

**Halkshill and Blair Park Consultation Event
Monday, 24th April, 2017**

Comments Made

Response

Public Access

1	Trees next to footpath should not be harvested.	This will be the case for the majority of the Core Path and all areas of amenity and broadleaved planting. Some tree management might be required to maintain access routes or views. Post this event, the design around the Core Path will be revisited to ensure sufficient open ground adjacent to the path and remove an area of spruce south west of
2	New circular path from Bellsdale Greeto Power House up to Core Path on the pipe track.	This is possible and can be accommodated within the existing plan. The route is already being used and could be formalised and improved.
3	Sheep track on south bank of Gogo.	improvement could be explored.
4	Lack of/no public parking (Bellsdale Avenue).	Noted, see (7)
5	Parking arrangement at new campus with footpath or sports centre.	Good idea, to be taken forward by Council?
6	View point with picnic tables at a high point going towards Greeto Falls, walking from Bellsdale Avenue.	Picnic tables and seating can be accommodated. Final locations can be further discussed with community and NAC Access Officer.
7	Parking at Bellsdale to discouraged, parking there is for residents.	Access for any proposed operations would not be taken from Bellsdale Avenue.
8	Existing access by foot breaches DD act re locked gates and styles.	Only vehicular access will be restricted.
9	A footpath from the Core Path to join up with new main arterial route via the mast with a view point.	This is possible and can be accommodated within the proposed planting design.
10	If site too steep can only be of limited value	Noted.
11	Path up burnside from Bellsdale to meeting of waters and Greeto Bridge reinstated	See (2).
12	The access onto and off the stile next to the gates at the Bellsdale Avenue access is extremely muddy! A bit of gravel laid in here would be ideal.	Will look into this.
13	Happy that public comments have been taken on board, access routes and community woodland greatly improved.	Noted

Other Issues

14	Public health issue, rubbish issue	Noted.
15	Want copy of soil survey (Megan Kelly & Tim Cowan)	See (16)
16	Key Objection - unsuitable site, pollution control, fertiliser use	Site suitability, pollution control and fertiliser use has been covered in the ES and subsequent work by applicant and Forestry Commission Scotland.
17	TO NAC - How does this development fit with Ayrshire & Arran Woodlands Forestry Strategy - it states should be broadleaf??	See (16)
18	Pleased to see reduction of Sitka planting in Wild Land Area	Noted. To be discussed with SNH on 13/6/17.
19	Be good to have link up with Douglas Park from existing road/path.	This is planned as part of the overall access provision.
20	It would be good to have a close by Community Woodland area.	Area below Cockmalane and existing Halkshill woodland give scope for this. Public Consultation through EADHA has taken place and discussions are ongoing with interested parties - see www.eadha.co.uk. More recent discussions with Largs Organic Gardens have
21	Apart from removal of Sitka spruce from open hill, don't see much difference, circular walk is positive.	Noted.
22	Better space around the Core Path BUT who will maintain and look after trees.	See (1) Scheme would be grant-aided and therefore under a maintenance obligation. In time, forest would be certified and managed in line with the UK Forestry Standard and UK
23	Public access may be improved for cyclists.	Noted.
24	Need community benefit for the area.	Noted.
25	Remove all Sitka from Wild Land Area.	SNH on the 13/6/17.
26	Good to see the response to concerns re the native woodland towards Largs, cut back of Sitka in Wild Land Area and to the north	Noted.
27	No growth on west facing slope.	Planting design around Cauld Rocks to be revisited with potential for removal of areas of broadleaves due east of Cauld Rocks but has implications for native woodland creation.
28	No visibility if tree tops above horizon.	See (27). Full Landscape and Visual Assessment undertaken as part of EIA to ensure any adverse impacts are avoided or mitigated.
29	A760 plant hardwood between Sitka and road.	Noted. Native woodland (broadleaf and Scots pine) planting is proposed for this area, any redesign would retain this proposal.
30	No visible trees around Quad Rocks from town.	See (27)
31	Forest gardening ideas instead of Community Garden.	community involvement.

