

DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Attadale Estate – See Lochalsh Deer Management Group Deer Management Plan 2016-2020

The estate are currently compiling a 20year Long Term Forest Plan (LTFP). As part of the public consultation process Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Forestry Commission (FC) have asked for an update to the Deer Management Plan (DMP) to assess the impact the LTFP proposals will have on the local deer population.

The estate propose to fell compartments 16 and 18 within the first 5 year phase of the LTFP. This equates to 345ha of mixed commercial woodland. It is proposed to fell Cmpt 16 in spring/summer of 2018 and Cmpt 18 in spring /summer 2019. (See Felling Proposal Map). These compartments were planted in the 1960's, the fences have gradually been removed over the past 20 years leaving them open to deer.

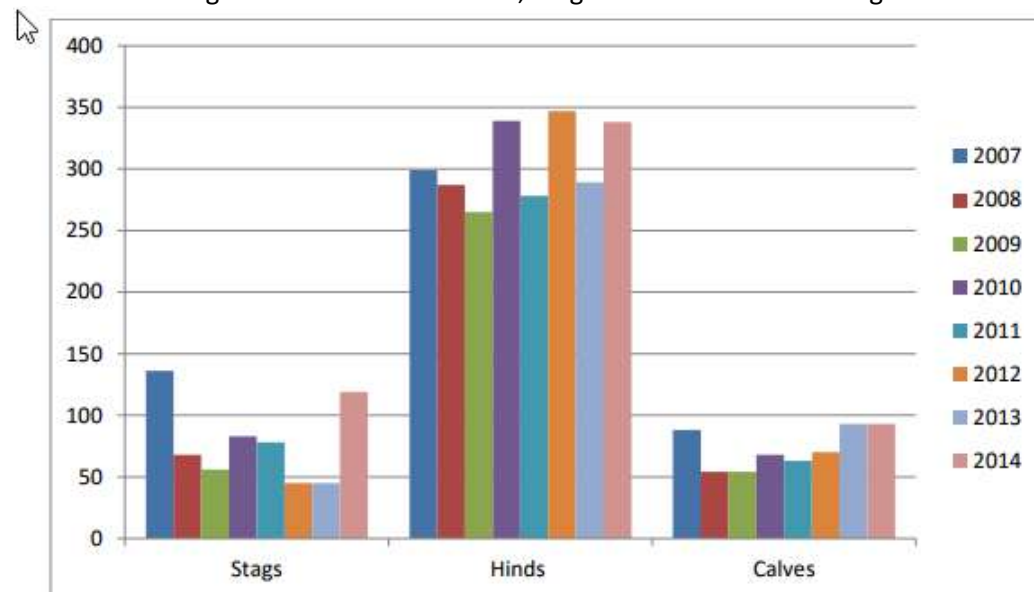
The estate are also creating 4 new native woodlands at Glen Ling, Blackwater, NNR Restructuring and CPI Expansion (see attached Woodland creation Map). This will enclose approx. 286ha. Glen Ling is to be fenced and planted in 2018, Blackwater in 2019, CPI Expansion in 2020 and the NNR restructuring during the restocking of cmpts 16 and 18 in 2021.

