Woodland Management Plan
for
The Lady Wood
Aboyne

August 2002

prepared for
Mid Deeside Limited

by

the Ross Partnership
Bearfold Ordie Dinnet Aboyne AB34 5LS
Tel/Fax. 013398 81651 E-mail: info@sylvestris.demon.co.uk
Veronica Ross BA DipLD MLI Irvine Ross BSc(For) FICFor

The Lady Wood

Main path looking West with beech regeneration.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 3

1.1 Introduction : 3

1.2 Date of Plan Production : 3

1.3 Contact Name and Address : 3

1.4 Summary : 3

2. DESCRIPTION 6

2.1 Name of wood : 6

2.2 Area Statement : 6

2.3 Status : 6

2.4 Legal Details : 6

2.5 General Description : 6
2.5.1 Location : 6
2.5.2 Surrounding Land Use: 6
2.5.3 Soils and Geology : 7
2.5.4 Elevation Aspect and Topography : 7
2.5.5 Vegetation : 7
2.5.6 Fauna : 8
2.5.7 Hydrology : 8
2.5.8 Trees : 9
2.5.9 Condition of the Trees : 11
2.5.10 Archaeology : 12
2.5.11 Landscape : 12
2.5.12 Footpaths : 12
2.5.13 History of Land Use : 13

2.6 Key Aspects : 13
2.6.1 Oak tree species : 13
2.6.2 Non-Native trees : 14
2.6.3 Visual and Educational amenity : 15
2.6.4 Path Network : 15
2.6.5 Public Safety : 16
2.6.6 Safer Routes to School : 16
2.6.7 Aboyne Path Network : 17

3. MANAGEMENT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 18

3.1 Aims 18

3.2 Objectives 18
3.2.1 Primary Objectives 18
3.2.2 Secondary Objectives : 18

4. CONSTRAINTS AND RESOURCES 19

4.1 Constraints : 19

4.2 Resources : 19
4.2.1 Management and Labour: 19
4.2.2 Financial : 20

5. PRESCRIPTIONS **22**

5.1 Tree Management 22

5.2 Natural Regeneration 23

5.3 Tree Planting 23

5.4 Wildlife Habitat 24

5.5 Research and Information 24

5.6 Path Improvement 25
5.6.1 Steps 26
5.6.2 Ramp and Ramped Steps 26
5.6.3 Seats and Information Boards 26
5.6.4 Car Parking: 27

6. WORK PROGRAMME **28**

7. INDICATIVE CASH FLOW **29**

MAPS

Map 1 Existing layout with sub-area numbers
Map 2 Proposed path improvements
Map 3 Proposed Aboyne Path Network
Map 4 The Lady Wood in 1891

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Target Notes

Appendix 2 Notes from discussion at Public Consultation meeting 17.04.02

Appendix 3 Information Sheets on:
Sleeper Steps
Stepped Ramp Construction
Ramps and Gradients
Ramp Construction for Wheelchair Users
Circulation Space for Ambulant Disabled People
Path Users/Path Width
Perch Seats

Appendix 4 Contact Names and Addresses

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction :

The Lady Wood is a narrow strip of oak dominated woodland on the western edge of the village of Aboyne. It is the property of Mr Marcus Humphrey of Dinnet House. In celebration of Her Majesty The Queen's Golden Jubilee, he has indicated a willingness to place the Lady Wood in the care of the community of Aboyne on a 99 year rent free lease on condition that the community is willing to take responsibility for the woodland and has the resources to ensure its proper maintenance. This management plan has been written to assess the condition of the wood, its value to the community and the maintenance works necessary for its upkeep. An outline work programme and indicative cash flow for the first 5 years have been prepared.

1.2 Date of Plan Production :

Second Draft - 10th July 2002

1.3 Contact Name and Address :

Mid Deeside Limited
Victory Hall
Ballater Road
Aboyne

1.4 Summary :

The Lady Wood is an area of oak dominated woodland, extending to 3.79 hectares, located on the western approach to the village of Aboyne in Aberdeenshire. The present owner has indicated a willingness to place the Lady Wood in the care of the community of Aboyne on a 99 year, rent free lease on condition that the community is willing to take responsibility for the woodland and has the resources to ensure its proper maintenance. This management plan has been written to assess the condition of the wood, its value to the community and the maintenance works necessary for its upkeep.

The Lady Wood has no statutory designations and is not subject to any Tree Preservation Orders. In the latest draft of the Aberdeenshire Local Plan documentation the Lady Wood, and all the woodland along Rhu-Na-Haven Road, is designated as a Protected Area. This should ensure that no further building development can take place on the site.

The woodland is part of a larger woodland ecosystem. It is relatively well sheltered, lying at the bottom of the main valley of the River Dee. The soil is a well drained, stony forest brown earth and there are no streams or boggy areas in the wood. The ground vegetation contains many native plants and shrubs which are an important part of its wildlife value. There are also a number of garden plants which have become established in the wood and they dominate local areas.

Red squirrels are present in the wood as are a number of birds which breed or feed in the woodland including blackcaps, tawny owls, woodpeckers and jays. At least two species of bats are also known to use the wood.

The woodland is dominated by mature pedunculate oak trees believed to have been planted around 150 years ago. Many of the trees are in good condition and some of these are likely to survive for a further 150 years giving a long term stability to the woodland structure. Winter storm damage is a regular feature and a number of the trees have lost main limbs. Some trees are standing dead or have significant pockets of decayed wood. Very few oak seedlings are found in the wood although they are frequently found in surrounding gardens.

There are patches of younger native trees, including birch which also show some winter damage. Other non-native species of trees are regenerating freely in the Lady Wood. These include beech, sycamore, Norway maple and various conifers. These species cast a denser shade than oak trees and, if left alone, they will come to dominate the wood in the long term leading to a change of character and a loss of wildlife habitat.

There are a number of footpaths in the Lady Wood which are well used by local residents and are a route to school for local pupils of Aboyne Academy and Aboyne Primary School. It is also possible that the main path through the Lady Wood could form part of a network of footpaths around the village which would cause further increased use. The heavy use of these paths has lead to trampling of the vegetation and erosion of the soil. The paths are rough in places and muddy in wet weather. This makes them difficult to use by the elderly and very young children on the way to school. It is also difficult for the pupils and staff of the ASCENT base at the Academy to gain access to the wood.

The fact that the Lady Wood is adjacent to the two schools makes it an important educational resource. Project work in the 5-14 curriculum can be done in and about the wood without the time and cost of road travel for the pupils. Part of the management work in the wood can also be done by the pupils under the guidance of the Aberdeenshire Council Countryside Ranger Service.

From comments given at a public consultation meeting it is proposed that the main aims of management for the Lady Wood should be to:

Maintain the Lady Wood as a native oak wood
Maintain the diverse structure and wildlife habitat of the woodland
Maintain the amenity of the wood and the recreational value of the path network
Provide an educational resource for the schools and the community

It is therefore proposed that :

a) The standing dead and decayed trees should be felled and hanging broken branches should be made safe in the interest of public safety.
b) The storm damaged younger trees should also be made safe.
c) The young non-native tree seedlings should be removed by pulling or cutting
d) As there are few naturally occurring oak seedlings in the wood, oak, gean, hazel and hawthorn seedlings of local genetic origin should be planted in the gaps created by the tree felling and the removal of the non-native trees.

e) Bird and bat boxes should be placed in the wood to increase the available places for nesting birds and roosting bats.
f) To increase the educational potential of the Lady Wood a compilation should be made of the available information on the history of the wood and its ecology.
g) The main paths through the wood should be resurfaced with gravel to all-abilities standards to allow easy access to the wood by all members of the community.
h) Steps and an access ramp should be provided where necessary.
i) Information boards should be erected, taking into account the needs of the visually impaired
j) A small lay-by should be provided at the Rhu-na-Haven Road.

The tree felling and path resurfacing will have to be done by properly qualified contractors. Many of the other tasks can be done by volunteer members of the community and by pupils of the two schools. Assistance can be given in organising and overseeing practical tasks by the Countryside Ranger Service of Aberdeenshire Council.

Grant aid will be available from the Forestry Commission, Scottish Natural Heritage and Objective 2 European funding to cover the main costs of tree felling and path improvements. The Upper Deeside Access Trust are locally based and have the expertise to manage and supervise all the necessary path works.

A small annual financial cost will be incurred for public liability insurance and administration. Grant aid from a variety of sources should be available to cover this.

2. Description

2.1 Name of wood :

The area of woodland is known as the Lady Wood

2.2 Area Statement :

The wood extends to some 3.79 hectares

2.3 Status :

The Lady Wood has no statutory designations and is not subject to any Tree Preservation Orders.

In the latest draft of the Aberdeenshire Local Plan documentation the Lady Wood, and all the woodland along Rhu-Na-Haven Road, is designated as a Protected Area.

This is covered by Policy Env/7 of the Aberdeenshire Local Plan (ALP) which says that development will be refused unless:
a) It is for an essential community facility which cannot be located elsewhere and whose public benefits clearly outweigh the value of the site to the settlement's special character or amenity
OR
b) it would positively impact on the site's or settlement's special character or amenity.

As and when the Protected Area Status is approved, it is extremely unlikely that planning consent would be given for any development on the site of the Lady Wood.

2.4 Legal Details :

The woodland is presently the property of Mr Marcus Humphrey of Dinnet House.

2.5 General Description :

2.5.1 Location :

The Lady Wood lies on the south side of the A93 Ballater Road in the village of Aboyne, Aberdeenshire, OS reference NO 516986. The wood is bounded to the north by Ballater Road, the A93 road, to the west by Rhu-na-Haven road, to the south by a range of private gardens and the Aboyne Academy and Community Centre car park, and to the east by Bridgeview Road.

2.5.2 Surrounding Land Use:

The Lady Wood is largely surrounded by other areas of woodland and therefore forms only one part of a larger woodland ecosystem. To the south are the gardens of Barclay Park which are themselves well wooded but also provide areas of open ground. Many residents also provide supplementary feeding for birds and garden ponds and bird baths give essential access to water.

To the east is the mixed coniferous and broadleaved wood in the grounds of St Thomas' Church. To the north lie the gardens of the houses facing Ballater Road and the mixed broadleaved woodland between Ballater Road and Kinnord Drive. The gardens in Kinnord Drive are also well wooded. To the west are mixed coniferous and broadleaved woods, some of which are managed for timber production.

2.5.3 Soils and Geology :

The underlying rock is Dalradian limestone but this is deeply buried under layers of coarse fluvio-glacial outwash of mixed, mainly acidic origin. The soil is a well drained, stony forest brown earth.

2.5.4 Elevation Aspect and Topography :

The wood lies at an elevation of 140 metres a.s.l. The aspect is open and the land is level at the western end with a slight slope from the main road to the school car park at the eastern end. The wood lies on the floor of the main valley of the River Dee and the DAMS (Detailed Aspect Measurement System) score for the wood is 12 which confirms the area is relatively well sheltered for this part of middle Deeside.

2.5.5 Vegetation :

No formal vegetation survey has been carried out but the wood has some components of the natural ground flora that would be typical of a native oakwood in this location, Great wood rush *(Luzula sylvatica)* is present but limited in extent and blaeberry (*Vaccinium mytillus*) also has a limited spread and is found mainly at the western end of the wood. Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) is present where there is limited overhead shade and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) is common with a clumped distribution. Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) is dominant in more open areas where light reaches the ground.

In the month of May the following native ground flora were recorded:

Blue bugle	*Ajuga gaevenensis*
Bluebell	*Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*
Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
Chickweed wintergreen	*Trientalis europaea*
Common nettle	*Urtica dioica*
Dead nettle	*Lamium spp.*
Dog violet	*Viola riviniana*
Foxglove	*Digitalis purpurea*
Ground elder	*Aegopodium podagraria*
Hedge mustard	*Sisymbrium officianle*
Lesser celandine	*Ranunculus ficaria*
Ramsons/Wild garlic	*Allium ursinum*
Rosebay willow-herb	*Epilobium angustifolium*
Wild raspberry	*Rubus idaeus*
Wood sorrel	*Oxalis acetosella*

The shrub and dwarf shrub layers are poorly developed and native shrub species such as hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel are scarce or absent. Garden escapes are frequent and, in parts, to the exclusion of all other plants. Cultivated dead nettle forms extensive carpets in places, flowering currant bushes are also present and in spring there are many snowdrops and daffodils.

2.5.6 Fauna :

Mammals :

Red Squirrel are common on Deeside generally and are commonly observed in the Lady Wood and the adjoining woodland to the west.

Bats Pipistrelle bats and long eared bats have been recorded in the Lady Wood and are known to roost in adjacent gardens so may be assumed to roost in the wood also.

Badgers have not been observed on the site and as no evidence of badger sets has been discovered they are considered to be absent.

Roe deer are common in the adjacent woods and use the Lady Wood regularly at night however their impact on tree regeneration is slight.

Rabbits are observed in the Lady Wood at nights but, as there is little evidence of browsing on regenerating seedlings, their impact is not considered significant.

Other Common Mammals such as fox, stoat, weasel are common on Deeside and may occasionally use the Lady Wood. No information is available on small mammals such a voles, shrews and field mice but it may be assumed that they are present.

Birds:

Common garden birds such as blackbird, song and mistle thrushes, sparrow, chaffinch, collared dove and wood pigeon are all present and either breed or feed regularly in the wood

Other woodland birds such as tawny owl, and blackcaps breed regularly in the wood. Great spotted and green woodpeckers and jays nest nearby and regularly forage in the wood. Woodcock are observed flying over the wood at dusk but are not thought to breed there.

Invertebrates :

No systematic information is available on the invertebrate population of the Lady Wood.

2.5.7 Hydrology :

There are no streams or water courses in the wood. One ditch crosses the wood in a north-south direction just west of the mid point but it rarely carries any water.

