



Irish Forestry Unit Trust

New West Westmeath MU

By Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

MANAGEMENT PLAN

2023 – 2042

(Plan Period: 2023 -2027)

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------|---------------------|-------------|
| Preparation Date: | 2023 | Prepared by: | Kevin Reidy |
|--------------------------|------|---------------------|-------------|

GENERAL INTRODUCTION, OWNERSHIP AND LANDUSE HISTORY.

New West Westmeath (MU) comprises 6 properties totalling 211.7ha. This MU is based on geographical location as all blocks are situated in west County Westmeath to the north and west of Mullingar. Prior to forest establishment, the primary land use was unimproved grassland and rough grazing. The properties are adjoined by commercial forest plantations and agricultural holdings comprised of improved grassland and rough grazing.

New properties to be added to the MU:

1. Lackan – 23.97ha. Established circa 1991.
2. Corry – 22.39ha. Established circa 2000.

3. Lackan – 19.76ha. Established circa 1995.
4. Rathskeagh Upper – 13.05ha. Established circa 2021.
5. Taghmon – 39.33ha. Established circa 1996/2021.
6. Taghmon 2 – 93.23ha. Established circa 1994

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

Elevation

- Lackan – 80 metres to 60 metres.
- Corry – 65 metres to 55 metres.
- Lackan – 80 metres to 60 metres.
- Rathskeagh Upper – 90 metres to 80 metres.
- Taghmon – 120 metres to 60 metres.
- Taghmon 2 – 120 metres to 60 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 New West Westmeath MU are in the following catchment and sub-catchments:

- Upper Shannon Catchment
 - Inny[Shannon]_SC_030 sub catchment
 - Inny[Shannon]_SC_050 sub catchment
 - Inny[Shannon]_SC_070 sub catchment

Margaritifera (Fresh Water Pearl Mussel)

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.

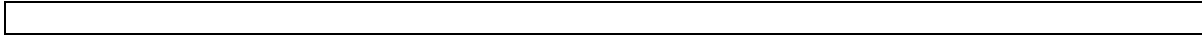
Old Woodland Sites (OWS):

There are no OWS/potential OWS situated in the New West Westmeath MU.

Archaeology/Historical/Cultural:

There are three features of archaeological, historical, and cultural significance situated in Drumbee in the New West Westmeath MU and 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 give advice on protection and outline mitigation measures when IForUT apply for a licence 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 three soil types across the New West Westmeath MU Forest sites.

- Brown earth is the primary soil type within the MU with surface water gley, and peat soils 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 Moderate Landscape Sensitivity class, as defined for afforestation planning covers the three upland 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 has applied a significant coupe restructuring plan to reduce clearfell size and introduce coupe separation. Long-term restructuring plan outlines future restructuring species which is limited to Sitka spruce and Norway spruce based on soil types and management objectives. Biodiversity enhancement in is focused on the creation of additional open ground and

expansion of broadleaf planting. Species choice being 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. New West Westmeath MU

| | Objective | Was it achieved? | How was this information applied to 5-year Management Plan review? |
|---|-------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Economic Return | Taghmon, Taghmon 2 and Lackan were 1 st and 2 nd thinned in the past five years. Taghmon, Taghmon 2 and Lackan may be thinned in the next plan period subject to crop stability and licencing. | Further thinning may be carried out on various sites across the FMU subject to crop stability and access. No clearfelling is planned within the next plan period as all properties were planted between 1994 and 2021. One site – Rathskeagh Upper – was planted in 2021 under the Forest Service afforestation scheme. |
| 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 | Decent quality crops with high 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 Landscape Character Assessment Map in MP. Corry and Rathskeagh Upper are classified as having Low sensitivity while Lackan and Taghmon, and Taghmon 2 are classified as having Moderate sensitivity according to LU classification. Rathskeagh Upper, Lackan, Taghmon classified as Moderate Sensitivity according to the FS classification. An area in the north part of Lackan and most of Taghmon 2 fall into the High Sensitivity classification. |
|---|-----------|---|--|

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|
| 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, three sites within the MU – were 1st/2nd thinned in the past five years.</p> | <p>Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement will continue to occur 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>Under the Forest Service afforestation scheme Rathskeagh Upper was planted in 2021. Planting setbacks from the local public road/forest road, watercourses/aquatic zones, neighbouring houses, and property boundaries were created with several rows of native broadleaves planted between the setback and commercial crop. The enhancement and/or creation of biodiversity features will continue with all replanting operations as illustrated in the Long-Term Restructuring Plan for the New West Westmeath FMU.</p> <p>In terms of species of note in the FMU, there are no records.</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> |
| 7 | Professional Development | <p>██████████ managed. Forest Managers are members of SIF and attend lectures and field days as part of continuous professional development.</p> | <p>Retendering of whole portfolio into regional management units in 2010 to simplify overall forest level management and Certification compliance. New centralised network server ██████████ has been introduced for managing FMM and IForUT database.</p> |

| | | | |
|---|------------------|--|---|
| 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. |
|---|------------------|--|---|