

UC33 Auchenlochan Back Road Timber Transport Management Plan - Briefing

1.0 Background to the Argyll Timber Transport Group and Timber Transport Management Plans

1.1 The Argyll Timber Transport Group (ATTG) is a voluntary body supported by the timber industry, Forestry Commission and Local Authority as a means of minimising problems arising from timber haulage on public roads. The ATTG was formed in 1997 and meets at least twice per year. Agreements are made in a spirit of co-operation to sustain the network to allow access by the majority of users. The role of the ATTG has become particularly significant in recent years following extensive freeze/thaw damage suffered to the local road network during winter; which has highlighted the fragility of the roads and the need for timber traffic management to sustain the roads essential for access by the wider community. The ATTG has championed best practise and the use of technology such as central tyre inflation (CTI) which has resulted in local hauliers making considerable investments to their fleet with a view to sustaining the local road network.

1.2 Where it is necessary to extract timber via a fragile public road, this is controlled by use of a Timber Traffic Management Plan (TTMP). The TTMP will normally include:

- Detail of the route;
- The lorry configuration (e.g. tyre type, CTI, trailer/cab type);
- Frequency of haulage;
- Seasonal and weather restrictions;
- Speed limits and requirement for drive awareness;
- Monitoring – this will include not only inspections by Council staff but also puts responsibility for reporting defects on other relevant parties (i.e. haulier, land owner).

1.3 The TTMPs are voluntary agreements; they are not legally binding contracts, however; there are enforcement options open to both the ATTG and to the Council as an individual organisation. Through the ATTG; if a particular land owner or haulier, for example, consistently breached the TTMP the enforcement could be that they may not be granted future felling licences (by the Forestry Commission), or forestry companies may advise a Haulage Contractor that if they continued breaching a TTMP that they would not be awarded any future contracts. The Council could suspend the TTMP and warn that any future TTMP requests may not be granted.

In the event that the aforementioned informal approaches are unsuccessful then the Council, as the Roads Authority, could introduce a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on a route restricting vehicle width, vehicle length and maximum gross weight permitted. It should also be noted that if a public road is damaged due to use by HGVs, then costs

can be recovered via the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, s96. The TTMPs do not in any way prejudice the use of s96.

There are currently thirty-seven TTMPs in operation across the Argyll and Bute Council area; of which seven are for routes within Bute & Cowal.

1.4 The timber industry is the only industry that have accepted control of their business activities by way of voluntary traffic management plans. It is worth noting that this is not done by farming (aqua or agri-cultural), quarries or any delivery company.

1.5 The use of TTMPs has largely been a success within Argyll and Bute in protecting a sometimes fragile network. As a member of the ATTG, the Council has also been able to secure additional capital funding for road improvements through the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme. An example of one such successful scheme in Bute and Cowal is the B836 Glen Lean Improvements. Appendix 1 provides detail in regards to the project type and the success of Argyll as a whole in achieving project award. The table and graphs are from the Forestry Commissions "Strategic Timber Transport Fund Update Report April 2016".

1.6 The Argyll Timber Transport Group has representation by the following organisations:

- Argyll & Bute Council
- Forestry Commission
- Forest Enterprise
- Scottish Woodlands Ltd
- UPM Tilhill
- Aichesse Co
- Euroforest
- Iggesund
- Egger
- James Jones & Sons
- J.R. Dixon & Son
- Balcas Timber Ltd
- United Kingdom Forest Products Association

2.0 Current TTMP for UC33 Auchenlochan Back Road

2.1 The TTMP prepared for the UC33 Auchenlochan Back Road on 9 December 2013 is still in operation. The agreements are voluntary but are supported by the Argyll Timber Transport Group (ATTG) which ensures compliance as noted earlier. The TTMP notes that the route is narrow, runs adjacent to residential properties and has no formal passing places. This is not uncommon on many of the Councils rural single track routes although passing place provision is usually better than on the UC33. It is worth noting, however, that the length of the UC33 from the forest access to the A8003 is only 270m (approximately) and there are no alternative extraction routes currently available. There are no TROs in operation on the UC33 at this time.