2.5.8 Trees :

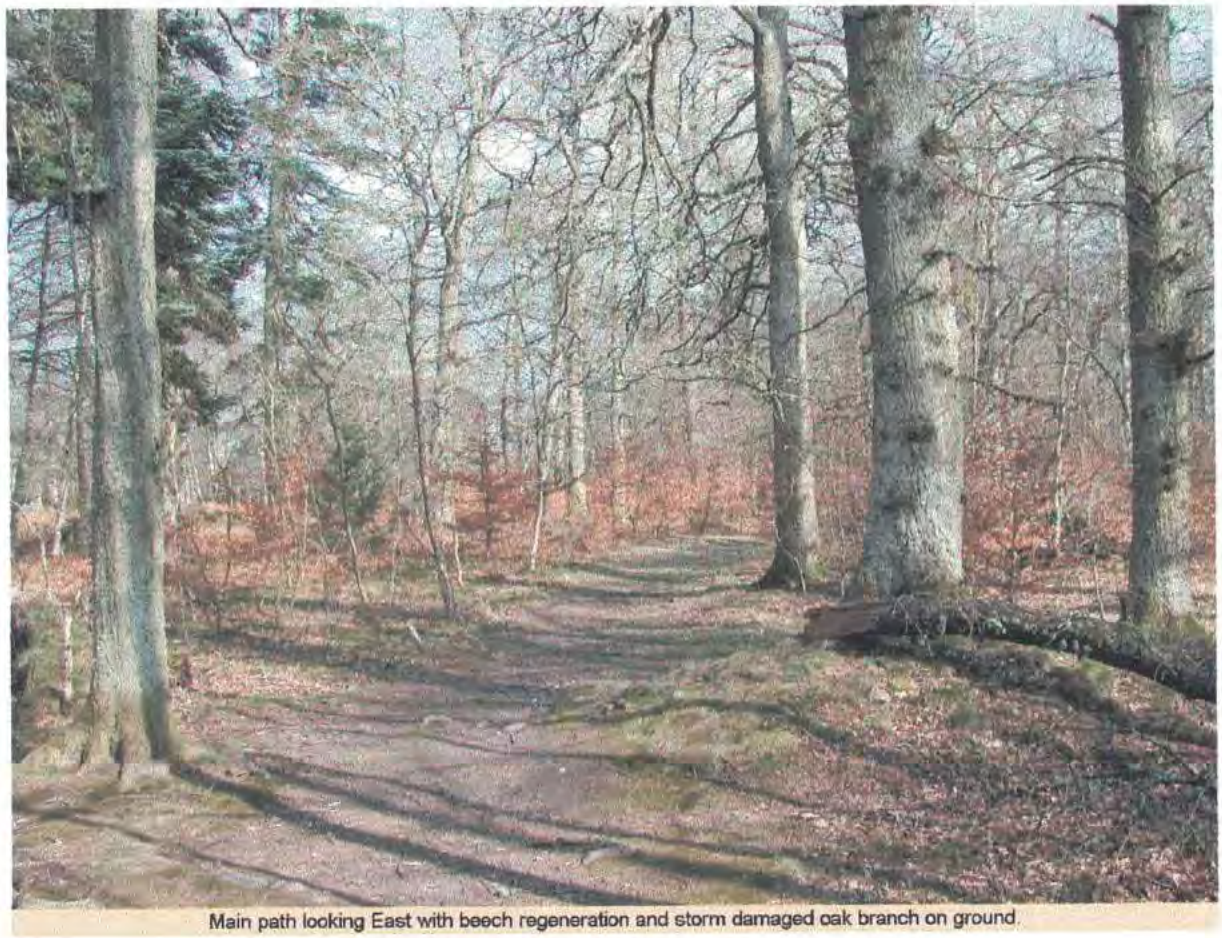
The woodland is dominated by pedunculate oak trees of around 150 years of age (See Picture 1). There are no written records of the establishment of the wood, however the fairly uniform size and growth habit of all the oak trees present in the wood gives a strong indication that the wood was planted. Ring counts from a recently windblown oak gave an approximate planting date of around 1850. Sample measurements of the dominant tree crop are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Species	Stems/ha	Top Height (m)	Mean DBH (cm)
Oak	140	22.0	42

There is evidence of past gale damage in the woods in a fairly regular distribution of windblown oak stumps, almost all leaning away from the north west. The date of this damage is not known but the direction of the stumps would indicate that it was not in the "Great Gale" of 1953 which was north easterly. Many of the blown stumps now carry coppice re-growth of around 10 metres height and with a diameter of around 10cm. However, as these are growing from a decayed root system, their long term future is doubtful.

Picture No 1



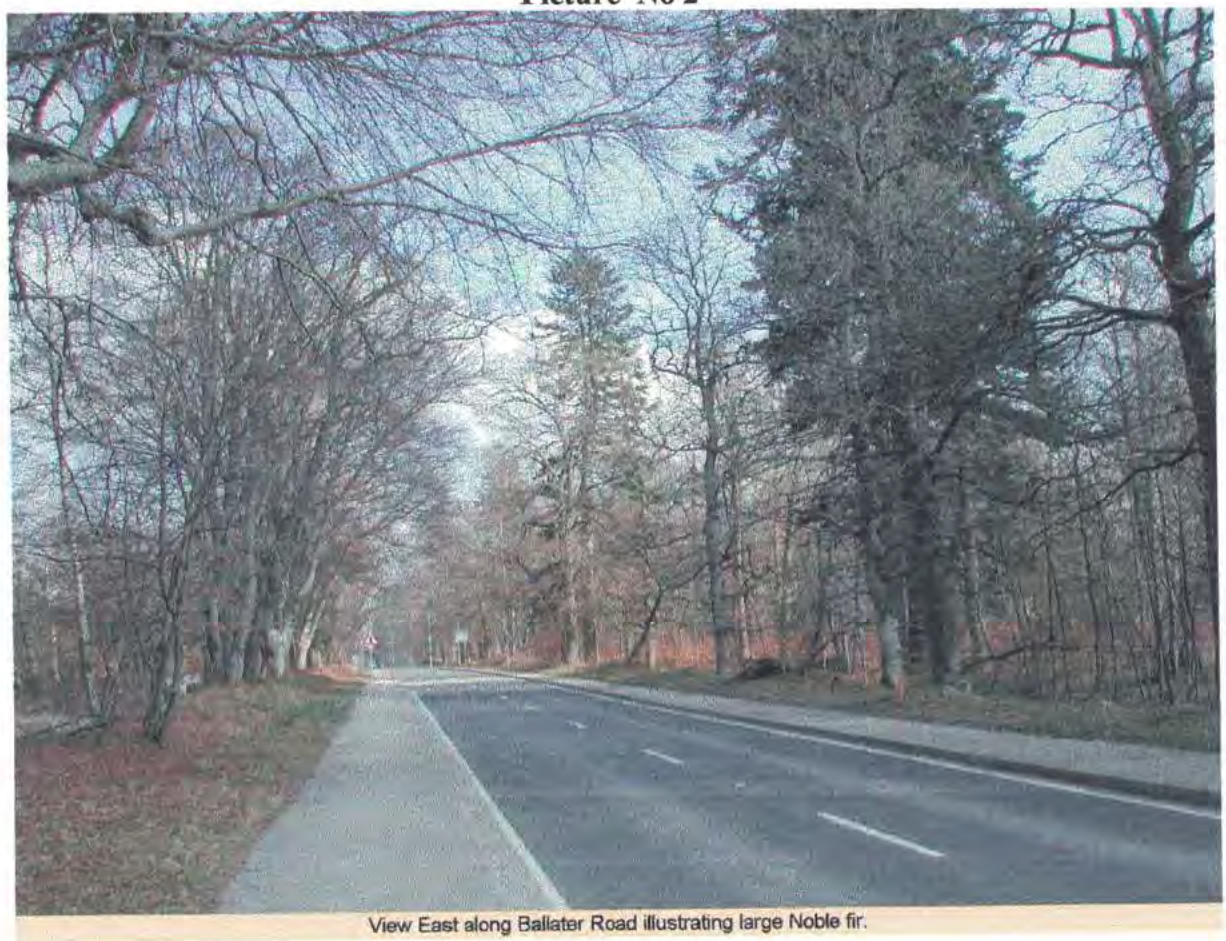
Main path looking East with beech regeneration and storm damaged oak branch on ground.

The other notable tree species present is Noble Fir (*Abies procera*). There are a few specimens planted along the side of the wood nearest Ballater road of significant size, around 35 metres (100') top height and 90 cm DBH (Diameter at Breast Height). (See Picture 2)

More coniferous trees are present at the western end of the wood, including Noble fir, Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga taxifolia*) and Norway spruce (*Picea abies*). These grow to around 22 metre (72') top height and are thought to have regenerated from the trees growing on the western side of Rhu-na-Haven Road.

Naturally regenerated silver and downy birch (*Betula pendula and B. pubescens*) are present in clumps wherever there are small gaps in the oak canopy. These reach a height of 12 – 18 metres and, as they have never been thinned, tend to be spindly with a small stem diameter for their height. Many of these have suffered stem breakage from heavy snow in past winters. (See Picture 3)

Picture No 2



View East along Ballater Road illustrating large Noble fir.

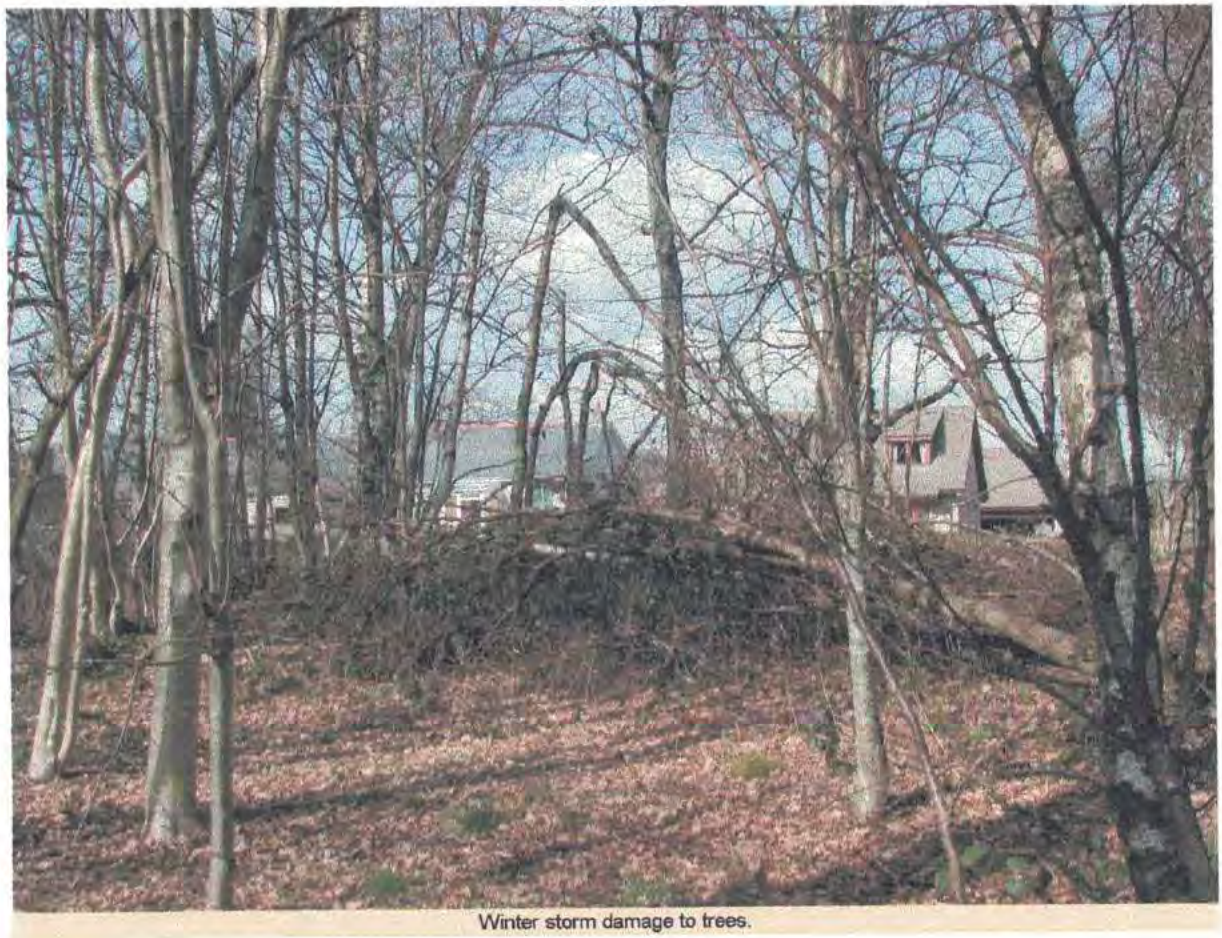
Young self-seeded trees are present throughout the wood although oak seedlings are rare. At the western end of the wood, beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) seedlings are abundant with heights of 2-3 metres common (see Picture 1). Sycamore *(Acer pseudoplatanus)* seedlings are also frequent at this end of the wood along with some scattered regeneration of Douglas fir and Noble fir. Birch, rowan *(Sorbus aucuparia),* elder (Sambucus nigra), red elder (Sambucus racemosa) and holly *(Ilex aquifolium)* are found in smaller numbers throughout the site.

Most of this younger regeneration appears to date from a time after the houses in Barclay Park were built. Presumably the increased human usage of the wood has deterred the presence of roe deer and rabbits.

2.5.9 Condition of the Trees :

The trees and ground flora were inspected in February 2002. In order to aid recording and description, the wood was sub-divided into 13 sub areas using the path network as area boundaries. (See Map 1 and Appendix 1, Target Notes)

Picture No 3



Winter storm damage to trees.

Many of the trees are healthy and in good condition. However the evidence of storm damage is widespread. A number of the young thickets of birch trees have been bent over and snapped by heavy snow. Snow damage is also evident on the oak trees. Some is relatively minor such as the breaking of small branches, however a number of snapped branches are still hanging in the tree canopy and may well fall down in a period of high winds which creates a hazard to anyone walking through the wood at the time. Some trees have had large branches broken in the past, creating cavities and weaknesses in the wood which will deteriorate as the wood decays. A few need inspection by climbing to assess their safety. Some trees are already badly

decayed or standing dead and their safety is questionable. A summary of the survey results are included in Table 2.

Table 2

Area	Nos. of Trees	Condition
1	1	Broken branches hanging from oak
	13	Storm damaged broken young trees
3	45	Storm damaged broken young trees
4	1	Cavity in oak at height
	3	Standing dead/decayed oak
	1	Broken branches hanging from oak
5	1	Broken branches hanging from oak
	2	Trees becoming choked with Ivy
	1	Standing oak with unsafe lean
6	5	Standing dead oak
	12	Storm damaged broken young trees
7	1	Standing dead oak
8	7	Storm damaged broken young trees
	5	Broken branches hanging from oak
	3	Standing dead oak
9	6	Storm damaged broken young trees
	1	Broken branches hanging from oak
10	1	Cavity in oak at height
	3	Dead/decayed oak & birch
11	1	Broken branches hanging from oak
12	1	Dead/decayed oak
13	1	Cavity in oak at height
	1	Storm damaged broken young trees

2.5.10 Archaeology :

There are no known sites of archaeological interest in the Lady Wood.

2.5.11 Landscape :

The Lady Wood offers an important contribution to the western approach to Aboyne. It provides a visual link between the wooded countryside around the village and the Ballater road which is lines by houses with large gardens containing many fine trees. It is vital to maintain this wooded aspect as trees are very prominent in the village of Aboyne. The Lady Wood also screens the main road from the residential development in Barclay Park and also provides important sound moderation from the noise of the traffic.

2.5.12 Footpaths :

Almost all the footpaths in the wood are informal, trodden footpaths. The major footpath runs from east to west, with a multitude of other paths along desire lines, the majority of which are closer to the school and Community Centre. Many of the paths lead from this main path to

the playing field, the car park, the school, the Centre and the Ballater Road. All the paths are noted on Map1 – Existing Layout, numbered from A to Z.

There is one formal, lit footpath running north/south across the wood from Barclay Park, leading to the Ballater Road. It was surfaced with gravel, but has not been maintained for many years and is very muddy in many places.

In many places the tree roots run across the path surface and there are patches of stones, making the walking surface uneven and in winter the erosion has caused muddy puddles to develop at certain points, making access for all abilities difficult.

Although Aboyne Academy staff regularly collect litter at the eastern end of the wood near the Academy, there is no formal arrangement for litter collection in the remainder. Most of the litter collection is presently done by public spirited members of the public.

2.5.13 History of Land Use :

The Lady Wood was part of Aboyne Castle Estate from around 1440 until it was sold in the 1880s. The land was subsequently purchased in 1944 by the present owner's Grandfather, Sir Malcolm Barclay Harvey of Dinnet. The wood was considerably larger than at present and occupied almost all of the ground between Bridgeview Road, the North Deeside Road and the River Dee, the only open ground being the Glebe manse. (See Map 4) The wood is believed to have been planted, or perhaps replanted, with oak and Scots pine sometime around 1850. Subsequent to this, part of the area was lost in the early 1900s when Rhu-na-Haven Road was built along with the Edwardian houses facing onto the river Dee. Much of the wood was felled in the late 1930s leaving a strip of oak trees on the south side of the Deeside road. The felled area has been gradually developed for housing over the past 50 years and Aboyne Academy and Community Centre was built at the eastern end of the wood in 1949 and extended in 1974.

