



Irish Forestry Unit Trust

Tonduff MU
By Abbeyleix, Co. Laois
MANAGEMENT PLAN
2023 – 2042
(Plan Period: 2023 -2027)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION, OWNERSHIP AND LANDUSE HISTORY.

Tonduff (MU) comprises 3 properties totalling ha 113.2ha. This MU is based on geographical location as all blocks are situated in southwest County Laois to the northwest and southeast of Abbeyleix. Prior to forest establishment, the primary land use was unimproved grassland, rough grazing, and blanket/cutaway bog. The properties are adjoined by commercial forest plantations and agricultural holdings comprising improved grassland and rough grazing.

Forest properties being reviewed:

1. Tonduff – 66.02ha. Established circa 1971 & 1984/85/86.

New properties to be added to the MU:

1. Knockardagur – 34.10ha. Established circa 1999.
2. Aghnacross – 13.03ha. Established circa 2000.

All forested land is owned by freehold title by the Irish Forestry Unit Trust (IForUT). Legal folios are held on file.

Elevation

- Tonduff – 100 metres to 85 metres.
- Knockardagur – 230 metres to 190 metres.
- Aghnacross – 230 metres to 205 metres.

Statutory Land Designations

There are no IForUT properties situated in a NPWS (National Parks & Wildlife Service) designated area with protected status.

Water/Fisheries Sensitivities:

The forest sites within the Tonduff MU are in the following catchment and sub-catchments:

- Nore Catchment
 - Nore_SC_040 sub catchment
 - Nore_SC_060 sub catchment

Margaritifera (Fresh Water Pearl Mussel)

- Tonduff, Knockardagur and Aghnacross are situated within the Nore Upper FWPM zone. IForUT will adhere to the Forest and Water Quality Guidelines - all ground

operations are to take all precautions and mitigation to avoid ground damage, siltation, or any pollution entering watercourses.

Old Woodland Sites (OWS):

There are no OWS/potential OWS situated in the Tonduff MU.

Archaeology/Historical/Cultural:

There are no features of archaeological, historical, and cultural significance situated in within the Tonduff MU which are marked on all operational maps and will be protected. These features are recorded on the 'Sites and Monuments Record' (<https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>).

The Forest Service gives advice on protection and outlines mitigation measures when IForUT applies for a license to carry out any harvesting operation in the vicinity of any monument. Also, as standard procedure, any old farmhouse/cottage or other buildings and stone walls/significant ditches are considered as more recent cultural heritage and are protected during harvesting and roading operations.

SOIL TYPES.

There are four soil types across the Tonduff MU Forest sites.

- Peat is the primary soil type within the MU with surface water gley, ground water gley, peaty gley, and lithosols (shallow soils) soils, and brown earths/brown podzolics also distributed across the forest sites.

SUMMARY OF THE LANDSCAPE VALUE OF THE FOREST.

Low Felling Impact with High Afforestation Sensitivity - All forest blocks are classed as low to moderate felling impact on the IForUT system due partly to the extensive forested landscape and small size of the IForUT holdings. Whenever felling licences are submitted the Forest Service will correspond with relevant local and statutory bodies to investigate any potential landscape sensitivities. The Forest Service Landscape Sensitivity classification areas, as defined for afforestation planning does not include the three properties which will require some sensitivity given to the restocking planning in this MU.

To address the potential landscape impact issues caused by future clearfelling, the felling plan (Map 6) has applied a significant coupe restructuring plan to reduce clearfell size and introduce coupe separation. The restructuring plan (Map 7) outlines future restructuring species which is limited to Sitka spruce and Norway spruce based on soil types and

management objectives. Biodiversity enhancement in Map 7 is focused on the creation of additional open ground and the expansion of broadleaf planting. Species choice is specifically matched to soil type and exposure.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES.

- 1) To maximise economic output from the forest at local and national level.
- 2) To manage FMU in accordance with the principals of the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and international benchmarks of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC).
- 3) To manage timber production in a sustainable way.
- 4) To maintain and enhance the landscape value of the forest.
- 5) To protect existing biodiversity and where opportunities arise enhance and further promote new biodiversity.
- 6) To manage forest activities with due regard to local, regional, and national stakeholder interests.
- 7) To promote continuous professional development at management level.

(IForUT's FSC licence code : FSC-C003194)

Summary of silvicultural systems to be used.

System	Conifers	Broadleaves
Clear fell	✓	
Selective fell		
Thinning to MTI	✓	
Line thinning only		
Non thin regime	✓	
Non intervention		✓
Natural regeneration		✓
Replanting	✓	✓
Other		

5 Year Monitoring Report Summary. **Tonduff MU**

	Objective	Was it achieved?	How was this information applied to 5-year Management Plan review?
1	Economic Return	Aghnacross and Knockardagur were 1st thinned in the past five years. Both properties may be 2nd thinned in the next plan period subject to crop stability and licencing. Four coupes were felled in Tonduff in the summer of 2023	Further thinning may be carried out on various sites across the FMU subject to crop stability and access. Clearfelling is planned within the next plan period.
2	Certification Standards	Certification standards and IForUT systems applied over plan period. Managers working off FMM	Continue as before and update FMM as required.
3	Timber production	Variable quality crop with variable YC overall. Timber production had been maximised through thinning where possible. There may be further thinning works across the FMU subject to access and crop stability.	Strong DBH growth in thinned crops and significant volume increment and the crop appears to be stable. There will be no clearfelling over the next 5-year period. Felling coupes have been designed to be as small as possible to minimise any potential landscape impacts. Felling coupes have also been separated out as much as possible to allow for time delays between felling coupes and to try to ensure that there is not a glut of felling in any five-year period. However, delaying felling or bringing felling forward any further would result in severe economic losses from either a too-small tree size or wind damage because of delaying felling beyond a critical top height.

4	Landscape	Two new landscape layers added to designations GIS layer. Forest Service layer taken off National Development plan for new planting and Landscape Unit appraisals based on Coillte LUs.	New landscape layer added to Sensitivities Map in MP. All properties classified as having Low sensitivity according to LU classification. All properties were classified as low in FS Sensitivity Category.
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5	Biodiversity Enhancement	<p>Biodiversity areas have been identified and classified across the FMU on IForUT's GIS system. There have been limited opportunities to enhance biodiversity as no felling and reforestation operations have taken place in this FMU, however, four coupes were felled in Tonduff in the summer of 2023 which will be replanted in accordance with reforestation standards and felling licence conditions during the 2023/24 planting season.</p>	<p>Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement will commence at the reforestation phase following the felling of the first rotation crops. Native broadleaves will be planted, and specific areas left unplanted to create a mixture of native woodland and open habitat. As per the new standard for Felling and Reforestation, there will be uninterrupted water/aquatic zone, habitat, archaeological, public road, and utilised building (i.e., dwelling houses) setbacks created where required, and native broadleaves and Scots pine planted where practicable.</p> <p>Planting setbacks from the local public road/forest road, watercourses/aquatic zones, neighbouring houses, and property boundaries will be created with several rows of native broadleaves planted between the setback and commercial crop.</p> <p>The enhancement and/or creation of biodiversity features will continue with all replanting operations as illustrated in the Long-Term Restructuring Plan for the Tonduff FMU.</p> <p>In terms of species of note in the FMU, there are numerous badger tracks across Tonduff and hare were also observed in the wood.</p>
6	Stakeholder	<p>General quiet locality. Good relationships with neighbours and RoW holders.</p>	<p>During plan review a more comprehensive stakeholder consultation has been conducted. See Stakeholder files.</p>

