



Irish Forestry Unit Trust

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

GENERAL INTRODUCTION, OWNERSHIP AND LANDUSE HISTORY.

Camross Management Unit (MU) comprises 4 properties totalling 154.40ha. This MU is based on geographical location as all blocks are situated in west County Laois. 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.

Forest properties being reviewed:

1. Glenconra – 21.57ha. Established circa 1991.
2. Ballinrally – 104.54ha. Established circa 1987.
3. Rossdorragha – 11.24ha. Established circa 1990.
4. Derrylahan – 17.07ha. Established circa 1994/1997/2001.

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

Elevation

- Glenconra – 235 metres to 175 metres.
- Ballinrally – 250 metres to 160 metres.
- Rossdorragha – 200 metres to 165 metres.
- Derrylahan – 145 metres to 130 metres.

Statutory Land Designations

There are three IForUT properties situated in a NPWS (National Parks & Wildlife Service) designated area with protected status.

Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (004160)

- Glenconra, Ballinrally and Rossdorragha are situated in the SPA.

Water/Fisheries Sensitivities:

The forest sites within the Camross MU are in the following catchments and sub catchments:

- Nore Catchment
 - Nore_SC_010 sub catchment
 - Nore_SC_010 sub catchment

Margaritifera (Fresh Water Pearl Mussel)

- The four properties in the MU are situated within the Nore Upper FWPM zone.

These are all catchments with previous records of Margaritifera, but status is currently unknown.

The Camross MU is within the Nore River Catchment in the South-eastern River Basin District. 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 is an OWS/potential OWS situated in Camross Forest in the New Camross MU.

Archaeology/Historical/Cultural:

There are no features of archaeological, historical and cultural significance situated within the properties in the New Camross MU but any features in adjoining properties are marked on all operational maps and will be protected as such. 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 four soil types across the New Camross MU Forest sites.

- Ground water gley is the primary soil type within the MU with podzol, brown podzol, and brown earth 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 based on soil types and management objectives. Biodiversity enhancement 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 (Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification)).
- 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 Camross MU**

	Objective	Was it achieved?	How was this information applied to 5-year Management Plan review?
1	Economic Return	All properties within the MU have been thinned at least twice and 3 times in some cases. Glenconra, Ballinrally, and Derrylahan were thinned within the planning period. Derrylahan may be thinned in the next plan period subject to licencing. Very Productive MU.	Thinning volumes removed have been below production forecasting to maintain crop stability, but crops carry higher standing volumes. Further thinning is expected between 2023 – 2027 but only in Derrylahan forest. Thinning in other properties will not be carried out as risk of windblow is high and harvesting of windblown timber will diminish economic return.
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 Sensitivities Map in MP. Classified as having Medium according to LU classification and High in FS classification. Derrylahan is low landscape sensitivity. Ballinrally has had several clearfells in quick succession and this trend will continue going forward. This is because the timber is in danger of becoming oversized and too tall and thus – losing economic value and increasing risk of windthrow.
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5	Biodiversity Enhancement	<p>Biodiversity areas have been identified and classified across the FMU on IForUT's GIS system. As crops are entering stages of felling and restocking, increased broadleaves and open spaces are being created. Coupes in Ballinrally and Glenconra were felled and replanted in the two previous plan periods, 2014-2018 and 2018-2022. Rosdorraha was felled in 2022 and replanted spring/summer 2023.</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>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 Camross FMU.</p> <p>In terms of species of note in the FMU, buzzard, badger and red squirrel were observed and recorded in Ballinrally.</p> <p>There is an area of ash – infected with Chalara – in Glenconra which is planted with other species. This mixed species area will be managed as an LTR. In the event of removal of the ash native broadleaves will be planted to replace the ash.</p>
6	Stakeholder	<p>General a quiet locality. Little interaction with neighbours. The timber haulage route has specifically minimised local conflict.</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 FSC compliance. New centralised network server ████████ has been introduced for managing FMM and IForUT database.</p>
8	Forward Planning	<p>Continue with current standards and work practices and review on a continuous basis to implement industry best practice.</p>	<p>Carry out reviews of Forest Management Manual and introduce manager training and updating of best practice.</p>