

Assessment & implications of the 2010-2015 Newborough Forest Management Plan - Proposed areas of clearfelling and underplanting

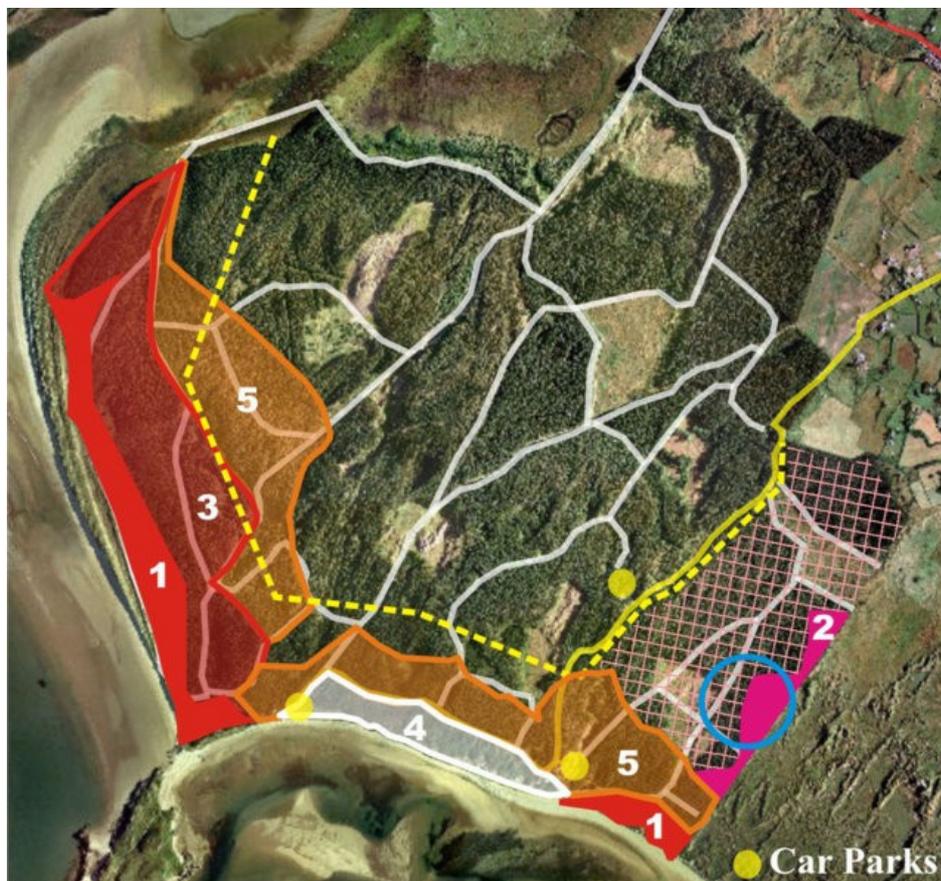
These proposals show the conflict which exists between the former Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) wish to create mobile sand dunes & what is in the greater public's & tourism's best interests, keeping this shelter belt of trees and the stability they provide. The EU Habitats Directive makes it clear that 'economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics' must be taken into account. However there is no evidence that these matters have been properly considered in forming their recommendations. They have been selective in their interpretation of the Directive.

The proposal is to clear fell Zone 1 and very possibly Zones 3 & 4 after the plan is reviewed. This is felling the very areas of the forest which allow visitors to appreciate our wild coastal heritage in all weather conditions, providing shelter from wind & rain, allowing access in our often poor weather conditions, & providing shade in the summer.

In addition these trees form a very important shelter belt for the rest of the forest. Without this shelter-belt, significant numbers of the previously sheltered trees at the edge of the remaining forest would soon fall in the winter storms. Also the mobile sand dunes created would threaten access roads & car parks with inundation by sand, making access to the car parks & Llandwyn Island difficult if not impossible.

Given the importance of these areas of the forest to the public & for tourism generally, they should need to have very good reasons indeed to justify their proposals, not the tenuous arguments that are currently being used. The justification is that 'this is to restore a natural dune zonation behind the shoreline and address the perceived impacts of the forest on the hydrology of the designated habitats'.