Current Deer Populations

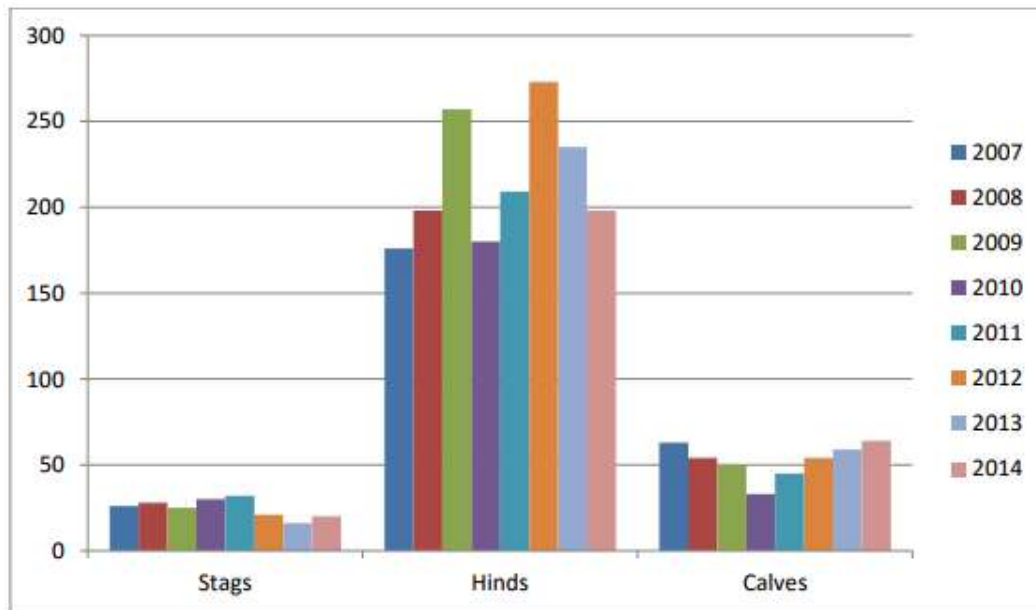
1. Resident Deer

The principal species present on the Estate are Red deer. The estate has carried out counts for the last 15 years.

The main holding areas are the Far Corries, Lurg Mhor and Beinn Dronaig.



Far Corries and Calavie boat summer count



Beinn Dronaig summer count

Year	STAGS	HINDS	CALVES	TOTAL
2007	64(8)	89(1)	45(1)	208
2008	70(25)	58	24	177
2009	76(13)	89	45	223
2010	63(2)	58	38	161
2011	65(3)	51	22	141
2012	60(6)	66(3)	38(3)	176
2013	69(8)	68(1)	27	173
2014	71(15)	79	36	201

Deer cull figures.

In the last SNH count in March 2016 approx. 47 deer were noted within Cmpts 16, 18 and the surrounding area.

Woodland deer density indicators

The following table gives the approximate deer densities on the Estate:

Evidence	4-8 Low Density	8-15 Medium Density	15+ High Density
Tracks	Difficult to find deer slot marks or defined paths	Defined paths slot marks easy to find in areas of soft ground	Many well defined tracks and paths often black and constant use
	X		
Dung	Difficult to find evidence with just the odd isolated pellet group	Pellet groups relatively easy to find, particularly on woodland edges and good feeding areas	Pellet groups very easy to find. Highly concentrated on favoured feed areas.
	X		
Browsing of Vegetation	Natural regeneration of broad-leaved trees taking place with little damage to current years incremental growth	Broad-leaved saplings present but showing significant damage	No seedlings growing above dominant vegetation height. Often well defined browse lines on established shrubs and plants
	X		

Future Deer Populations

Future Red deer populations are not expected to change within the timescale of the forest plan. Numbers will be managed so as not to cause adverse pressure on all woodlands within Attadale Estate.

Deer Management

The estate have begun a programme of culling within cmpts 16 and 18 to reduce the numbers in preparation for the felling and restocking. In 2016 25 hinds were shot in or around cmpts 16 and 18 and a further 25 hinds in 2017. This will be repeated in spring of 2018 prior to the first stage of the felling commencing in April/May 2018. A spring count will be done in March 2019 prior to felling to assess the numbers within Compartment 18.

1. Fencing

It is thought that pressure from the Red deer population will come from deer within Attadale Estate and surrounding ownerships including Commercial Forests belonging to the Forestry Commission and the neighbouring Inverinate Estate. It is accepted that the re-establishment of cmpts 16 and 18 and the new woodland creation schemes would be in danger of severe damage from deer if it were not fenced until established, particularly as it is to be planted predominantly with Scots pine and native broadleaves which are sensitive to browsing.

The restocking of cmpts 16 and 18 will be carried out in 2021, a new fence will be erected to enclose cmpts 16, 17 and 18 as one block. This will include the area of NNR Restructuring as identified on the Woodland Creation map, protecting the area of designated Caledonian Pinewood within cmpt 17. Enclosing an area of 510ha.