2.6 Key Aspects :

2.6.1 Oak tree species :

Although the wood is planted with pedunculate oak, it is closely related to sessile oak, a native Scottish species that would grow naturally on this site. As oak is a native species, the trees and the associated shrub and ground flora support a diverse insect population which in turn supports an interesting song bird population that would not be present in a beech or sycamore wood.

Although the ground flora is much affected by human activity, particularly trampling and the presence of garden species, many native ground flora species are still present and form an important part of the habitat value of the woodlands. The ground vegetation is an integral part of the woodland and any future management must take this into account.

The longevity of the oaks also gives a long term stability to the woodland habitat. The majority of the trees are around 150 years of age and it can be expected that, barring natural catastrophes, the healthy dominant trees in the wood will still be present in another 150 years.

As some of the trees are mature and some are now beginning to decay and lose branches in winter storms, special habitats for hole nesting birds and bats are present which increases the wildlife diversity of the wood.

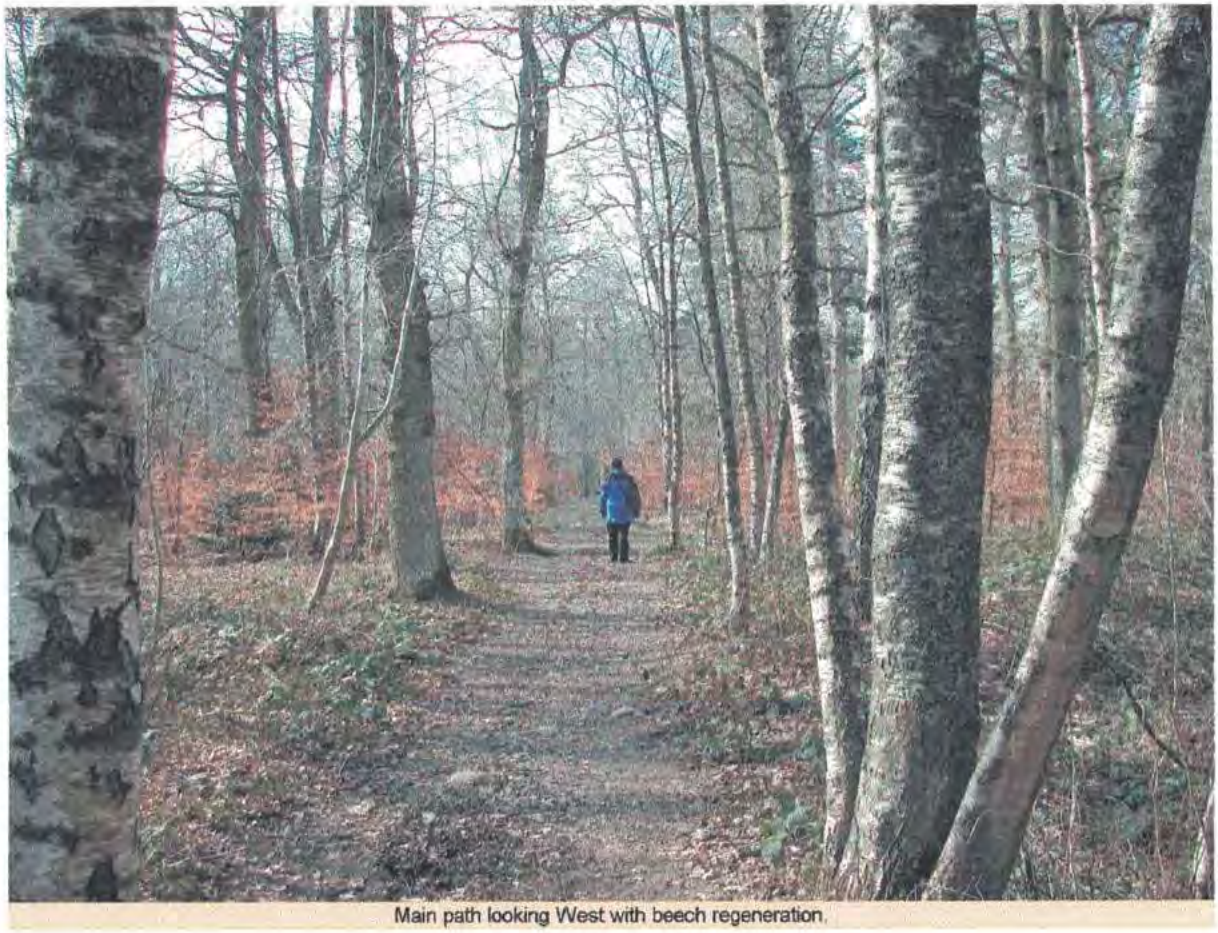
2.6.2 Non-Native trees :

The majority of the young self-seeded trees in the wood are not of native species. As already noted beech regeneration is abundant along with smaller numbers of sycamore and mixed conifers. Oak seedlings are so few in numbers that the wood is unlikely to sustain itself as an oakwood with the current level of competing species.

If left unchecked, the non-native trees will, in time, dominate the wood and exclude many of the native trees. This will cause a long term change in character of the wood. Beech and confers cast a dense shade which will cause the loss of much of the present ground vegetation and the ground in the wood is likely in future to carry only early spring flowering plants, mosses and leaf litter.

Beech and sycamore also support fewer and less diverse insects than oak. A reduction in insect population will cause a change in bird population and some of the insect eating species will be reduced in numbers or no longer survive. Beech is also more prone to rot and decay at an earlier age than oak and the long term stability of the woods would be reduced.

Picture No 4



Main path looking West with beech regeneration.

2.6.3 Visual and Educational amenity :

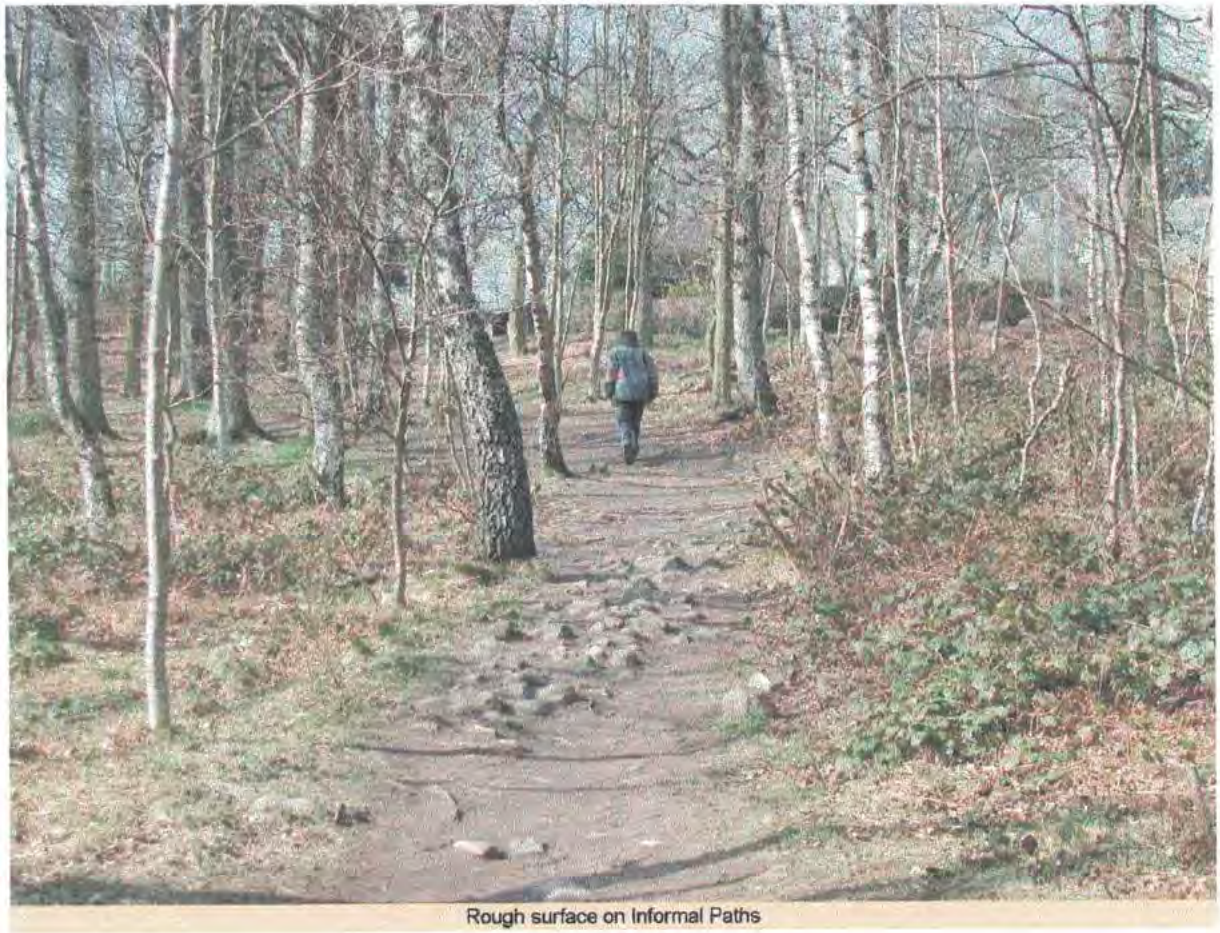
See picture No 4.

The woodland is adjacent to Aboyne Academy, giving pupils the opportunity to get outside in pleasant surroundings in their break times. This oak woodland is on the door step of Aboyne Academy and Aboyne Primary School and is an important resource for use in wildlife and environmental education. Its value is increased by the fact that it can be accessed very easily without having to use road transport.

If the paths were to be made accessible for all needs, the ASENT base at Aboyne Academy could make good use of the woodland for all its pupils.

The value of the wood as an educational resource would be greatly increased if a resource pack could be produced. This would contain maps and information that would enable primary and nursery teachers with no particular expertise in woodland ecology to explain the history of the site, its wildlife, and the impact of mans activity on the woodland.

Picture No 5



Rough surface on Informal Paths

2.6.4 Path Network :

The paths through the woodland offer a good alternative to walking on the pavement beside the busy A93, for those who are wishing to access the riverside walks from the village or those wishing for a short walk amongst trees. The woodland path avoids the road spray and is safer for the younger children than the roadside pavement.

It is a primary route to school for pupils and with the current *'Safe Routes to school'* initiative, its continued use should be encouraged. Currently the condition of the paths means that often, a lot of mud is taken into the schools or Community Centre. The improvement of the major routes would be of benefit to everyone.

All abilities access is to the wood is difficult on the paths because of their rough, uneven condition. It will be therefore, be valuable if some of these paths can be improved for all abilities use.

There is also a proliferation of footpaths at the eastern end of the wood and the trampling is causing loss of ground vegetation. The surfacing of the major routes would make them more attractive to users and reduce the trampling of the minor routes.

2.6.5 Public Safety :

Because of the high level of use of the Lady Wood as a thoroughfare, the matter of public safety must receive due attention. As noted in section 2.5.9 there are a number of trees which have dead and broken branches hanging in the canopy, many young trees broken by snow and a few larger standing dead trees. Some of these may in some circumstances be hazardous to the public walking through the wood.

Any body responsible for the management of the wood must also consider their public liability responsibilities. Under civil law, the falling of a tree, or a branch from a tree, is considered an "Act of God" if there were no prior outward indications that the tree was diseased, unhealthy or otherwise weakened. In these circumstances the body or person responsible for the management the tree is not liable for damages that might be inflicted on any third party. However if the tree was evidently weakened, then the managing body would be liable for damages under a civil action. The managing body also would not have any protection under public liability insurance as the insuring company will almost certainly have an exemption clause in the policy.

In the interests of both the public and the body which may take over responsibility for the woodland, it would be advisable to make safe any tree that might be considered a risk to the public.

2.6.6 Safer Routes to School :

There is a current proposal for a pedestrian crossing across the Ballater Road. It's actual position has not yet been decided, but it is likely to be just west of the Bridgeview Road junction with the Ballater Road. It is the Road Department's intention to also build a short footpath across the Lady Wood, linking the pedestrian crossing with the main entrance to the Community Centre and Aboyne Academy.

This footpath has not yet been designed but, to comply with national regulations, will be surfaced with bitmac and will have lighting. The Road Department is aware of the Lady Wood path and woodland project and any organising body must keep in touch with the Council Roads Department, to see if there is any advantage in the Lady Wood paths linking in with the proposed formal path.

2.6.7 Aboyne Path Network :

U.D.A.T. (Upper Deeside Access Trust) has allocated funds for the development of an Aboyne path network (see Map 3). Under these proposals, the path through the Lady Wood would form part of one of the routes at the western edge of the village. U.D.A.T. will be managing the development and upgrading of the path network. They have been consulted about the proposals for the Lady Wood and would be pleased to work in co-operation with the organising body for the Lady Wood project.

3. Management Aims and Objectives

3.1 Aims

The management aims are to:

Maintain the Lady Wood as a native oak wood

Maintain the diverse structure and wildlife habitat of the woodland

Maintain the amenity of the wood and the recreational value of the path network

Provide an educational resource for the schools and the community

3.2 Objectives

3.2.1 Primary Objectives

1. To fulfil all legal and contractual obligations committed to within the plan period
2. To provide access to the wood for people of all abilities
3. To reduce trampling and erosion by improving the surfacing of the path network
4. To replace dead and fallen oak trees with oak seedlings of local genetic origin.
5. To maintain habitats for wildlife, including 15-20% of open ground.
6. To encourage the natural regeneration of native trees and shrubs in suitable gaps in the wood
7. To involve the schools and the community in all woodland management activities.

3.2.2 Secondary Objectives :

8. To establish monitoring systems that will record the establishment of tree and shrub regeneration and the impact of management activities.
9. To continue to provide for public access and recreation by the maintenance of paths, parking areas and the removal of litter
10. To improve the quality of experience of the visiting public by the provision of interpretative information on the natural history of the wood

4. Constraints and Resources

4.1 Constraints :

Within the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act some of the woodland management prescriptions can only be carried out by properly trained and equipped workers. Any operations including tree felling, tree surgery, the use of chainsaws and the application of any herbicides or pesticides may only be done by operators holding the appropriate qualifications. However some woodland management operations, such as tree planting, may be carried out by volunteer workers provided they have adequate briefing and supervision.

Permission to fell dead and damaged trees must be obtained from the Forestry Commission, normally through application for a thinning licence or as part of a Woodland Grant Scheme contract.

The woodland footpaths are regularly used as a route to the two schools and community centre and any works must take full consideration of public safety.

The woodland lies adjacent to residential areas and noise and disturbance at unsociable hours must be avoided.

4.2 Resources :

4.2.1 Management and Labour:

At the time of writing, there are no long term provisions for the availability of management expertise or skilled labour to carry out the works specified in the prescriptions.

However it is anticipated that a body, such as a Trust for example, will be formed to take responsibility for the management and maintenance of the woodland on behalf of the community of Aboyne.

With adequate financial resources, such a body will be able to retain professional advisors in the management of the woods and to engage contractors where necessary and co-ordinate volunteer labour to carry out all necessary operations. Most of the necessary expertise could be secured locally from organisations such as:

> Upper Deeside Access Trust (UDAT) - Based in Tarland, UDAT have considerable experience in project management and funding applications for path works. They are currently assessing the potential for a network of footpaths around Aboyne and the path through the Lady Wood would form an essential link in the network. If as seems likely, the board of UDAT approve the development of the footpath network around Aboyne, the UDAT staff will be involved in the project management and supervision of the necessary works. It would be logical and efficient for UDAT staff to manage and supervise the upgrading of the paths through the Lady Wood. Their project management costs would be covered by the grant aid that the work would attract.

