



## Scotland's Garden & Landscape Heritage

FAO: Peter Boyle  
Scottish Forestry  
South Scotland Conservancy  
Greystone Park  
55/57 Moffat Road  
Dumfries  
DG1 1NP

16 December 2023

By email only: [ScottishForestry@scottishforestry-casebook.oncreate.app](mailto:ScottishForestry@scottishforestry-casebook.oncreate.app)

Dear Mr Boyle,

### **Case Ref: SF Consultation Request for Felling Permission: Ref: FPA-11133 - Garlieston Home Farm**

Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage is grateful to be included in the above Felling Permission consultation.

We have studied the Garlieston Home Farm felling permission application details and accompanying felling and restocking map figures and note that the woodlands all lie within the Galloway House designed landscape. Galloway House is included in Historic Environment Scotland's Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland Ref. GDL00185 and is therefore considered to be of national significance.

The woodlands to be felled have long been woodlands, and we understand were planted as part of the designed landscape created by the 7<sup>th</sup> Early of Galloway in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the influence of 'Capability' Brown and Sir John Clerk of Pencuik. The Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL) citation states that "*In 1791, the Statistical Accounts recorded that Galloway House 'forms part of a landscape truly beautiful and grand' and that the Earl planted over 200,000 trees a year*".

We note that the GDL citation, Woodlands section states that "*There are several large blocks of woodland within the park walls. Their present layout has hardly changed since the 2nd edition OS plan of 1898. The size of many of the large beech and oak suggests that they could*

## Scotland's Garden & Landscape Heritage

Page 2

*have been planted in the late 18th century but most of the woodlands were replanted in the 1950s and 60s. The woods have been replanted mainly with hardwoods using conifers, particularly spruce, as a nurse crop”.*

This statement recognises that there has been replanting within these woodland blocks, but that ancient trees (beech and oak are mentioned) exist through the woodlands. We therefore consider that unless surveys demonstrate that there are no ancient trees within compartments 1, 2 and 3, clear felling will not be appropriate given the need to identify, protect and preserve these ancient trees which form part of the heritage of the GDL.

Compartments 1, 2 and 3 frame a key view from Garlieston House inland to the west (and from the B7004 looking towards the House where the masonry wall is replaced by railing). As such, the character of the vista would be much altered by clear felling. Compartments 1 and 3 also provide a backdrop to views of the western parkland from the house, with Compartment 1 also forming a shelterbelt to the western edge of the GDL. We would therefore suggest that further survey information be provided, to identify older trees within these compartments, and to consider selected felling.

Given the longevity of compartments 1, 2 and 3 as part of the designed landscape, we consider that leaving these areas for natural regeneration will downgrade the quality of the nationally important designed landscape and is a missed opportunity for recreating woodland that is more in keeping with the intended character laid out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. We recommend that replanting using suitable species should be carried out for those areas felled, particularly around the compartment perimeters, even if some internal areas were left for natural regeneration.

Compartments 4 and 5 are proposed for thinning. Again, we note the potential for ancient trees within these long-established woodland areas and the need for identification of these, but consider that careful thinning of younger or non-native trees will enhance the structure of the woodlands.

We would therefore recommend that further information is provided relating to a survey of older trees within the compartments, and more detailed consideration of clear-fell proposals.

Importantly, we do not consider that natural regeneration is a suitable approach to restoring the woodlands which form an intrinsic part of the designed landscape at Galloway House.

Yours sincerely,

Beatrice Dower, BSc (Hons), MSc, MLA, CMLI  
Conservation Consultant  
Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage [conservation@sghl.org](mailto:conservation@sghl.org)

SGLH Conservation Committee  
Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage [info@sghl.org](mailto:info@sghl.org)