Current Forestry Commission (FC) policy (Guidance Note 11) is to support the use of fencing only where there is no reasonable alternative.

Deer Management will follow Best Practice guidance and will aim for a 'no deer policy' within the woodlands until trees are established and at least within the first 10-15yr.

To compensate for the loss of cover/forage within Cmpts 16 and 18, Cmpts 30,31,33,34 will gradually be opened up over the next 5 years. The existing fence lines will be dropped in sections identified by the estate staff to allow gradual incursion. A baseline regeneration survey has been carried out within these cmpts which has shown the sites to have significant woodland cover to support a healthy deer population. The total area within these sites is approx. 28ha. Although this is significantly less than the felling areas in 16 and 18, the sites will provide a better quality cover and forage environment.

2. Forest Design

The design of the new native woodlands at Blackwater, Glen Ling, NNR Restructuring and CPI Expansion have taken account of the need for movement of deer between the neighbouring estates. The Glen Ling scheme includes 2 large deer passes that have been created along the River Ling as requested by Inverinate Estate. The internal woodland design has included open habitat for deer control, to provide suitable sight-lines and opportunities for culling as the woodland establishes across the site and matures. These locations are associated primarily with burnsidings and other areas of open ground on the upper slopes of the hill.

3. Access Tracks

Access is needed for ATV quad bikes and where possible to allow for deer control. The estate are currently installing 3 hydro schemes across the estate, along with significant new road infrastructure. These access tracks will be open to estate staff to ensure ATV and pedestrian access is maintained.

4. Control Methods

In the establishment phase of the woodland all deer found within the enclosures will be removed immediately or shot as seen throughout the year.

5. Controller

The controller for the enclosures will be the Head Keeper (Tom Watson) and owners of Attadale Estate. The Estate will liaise with Galbraith with regard to fence and habitat monitoring and assessing deer populations.

6. Required Outcomes

The objective of the controller in consultation with the site Forest Manager will be to manage the deer to ensure that they do not prevent the successful establishment of the proposed

woodlands, and that their numbers remain in balance with the created habitats. This will be undertaken in a safe and humane manner to comply with current standards and guidelines.

The new fences around cmpts 16 and 18, Glen Ling, Blackwater, NNR Restructuring and CPI Expansion will be walked monthly by estate staff or Galbraith, and more frequently in times of snow and bad weather, to ascertain if there is any pressure from deer on the fence. Pressure will be evidenced by tracking undermining the fence. If any significant tracking occurs the population density will be reviewed.

The welfare of any displaced deer will be monitored and if necessary actions taken to avoid any welfare issues.

7. Permissions

All necessary permissions and licences will be in place prior to any culling occurring.

