090 (SM3432)	Gray Coat Pele house (16 th century)	10m buffer outwith scheduled area	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
10	344535	Sheepfold (post- medieval)	5m buffer	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
11	54095	Cord rig (prehistoric)	within scheduled area	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
12	344527	Linear earthwork - Catrail	3m buffer either side	5m buffer either side will be maintained on short stretch below track
13	54094	Enclosure (period unassigned)	5m buffer	5m buffer, on edge of large area of open ground
14	344532	Stock Enclosure (post-medieval)	5m buffer around outer walls, 5m buffer around inner structure	5m buffer around outer walls, 5m buffer around inner structure
15	344534	Stock enclosure (post-medieval)	5m buffer	5m buffer of open ground around structure
16	-	Modern building	no mitigation	outwith scheme
17	-	Drain	no mitigation	with retained grazing land

18	-	Terraces (fields/buildings?)	retained as open ground with 5m buffer	retained as open ground with 5m buffer
19	-	Modern track	no mitigation	retained as access route
20	-	Rectilinear enclosure	retained as open ground with 5m buffer	retained as open ground with 5m buffer
21	-	Natural hollow/quarry/corn drying kiln?	no mitigation	set within large clearing around sites 2 and 6
22	-	Linear quarry	no mitigation	set within large clearing around sites 2 and 6
23	-	Bank & drain	3m buffer either side	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
24	-	Shieling hut & annex	5m buffer around feature	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
25	-	T-shaped sheep shelter	3m buffer	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33
26	-	Catrail	3m buffer either side	full length above track is within larger clearing,
27	-	Linear bank	3m buffer either side	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
28	-	Curving earth bank	3m buffer either side	5m buffer either side
29	-	Covered drain	within buffer around Pele House	Set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
30	-	Longhouse?	within buffer around Pele House	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
31	-	Structure	increase buffer around Pele House	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
32	-	Earth bank & ditch	none given	set within much larger clearing containing feature nos. 9-11 and 27-33.
33	-	Rig & furrow	no mitigation outwith clearing	no mitigation outwith clearing
34	-	Linear bank	3m buffer either side	5m buffer either side
35	-	Linear bank	3m wide buffer either side	5m wide buffer either side -
36	-	Earth bank	3m buffer outside bank	5m buffer outside bank
37	-	Drain	3m wide buffer either side	set within area retained in agricultural grazing
38	-	D-shaped enclosure	3m buffer around enclosure	set within area retained in agricultural grazing
39	-	Drain & bank	no mitigation	no mitigation

40	-	Flints on track	no mitigation	no mitigation
41	-	Vicinity of footbridge over Barry Sike	no mitigation	no mitigation
42	-	Drystone wall at N end of Garden Plantation	5m buffer around wall	no planting within 5m of wall
43	-	Bank at S end of Garden Plantation	5m buffer around Garden Plantation	no planting within 5m of bankings
44	-	Heather Wood enclosing bank	3m buffer around Heather Wood	no planting within 5m of woodland
45	-	Rig and furrow	no mitigation	no mitigation
46	-	Quarry (with badger hole)	no mitigation	no mitigation (confirmed no badger sett)
47	-	Track & bank (modern?)	no mitigation	no mitigation
48	-	Quarry/kiln	no mitigation	no mitigation
49	SBC No 174.	Priesthaugh Designed Landscape		see below for discussion

Scheduled Monuments

As detailed in the Archaeology Report, there are three Scheduled Monuments within the site: a prehistoric settlement/fort on the summit of Gray Coat, a cairn on the upper north-east flank of the same hill, and a Pele House on the mid slopes on the western side of the Dod Burn valley. In addition there are numerous Scheduled Monuments in the surrounding area, including a homestead to the north of Grey Coat settlement immediately abutting the site, and a series of hill forts and settlements on the hills to the north and west of the site. The Scheduled Features are shown on Map 1- Location, Context and Viewpoints.