The Aberdeenshire Council Countryside Ranger Service - The Countryside Ranger for the Marr area has been informed of the community interest in the Lady Wood and is available and willing to give practical assistance in the management of the wood. He has the necessary skills to educate and direct both school parties and volunteer adult workers undertaking tasks such as tree planting and the removal of unwanted tree seedlings with hand tools.

Other sources of support include :

At the public consultation meeting held on 17 April 2002 there were offers of practical assistance from the members of the public attending who stated they would be willing to volunteer to carry out tasks such as tree planting and the removal of beech seedlings.

Aboyne Primary School have been consulted and appreciate the educational value of the Lady Wood and its accessibility for pupils of all abilities. They would in principle be willing to co-operate in projects with educational and conservation objectives such as tree planting.

Aboyne Academy are presently considering how they could be involved in the management and monitoring of the Lady Wood and their participation will be valuable asset in the future.

4.2.2 Financial :

Grant aid for woodland management works and to provide facilities for public recreation are available from a number of sources:

Forestry Commission (FC)

Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS):
Grants are available for replanting after felling at a rate of £325 per ha for broadleaved trees. However, as it is not envisaged that any measurable area will be felled in the Lady Wood this grant is unlikely to be appropriate.

Annual Management Grant (AMG) :
Is paid annually at the rate of £35 per ha. Given the limited size of the Lady Wood this is only likely to amount to £100 a year but could be a useful contribution towards the costs of stakes and tree shelters for a modest replanting programme.

Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) :
This can be paid towards projects such as footpath construction or improvements and the provision of information signs and benches. The grant can also cover any necessary works to improve the condition of the trees, such as the clearance of storm damage. The grant is paid at a rate of 50% of estimated costs up to a maximum of £10,000 in any 5 year period.

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)

SNH give grant aid to projects intended to conserve areas of wildlife interest or to improve access to the countryside. The proposed improvements to the footpaths and any signpost and information boards would be eligible for grant aid. Normally grant is paid at 50% of costs but for community based projects this can be, at the discretion of SNH, up to 100%.

European Funding

This is a complex area and advice should be sought from UDAT. However Objective 2 funding has been successfully obtained for other footpath schemes in Deeside.

Aberdeenshire council

Local councils have funding for the creation and maintenance of a core path network around communities. Funding would be available form this source for the maintenance of the paths in the Lady Wood after they have been resurfaced.

5. Prescriptions

The prescription are set out by activities with the Objectives set against each one.

5.1 Tree Management

Primary Objective 2 – To provide access to the wood for people of all abilities

As reported in section 2.5.9 a number of trees are standing dead or decayed or have suffered winter storm damage. In the interests of public safety, dangerous trees or branches should be removed and to improve the visual amenity the storm broken younger trees should be cleared. The following list of remedial works in Table 3 are recommended. The Area column refers to the area numbers on Map 1.

Table 3

Area	Nos. of Trees	Action Recommended
1	1	Clear broken branches from oak
	13	Fell young broken trees
3	45	Fell/prune young broken trees
4	1	Inspect cavity in Oak
	3	Fell dead/decayed oak
	1	Clear broken branches from oak
5	1	Clear broken branches from oak
	2	Clear Ivy from trees
	1	Fell leaning oak
6	5	Fell dead oak
	12	Fell/prune young broken trees
7	1	Fell dead oak
8	7	Fell/prune young broken trees
	5	Clear broken branches from oak
	3	Fell dead oak
9	6	Fell/prune young broken trees
	1	Clear broken branches from oak
10	1	Inspect cavity in Oak
	3	Fell dead/decayed oak & birch
11	1	Clear broken branches from oak
12	1	Fell dead/decayed oak
13	1	Inspect cavity in Oak
	1	Fell/prune young broken trees

This work must be carried out by competent contractors with the appropriate skills and qualifications for the jobs involved. It is not necessary in every case to fell the trees to ground level. Dead trees can instead be reduced to a height of 3-4 metres to provided wildlife habitat where this would not create a hazard to the public.

The larger pieces of timber will be left on site to provide dead wood habitat for invertebrates, the smaller branches and brushwood will be chipped on site and the chips used to surface some of the minor paths.

5.2 Natural Regeneration

Primary Objective 6 – To encourage the natural regeneration of native trees and shrubs in suitable gaps in the wood

Primary Objective 7 – To involve the schools and the community in all woodland management activities.

As mentioned in Section 2.6.2, there is significant regeneration of non-native tree species which will in time come to dominate the wood. It is therefore proposed that all non-native trees with a stem size less than 10cm in diameter at ground level should be removed.

The larger trees will be removed by the contractors engaged in the tree management works. The smaller trees can be removed by cutting with hand saws, loppers and secateurs. Small seedlings can be uprooted by hand.

This task can be done by volunteers under the direction of the Marr Area Countryside Ranger to ensure that only the non-native species are removed and the desirable species such as birch, rowan and holly are left undisturbed.

The removal of the non-native species will provide space and light for the natural regeneration of more native species trees.

It can be expected that beech and sycamore will also continue to regenerate in the Lady Wood so long as mature trees are nearby to provide a source of seed. The task of uprooting non-native trees will therefore have to be repeated at intervals of around every 5 years.

5.3 Tree Planting

Primary Objective 4 – To replace dead and fallen oak trees with oak seedlings of local genetic origin

Primary Objective 7 – To involve the schools and the community in all woodland management activities.

It is anticipated that the numbers of trees that will need to be planted will be small, perhaps 10 – 20 trees per year. In some years the production of acorns is very sparse due to poor weather so the planting programme will have to adapt to the available seed supply.

To achieve the objective of planting oak seedlings of local genetic origin it will be necessary to organise the collection of acorns from local native oak trees. These are few in number and scattered but some can be found on Craig Damh in Glen Tanar and on Dinnet National Nature Reserve. The permission of the landowners will have to be obtained but this is not expected to be a major hurdle.

Growing the oak seedlings to plantable size can be done by volunteers in any domestic garden that is protected from rabbits and other grazing animals.

Tree planting can be done by the Aboyne Primary School and Aboyne Academy pupils under the direction of the Marr Area Countryside Ranger. Cutting back competing vegetation in the summer needs to be done with sharp tools and can be done by adult volunteers.

Planting should be carried out in small openings in the wood where decayed or storm damaged trees have been cleared. As natural regeneration is severely checked by the growth of bracken, planting can be done in patches of bracken without any loss of opportunity for native trees to regenerate naturally.

In addition to oak trees, native shrub species such as hazel and hawthorn should also be planted in small numbers to create a shrub layer in the wood. Planting of shrubs should be concentrated on the margins of the wood and near small clearings where the light is greater.

5.4 Wildlife Habitat

Primary Objective 5 - To maintain habitats for wildlife, including 15-20% of open ground.

The bird population of the wood includes a wide range of species some of which depend on cavities in trees for nesting spaces. Whilst there are a number of natural cavities in the older trees the habitat can be improved by the provision of nesting boxes.

These should be constructed in a variety of sizes, the smaller ones for birds such as warblers up to boxes large enough for tawny owls. Bat Boxes can also be provided to create roosting habitat for bats.

The areas of bracken, near the western end of the wood, should be controlled by annual cutting. Bracken is an invasive species which tends to harbour ticks and overwhelm more valuable ground flora species. Repeated cutting will weaken the bracken and allow light through to the ground to encourage other plant species.

5.5 Research and Information

Primary Objective 11 - To involve the schools and the community in all woodland management activities.

The educational value of the Lady Wood will be increased considerably if a resource pack of information on the wood were available. There are general resource packs available for school use such as the "Tree Trunk" pack prepared by the Forest Education Initiative. Some basic local information, including maps, should be compiled on the history of the wood, its particular wildlife and the human impact on the ecology of the wood as a supplement to the Tree Trunk resource pack. This can be assembled by the Aboyne Academy and Aboyne Primary School with the guidance of the Marr Area Countryside Ranger.

5.6 Path Improvement

Primary Objective 2 - To provide access to the wood for people of all abilities

Primary Objective 3 - To reducing trampling and erosion by improving the surfacing of the path network

See Map 2 (Drwg.No. 0206/2A) Proposed Layout

To improve the agreed paths, all depressions in the path will be levelled with small stones and any large stones will be dug out. A geotextile membrane will be spread the length of the path to a width of 1.5m. On top of this 75mm of hardcore will be laid, topped with 25mm of fine quarry dust rolled into the surface. This will provide a path that can be used by all abilities. There will be no path edging to allow an informal edge to develop again.

Close to the Community Centre and school the wood is much used by the pupils at break time. The large areas of worn ground can be made into meeting spaces, adjacent to the paths. There is path access from Barclay Park, which leads northwards through the wood to the Ballater Road. This is well used and muddy. It is intended to improve the surface of this path.

Picture No 6

Access to Community Centre/School. Eroded path with difficult gradient.

5.6.1 Steps

Opposite the northern door to the Community Centre, at the edge of the wood is a bank, formed when the access road to the car park was constructed. This steep bank has a much eroded path leading up to the car park road. (see Picture No. 6) Sleeper steps could be positioned here to improve access to the Centre and schools.

5.6.2 Ramp and Ramped Steps

To provide all needs access to the wood it is proposed to build a ramp at the north western corner of the car park, leading to the main path. (See Picture No 7) Currently there is an eroded path leading down the bank to the car park. To prevent further erosion it is proposed to build ramped steps, using sleepers, close to the new ramp.

5.6.3 Seats and Information Boards

Perch benches for the less able who need frequent rests should be provided, one every 100m. Information boards should be provided to give information on the ecology of the oak wood and to inform users of the all abilities provisions. This should take account of the needs of the visually impaired

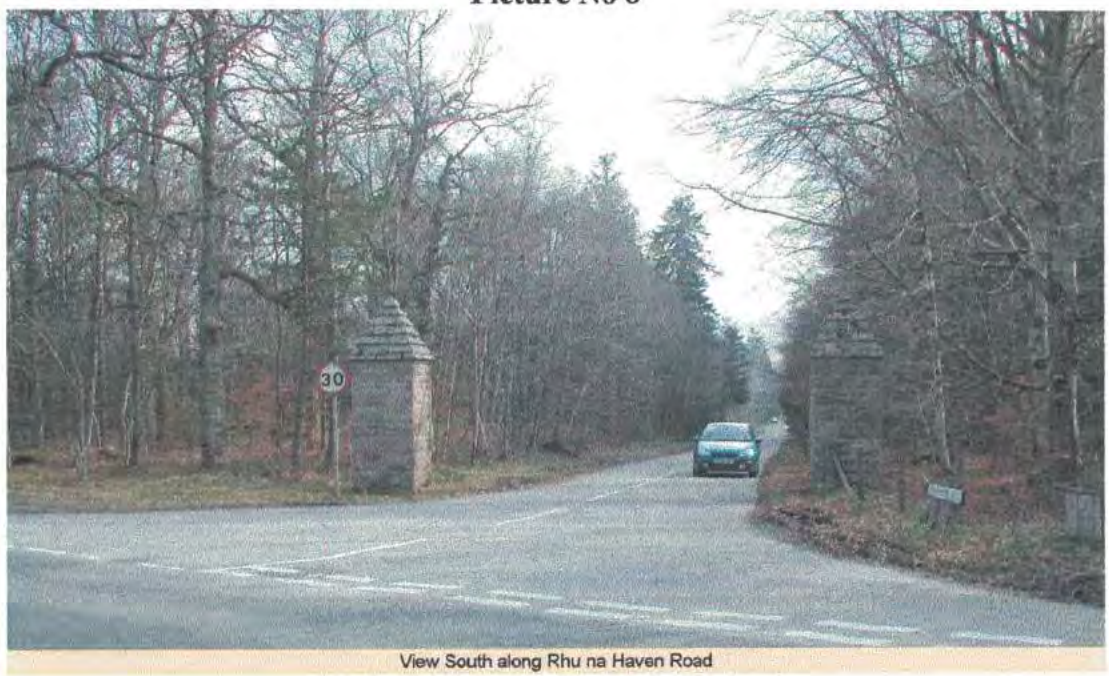
Picture No 7

Access to/from car park. Eroded path with difficult gradient.

5.6.4 Car Parking:

At the western end of the main footpath, on Rhu-na-Haven Road, it is common to find 2 to 3 cars parked at the road side causing the verge to become rutted and muddy (see Picture No. 8). It is suggested that Aberdeenshire Council are requested to construct a small informal lay-by to allow up to three cars to be parked.

Picture No 8



View South along Rhu na Haven Road

6. Work Programme

The following timetable of works is recommended

Operation	Timing	Implemented by	Supervised by
Clear dead, decayed and storm damaged trees	Winter 2002	Contractors	Consultant
Collect native acorns, hazel and hawthorn	Autumn 2002 and ongoing	Volunteers	ACCRS
Remove non-native tree regeneration	Winter 2002	Volunteers	ACCRS
Compile information for educational resource pack	Winter 2002	Schools	ACCRS
Sow acorns and grow for planting	Spring 2003 and ongoing	Volunteers	ACCRS
Upgrade paths, provide access ramp, perch benches & steps	Summer 2003	Contractors	UDAT
Provide information boards allowing for visually impaired	Summer 2003	Contractors	UDAT
Provide lay-by at Rhu-na-Haven Road	2003	Aberdeenshire Council	Council
Maintain paths to all ability standard	Annually	Volunteers	MDL
Monitor wildlife and nest boxes	Annually	Schools and volunteers	ACCRS
Continue tree inspection and remedial works as necessary	As necessary	Volunteers/ Contractors	MDL
Continue removal of non-native tree seedlings	Every 2 – 3 years	Volunteers	MDL

Abbreviations

ACCRS	Aberdeenshire Council Countryside Ranger Service
UDAT	Upper Deeside Access Trust
MDL	Mid Deeside Limited

7. Indicative Cash Flow

		Year				
		2003	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Expenditure						
Clear dead, decayed and storm damaged trees	Autumn/Winter 2002	6,000				
Upgrade Paths	Summer 2003	12,000				
Information Boards	Summer 2003	3,000				
Path maintenance			200	200	200	200
Install bird and bat boxes	Autumn 2002 and ongoing	50	50	50	50	50
Tree planting	Spring 2004 and ongoing		50	50	50	50
Public Liability Insurance		100	100	100	100	100
Total Expenditure		**21,150**	**400**	**400**	**400**	**400**
Income						
Forestry Commission WIG		3,000				
Forestry Commission AMG		100	100	100	100	100
SNH Grant/ Objective 2		18,000				
Aberdeenshire Council			200	200	200	200
Total Income		**21,100**	**300**	**300**	**300**	**300**
Surplus/Deficit		***-50***	***-100***	***-100***	***-100***	***-100***