For more information about this see: [Assessment review.pdf](#)



Zone	Action during 5 year Plan period	Possible action after Plan is reviewed
	* Clearfell and partial destumping, to restore to mobile dunes	
	* Clearfell realignment of forest boundary with the warren (indicative felling edge)	
	* Low-intervention. Monitor and review over the plan period	Clearfelling of entire area should they decide sand dune remobilisation is insufficient.
	Natural processes to be allowed to occur. Area of limited intervention.	Clearfelling of entire area should they decide sand dune remobilisation is insufficient.
	Forest protection. Underplant to create an Atlantic dune woodland.	* Note - The exact boundaries of Zone 5 may be redefined once the Science Review has concluded.
	* proposed area of hydrological experiment	
	Area which could be at risk of Clearfelling depending on the results of hydrological experiment	
	approx 500 metres from forest edge, as recommended in CCW's TSG FDP assessment document.	
*	Subject to the conclusion of the Science Review 2010	

2010-2015 Newborough Forest Management Plan - the reality and implications of the plan

Zone 1:

Clearfelling and partial stump removal; 'Encourage natural processes'.

Actually the unnecessary and unjustified creation of more sand dunes at the expense of the forest; forest that currently provides shelter on the windward, weather side of the forest allowing visitors to appreciate the sea and our coastal heritage in all weathers. These trees also act as an important shelter belt for the rest of the forest protecting the trees further inland from the worst of the wind/weather and salt spray.

Zone 2:

Realignment of the forest boundary with the Warren.

This has been justified on the basis of 'aesthetics' - straight lines are supposedly unwelcome. The issue was discussed in the liaison partnership consultation but it was made clear during that process that any realignment could not be allowed to be 'felling by stealth'. Since it would be illegal for compensatory planting on the Warren the realignment could only have ever been a permanent loss of forest and therefore unacceptable to the public. It was always and could only have been 'felling by stealth'.

Zone 3 & 4:

Low intervention/limited intervention. Natural processes to be allowed to occur/monitor and review over the plan period.

Effectively non-management - no thinning and replanting to improve age structure and no underplanting to try and create a robust wind/weather resistant forest boundary. Trees in zones 3 have been sheltered by zone 1 from the worst of the prevailing wind/weather and salt spray. They have limited wind resistance and salt tolerance. Clearfelling of zone 1 newly exposes these trees to the effects of wind, weather and salt spray and will lead to decimation from windthrow and salt intolerance. A failure to improve the age structure will lead to further loss of trees. These zones are to be effectively left to die and/or be destroyed by wind/weather and salt spray.

Zone 5:

Forest protection. Underplant to create Atlantic dune woodland.

This underplanting zone, which may be changed, shows where they believe the forest boundary will ultimately be once zones 3 & 4 have been effectively destroyed by exposure and non-management. Call it malign neglect. The FMP is basically CCW's original plan to remove the forest until it is at least 500m from the current forest/beach(dune) boundary. The plan is an attempt to achieve their objectives by stealth rather than immediate clearfelling in the face of widespread public opposition.

Forest/Warren boundary 'hydrological experiment':

The extent and position of any clearfelling for a hydrological experiment has not been defined. It is to be based on sound science and limited to felling necessary to achieve the research aims. It is also to be decided by consultation with both independent scientists from the Review and CEH & CCW. CEH's earlier review of Newborough Warren hydrology suggested a 4-5 hectare experimental felling. It is also to be preceded by a suitable period of hydrological measurements that will allow a well defined baseline condition to be established before any felling takes place.

See pages 26-28 of the 2010-2015 NEWBOROUGH FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN which is available here:

<http://www.savenewboroughforest.org.uk/20101201NewboroughForestManagementPlanFINALv10.pdf>

Also CCW's TSG FDP assessment document is here:

[http://www.savenewboroughforest.org.uk/TSG FDP response December 2008 final draft HL.pdf](http://www.savenewboroughforest.org.uk/TSG_FDP_response_December_2008_final_draft_HL.pdf)