

## Stobo Access Survey

### Overview

Access roads and tracks will provide further recreation opportunities, allowing visitors to the site easier access to areas, thus possibly influencing usage patterns, use and views from these tracks should also be considered in the design. The Recreational Access Map takes in to account the desire lines highlighted in Map 2 and reconciles commonly used routes throughout the valley against the proposed planting design (document 11). Where these desire lines fall in the middle of planned planting coupes, we have proposed minor diversions up species boundaries along quad tracks (to be created during the planting phase) or (in the case of the route down from Woolshears) out and along the future forest road – [REDACTED]

In conversations with Scottish Borders Council, it has been highlighted that where cyclists and horse riders are access the site multi-use gates (such as those demonstrated in Figure 25 in Trout and Pepper, 2006) should be provisioned. Public consultation has also preferred pedestrian gates instead of styles. As such, where access routes crosses deer fencing, gates appropriate to the use type will be used.

In February 2023 an access survey was carried out to assess how well utilised the Stobo Valley is by public rights of way and by desire lines as identified by the Strava Heat Map.

The images taken as a part of this survey can be viewed here: [Stobo Access Survey](#)

### The John Buchan Way

The John Buch Way is the most highly used route through the scheme area. The route enters the property to the east of Hammer Rig at NT16143843 at an elevation of 270m (figure 1).



Figure 1 - NT16153842

From here it heads west up to the saddle between Mid Hill and Hammer Rig at NT15453847 (figures 2 and 3).



*Figure 2 – looking up the John Buchan way through Stobo Valley*



*Figure 3 – looking back down the John Buchan Way across to Penveny Forest*

The John Buchan way wends its way through the Stobo Valley before exiting the scheme at NT12703923 at an elevation of 380m.



*Figure 4 - NT12883928*

As it stands access to the John Buchan way will not be affected by the proposed Scheme. Where deer fencing crosses the John Buchan way both self-closing deer vehicle gates and self-closing full public access gates will be installed (figures 5 and 6).



*Figure 5 – an example of a deer vehicle gate*



*Figure 6 – an example of a full access pedestrian gate useable by pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders*

### **Public Rights of Way**

Stobo Estate has three public rights of way within the scheme boundary.

The first crosses into the scheme at Coshbog house at NT16813682 and runs along the main access track before deviating off at NT14203913 up over Hopehead Rig (Figure 7) before joining the John Buchan Way at the most western extent of the property (Figure 8). For most of the off-road part of this path it is little more than a sheep trod, with foot traffic seemingly favouring the more established John Buchan Way.



*Figure 7 – PROW across Hopehead Rig*



*Figure 8 – PROW across Hopehead Rig*

The second public right of way runs from the edge of the property boundary with Woolshears wood (NT14214060) (figure 9) down to the cottage at Stobo Hopehead (NT14103962) (figure 10). This is a well-used route with cyclists spotted using it on multiple occasions. As with the John Buchan Way, where deer fencing crosses this public right of way a full access pedestrian gate will be used (figure 6).



The final public right of way runs from the most westerly crossing point of the John Buchan Way (NT12703923), along the bottom of Broomy Side to join the second public right of way at NT13944000. It is evident from the lack of delineation in the vegetation that this path is barely used with only a subtle trod able to be seen in the vegetation (figures 11 and 12).



For the first and third public right of way, planting positions will be pulled back by a 5 to 7.5m on either side and their deer fence crossing points will be serviced by gates installed on the John Buchan Way. The second public right of way will be buffered by at least 5m up to 7.5m on either side.

### Desire lines

Alongside the public rights of way there are a series of desire lines throughout and around the scheme area. The horseshoe route around the hill tops of the glen is well used with a well-trod track clear on the ground (figures 13, 14 and 15). This route is accessed from the John Buchan way at NT12453923 and from within the scheme by desire lines heading up and over Louden Knowe (figures 16 and 17), Hog Knowe/Grey Yade (figures 18 and 19), and Hammer Know/Mid Hill (figures 20 and 21).



Figure 13 - NT12863894



Figure 14 - NT12354135



Figure 15 - NT13984070



Figure 16 - NT15283756



Figure 17 - NT14193724

Figure 18 - NT14943820



Figure 19 - NT13623823



*Figure 20 (above) - NT15373853*

*Figure 21 (left) - NT15303877*

The horseshoe route will not be interrupted by tree planting as it lies in planned open ground. Where deer fencing crossed the desire lines gates such as the one seen in figure 6 shall be used.

For the desire lines heading up through the scheme, planting will once again be pulled back by 5 to 7.5m, access shall also be available via quad tracks developed to service the scheme. Where deer fencing crosses these desire lines gates such as the one seen in figure 6 shall be used.

The final desire line runs along a track from the John Buchan way. Below Huskie Rig and out to Harrow Hope (figure 22). This track will be upgraded as part of access works with the scheme, and gates such as those in figures 5&6 will be installed where the track crosses the planned deer fence.



*Figure 22 - NT15593895*