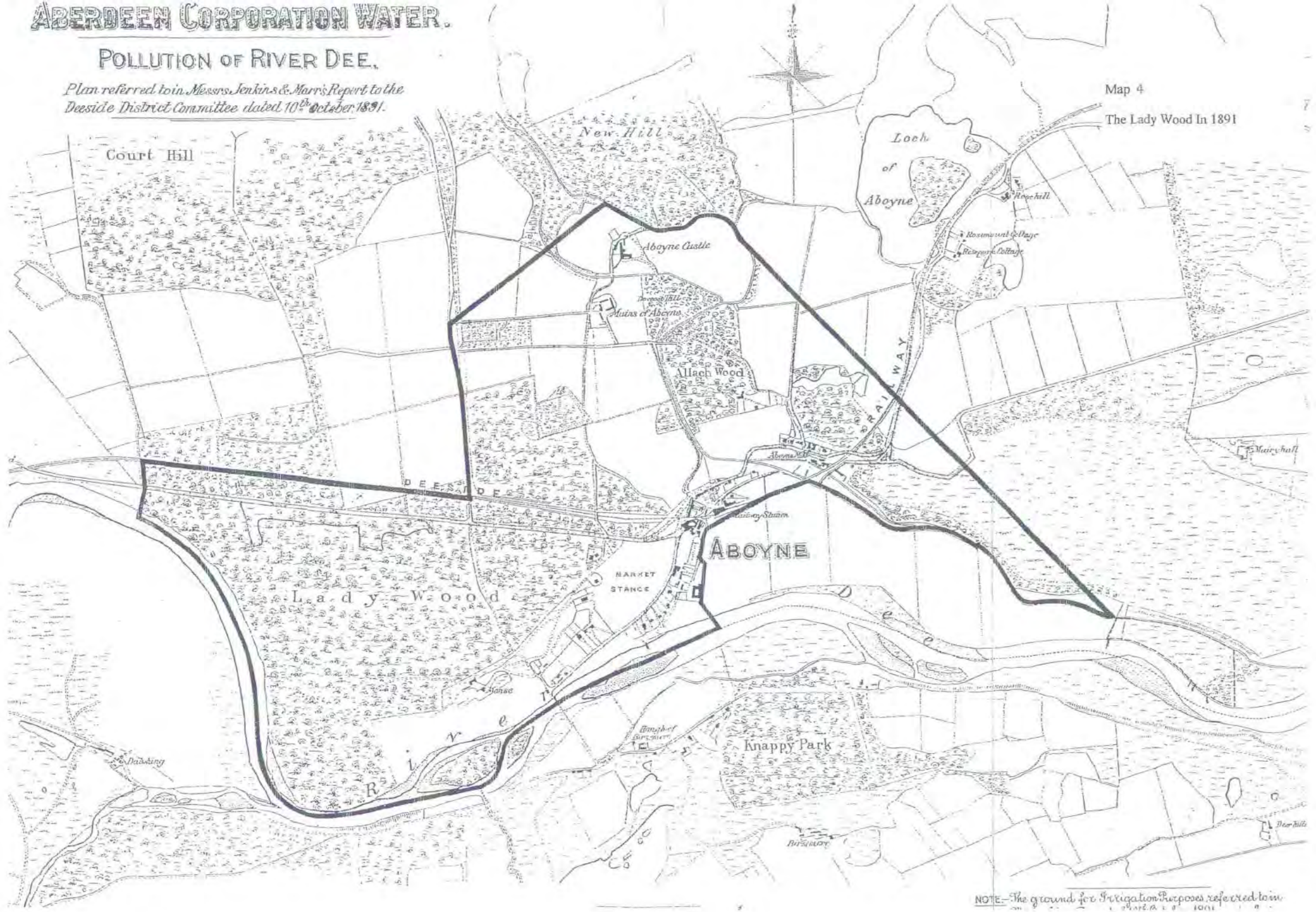
ABERDEEN CORPORATION WATER.

POLLUTION OF RIVER DEE.

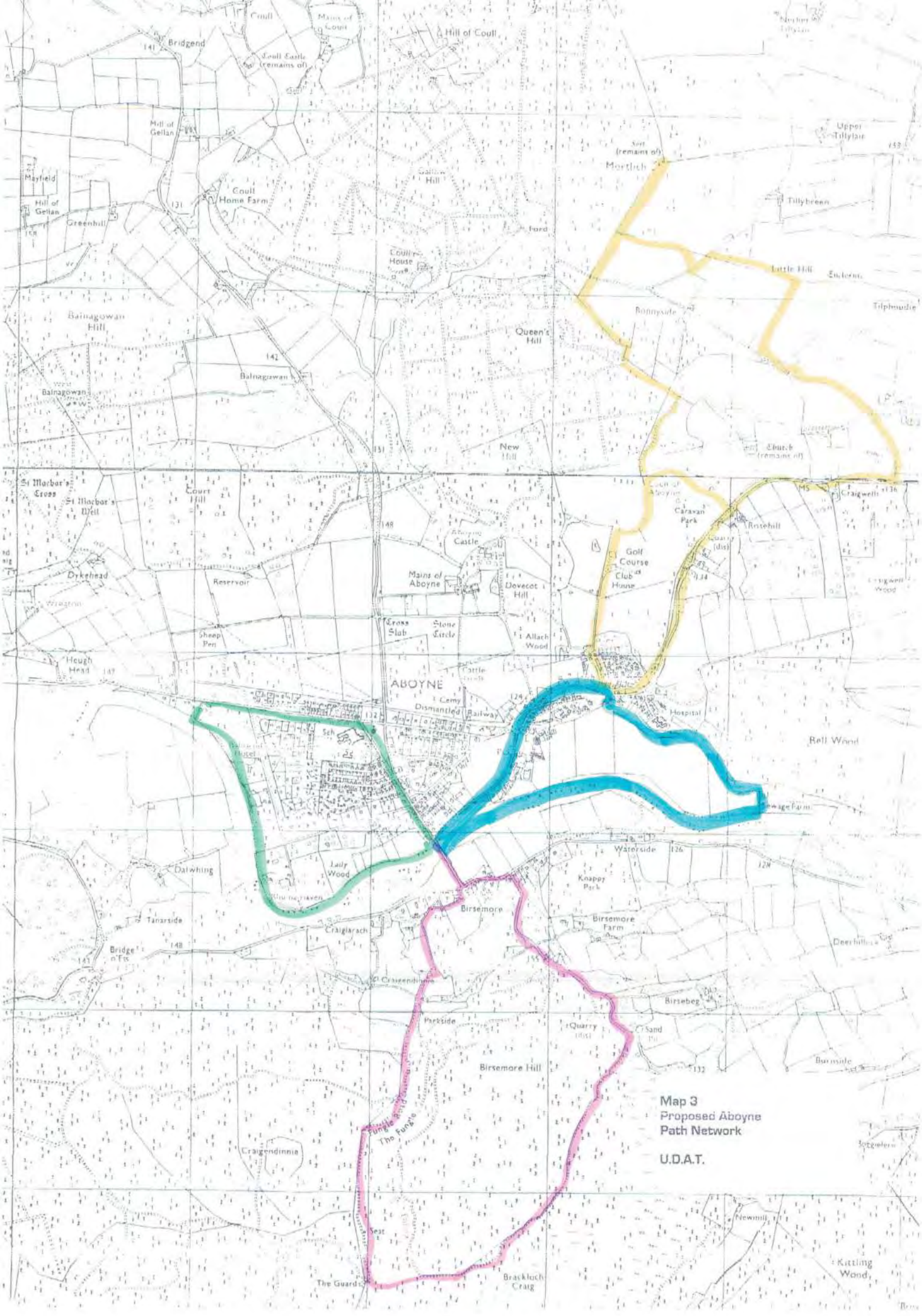
Plan referred to in Messrs. Jenkins & Marr's Report to the Deeside District Committee dated 10th October 1891.

Map 4

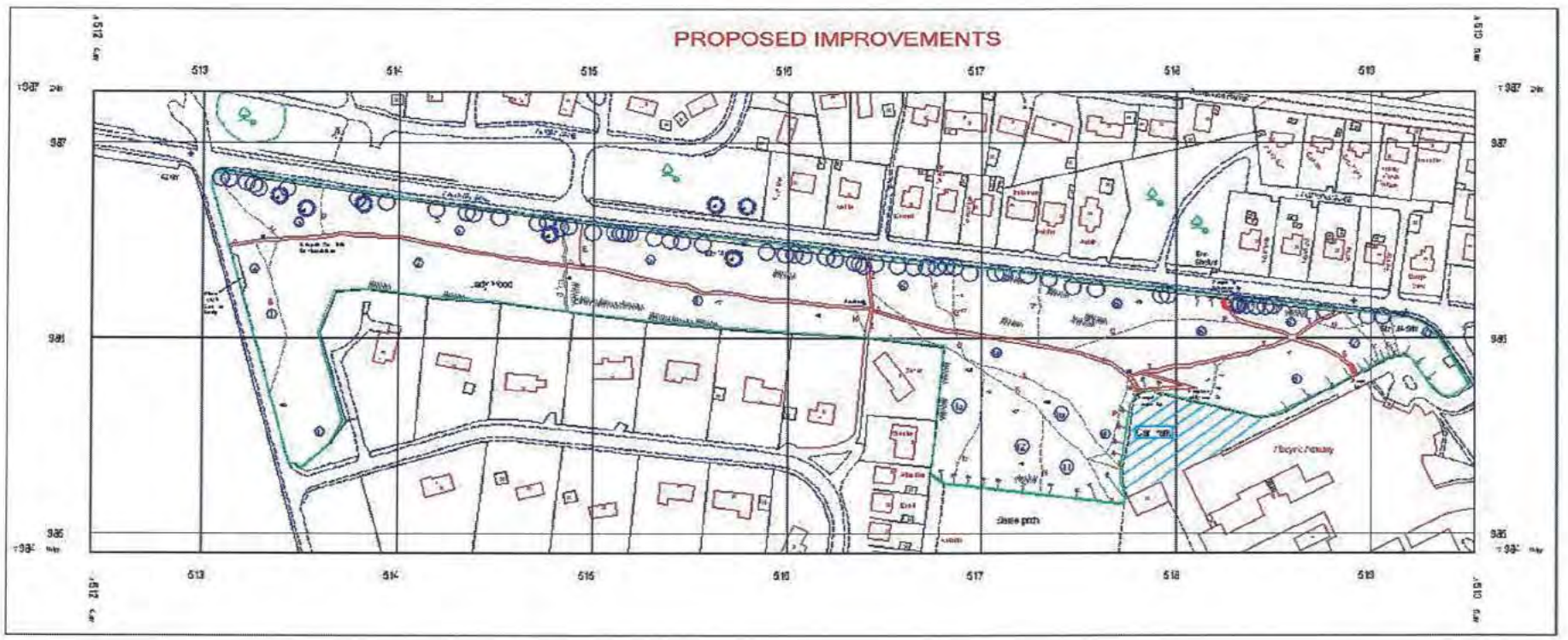
The Lady Wood In 1891



NOTE.—The ground for Irrigation Purposes referred to in


Map 3
Proposed Aboyne
Path Network
U.D.A.T.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



rev	description	date
A	Layby - addt. improved parts	12.04.02

SPECIFICATION (in order of priority)

1. Fell & remove unsafe tree
2. Clear all broken branches & snapped tree
3. Improve main footpath
4. Construct new ramp, steps & ramp
5. Install path benches
6. Construct layby car park

KEY

- Tree inspection areas - refer to Arboric Report - Appdx. 1
- Specific trees requiring maintenance/felling
- Hedge garden trimmings
- Gate & stile to be retained/ replaced
- Major paths to improve
- Minor paths
- Path bench/seat

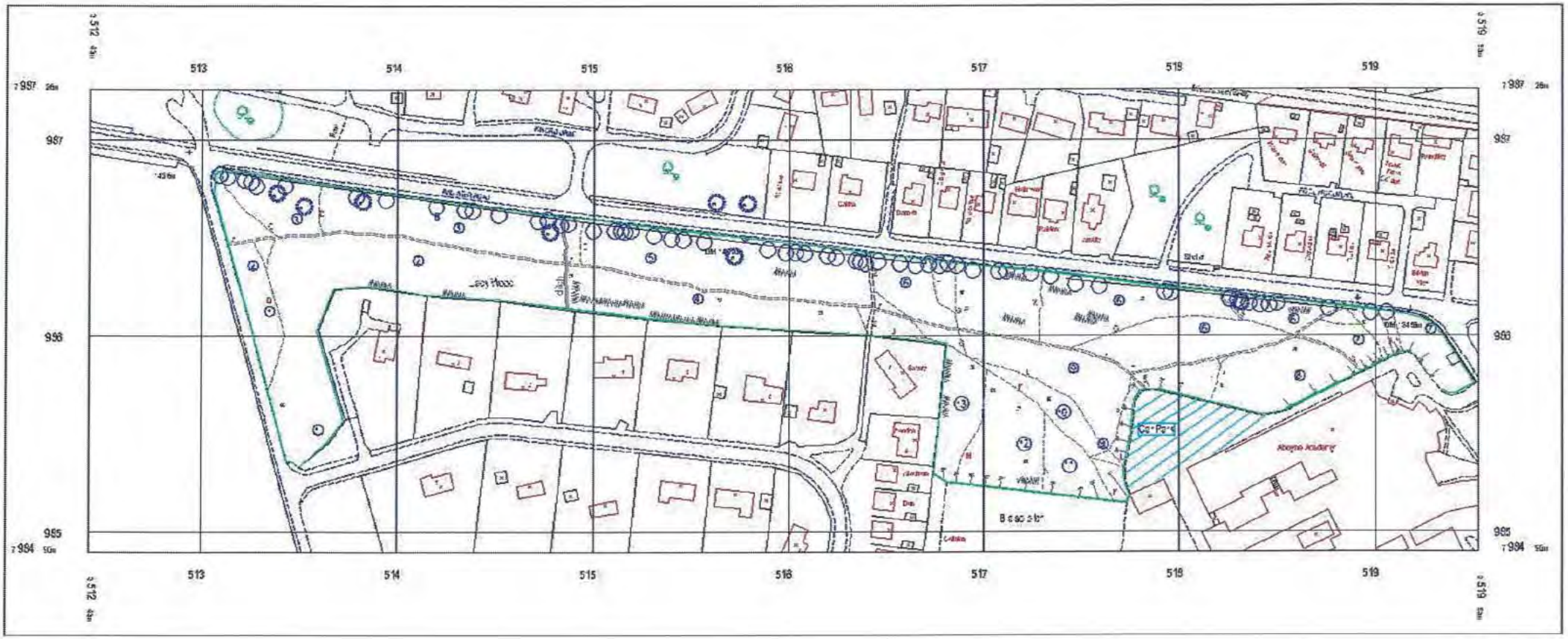
CLIENT: [illegible]

PROJECT: [illegible] MAP 2

DRAWING: [illegible]

SCALE	DATE	DWG.NO.	REVISION
1:xx	04.02	xx/02	A

the Ross Partnership
Landscape & Forestry Consultancy
Bearfold, Ordie, Dinnet
Aboyne AB34 5LS
Tel/Fax: 013398 81651
E-mail: veronica@sylvestris.demon.co.uk



rev	description	date

20 0 20 40 60 80 100
Metres

LEGEND
Survey cross-
refer to Topographical Notes - Appendix 1
Tree canopy as shown thus
Property boundary
Grass / wood fast edge
Bearing Rd.
Major paths
Minor paths

CLIENT	MID DEESIDE LIMITED		
PROJECT	LAND AT WOOD, ABOYNE WOOD AND MANAGEMENT		MAP 1
DRAWING	EXISTING LAYOUT WITH SUB-AREA NUMBERS		
SCALE 1:1250	DATE 6.3.02	DWG.NO. 0206/1	REVISION

the Ross Partnership
Landscape & Forestry Consultancy
Bearfold, Ordie, Dinnet
Aboyne AB34 5LS
Tel/Fax: 013398 81651
E-mail: veronica@sylvestris.demon.co.uk

Appendix 1

Lady Wood Aboyne Target Notes 14.2.02

Area 1 Walking from south to north up Rhu na Haven Rd.

