



Irish Forestry Unit Trust

Rossalee
Mountrath, Co. Laois
MANAGEMENT PLAN
2023 – 2042 (Period 1: 2023-2027)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION, OWNERSHIP AND LANDUSE HISTORY.

Rossalee Forest comprises of one forestry block of 60.0Ha. The crop is predominantly SS with a lesser area of SS/LP on the eastern side. SS has achieved high growth rates on these soil types and is well matched to the site and objectives. Rossalee is situated in a heavily afforested area on the lower slopes of the eastern Slieve Bloom mountains. Neighbouring landuse is improved enclosed land and poor unenclosed.

Rossalee was initially established by [REDACTED] and then acquired by IForUT in early 1999.

Elevation

Ranges between 160m and 230m

Statutory Land Designations

Rossalee is situated in a heavily afforested area on the lower slopes of the eastern Slieve Bloom mountains SPA. The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) of special conservation interest for Hen Harrier.

Water/Fisheries Sensitivities:

Rossalee MU lies within the water catchments of Barrow Main, Brosna, Figile, Nore Upper and Barrow/Owenass/Triogue.

Margaritifera

Rossalee is within Catchments of SAC populations of Fresh Water Pearl Mussel.

Old Woodland Sites (OWS):

There is no OWS/potential OWS in the Rossalee MU.

Archaeology/Historical/Cultural:

There are no archaeology features in properties within the Rossalee MU.

SOIL TYPES.

Soil types are mainly gley/ peaty gley on the lower enclosed land and peaty podzol above the enclosed land margins.

SUMMARY OF THE LANDSCAPE VALUE OF THE FOREST.

Landscape Classification. Rossalee is situated on an elevated position and is visible to much of the surrounding landscape. When this is viewed in context with the forestation levels on the surrounding topography the potential landscape impact is lessened.

Afforestation has a High Sensitivity due to the existing high level of conifer forest cover in the area.

To address the potential landscape impact issues the felling plan has applied a significant coupe restructuring sequence to introduce greater crop age structure.

Moderate landscape value due to its raised position on a sloping topography. General locality sparsely populated reducing the potential impact of the forest. Surrounding landscape mainly poor hill grazing and mature plantation forestry.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES.

- 1) To maximise economic output from the forest at local and national level.
- 2) To manage FMU in accordance with the principals of the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and international benchmarks of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC).
- 3) To manage timber production in a sustainable way.
- 4) To maintain and enhance the landscape value of the forest.
- 5) To protect existing biodiversity and where opportunities arise enhance and further promote new biodiversity.
- 6) To manage forest activities with due regard to local, regional and national stakeholder interests.
- 7) To promote continuous professional development at management level.

(IForUTs FSC licence code: FSC-C003194)

Summary of silvicultural systems to be used.

System	Conifers	Broadleaves
Clear fell	✓	
Selective fell		
Thinning to MTI (potnl)	✓	
Line thinning only		
Non thin regime	✓	
Non intervention		✓
Natural regeneration		✓
Replanting	✓	✓
Other		

5 Year Monitoring Report

	Objective	Was it achieved?	How this information was applied to 5 year Management Plan review?
1	Economic Return	This site was thinned 3 times the most recent being carried out in early 2015, improving crop quality and potential future revenues.	No significant changes to plan for next five year period. There had been plans previously to thin this property a 4 th time but this has been changed as there are concerns over crop stability.
2	Certification Standards	Certification Standards and IForUT systems applied over plan period. Managers working off FMM	Certification standards and IForUT systems applied over plan period. Managers working off FMM. Continue as before and update FMM as required.
3	Timber production	Thinned three times, good volume increment and DBH growth.	As mentioned above, thinning cycles and crop stability were reviewed and it was decided that a 4 th thinning would be risky as storm occurrences are becoming more common. Only parts of the crop were suitable to be thinned. There is somewhat mixed productivity in the FMU. SS and pine mixes are self thinning as the pine has been by and large suppressed. However there are some very good Spruce areas on this property. Windthrow will greatly devalue the crop. First clearfell planned for 2023. Felling coupes have been separated out as much as possible to allow for time delays between felling coupes and to try to ensure that there is not a glut of felling in any five year period. However, delaying felling or bringing felling forward any further would result in severe economic losses from either a too small tree size or wind damage as a result of delaying felling beyond a critical top height.
4	Landscape	Two new landscape layers added to designations GIS layer. Forest Service layer taken off National Development plan for new planting and Landscape Unit appraisals based on Coillte LUs.	New landscape Map added to MP. New felling coupe design added to MP which keeps coupes separated. Classified as having low landscape sensitivity.
5	Biodiversity Enhancement	Existing biodiversity very limited to thinned monoculture. Limited hedgerows present that could be thinned out along.	Restructuring plan addresses biodiversity requirements. Main opportunities for enhancement will occur after clearfell stage with more Broadleaf planting being planned and increased open spaces being introduced post clearfell. Open space and biodiversity will increase over the next rotation due to changes in the required national standards. These standards will require increased broadleaves and open space alongside county roads and dwelling houses at restocking stage.

6	Stakeholder	Forest has low level local stakeholder relationships.	During plan review, conducted a more comprehensive stakeholder consultation has been completed. Regional press/local community groups and local statutory bodies consulted. See stakeholder folder
7	Professional Development	████████ managed. Forest Managers are members of SIF and attend lectures and field days as part of continuous professional development.	Retendering of whole portfolio into regional management units in 2010 to simplify overall forest level management and Certification compliance. New centralised network server ██████████ is being used for managing FMM and IForUT database.
8	Forward Planning	Continue with current standards and work practices and review on a continuous basis to implement industry best practice.	Carry out reviews of Forest Management Manual and introduce manager training and updating of best practice.