Whilst the Archaeology Report makes recommendations protecting the on-site scheduled features it was evident that as well as protecting the fabric of the monuments, it is necessary to provide an appropriate setting for the features, and to retain intervisibility between similar features within and outwith the site. With this in mind, dialogue was held with Historic Environment Scotland, which included the provision of perspective images showing the impact of future tree growth on current intervisibility (see Appendix 6, viewpoints 5 and 6).

Pele House (SM3432) - the Pele House will be set within an open area of ground, covering around 4 ha, extending from the track/right of way to the top of the ridge. The clearing will protect numerous other features of archaeological value, including sections of the Catrail, a sheepfold and a possible longhouse. While the clearing is partly enclosed by Sitka spruce woodland, other clearing margins will be of broadleaved woodland, with the clearing being open to the hill top. Any trees or scrub regenerating on the features will be removed.

Gey Coat Settlement (SM3459) and Cairn (SM3391) – these scheduled monuments, along with some associated features, will be retained in open ground covering the hill summit and upper slopes, encompassing around 5 ha of ground. This clearing extends next to and below the scheduled homestead (SM3356). This area of open ground will be excluded from the fenced enclosure as fence erection on the march boundary would involve works within the scheduled area and the appearance of a detractive feature on the skyline. A self-closing gate will be fitted to facilitate access to the monuments from the access track below.

In order to retain the current intervisibility of numerous other scheduled features from Grey Coat, including hill forts on Burgh Hill, Dodburn Hill, Penchrise Pen and Pyatknowe, planting will be kept below the 330m contour line on the hill's northern and north-wester side (the hill summit sits at 378m above sea level). In terms of the scheduled monuments setting, broadleaves will be concentrated on the upper edges of the pine and spruce woodlands on the hill slopes below the clearing in order to provide a relatively soft upper margin to the woodland. It is likely that grazing by deer and by sheep straying from the neighbouring land will prevent any scrub or tree growth within the scheduled areas, but should such growth occur it will be removed.

Priesthaugh Designed Landscape

While Dod Farm is not listed as an Inventory or Non-Inventory Designed Landscape, it is contained on the Scottish Borders Council's Schedule of Designed Landscapes. This Schedule comprises of 184 such sites, with each site being described, along with identification of notable features and a statement of significance.

The description notes that the landscape contains '*unfenced small woodland blocks of uncertain origin*'. The fact that the woods are named '*suggest purposeful and personal attention of owner and some design intent*' although '*other planting in locality shows similar pattern of planting, on an equivalent scale, simply to provide shelter for sheep*'. The notable characteristics simply states '*named small tree blocks in remote upland glen of uncertain origin*', while its significance is given as '*Local, some*'.

While most of the woods are shown on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps, only parts of the linked Scar and Pyat Sike Plantations is recorded on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (as Long Established Plantation Origin Woodland)

The Archaeological Report states 'The Priesthaugh Designed Landscape is of local significance. It does not preclude further planting in the area, but new planting could possibly reflect, augment or renew the design. It is suggested that the outer banks have a buffer zone of 3 m'

All of the woodlands are being retained, and a Management Plan will be written to guide their long term management. It is anticipated that they will be managed on a long term retention basis, with thinning undertaken in the younger, largely broadleaved woodlands. It should be noted that some of the woods comprise of relatively young trees planted on the footprint of the original plantings

No planting will be undertaken within 5m of any of the woods and their boundary markers, and many of the existing woodlands will be framed by broadleaved, or diverse conifer planting, which will reflect the character of the existing woodlands. The exclusion of grazing stock, and in the short term at least, deer, will permit the development of natural regeneration.

Roads

The site has a short and direct access onto the D 24 road, which forms a looped circuit south of the A7 trunk road. The D24 is shown as a ' Consultation Route' in the Scottish Borders 'Timber

Haulage Map. SBC Roads Dept. and the Timber Transport Officer have not responded to initial consultation.

