

24.01.25 Burnbrae Farm Woodland Creation proposals

From Andy Greathead <AGreathead@savills.com>

Date Fri 24/01/2025 13:57

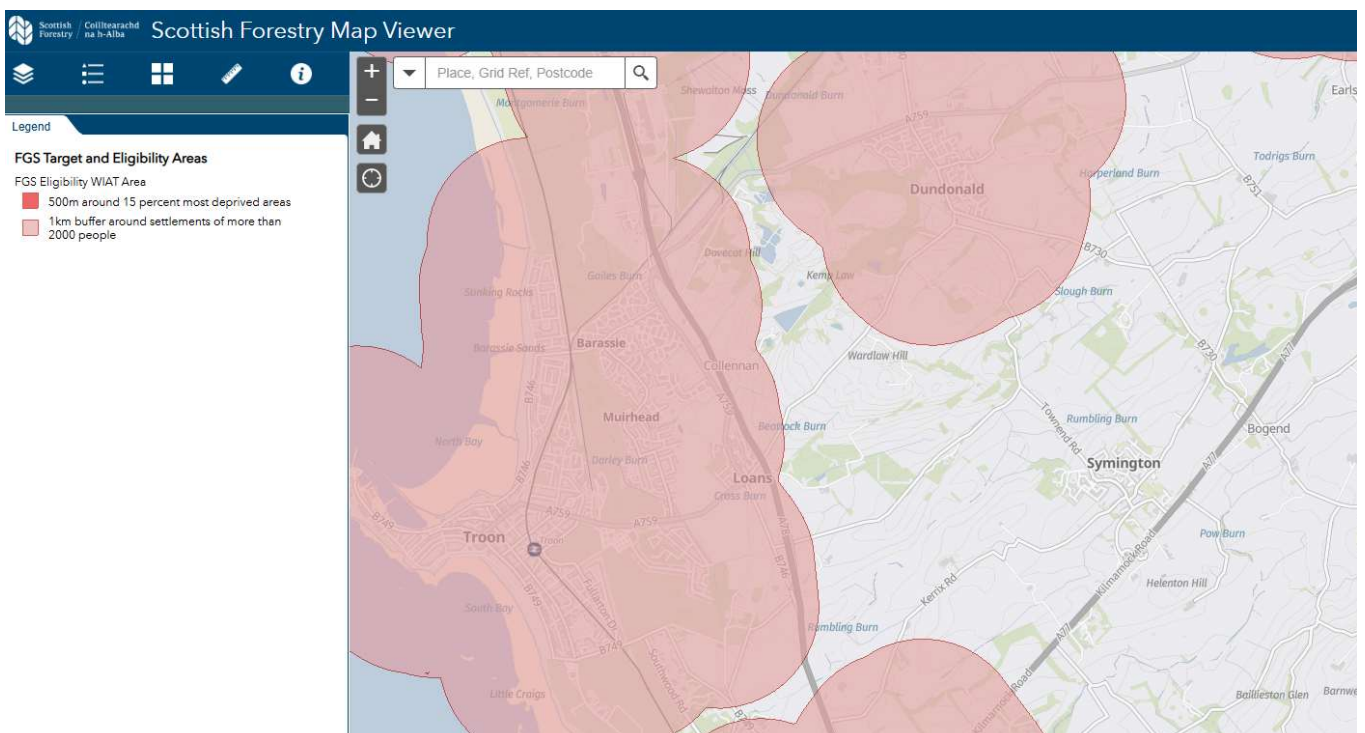
To Symington Community Council <symingtoncc@hotmail.com>

Cc Andy <Andy@walkerhineswoodlandservices.co.uk>; Liz Kelly <liz.kelly@btinternet.com>; Debs <whitedj@btinternet.com>

Dave

Re emails below, I received a response from MacTaggart & Mickel Group Limited to confirm their position but unfortunately not in time for your meeting on 21 January. I have listed the items we discussed at our meeting on 4 December with further comment in red.