8. Monitoring

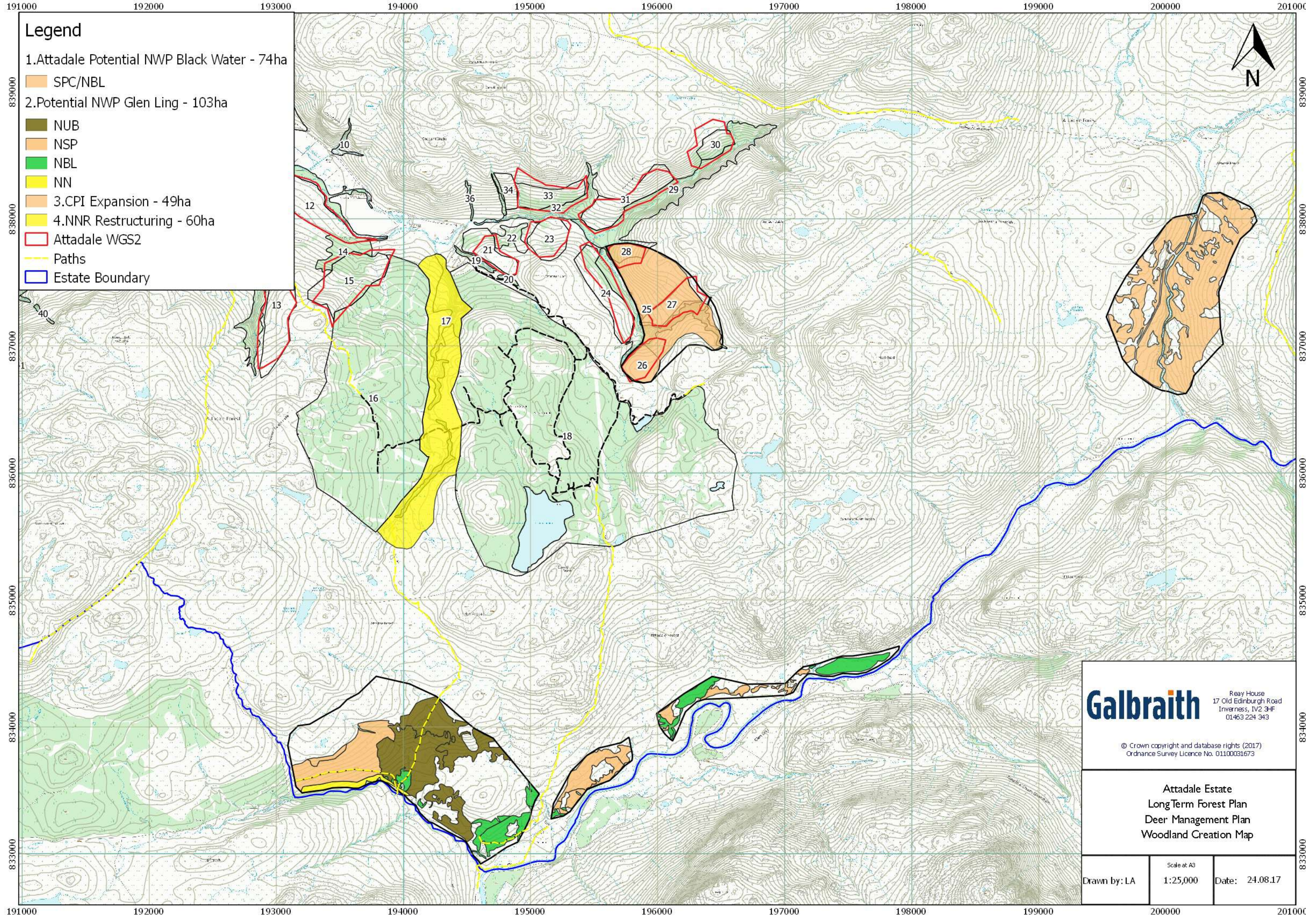
The planted areas within Glen Ling, Blackwater, NNR Restructuring, CPI Expansion and cmpts 16 and 18 will be monitored monthly over the initial most sensitive phase. Cmpts 30, 31, 33 and 34 will be surveyed annually to assess the impact the deer will have on the vegetation and woodland habitat. Fixed plots will be located throughout Cmpts 30,31,33 and 34 to allow damage levels to be monitored with control measures taken promptly as appropriate.

9. Neighbours

All march fence neighbours have been contacted about this project. All neighbours will be given an opportunity to comment on the proposal through the consultation process.

10. Review

This plan will be reviewed annually by Galbraith and Attadale Estate and any necessary amendments made.



Legend

- 1.Attadale Potential NWP Black Water - 74ha
- 2.Potential NWP Glen Ling - 103ha
- 3.CPI Expansion - 49ha
- 4.NNR Restructuring - 60ha
- Attadale WGS2
- Paths
- Estate Boundary