32	-	Welcome native broadleaves planted on Quad Rocks area and a good access path.	Noted.
33	-	Need a public meeting.	Noted.
34	-	Circular walking route.	See (2).
35	-	Soil management, nitrogen, fixing trees to put nutrients back into the soil	See (16).
36	-	Woodland trail/information signage.	Option as part of (20).
37	-	Paths for All.	The terrain is challenging for a Paths for All approach but further discussions will be held with the NAC Access Officer.
38	-	Picnic areas (i.e. the odd picnic bench).	See (6)
39	-	Opportunities should be explored to create access links from new high school to area of new native woodland - work with landowner and NAC Access Officer to secure access.	See (5)
40	-	Would be fantastic learning resource.	Noted
41	-	Link routes to provide circular access for cyclists/walkers e.g. east of Blair Park.	This to be further explored but there is good scope for this and it can be accommodated within existing proposed planting design.
42	-	Blue path for cyclists as well as walkers	See (41)
43	-	Be good to contact Sustrans about cycle route to Largs from Dalry to link up (Malcolm Macqueen 07780 727579)	See (41)
44	-	Would be good to get agreed boundary of wild land/planting to ensure no further advance in the future. By all parties NAC, SNH, FC & owner	See (25)
45	-	Fix a designation for Wild Land to avoid further encroachment.	See (25)
46	-	Public needs to be informed of the staging of the planting which areas open or closed at any one time.	Noted. It is envisaged that responsible access will be available at all times. During operations operatives will inform public by signage and/or banksmen of activities which they may wish to avoid. Any access restrictions for operational reasons will be discussed
47	-	Incorporate biodiversity areas - wildflowers, nature, pond with boardwalk.	Potential for some of this within community woodland area, see (20).
48	-	Retention of Wild Land, no planting on Wild Land, redesignation of boundary (wild land).	See (25).
49	-	Deer fences retained.	browsing damage.

Visual Impact

50	-	Outdoor classroom.	Potential for this on site and within a community woodland area, see (20).
51	-	Land for allotments	Following discussions, felt that land offers little opportunity but would better suit forest
52	-	I suggest there is no or very little broadleaf planting in the Greeta area	Greeta falls given large unplanted buffer.
53	-	The area would remain as is - old brown area	Noted
54	-	Consultation tonight presented too narrow set of issues for people to comment on	Noted
55	-	Keep ridge line clear - views from promenade was deemed very important	See (27) It was part of Landscape Architects brief to retain views of Cauld Rocks as presently exist and this has been accommodated within the current design. Post this event this will be revisited to expand unplanted area around this key feature.
56	-	Remove planting west of Greeto burn	See (27)
57	-	Remove most broadleaf and some Sitka from west of Greeto	See (27)
58	-	Remove new planting from above and below Core Path	Planting around Core Path to be revisited with greater open buffer allocated and removal of commercial species to be replaced by amenity conifer and broadleaves which would not
59	-	New Otter survey needed as based on outdated information.	Design and any operations would follow current guidance and best practise in relation to protected species. Follow up otter survey planned for any proposed water crossings and will form part of an Implementation Plan should the project proceed.
60	-	Most major developers instigate community cash benefit, that would comfort folk.	Noted.
61	-	At minimum a new allotment area would be popular.	See (20).
62	-	More information needed on soil survey and pesticides.	See (16).
63	-	The Largs hill are fine. No need for any planting especially not Sitka spruce	Noted.
64	-	Suitability of site.	See (16).
65	-	Active travel survey - undertaking full cycle options in Largs and surrounding areas. Linked with Sustrans/NAC/LCC.	See (41).
66	-	Bridge over at Blair Park and Kelburn.	Noted - see (41)
67	-	Some project between Sports Scotland/Largs Academy.	See (5) and (39) Opportunities for involvement of both should scheme proceed.
68	-	Consider cumulative impact of this scheme and Hydro.	For regulators to consider. Cumulative impact was not within the scope of the forestry EIA.
69	-	Glad to see no trees to be planted below the level of Cauld Rocks.	Noted see (27).
70	-	Trees planted next to Core Path could be removed if they spoiled the view as they matured.	Yes, as part of ongoing management See (22).