1 Species: birch, oak, Scots pine (SP), beech, rowan, noble fir (NF), Douglas fir, Norway spruce

2 DF, NS & NF seeded in from trees growing on W of Rhu na Haven Road (RnH Rd), many now tall – e.g. 22m, but many seedlings etc. now growing under older trees

3 Tree no. 1560 - a 22m high NF, sprouted from old blown stump. Stability questionable.

4 Near to no.1560 an SP with a hanging broken branch – high and an oak with a large broken branch (tip resting on ground)

5 Close to Whitewalls gdn. Fence – a few saplings – all need stakes, ties and tubes removing

6 Young spindly birch on R n H Rd. edge – liable to bend over road with snow – FELL

7 Approx. 12 oak & birch with snapped, hanging branches – remove

Area 2 Walking east from R n H Rd. to ditch, south of path

1 Fewer conifers in this section, more oak & birch

2 Young beech (knee – waist high) en masse. + seedling NF, sapling rowan

3 All sapling sycamore to be cut

4 Much garden rubbish behind houses 1 & 2 – lop & top, leaves etc.

5 Oak av. Size 22m

Area 3 Walking west from ditch, north of path

1 Mature NF close to ditch

2 Garden trimmings nr. ditch at start

3 1 mature oak uprooted 28.1.02. Root system OK, tree OK – severe pocket of wind! Roots to W, lying E. Behind house 2

4 Ground flora: much bramble, some bracken because slightly more open than S of path.
Understorey: rowan & beech

5 Near R n H Rd. 3 planted NF – visually magnificent. Condition appears OK., but some drought cracking . Tallest = 35m, split @ 8.5m

Areas 1, 2, 3:
Approx no. Sycamores to cut 12.
Approx. no. oak & birch branches to be pruned or topped – 45
Trees to fell: 1

Area 4 – walking S of path, W to ditch from Barclay Pk.. path

1 Behind house 7, large piles of oak leaves

2 Masses of dead nettle ground cover - gdn. escape

3 Tree no. 1551, oak with cavity on E side, where dead branch in past, approx. 8m up, needs inspection because at path edge

4 E of tree no. 1551, oak with breakages @ top

5 Ground flora – leaf litter, grass, bramble

6 Back of house 5, masses of lop & top all outside back gdn. fence

7 Back of house 4, enormous piles of lop & top & garden cuttings

8 2 dead oak near ditch – FELL

9 no.1552 oak - FELL

Area 5 – walking E from ditch > Barclay Pk. path

1 Ground flora: much bramble nr. ditch, then more bracken

2 Understorey: 1 elder 1 rowan

3 A little path goes N (opposite Kinord Drive) oak next to path has lge. dead hanging branch in crown – remove

4 Huge NF at Ballater Rd. edge – has drought crack. 100 dbh. 29m high

5 Many stumps from fallen oaks, now with coppice shoots

6 E of NF, behind house 6 – much grass cutting, vinca, cypress heads,

7 Closer to Barclay Pk. path - ground flora = honeysuckle & celandine

8 A few holly bushes at this end

9 Much lop & top from gdn. oaks on ground

10 Oak leaning over path from Barclay Pk. to Ballater Rd. – tidy/prune/fell!

11 2 oaks nr. Ballater Rd. edge of path - have much ivy growing up stem

Areas 4, 5:
Approx. no. Sycamores to cut 1
Approx. no. oak & birch branches to be pruned or topped
8 trees to fell: 2

Area 6 – walking N of path, from Barclay Pk. path eastwards

1 A few oaks have honeysuckle growing up trunks

2 Masses of dead nettle, ivy on ground & up some oaks

3 Behind house 8 – 2 oaks with bird boxes attached

4 Garden cuttings dumped from Ballater Rd. houses

5 Many little paths run N to Ballater Rd, - snowdrops beside some of them

6 Where there is a conglomeration of path intersections a few oak are in bad shape - no.1522 FELL. Oak next to it dead – FELL no.1548 FELL

7 Much bramble & more hollies, masses of dead nettle

8 Above car park – honeysuckle on ground & up trees

9 no.1526 FELL another oak opposite bus shelter -FELL

Area 6:
Approx. no. oak & birch branches to be pruned or topped – 12
Trees to fell - 5

18.2.02
Area 7 > east from path to bus shelter

1 Ground flora: leaf litter, grass – v. little ground flora round about eroded paths because of school kids feet. Further from paths - bramble

2 Understorey: hollies, NF, birch

3 Many eroded paths as major route to school from bus stops & Ballater Rd. Steps needed up to bus stop pavement & up to CC entrance. Ramp suggested but would need ramp at both ends of path – not enough room, too steep

4 Dead oak close below bus stop – no.1543 FELL

5 Some garden trimmings from houses N side of Ballater Rd. A cotoneaster garden escape

6 Huge oak beside path V, height – 23.4m, dbh – 78. Some grafitti on main trunk. 4 eroded paths run N/S from pavement to CC.

7 Mortared wall at junction of Bridgeview Rd. with Ballater Rd. Behind this is a large old, overgrown pile of..... Road drain runs thro' pile at W end of wall. Much rubbish caught in bushes.

Area 8 > W from path S, to S of main path

1 Species: oak, rowan, birch, NF seedlings

2 Ground flora: bramble (lots), grass, honeysuckle

3 No paths in this first section

4 no.1524 oak, @ path intersections – lop dying limb. Beside this oak – another with 2 dead branches in crown – lop

5 Honeysuckle growing up some trees

6 Along CC access road, mostly birch growing

7 Cotoneaster bush nr. swimming pool, much broom, 1 laurel, a few younger oak

8 no.1557 – rotten birch – FELL

9 Almost behind no.1557 – a large sycamore sapling – CUT

10 1 small dead oak at paths intersection – FELL

11 Up bank a little more rowan & holly seedlings

12 Nr. car park corner at edge – large oak.with large broken branch – lop

13 a) see lger. scale map – nr. path from car park - birch has

14 scar @ 1.2m with nails hammered in. Will need felling at some stage – check periodically

15 b) behind a) another birch with similar scar - check periodically

Areas 7, 8:
Approx. no. birch branches to lop: 7
Approx. no. oak branches to lop:5
Trees to Fell: 3

Area 9 > NW between paths A & L

1 Predominantly birch

2 Lge. oak @ E corner of car park & path has lge. scar @ base > 3m. Monitor because is above parked cars & is of visual importance to car park edge

3 Grd, flora: bramble

4 Understorey: hollies, 1 beech, 1 DF, rowan

5 Further NW beside path 6 birch (1 dead) bent considerably . Future snowfall may crack them

6 Cypress cuttings & garden rubbish @ top end

7 no.1596 – oak – 2 damaged branches lop off

Area 10 Between paths K & L > south east

1 Oak – no.1539 requires inspection – lge. cavity @ 8m where big branch broken out in past

2 Hollies

3 no.1501 & no.1537 – oaks – FELL

4 no.1549 – birch FELL

Areas 9, 10:
Approx no. birch branches to lop: 4
Approx. no. oak branches to lop: 5
Trees to fell: 3

Area 11 > N from blaise pitch, between paths K & N

1 mostly birch , no understorey,

2 ground flora: vaccinium, mosses, grass

3 half way up, lge oak, with lge. broken branch resting on ground – lop

4 broom @ S edge where more light

Area 12 > N from blaise pitch between paths M & N#

1 Broom @ pitch edge

2 Understorey: holly, rowan seedlings @ top, DF seedlings

3 Grd. Flora: honeysuckle, grass, 1 sml. Patch heather

4 Garden rubbish – cypress clippings

5 no.1591 – oak FELL

Area 13 > N from blaise pitch between path M & garden fences

1 Cotoneaster, broom, 3x NS(7'), hollies, rowan, blaeberry

2 Garden rubbish behind Savary

3 1564 – oak – climb & inspect because lge scar on trunk & in v. public area

Areas 11, 12, 13:
Birch branches to lop: 1
Trees to fell: 1

Lady Wood Tree Survey **15.02.02**

Tree No.	Stems	Species	DBH	Height	Comment
1560	1	NF	44	22	Sprouted from old blown stump – stability questionable
1551	1	oak			Cavity on E side where dead branching past @ approx. 8m. Needs inspecting because on path edge.
1572	1	oak	26	8	Damaged, core rotten, close to path – FELL
1552	1	oak	44	18.5	Trunk riven from 2 > 5/6m, completely hollow in middle of main stem, Nr. path - FELL
1520	1	Oak			Lge. dead upper branch – lop
1522	1	Oak	100		Lge. decayed cavity @ top of main stem-what's left of crown hanging to S causing stress on decayed area. FELL
1548	1	Oak			Extensive decayed cavity @ on main stem from grd. Level >2m, covering 90% of stem. Significant decay. FELL
1526	1	Oak	26		Cavity in main stem @ 1.5m – dying. FELL
1543	1	Oak	29	12.5	Dead, showing evidence of bracket fungus higher up. FELL
1590	1	Oak	54	24.5	Lge. scar @ base of main stem extending to approx. 1/3 of tree's circ. From ground level to 1.2m. Some surface decay on exposed timber. Heavily used public area – FELL
1524	1	Oak			Lge. branch @ top has longitudinal split. Dead for ½ its length. Inspect. Prune out unsound timber.
1551	1	Birch	22	8.5	Rotten. Lge scar on main stem from base to a.4m, exposing badly decayed timber. FELL
1596	1	Oak	61	19.5	Lower branch dead – lop. Heavy upper branch has longitudinal split extending thro' branch – lop
1539	1	Oak	50	17	Lge. cavity @ 8m where lge. branch broken off in past. Inspect because at path junction
1501	1	Oak	30	10	Upper half of stem dead. FELL
1537	1	Birch	33	10	Dead – FELL
1549	1	Birch	25	13	Scar extending from base to 4m. Decay extending to heart of tree. FELL
1591	1	Oak	35	16	Almost dead in crown. FELL
1564	1	Oak	42	19.5	Scar half way up main stem. Climb & inSpect.

DBH: Diameter at Breast Height

Appendix 2

Public Consultation Meeting
On the
Lady Wood
17 April 2002

Notes from the discussion session.
These have been arranged in subject headings to aid readability and do not reflect the order of the discussions at the meeting.

1 Woodland Management:

1.1 It was pointed out from the floor that the proposed 99 year lease was a relatively short period in the lifetime of an oakwood. It was asked what would happen at the end of the lease.

The Chairman replied that this had still to be resolved.

1.2 Prof. D Jenkins pointed out that Mid Deeside Community Council had been involved in proposals for a management plan to cover all the trees and woodlands in the village some 20 years ago. Aberdeen University Department of Forestry had been willing to assist. The idea had been abandoned, he thought, because of the reluctance of Dinnet Estate to co-operate. He suggested that the proposed management plan for the Lady Wood should be extended to cover all the village.

1.3 Prof. Jenkins was of the opinion that the condition of the wood might degenerate more quickly than the 150 years that had been suggested in the presentations. If left alone he considered that the wood would become dominated by beech and lose its native oakwood character. Although oak is regenerating freely in the adjacent gardens, the wood is thought to have been planted with oaks of unknown genetic origin. He therefore suggested that it should be replanted when necessary with oaks of known local genetic origin.

1.4 There was concern expressed about the availability of continued future funding for the costs of management and maintenance.

It was pointed out that 50% grant funding would be available from the Forestry Commission up to a maximum of £10,000. However the Annual Management Grant thereafter would only amount to around £100 per annum which might be enough to cover the insurance costs. Long term funding would always be a difficulty with this type of long term project.

1.5 It was suggested that the wood should be managed in future to maintain it as a native oak wood with education as a management priority. Although some expressed the view that they did not see the importance of what species of trees were in the wood and the important thing was that it remained woodland, the majority of the meeting were in favour, or at least did not object to the proposal.

1.6 The were a question from the floor about the costs of woodland maintenance to keep the wood as an oakwood.

It was pointed out that much of the ongoing work such as clearing young beech and sycamore regeneration could be done by volunteers with hand tools. There were groups of conservation volunteers who were willing to do such tasks and there were local groups such as the Probus Club who might be willing to help. Replanting would only be necessary as and when the older trees died or were damaged by storms. This could be undertaken by Academy or Primary school pupils. The Aberdeenshire Council Ranger Service might be willing to assist.

1.7 There were mixed opinions on the matter of the piles of garden cuttings that have been left in the wood. Some considered them to be unsightly rubbish others suggested that it they were only wood and leaves and would decompose naturally and add humus to the wood. There was no clear consensus on this matter.

2 Footpaths:

2.1 The footpath from Aboyne Academy to the new housing development at Charlton Park which passes the house "Darrach" on Ballater Road is now being more heavily used which is causing some erosion. If there is more development at Charlton Park this is likely to increase. It was suggested that the developers of Charlton Park should be asked to contribute to the re-surfacing of he footpath through the Lady Wood and also the section north from Ballater Road as a condition of further planning consent.

2.2 Prof. D Jenkins pointed out that the footpath in the Lady Wood is only part of the whole network of paths through and round the village and the proposed path improvements in the Lady Wood should be considered as part of the whole.

Councillor P Argyll pointed out that the Upper Deeside Access Trust(UDAT) were looking into improving and developing the path network around Aboyne and that there would be full co-operation with UDAT on the development of the proposed management plan.

2.3 Kevin Hutchens - Aberdeenshire Council, Community Development Officer (Learning Disabilities), suggested that access facilities for all abilities should be a priority. He pointed out that there are available guidelines for the standards of facilities that would be necessary. He also suggested that a handrail would be needed on an access ramps. He also suggested that interpretation and signage for the visually impaired should be considered and recommended consultation with Hugh Fife and the Kincardine and Deeside Disability Action Group.

2.4 A minority view was expressed that there was little need to upgrade the path when there was a tarmac surfaced pavement running parallel to the path along the Ballater Road. However others pointed out the danger to young children on the pavement from the road traffic and the effect of road spray on wet days. It was pointed out that the path is heavily used at present because that is the route the majority of people choose to take.

2.5 It was expressed from the floor that dog fouling was common and was unpleasant and also a health hazard for young children.

2.6 It was expressed from the floor that the wood near the school was heavily used as a meeting place for the school pupils, especially those pupils who smoke. The potential for the proposed new benches and signs to be vandalised was a concern.

2.7 Mr Meiklejohn, the Rector of Aboyne Academy, accepted that vandalism and litter were recurrent problems but pointed out that they are less of a problem at Aboyne that elsewhere, for example the new benches in the grounds of the Academy have been well treated by the majority of the pupils. There will always be a small minority who be have irresponsibly however the Academy actively encourages pupils to look after the school environment and he considered that the problem of vandalism could be minimised. He also welcomed the proposals for the Lady Wood and expressed the view that the school would be willing to actively participate in any way that was appropriate.

2.8 It was generally agreed that access should be made easier but that the Lady Wood should NOT be made to look like a city park.

3 Future Action:

3.1 The question of how the process would proceed in the period after the meeting was raised.

The Chairman suggested that the consultants should proceed with the next stage of the management plan which should be in draft from by June. A display of the main proposals would be mounted in Aboyne Public Library with the full text of the draft management plan available for reference. Provision would also be made for the public to leave comments. A second public meeting would then be held to assess the level of agreement on the draft proposals.