- SPC/NBL
- NUB
- NSP
- NBL
- NN

Galbraith

Reay House
17 Old Edinburgh Road
Inverness, IV2 3HF
01463 224 343

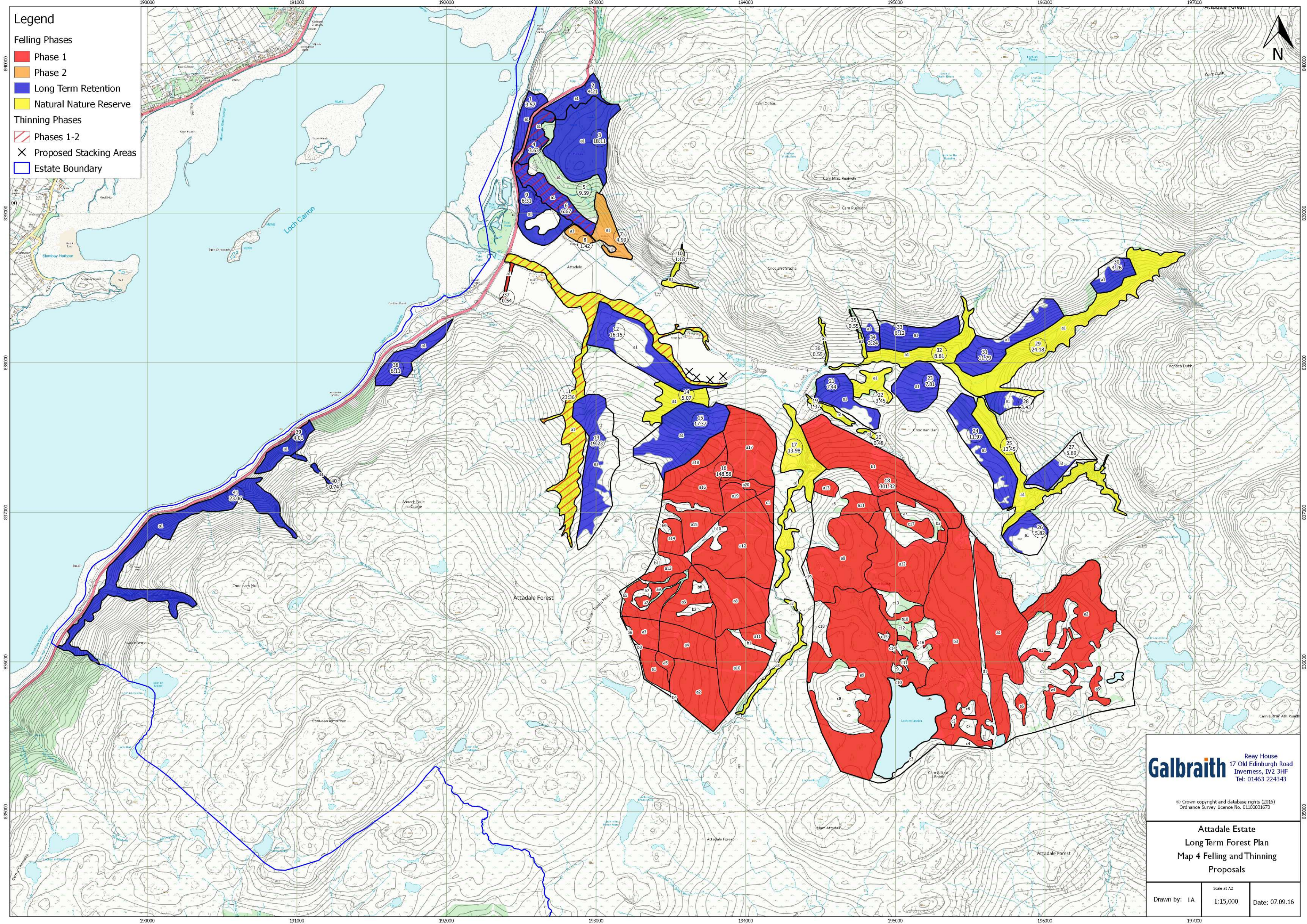
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Attadale Estate
Long Term Forest Plan
Deer Management Plan
Woodland Creation Map

Drawn by: LA

Scale at A3
1:25,000

Date: 24.08.17



Legend

Felling Phases

- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Long Term Retention
- Natural Nature Reserve

Thinning Phases

- Phases 1-2
- Proposed Stacking Areas
- Estate Boundary



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Attadale Estate
Long Term Forest Plan
Map 4 Felling and Thinning
Proposals

Drawn by: LA

Scale at A2
1:15,000

Date: 07.09.16