2.2 The TTMP highlighted that the haulage route passes adjacent to Tighnabraich Primary School and notes that, where practicable, vehicle movements should be planned for periods when the school is not in use. It is understood that the haulier avoids the school drop-off & pick-up periods, however, the haulage does continue during term

time. This is a pragmatic approach given that the alternative would be to haul solely during the primary schools summer holiday as haulage is only permitted between May – September unless otherwise agreed by ABC Technical Officers. Restricting the haulage period to this brief time may mean that the timber operation is not efficient or economical.

- 2.3 The TTMP requires that loaded vehicles should not leave the forest loaded at intervals less than one hour. In addition to this there are further requirements around the vehicle specification in regard to tyre types or systems (e.g. CTI, Maxi Tyres). There are no indications that these requirements have been breached.
- 2.4 The maximum speed permitted under the TTMP is 20mph, dropping to 10mph in proximity to the school. TTMPs are not legislative and the speed limit cannot be enforced by Police Scotland. Notwithstanding this, given that the approach to the UC33/A8003 junction is in proximity to the school it is expected that maximum speeds at this point will be 10mph, i.e. that it should be self-enforcing.
- 2.5 Like most of the older TTMPs, the UC33 TTMP advised that the road conditions are subject to fortnightly inspections within the *Monitoring* section. As Members may be aware, the available resource within Roads & Amenity has reduced over the years and, as such, there is limited availability to allow the Service to commit to this frequency of inspection.

It is intended that the existing TTMPs are reviewed and updated to take into account staff and project officer changes but also to review all conditions and amend as appropriate. It is likely that all TTMPs that currently have a specific frequency of inspections will have this paragraph amended to:

“Monitoring: Road conditions are subject to periodic inspections by Council staff during the period of operations. Parallel inspections by the ATTG Project Officer will be carried out when practicable. The expectation is that any deterioration of the road surface observed by all interested parties (hauliers, drivers, land owner, agents etc.) should be notified to the local Council Roads Operations office straightaway. Haulage should be suspended immediately if there is any doubt that significant damage is evident or likely to occur and only resumed after consultation with A&BC Technical Officer”

The proposed change to the TTMPs takes into account not only the limited resource available but is also reflective of the partnership approach through the ATTG. There is no programmed timescale for the review, however; a new Project Officer is due to start on the 2 April 2018 and this may be the first project taken forward.

- 2.6 Appendix 2 contains the TTMP for UC33 Auchenlochan Back Road.

3.0 Further Measures

- 3.1 As noted in Section 2, it is not practical to have a high level of on-site monitoring to ensure compliance with the existing TTMP, however, there are a number of options available which will improve active monitoring.
- 3.2 The A8003 is inspected on a monthly basis. The local area Technical Officer has agreed to attach an inspection of the UC33 between the forest access and the UC33/A8003

junction onto this monthly inspection. In addition to this, when Officers are in the area, informal ad-hoc condition surveys will be carried out on the UC33.

3.3 It is proposed to carry out a traffic count using our mobile traffic counters. This will be set up once haulage is resumed on the UC33. It should be noted that the traffic count will only provide a volume by vehicle type, it is not able to distinguish between a timber haulage vehicle and another HGV (e.g. a similar sized delivery vehicle), however; it will also provide vehicle mean speeds.

3.4 It is proposed to carry out one or more manual surveys by Officer(s) in order to assess if the one load per hour is complied with and to assess the types of vehicles using the route, i.e. if there other HGVs than timber haulage utilising the UC33. This survey will also check compliance in regards to not hauling during school drop-off and pick up periods.

3.5 The survey & inspection proposals are not rechargeable to the land owner or the haulage contractor; TTMPs are voluntary agreements.

3.6 If during the inspections it is found that either the road is deteriorating or the TTMP conditions are not being adhered to then the TTMP may be suspended. The suspension of the TTMP should, however, only be used as a proportionate measure and not as a punitive one. Where there is significant or serious damage to the road, the initial response would be to approach the contractor and/or land owner to agree extent of repairs and/or to discuss rechargeable costs if the work is carried out by ABC. Where this approach is not successful, the Council may instead use the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, s96 to recover costs.