1. While generally supportive as the woodland creation proposals enhance the current natural habitat and have the potential to provide a much needed off road walking route out of the village, Symington Community Council do not support woodland creation at the south east extension of compartment 1 and compartments 3 and 4 and see these as a precursor to future housing development. **Unfortunately we are not able to change the design at this stage in terms of structural planting. MacTaggart & Mickel Group Limited will be promoting these sites through the next LDP and the information will be publicly available.**
2. Symington Community Council are keen to see pathways that join Symington village to the network of paths through the woodland creation area avoiding walking along the public road. **These could potentially link to the existing core path network from Symington Mount to the east and via Townend Brae to the west.**
3. In the longer term, Symington Community Council are keen to see the maturing woodland managed under continuous cover forestry as opposed to a restructuring system of felling and replanting productive areas as they mature. **Continuous cover forestry is a system that avoids felling and replanting large areas by using heavy thinning or small scale felling often linked with natural regeneration of trees instead of replanting. From a commercial point of view, restructuring the woodland by felling and replanting productive areas as they mature is more common in UK Forestry and is easier and less intensive to manage. Deciding which management system to use would happen around year 20 when thinning could start in the faster growing conifer crops. Continuous cover forestry management will be considered over appropriate parts of the woodland at the time of first thinning.**
4. Symington Community Council would be keen to be involved in management of some of the internal hedges but assume that external roadside hedges will continue to be cut back by a contractor. **This would involve community groups layering hedges within the woodland to regenerate them.**
5. Symington Community Council would welcome the improvement of pathways including some surfaced sections for wheelchair users which could be grant funded under a Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) scheme administered by Scottish Forestry. **We could look into a funded Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) scheme following establishment of the woodland creation scheme. Currently Symington is outwith the eligibility area (as the population was around 1,600 in 2022 with a population of 2,000 required as shown below) but this will change as development takes place.**



6. Symington Community Council would welcome community involvement in the woodland creation area in the form of walks, benches and interpretive signage providing information on the biodiversity and species within the woodland. **We could look into a funded Woodlands In**

and Around Towns (WIAT) scheme following establishment of the woodland creation scheme subject to eligibility criteria.

We also discussed with Symington Community Council the following section of our draft woodland creation operational plan to be submitted to Scottish Forestry as part of the Forestry Grant Scheme application which includes:

Additional Features Beyond Grant Aid Support

The landowner is keen to cooperate and support the local community and after consultation with the Community Council the following items have been agreed. These features are not part of the grant aid funding, however, they show the genuine desire to work with the local community in order to create a woodland that is valued and well-used by local people.

- *Establishing small plots of wild flowers, which will be tended by local people and allowed to spread into the adjacent woodland edges*
- *Installing bird and bat boxes, with opportunities for these to be made by local school children, Scouts group or community groups*
- *Incorporating a wider range of flowering trees and shrubs to support the local drive to create habitats suitable for pollinators*

I will be at Burnbrae on 30 January and would be happy to meet up in the afternoon (say 2pm?). Please let me know if this suits.

Many thanks

Regards


Andy

Andy Greathead (MIC For)

Director

Rural

Savills, Earn House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth, PH1 1RA

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Mobile : +447741192802
Email : AGreathead@savills.com
Website : www.savills.co.uk



From: Andy Greathead

Sent: 14 January 2025 15:08

To: Symington Community Council <symingtoncc@hotmail.com>

Cc: Andy <Andy@walkerhineswoodlandservices.co.uk>; Liz Kelly <liz.kelly@btinternet.com>; Debs <whitedj@btinternet.com>

Subject: 14.01.25 Burnbrae Farm Woodland Creation proposals

Dave

Happy New Year to you too!

Thanks for your email. I have chased up McTaggart & Mickel to confirm their position in advance of your meeting on Tuesday, 21 January. I'll send the response as soon as I receive it.

Thanks for the offer of meeting again to further discuss the proposed woodland – I'll be in touch.

Regards


Andy

Andy Greathead (MIC For)

Director

Rural

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From: Symington Community Council <symingtoncc@hotmail.com>
Sent: 13 January 2025 20:21
To: Andy Greathead <AGreathead@savills.com>
Cc: Andy <Andy@walkerhineswoodlandservices.co.uk>; Liz Kelly <liz.kelly@btinternet.com>; Debs <whitedj@btinternet.com>
Subject: Re: 06.12.24 Burnbrae Farm Woodland Creation proposals

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Be cautious when opening attachments or clicking links

Hello Andy and Happy New Year,

You previously indicated your intention to provide us with an update; i.e. McTaggart & Mickel's position on our proposals, before our next Community Council meeting.

The next Symington Community Council meeting will take place next Tuesday, 21 January. If you are able to provide your update before the 21st, that will be much appreciated.
As previously discussed, we would be happy to meet again and discuss the proposed woodland.

Regards,
Dave

David Houfe
Symington Community Council Vice-chair & Secretary

From: Symington Community Council <symingtoncc@hotmail.com>
Sent: 12 December 2024 15:15
To: Andy Greathead <AGreathead@savills.com>
Cc: Andy <Andy@walkerhineswoodlandservices.co.uk>; Liz Kelly <liz.kelly@btinternet.com>; Debs <whitedj@btinternet.com>
Subject: Re: 06.12.24 Burnbrae Farm Woodland Creation proposals

Hello Andy,

Thanks for providing us with your summary of last week's meeting, which we also thought to be constructive. We look forward to hearing how our proposals are received by Mactaggart & Mickel.