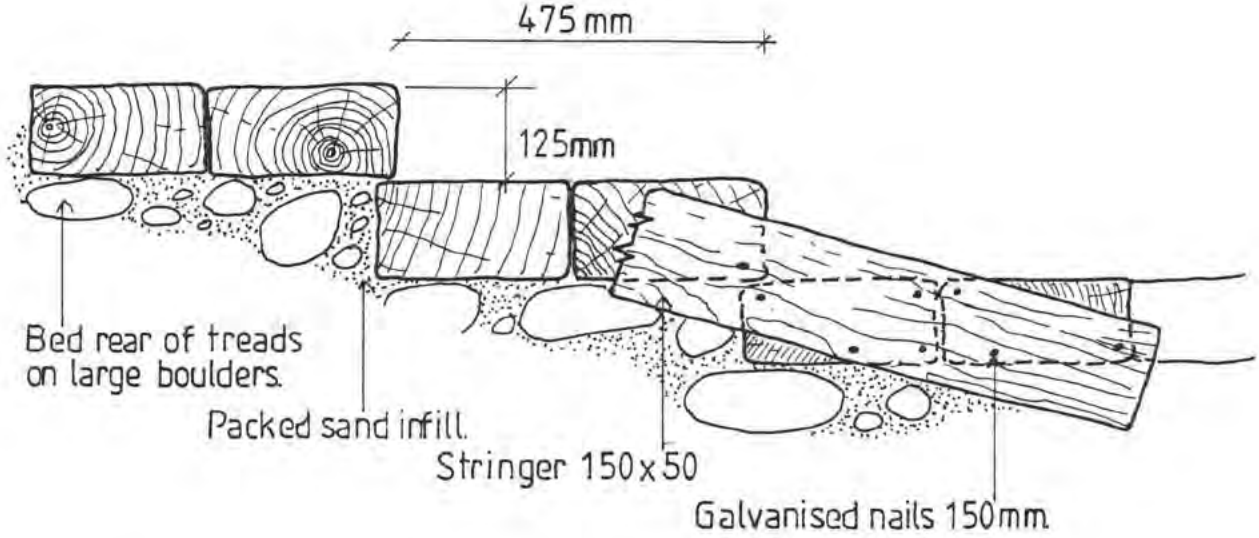
22/04/2002

Appendix 3

Information Sheets on:

Sleeper Steps
Stepped Ramp Construction
Ramps and Gradients
Ramp Construction for Wheelchair Users
Circulation Space for Ambulant Disabled people
Path Users/Path Width
Perch Seats

SLEEPER STEPS



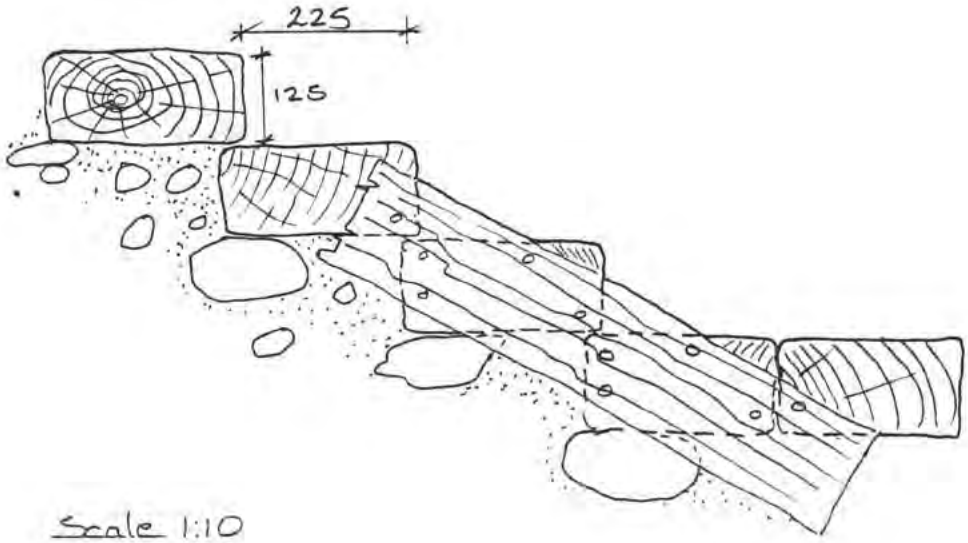
1 Step teads and risers to be formed from railway sleepers

2 Railway sleepers are nominally 2.4 x 3.0m.
Cut sleeper in half to form the tread, which should be beteen 1.2 - 1.5m in width. preferably 1.5m.

3 The tread width will vary according to the steepness of the slope. The tread will be one or two sleepers wide.

4 The stringer board at the side of the sleepers is to be 150 x 50mm nailed onto the sleepers with galvanised nails.

5 The height of the rise may be increased slightly to a max. of 175mm by using more infill.



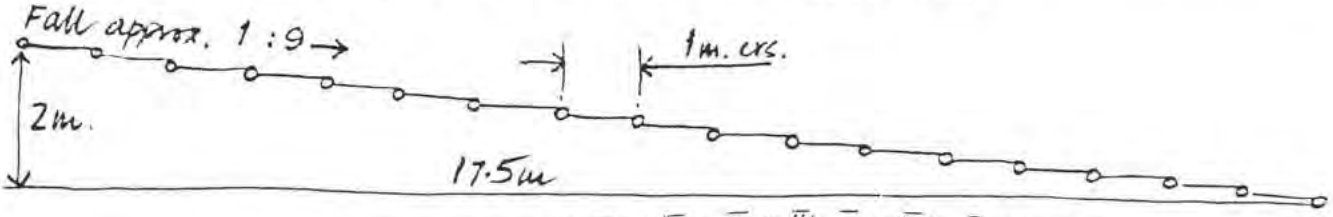
Scale 1:10

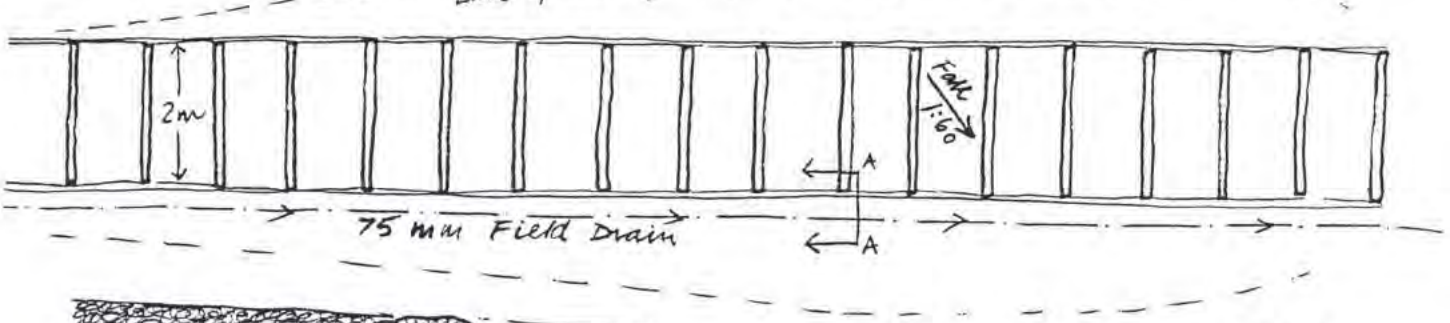
the Ross Partnership
Forestry Management - Landscape Design
www.sylvestris.demon.co.uk

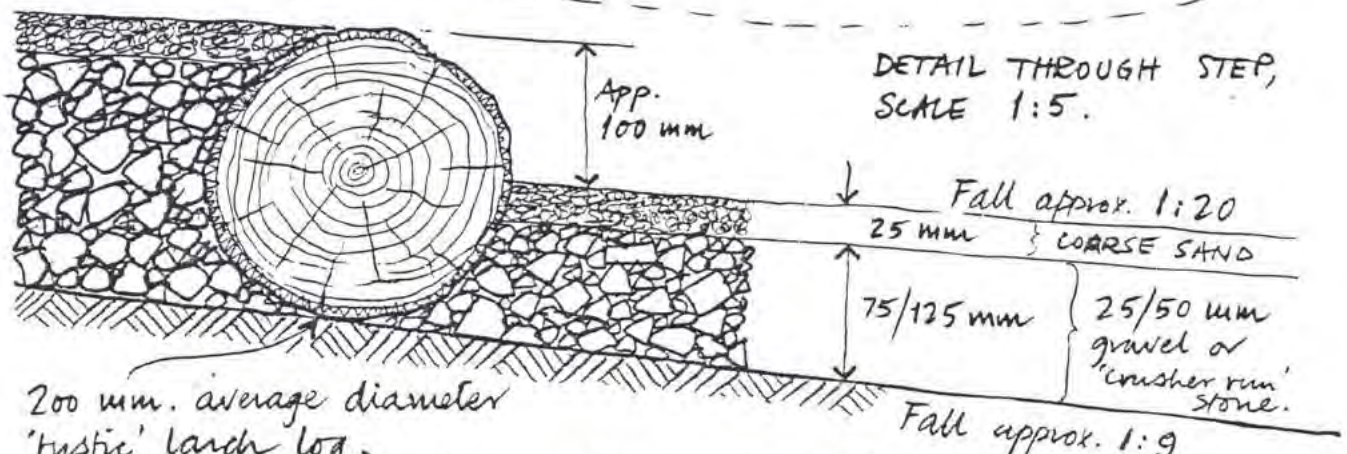
Beerfold, Ordie, Dinnet, Aboyne, Aberdeenshire, AB34 5LS
Tel/ Fax 013398 81651 E-Mail info@sylvestris.demon.co.uk

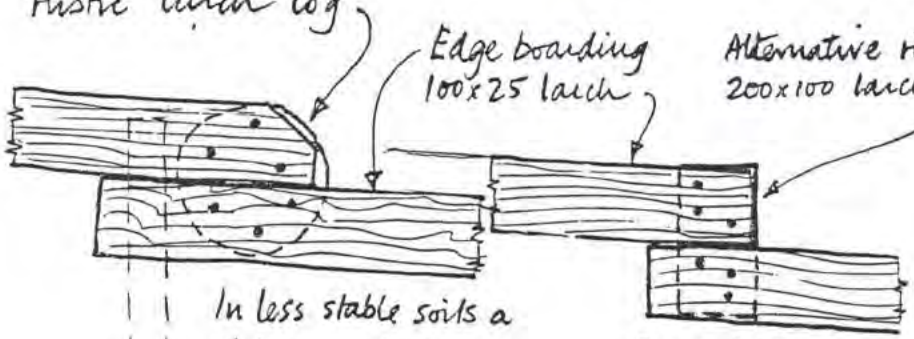
STEPPED RAMP CONSTRUCTION – Plank/sleeper/log + infill (scales as marked)

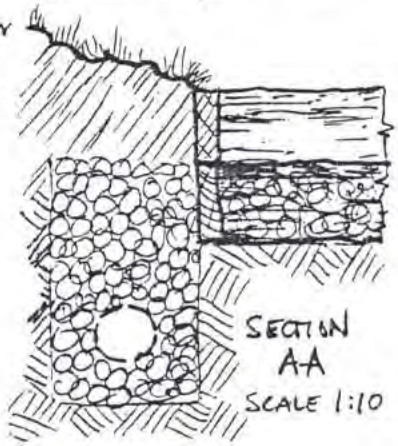
SITE DETAIL AT BATTLEBY DISPLAY CENTRE, Scale 1:100





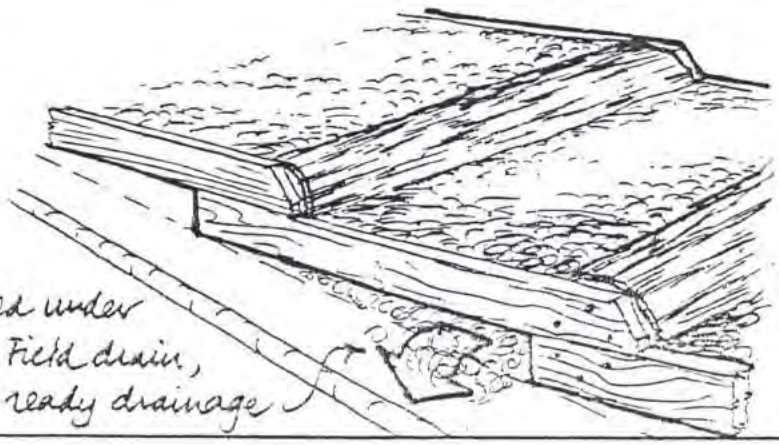






In less stable soils a stake may be added. In this case the lower edge board should be left long and the stake nailed to both boards.

NOTE:
This design obviates the necessity of driving pegs to hold the log risers, and is therefore suitable for sites with hard ground or bedrock. Also, each tread is self-draining.



Gravel continued under edge-board into Field drain, thus allowing ready drainage

RAMPS AND GRADIENTS

General: For wheelchairs users access to facilities must be level or ramped.
A level or ramped access is also advantageous to elderly people and mothers with prams.

In many situations able-bodied and ambulant handicapped can more easily, safely and comfortably manage steps rather than ramps: in wet or icy conditions ramps can be more dangerous than steps.

Handrails should be provided for ramps with a total rise of 600mm, at a height of 1.000m above ramp level.
Where the gradient is 1:20 or less, no handrail need be provided.

Kerbs:
A kerb should be provided to the exposed side of any ramp, not less than 75mm high or 50mm where there is a handrail.

Finishes:
All ramps must have non-slip surfaces. A textured finish with coarse aggregate not finer than 10mm is recommended. Asphalt should be roughened.

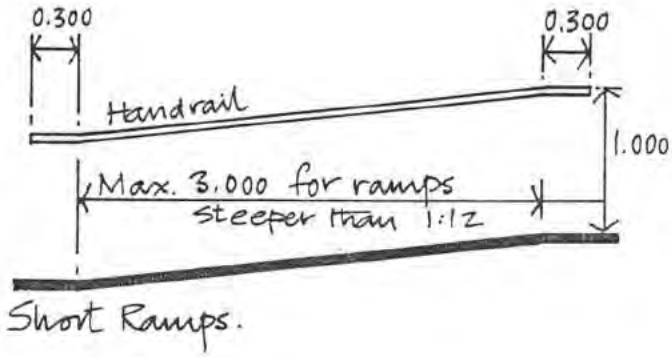
Concrete must **not** be polished, and the surface treated with carborundum to prevent slipping when wet.
For further details see I.S.17.6

Even though the ideal specification for ramps may not be possible to achieve in some places, still provide a ramp — even though it is steep — and some wheelchair users will negotiate it with assistance.

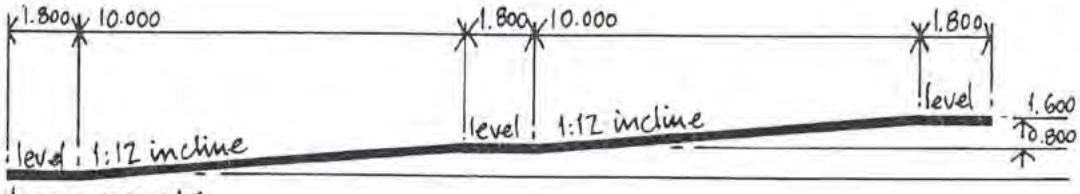
Recommended ramp gradients:

Length of ramp	up to 3.0	3.0-6.0	over 6.0m
ambulant disabled	1:9	1:12	1:12
independant wheelchair users	1:10	1:16	1:20
wheelchair pushed by attendant	1:9	1:12	1:20
electric wheelchairs	1:16	1:16	1:20
All users, preferred max. gradient	1:8	1:12	1:12

Dimensional data:
Preferred minimum width 1.500m.
For short ramps minimum width 1.200m.
In long ramps a rest platform should be provided for every 10.0m of ramp or each 0.800m of vertical rise.
The length of rest platforms should be not less than 1.800m.