It is proposed that all management access, and future timber movements, will use the eastern leg of the D 24 to access the A 7.

Consultation will be undertaken with SBC Roads Dept. and local residents prior to timber haulage being undertaken, and a Timber Haulage Management Plan will be produced in advance of any haulage. It has been noted that the D 24 passes very close to a Scheduled Monument just north of Dod Farm, and the need to fully protect this feature will be taken into account when the Plan is produced.

The internal track between the D24 and the sites northern boundary is crossed by a Scottish Water supply pipe. Liaison with Scottish Water has taken place, and site meeting is planned, to discuss future protection methods, but these measures will not be required for implementation access.

There are stretches of firm tracks within the site which will aid implementation works, and no substantial roadworks are planned at this stage. Proposed road-lines have been incorporated into the design, and It is anticipated that any stone required for future upgrading can be won on-site.

For implementation purposes, vehicular access to the ground on the eastern side of the Dod Burn will utilize the ford (Grid Ref. NT 4772/0478), with a log bridge installed and utilized following SEPA and Scottish Forestry Guidance. The specifications noted in 'Drain and Watercourse Crossings' within the 'Protecting the Environment during Mechanised Harvesting Operations (FC Technical Note, 2005) will be followed, and the log bridge will be removed following the completion of implementation works. In the longer term, a permanent solution involving the use of culverts will be installed.

Recreation

There are recognised paths within and adjoining the site; the two within the site are both recorded as rights of way and are shown in the Council's Core Path Plan, and on map 2 - General Constraints.

Route UPTE/BR99 (known as 'Thieves Road') runs southwards from the D 24 public road, past Dod farmhouse and follows a route on the mid slopes of the western side of the Dod Burn valley before crossing into Priestthaugh Forest, heading towards Hermitage. The route is surfaced for its northern stretch (having been used for farm management purpose) but the path becomes less discernible south of Gray Coat Pele House. The route offers the potential to take a circular walk by connecting to UPTE/BR100, which follows the Priestthaugh Burn back to the D 24.

Route UPTE/BR10 splits off the UPTE/BR99 just to the south of Dod farmhouse, and follows a rough track down to the Dod Burn. After crossing a ford in the burn north of its confluence with Barry

Sike, the route then ascends the saddle between Pencrise Hill and Maiden Paps before connecting to a promoted path (UPT/85P) just within Priesthaugh Forest. While the stretch between Dod Farmhouse and the burn is evident on the ground (albeit on a different line than that shown on the SBC map), there is no discernible track on the east side of the burn. The presence of a structured gap in the dyke just to the north of the sites north-eastern corner suggests the historic route runs on the north side of the boundary dyke, and outwith the site.

While there are opportunities to continue to provide, and to enhance, recreational opportunities on site it should be noted that Dod farmhouse lies very close to the noted path routes, which raises privacy concerns. In the light of this, access will be facilitated but not actively promoted. Further, in order to provide greater recreational linkage the cooperation of the owners of Priesthaugh Forest and Pencrise Farm would be required.

In any event path route BR99 will remain open for recreational use, as will the track that roughly follows the line of BR10. All-user self-closing gates will be installed and maintained at a number of entry points, including south of Dod farmhouse, in two locations by Priesthaugh, and where route BR99 appears to cross into Pencrise farm.

In addition, the proposed ATV routes and other rides will facilitate access across the wider site.

Land Use

An 'Agricultural Impact Assessment' has been completed, and is contained as Appendix 7. No significant negative impact on the agricultural economy is forecast, with loss of agricultural employment being balanced by a rise in employment in the forestry sector, and the loss of stock numbers will be minimal. Nearly all of the land removed from agricultural use is LCA 5. Pastoral agriculture will remain the predominant land use in the locality, and the new owners of Dod Farmhouse will be operating a rural enterprise, with no loss in local population numbers.