

Dear Ceredigion Local Nature Partnership,

Forest Management Plan, Pencoedtop, Ffostrasol

This document is a summary of a Forest Management Plan (FMP) that is being produced for Tricorn-Turret Wood, commonly also known as Pencoedtop. The FMP takes a long view of the management intentions for the site and includes regulatory permission for tree felling in the first 5 years; it will also enable us to access woodland management grants from Welsh Government. The site is owned by Bob Jacques and family.

Our long-term vision is to maximise biodiversity through the restoration of the site to a mosaic of characteristic native broadleaved woodland with open areas made up of rides, glades and areas of dry and wet heath (*rhos*). This will be achieved by the management objectives which are:

- Removal of most of the conifer trees, leaving the native broadleaves.
- Establishment of a traditional coppice rotation, where small areas of native broadleaved tree species are cut to the ground and regrown on a regular cycle.
- Restoration and maintenance of open areas within the wood, including areas of heathland, and rides and glades.
- Identification of opportunities for, and delivery of, areas of rewetting to create wet heath habitats.
- Enhancement and maintenance of site as a community and educational asset.
- We will also do some limited additional tree and wild-flower planting.

The site was originally afforested as a conifer plantation in the 1960s on what OS maps show was previously wet heath and rough grazing (*rhos*). It is located in southern Ceredigion approximately 1 mile (1.5km) to the north of Ffostrasol; the centre of the site is at NGR SN 371 493. Pencoedtop covers 9 hectares (22 acres) of gently sloping land at c.300m above sea level, it was formerly a compartment of a larger woodland called Coed Garn-Wen or Pengaer woods (the entire site comprises approximately 40 ha.)

At the time of planting, the site was artificially drained with forestry ditches and cross drains and planted with coniferous trees (Sitka spruce and Lodgepole pine). It has since gone through a full cycle of planting and felling, with original crop clearfelled in 2005. It was subsequently replanted with mixed native broadleaves (oak, birch, rowan, holly, alder) and sold off in parcels to private owners.

Since then, there has been considerable Sitka spruce regeneration, and some Lodgepole pine, Japanese larch and Caucasian fir, as well as many self-seeded grey and eared willows. The current structure of mixed planted broadleaves supplemented by naturally regenerating exotic conifers and willows has produced a highly diverse woodland, with closed canopy Sitka spruce and fairly open broadleaved woodland across the majority of the site. Approximately 50% of the site shows heathland vegetation (dry heath to the north of the site with boggy vegetation to the SE with Sphagnum species).

In very simple terms, the operational plans for the site are:

- for approximately 95% the conifers to be removed (for which a felling licence has been approved) in all compartments apart from 2a,

- for the remaining broadleaves to be managed as coppice with standards (a form of forest management involving the production of lots of small round wood on a regular (around 20-year) cycle, along with uncut larger trees – standards),
- For areas without trees (glades, rides, and ride edges) in compartments 1, 2b and 2c, to be maintained as such through a mixture of mechanical means and grazing by livestock,
- for wetter areas, predominantly in compartment 2c and the southern end of 2b, to be allowed to return to a boggy state through blocking some of the artificial drains from the 1960s and creating scrapes and small pools,
- and for the main soil track between compartments 1 and 2 to be upgraded to an all-weather track.

The FMP is being produced with the support of funding from the Welsh Government and the Heritage Fund through The Woodland Investment Grant (TWIG). Once the plan has been finalised and approved by Natural Resources Wales's woodland permitting team, we will be able to apply for inclusion in the National Forest for Wales, as well as further help to finance some of the planned work, such as upgrades to forest tracks, mechanised ride and open-ground mowing for conservation, creation of in-ditch wetlands, and the production of a wildfire management plan.

The attached map shows the location and extent of the site as well as the compartment layout.

Public consultation is an important part of forest management planning, and we want to engage with our neighbours, statutory consultees, and the local community. We would be very grateful if you were able to respond to our proposal – even if simply to say that you have no comment to make – within 14 days, this can be in writing, by email, text, phone or in person.

Yours sincerely,

Duncan Winton (Forestry consultant)

Bob Jacques (owner/manager)

If you have any comments or questions about our plan or would like any more detail about our proposal, then please contact: Bob Jacques, email pencoedtop@gmail.com, phone 07903 208559.

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