Short Ramps.



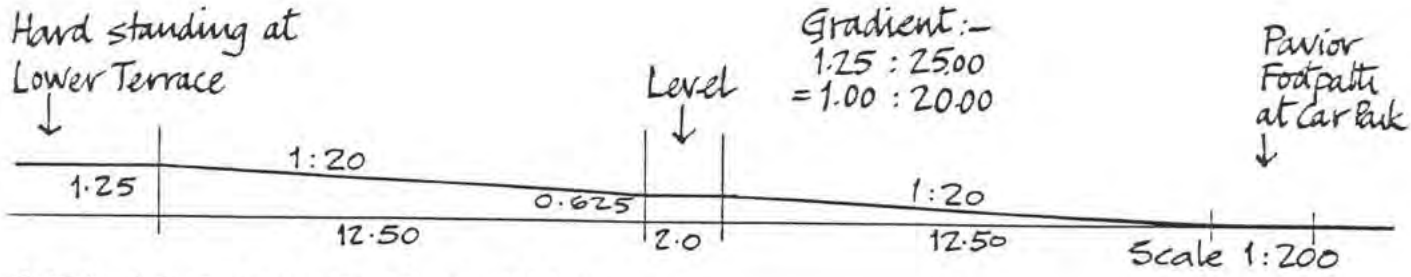
Long ramps

Information based on "Designing for the Disabled" by Selwyn Goldsmith, RIBA Publications, 1976.

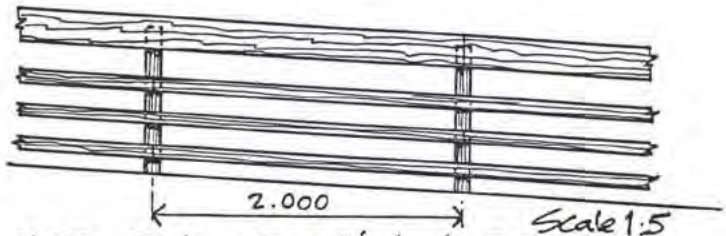
©C.C.S.

RAMP CONSTRUCTION for wheelchair users

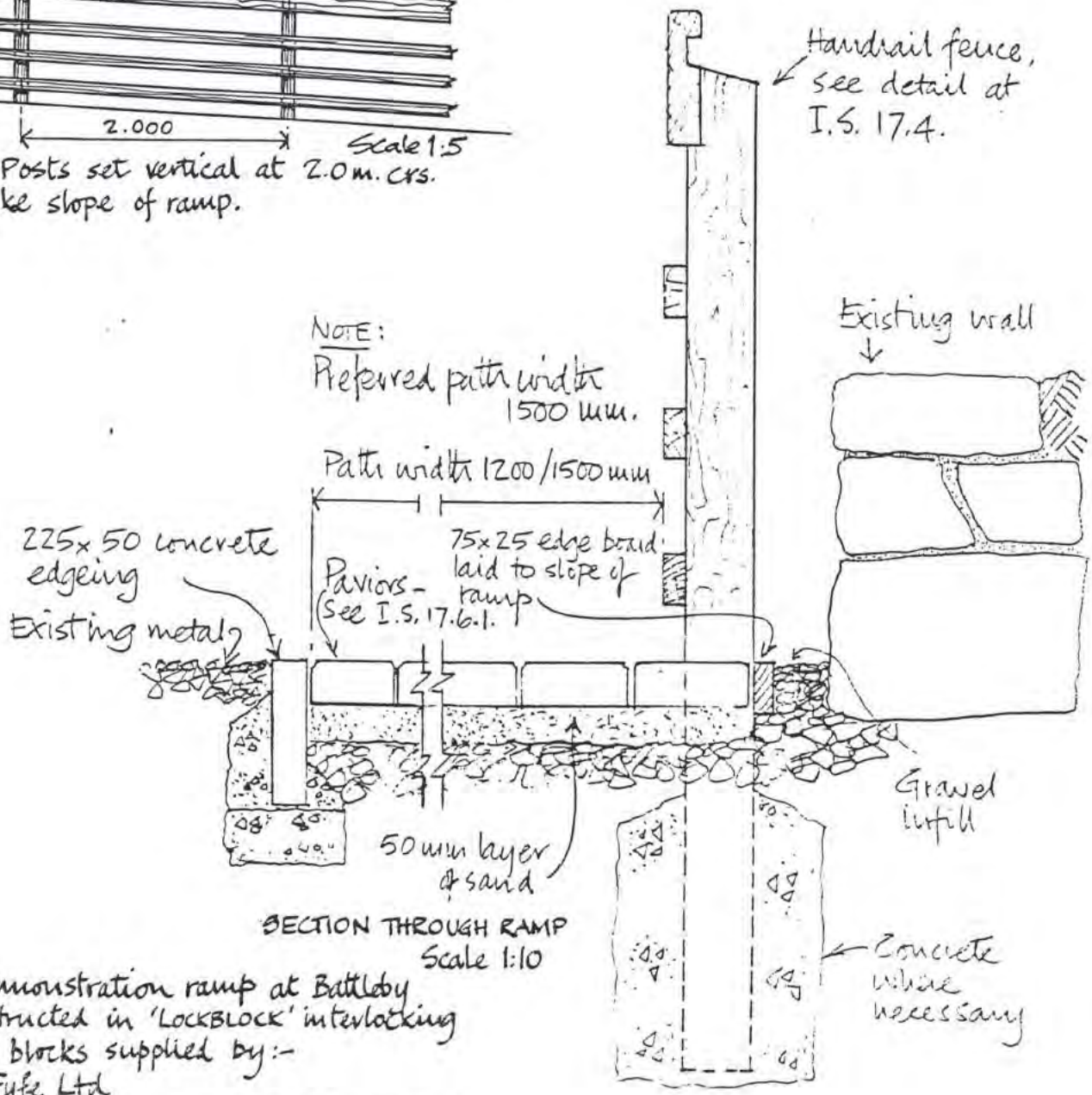
Scales as marked



SECTION THROUGH LENGTH OF RAMP
For general information on Ramps and recommended gradients see Information Sheet Nº 17.3.



NOTE: Posts set vertical at 2.0 m. crs.
Rails take slope of ramp.



SECTION THROUGH RAMP
Scale 1:10

The demonstration ramp at Battleby is constructed in 'LOCKBLOCK' interlocking paving blocks supplied by:-
John Fyfe Ltd
Whitemyres Avenue, ABERDEEN AB9 1XP
Telephone: 0224-691333.

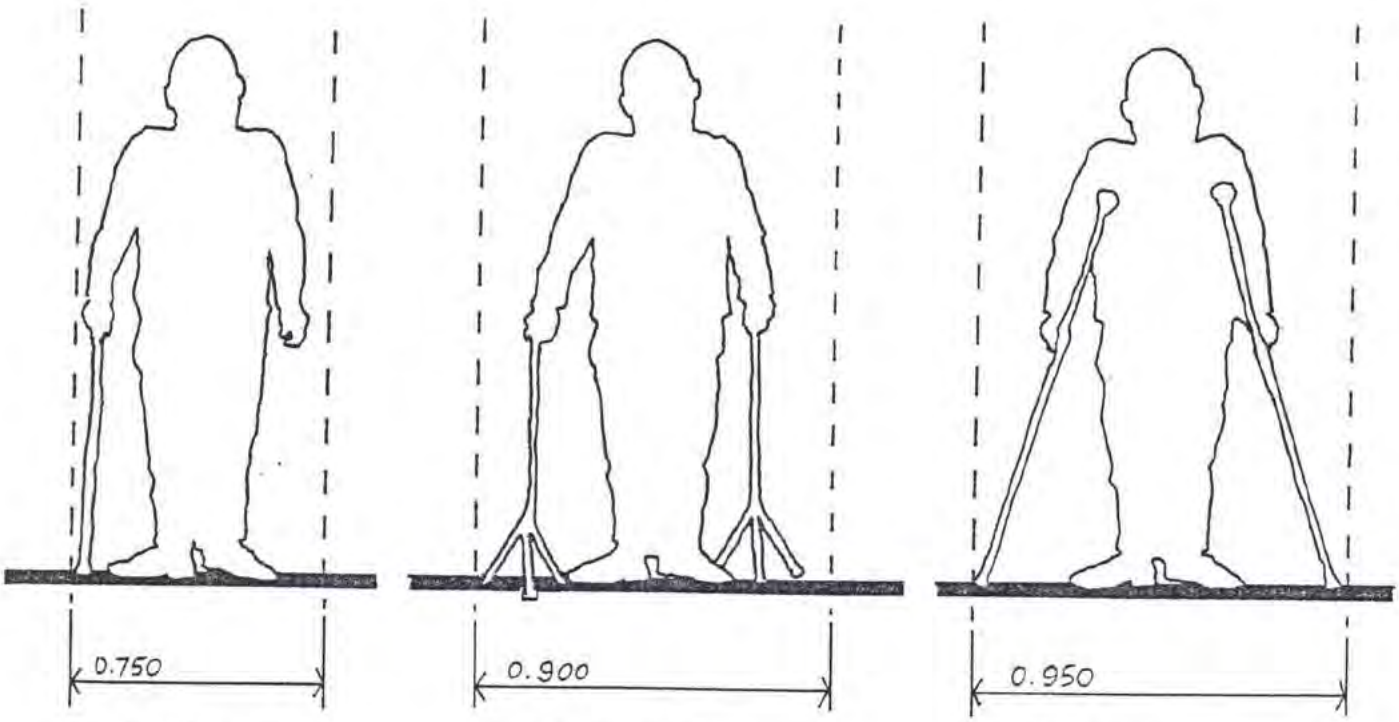
©C.C.S.

CIRCULATION SPACE: AMBULANT DISABLED PEOPLE

General: Although stick users can negotiate a passage width of 800mm (2′ 8″) this is not recommended, and a minimum passage width of 900mm (3′ 0″) should be observed.

In practice all stick users, crutch users and people with walking aids can be accommodated by a passage width of 1,000m (3′ 3″).

Circulation space requirements for ambulant disabled people.



Single walking stick

Tripod walking aids

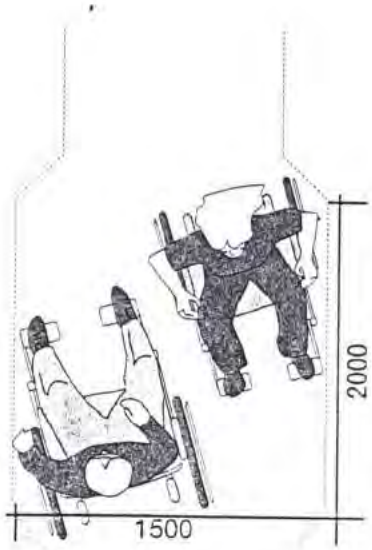
Shoulder crutches

Information based on "Designing for the Disabled" by Selwyn Goldsmith, RIBA Publications, 1976.

Path Users/Path Width

BT Countryside for All

- To be accessible countryside paths should have a minimum of 1200mm useable surface width. This allows two people to walk along side by side and support each other if necessary.
- The path width may be reduced to 815mm for a maximum of 300mm, for example at a gateway.
- To allow for free movement of two-way traffic by all pedestrians (including wheelchair users and double pushchairs) the minimum path width should be 2000mm.
- Path edging is not essential but a clear visual distinction between the path and adjoining ground will be helpful.
- People with visual impairment need to be able to feel the difference underfoot between the path surface and the ground next to it.
- Wide paths will not be accessible unless they are well maintained to ensure no vegetation encroaches and the surface remains firm and stable.



Passing Places:

- Where the path width is less than 1500mm passing places every 50m will allow two wheelchair users to pass each other.
- Passing places should be 1500mm wide and 2000mm long. This will allow enough space for two wheelchair users plus helpers to pass each other.

This sheet should be read in conjunction with the BT Countryside for All Standards and Guidelines

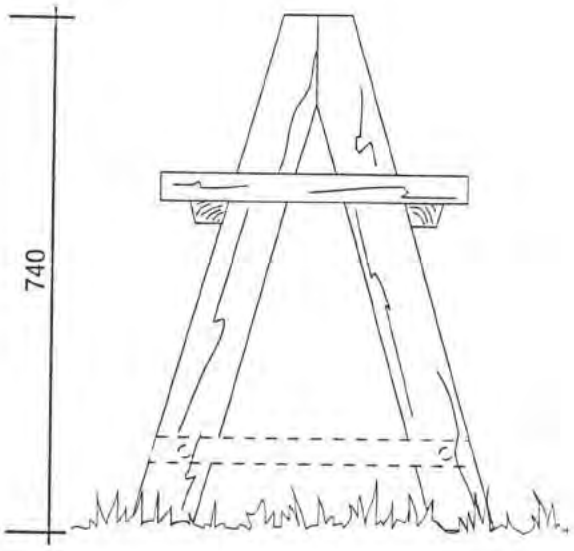
N.B. All measurements are in millimetres

Perch Seat

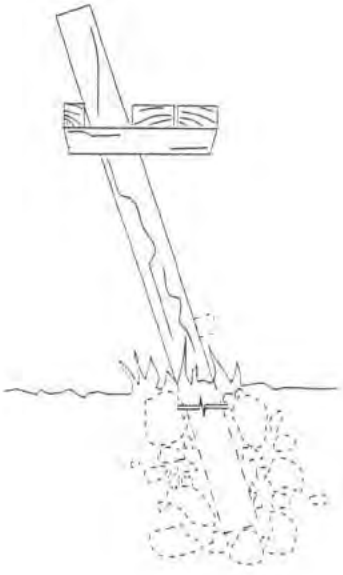
- A perch is a simple resting point aimed at providing leaning/ semi-seated rest at, for example, view points to break climbs, or along trails.

Supplied by:
© Scottish Natural Heritage
Phone 0173 862 7921

Front elevation:



Side elevation:



This sheet should be read in conjunction with the BT Countryside For All Standards and Guidelines

N.B. All measurements are in millimetres

Appendix 4

Contacts
The following organisations have been contacted about the Lady Wood project and they will be able to provide further assistance They would also like to be kept informed regarding its progress:

Marcus Humphrey
Dinnet, Aboyne, Aberdeenshire, AB34 5LN
email: marcus@dinnet.force9.co.uk

Aboyne Academy - David Meiklejohn Rector, Bridgeview Road, Aboyne
email: aboyne.aca@aberdeenshire.gov.uk Tel:013398 87722

Aboyne Primary School - May Beaton Head teacher, Aboyne
email: aboyne.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk Tel: 013398 86638

Upper Deeside Access Trust - Andrew Coleman, 1 Bridge Street, Tarland, Aboyne, AB34 4YN
email: udat@ecosse.co.uk Tel: 03398 81133

Aberdeenshire Council Countryside Ranger - John Latham,
Haughton Country Park, Alford
email: marr.ranger@aberdeenshire.gove.uk Tel: 019755 62453

Roads Department - Mark Skilling/Jim Craig, Aberdeenshire Council, Carlton House, Arduthie Road, Stonehaven AB39 2DP Tel: 01569 766266

Scottish Natural Heritage - Isla Martin, 17 Rubislaw Terrace, Aberdeen, AB10 1XE
email: isla.martin@snh.gov.uk Tel: 01224 642863

Forestry Commission, Ordiquhill, Portsoy Road, Huntly, Aberdeenshire AB54 4SJ

Mid Deeside Community Council

and

Mid-Deeside Limited, Victory Hall, Ballater Road, ABOYNE, AB34 5HY
email: mid-deeside@lineone.net Tel: 013398 95222