Using your numbering, I'd like to provide a few points of clarification and reiteration (I have attached a digital copy of my notes to help):

1. Picking up on your assertion of us being 'generally supportive'; to be clear, removal of CPT.1, CPT.3 and CPT.4 shelter belts does not, in and of itself, result in our support. The prime argument of my 20/11/24 email (which accompanied the Community Council's formal response to the woodland proposal), and an extent of our discussion last week, pertained to concerns by some members of the community, including members of the Community Council, that the woodland proposal is a pretext for housing developments. For some of these people, the premise of their support for the woodland is our call for changes that will bring improvements to habitat and biodiversity, and community involvement, **greater than that contained in the proposal originally presented** at September's Community Council meeting. Stands of (predominantly) Scots pine, spruce and cedar will not be aesthetically pleasing and have minimal value as habitat. As I stated in my 20/11/24 email, '*whilst approval for our response and agreement for us to discuss the proposal with you has been gained, it comes with caution and an expectation that you will give all of the requests contained in our response serious consideration in order that we can show these claims to be real*'. Though you referred in the meeting Mactaggart & Mickel's intention to 'sympathetically' develop the

non-woodland areas in the future, this had not previously been stated to us and, consequently, the CPT.1, CPT.3 and CPT.4 shelter belts had felt disingenuous at best.

2. The path past Townend that joins with Kerrix Road is a South Ayrshire Core Path. Other local paths are part of the Local Paths Network but don't really help connect to the proposed woodland.
3. The attached notes refer to the different prospective benefits of continuous cover management. Whilst recognising much of our ultimate aims will be achieved by appropriate management intervention over the longer term (thinning, underplanting, etc.), we would still like the design to consider what can be done at the planting stage. I have been speaking with Peter Livingstone of Eadha Enterprises, which is a local (Lochwinnoch) organisation that specialises in Aspen. Their article and report about Aspen-Spruce mixed silviculture is an example of the sort of direction we would like to go in: <https://www.eadha.co.uk/what-we-do/specialist-tree-nursery/cell-grown-trees/aspen/aspen-woodlands/aspen-spruce-mixed-silviculture/>
4. No further comment
5. No further comment
6. Whilst the community involvement items you mention are indeed what we discussed, it seems appropriate for the community's relationship with the woodland to develop as the woodland matures. So, whilst recognising the importance of engaging with you in respect to the woodland's design and your application for the Forestry Scotland grant, from the community's point of view we want to have an ongoing dialogue with respect to both community involvement and habitat and biodiversity. Who the community engages with in the ensuing years about the woodland's management is important to us.

Regards,
Dave

David Houfe
Symington Community Council Vice-chair & Secretary

From: Andy Greathead <AGreathead@savills.com>
Sent: 06 December 2024 12:35
To: symingtoncc@hotmail.com <symingtoncc@hotmail.com>
Cc: Andy <Andy@walkerhineswoodlandservices.co.uk>
Subject: 06.12.24 Burnbrae Farm Woodland Creation proposals

David, Liz, Deborah

Many thanks for meeting with Andy Hines and myself on Wednesday. It was a really useful meeting and we took away the following points (plan attached):

1. While generally supportive as the woodland creation proposals enhance the current natural habitat and have the potential to provide a much needed off road walking route out of the village, Symington Community Council do not support woodland creation at the south east extension of compartment 1 and compartments 3 and 4 and see these as a precursor to future housing development.
2. Symington Community Council are keen to see pathways that join Symington village to the network of paths through the woodland creation area avoiding walking along the public road. These could potentially link to the existing core path network.
3. In the longer term, Symington Community Council are keen to see the maturing woodland managed under continuous cover forestry as opposed to a restructuring system of felling and replanting productive areas as they mature.
4. Symington Community Council would be keen to be involved in management of some of the internal hedges but assume that external roadside hedges will continue to be cut back by a contractor.
5. Symington Community Council would welcome the improvement of pathways including some surfaced sections for wheelchair users which could be grant funded under a Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) scheme administered by Scottish Forestry.
6. Symington Community Council would welcome community involvement in the woodland creation area in the form of walks, benches and interpretive signage providing information on the biodiversity and species within the woodland.

We discussed our draft woodland creation operational plan to be submitted to Scottish Forestry as part of the Forestry Grant Scheme application which includes:

Additional Features Beyond Grant Aid Support

The landowner is keen to cooperate and support the local community and after consultation with the Community Council the following items have been agreed. These features are not part of the grant aid funding, however, they show the genuine desire to work with the local community in order to create a woodland that is valued and well-used by local people.

- Establishing small plots of wild flowers, which will be tended by local people and allowed to spread into the adjacent woodland edges
- Installing bird and bat boxes, with opportunities for these to be made by local school children, Scouts group or community groups
- Incorporating a wider range of flowering trees and shrubs to support the local drive to create habitats suitable for pollinators

Thanks again for your interest and we will be able to provide an update in advance of the next Community Council on 21 January 2025.

Regards

Andy

Andy Greathead (MIC For)

Director

Rural



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