



## Irish Forestry Unit Trust

<b>Oakley Park</b>
By Kinnitty, Co Offaly
<b>MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>
<b>2023 – 2042</b> <b>(Period 1: 2023-2027)</b>

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION, OWNERSHIP AND LANDUSE HISTORY.

Oakley Park Forest comprises of one block amounting to 47.3Ha. Norway spruce is the main planted species with small blocks of pure of SS and SP. Poor grazing with no cultivation prior to forestation.

This was initially established by [REDACTED] Ltd and then acquired by IForUT in early 1999.

### **Elevation**

Ranges between 86m and 100m

### **Statutory Land Designations**

To the south is the Island Fen SAC. This is an important habitat that has been positively incorporated into the Restructuring Plan.

### **Water/Fisheries Sensitivities:**

Oakley Park MU lies within the water catchments of Little Brosna and Nenagh

### **Margaritifera**

Oakley Park is not within any Margaritifera catchments.

### **Old Woodland Sites (OWS):**

There is 1ha of OWS/potential OWS in the Oakley Park MU. A reassessment was done on the area in January 2021 by an ecologist.

### **Archaeology/Historical/Cultural:**

There are numerous cultural features within the forest including a kiln, badger sett and earth banks within the Oakley Park MU.

## SOIL TYPES.

Soil types are mixed here. There are some areas of good mineral soil, peaty podzols and gley type soils, some of the site also has a pan under neath the top soil.

## SUMMARY OF THE LANDSCAPE VALUE OF THE FOREST.

**Landscape Classification.** Low landscape value due to low lying topography. General locality sparsely populated reducing the potential impact of the forest operations. Surrounding landscape mainly improved pasture but with neighbouring forestry and wetland fen .Felling conflict addressed between neighbouring [REDACTED] forestry but

delaying felling of Part 75075N 1 and part 75076I 1 to 2016 to separate against [REDACTED] adjacent 2009 felling.

To address the potential landscape impact issues the felling plan has applied a significant coupe restructuring sequence to introduce greater crop age structure.

Moderate landscape value due to its raised position on a sloping topography. General locality sparsely populated reducing the potential impact of the forest. Surrounding landscape mainly poor hill grazing and mature plantation forestry.

### **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.

(IForUTs FSC licence code: FSC-C003194)

**Summary of silvicultural systems to be used.**

<b>System</b>	<b>Conifers</b>	<b>Broadleaves</b>
Clear fell	✓	
Selective fell		
Thinning to MTI (potnl)	✓	
Line thinning only		
Non thin regime	✓	
Non intervention		✓
Natural regeneration		✓
Replanting	✓	✓
Other		

## 5 Year Monitoring Report Summary Oakley Park

	Objective	Was it achieved?	How this information was applied to 5 year Management Plan review?
1	Economic Return	This site was thinned 3 times the most recent being carried out in early 2015, improving crop quality and potential future revenues.	No significant changes to plan for next five year period. There had been plans previously to thin this property a 4 <sup>th</sup> time but this has been changed as there are concerns over crop stability.
2	Certification Standards	Certification Standards and IForUT systems applied over plan period. Managers working off FMM	Certification standards and IForUT systems applied over plan period. Managers working off FMM. Continue as before and update FMM as required.
3	Timber production	Thinned three times, good volume increment and DBH growth.	As mentioned above, thinning cycles and crop stability were reviewed and it was decided that a 4 <sup>th</sup> thinning would be risky as storm occurrences are becoming more common. Windthrow will greatly devalue the crop. First clearfell planned for 2022 has been postponed until 2023 due to changes in the market. This is the final clearfell in the property
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 Map added to MP. New felling coupe design added to MP which keeps coupes separated. Classified as having low landscape sensitivity.

5	Biodiversity Enhancement	Existing biodiversity very limited to thinned monoculture. Limited hedgerows present that could be thinned out along.	Restructuring plan addresses biodiversity requirements. Main opportunities for enhancement will occur after clearfell stage with more Broadleaf planting being planned and increased open spaces being introduced post clearfell. The sitka spruce which was replanted following the most recent clearfell has failed due to two seasons of late spring frost and poor soil. It is currently planned that this will be replanted again with mixed broadleaves. Open space and biodiversity will increase over the next rotation due to changes in the required national standards. These standards will require increased broadleaves and openspace alongside county roads and dwelling houses at restocking stage. Presence of squirrel had been noted on this property in 2022 and badger setts are present under some of the Beech. There is yew both mature and regeneration in this forest. There is an area of Long Term retention planned to the back of the site to facilitate the yew regeneration
6	Stakeholder	Forest has low level local stakeholder relationships.	During plan review, conducted a more comprehensive stakeholder consultation has been completed. Regional press/ local community groups and local statutory bodies consulted. See stakeholder folder
7	Professional Development	managed. Forest Managers are members of SIF and attend lectures and field days as part of continuous professional development.	Retendering of whole portfolio into regional management units in 2010 to simplify overall forest level management and Certification compliance. New centralised network server  is being used for managing FMM and IForUT database.
8	Forward Planning	Continue with current standards and work practices and review on a continuous basis to implement industry best practice.	Carry out reviews of Forest Management Manual and introduce manager training and updating of best practice.