71	- Keep hill top behind Largs tree free.	See (27). Full Landscape and Visual Assessment undertaken as part of EIA to ensure any adverse impacts are avoided or mitigated.
72	- There must be no obscuring of outline of hill.	See (27). Full Landscape and Visual Assessment undertaken as part of EIA to ensure any adverse impacts are avoided or mitigated.
73	- A public meeting with clarity of proposals, changes considered from original plans should still go ahead.	Noted.
74	- Most people are against planting of any kind on the west hill over Largs, why are you not listening?	Noted, but there are differing views see (32).
75	- We want to keep the west facing hillsides open and free from woodland of any species.	See (74).
76	- Soften boundary of Sitka spruce on wildland by an edge of natural woodland, something sustainable.	Edge planting is proposed within the current design, but there will be silvicultural
77	- Keep Greeto falls and burn area as it is.	This area is to be left unplanted so will remain as is.
78	- Why project the profile from a chair and small screen - it looks like a schoolboys homework presentation.	Previous presentations did use a different format and presented the design on a large screen. This was a different approach with the aim of generating community input.
79	- Would you consider reaching out to individual interested groups for discussion e.g. Wildlife Trust.	Map and contact details forwarded to Roger Hisset post meeting. SWT consulted as part of
80	- Call an open town meeting - Barrfields?	Noted.
81	- The Wildlife Trust would welcome any discussion re visual impact.	Visual impacts addressed by SNH and NAC as part of EIA process.
82	- Next step - public meeting!	Noted.
83	- Largs people do not want planting on the west front of the hills, visible from front of town.	See (32).
84	- Remove the line of planting along N-S behind Cauld Rocks	See (27)
85	- There should be a properly convened Public Meeting to present the proposal to residents with appropriate visual aids.	There have been a number of meetings with visual aids over the last four years and which are listed in the Environmental Statement.
86	- The people of Largs have asked for an open Public Meeting ever since the start of the consultation when is such a meeting going to happen?	See (85).
87	- Remove planting from west face of the Quad Rocks and Gogo valley.	Further Spruce area in Gogo Glen to be converted to amenity conifer and broadleaves. See
88	- Who has predetermined that private commercial forestry can develop within Muirshiel Park	No one has predetermined this. The project has been subject to a detailed and wide-ranging EIA that has gone through a public consultation process. It is this process that allows FCS, as the competent authority, to judge on balance whether or not woodland
89	- Why the reluctance to project the profiles of visual impact until it was requested.	There is no reluctance to project visual impacts - this is part of the ES process which is a publically available document.
90	- There must be no loss of the open aspect on the slope.	Considered by landscape architect as part of the Environmental Statement.
91	- There must be community benefit	We believe there will be.
92	- Why are you still intending to plant in the Wild Land? This cannot be allowed to happen.	See (25).
93	- Opportunity to develop "Rewilding" project over moorland including ditch dredging tapping into Government funding.	Certainly could be realistic option should woodland creation proceed.
94	- Parallel to forestry - Catchment Management.	Hydrology covered in EIA, SEPA requested unplanted buffer on main watercourses and design and future operations will follow existing guidelines and best practice.
95	- In the revised EIA can you identify where the view points are for the visualisations.	The EIA will be resubmitted with addenda covering the issues raised after the first ES submission. The locations of any additional viewpoints would be identified at that stage.
96	- Concern that since the first presentation that there is still forest being planted on west side of hills.	Noted.
97	- Remove the proposed afforestation from the west side of hills regarding the visual impact.	See (27) and (87)
98	- What is the minimum acreage of spruce to make project viable commercially e.g. if west side/glen planting is removed and wild land is protected/buffering	Planted area within latest proposal has greatly reduced as a result of site surveys and addressing consultees advice, leaving little scope for further reductions.

Potential for Community Woodland/Future Recreation

99	- Stakis owns five sites	Noted.
100	- Why has Stakis chosen land above a town? Other sites are barren.	Noted.
101	- Regional Park Access - none.	Opportunity is there, no changes to existing access, creation of roads/paths may conflict with Wild Land designation. There will be many pathways via major and minor
102	- Barrier between spruce and Regional Park with native woodland.	See (76).
103	- Cycle tracks for tourism.	See (41).
104	- Badger setts noted in gorse area on Gogo in proposed area of Scots pine.	Badgers are protected and current guidance and best practice would be followed. Protection of badger setts would be incorporated into Implementation Plan.
105	- Trails not roadways.	Noted, barring the main arterial roads, which are predominantly to the east most pathways will be minor and trail like.

106	- No predator control!!	Legal predator control may be required to protect the SPA but this will be agreed with SNH. There is also a requirement for deer control during the establishment phase when the young trees are vulnerable to browsing damage.
107	- Could be land available for community allotments.	See (22).
108	- Provision of benches/bins along walkways.	See (6) and (111).
109	- Limit non species at Peregrine sites. In particular Gogo site. To decrease disturbance through forestry works.	Best practise will be followed in relation to wild birds and other protected species. Requirements for protected species will be covered in an Implementation Plan.
110	- Security of tenure.	Has and will be discussed with community groups interested in taking forward a Forest
111	- Litter - more bins and staffing to empty them.	As per the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. Respect the interests of other people, care for the environment and take responsibility for your own actions . It is not anticipated that bins
112	- Geocache!	We believe Geocache sites are already present, improved access could allow greater use
113	- Benches to take in local views.	See (6), Local input as to preferred location will be required.
114	- Mountain biking.	See (41)
115	- Extend path beyond hydro turbine house to Greeta falls	See (2)
116	- Where are visitors going to park.	See (5), for greatest benefit to local economy would be best if visitors were in town, out of town parking exists at Kelburn windfarm access (Mutton Hall) and below Haylie Reservoir. Provision may also be made at the Blair Park entrance.
117	- Cease existing users of existing woodland at the Lower Gogo dumping loads of manure	More community use and public access could help discourage this.
118	- Restore the forest destroyed by the Hydro	Considerable scope for this.
119	- Active travel survey needs to be fed in the planning as ideas will come up there	Noted.
120	- Hand rail support for steep areas up/down.	Would be considered as part of overall access provision.
121	- Public information signs - you are here x, types of trees, wildlife in the area.	This would also be considered as part of access provision, which relates to archaeology (i.e. Castle Hill Fort) would involve Historic Environment Scotland. Main circular paths could be
122	- Good solid pathways	Main circular paths would be of more engineered design but there is a demand for more natural paths as already exist elsewhere on site. Both can be provided.
123	- Investment of funding from developer.	Noted.
124	- Historic information	See (121).
125	- Lack of/no public parking for public users	See (5) and (116).
126	- Possible link to sports centre or new school campus parking?	See (5).
127	- Disability discrimination act is currently breached re access.	See (8).
128	- Apprenticeship - arborists, drystone, forestry.	Main opportunity for employment in this project would be during the establishment phase, but it introduces all to the option of careers in the Forestry Sector, which is a major
129	- The beauty of the hills at the top of Holehouse road is in their bareness. Covering them with trees, whether pine or native woodland would take away their beautiful bareness. Why not just start the pine trees a bit further away so the tops won't be seen. Keep the hills bare at the front view.	See (27).
130	- Use the Largs campus and Inverclyde Sports Centre for parking, need co-operation for access paths. Refer to NAC Survey	See (5).