Appendix 1 – Successful application from 2005 to 30 April 2016 (Strategic Timber Transport Fund)

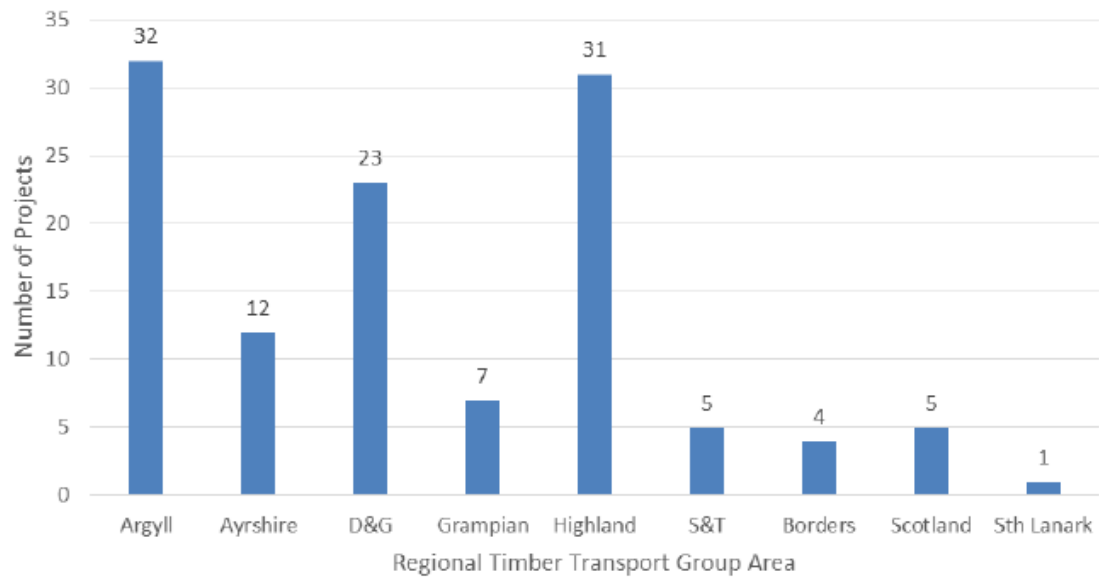
Note that the projects listed below exclude costs for project officers, feasibility studies and TimberLink.

| Project Title | Amount Awarded £ | Current Position | Scheme Type | £ Overall Project Value |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| A83 Rest & Be Thankful | 800,000 | Completed | Public Road | 1,400,000 |
| A83 Old Military Road | 300,000 | Completed | Public Road | 300,000 |
| Brenchoille Revised | 73,500 | Completed | Public Road | 238,060 |
| B8024 | 100,089 | Completed | Public Road | 200,178 |
| B8024 Tarbert Bypass | 599,909 | Completed | Public Road | 799,879 |
| B840 East Loch Awe Improvements | 71,564 | Completed | Public Road | 250,870 |
| B836 phase 2 | 497,757 | Completed | Public Road | 947,757 |
| B836 East - West Cowal | 743,688 | Completed | Public Road | 1,487,377 |
| Lochgoilhead | 109,104 | Completed | Public Road | 218,208 |

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|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Argyll Winter Road Damage Project | 110,000 | Completed | Public Road Extreme Winter Repair | 504,450 |
| Argyll & Bute Council | 176,500 | Completed | Public Road Extreme Winter Repair | 353,000 |
| West Loch Awe Timber Haul Route | 1,000,000 | Active | In Forest Route | 5,376,000 |
| North Kintyre Link Road | 248,231 | Completed | In Forest Route | 496,463 |
| SW Cowal Haul Route | 309,055 | Completed | In Forest Route | 618,450 |
| SW Glendaruel Haul Route | 276,098 | Completed | In Forest Route | 550,760 |
| Dalmally Haul Route | 142,160 | Completed | In Forest Route | 284,320 |
| Ormidale-Waulkmill Hill | 81,805 | Completed | In Forest Route | 177,836 |
| Dunoon Haul Route | 380,447 | Completed | In Forest Route | 586,200 |
| Glen Massan - B836 link | 44,085 | Completed | In Forest Route | 129,445 |
| Ardfern Bypass | 40,435 | Completed | In Forest Route | 101,087 |
| Peaton Hill Link Road | 45,850 | Completed | In Forest Route | 112,559 |
| North West Mull Community Woodlands | 860,730 | Completed | In Forest Route | 2,254,813 |
| Mull Timber Pier (Pennyghael) | 406,974 | Completed | Sea | 813,949 |
| Landing Craft | 148,248 | Completed | Sea | 296,697 |
| Landing Craft 2 | 56,806 | Completed | Sea | 113,610 |

RTTG Area

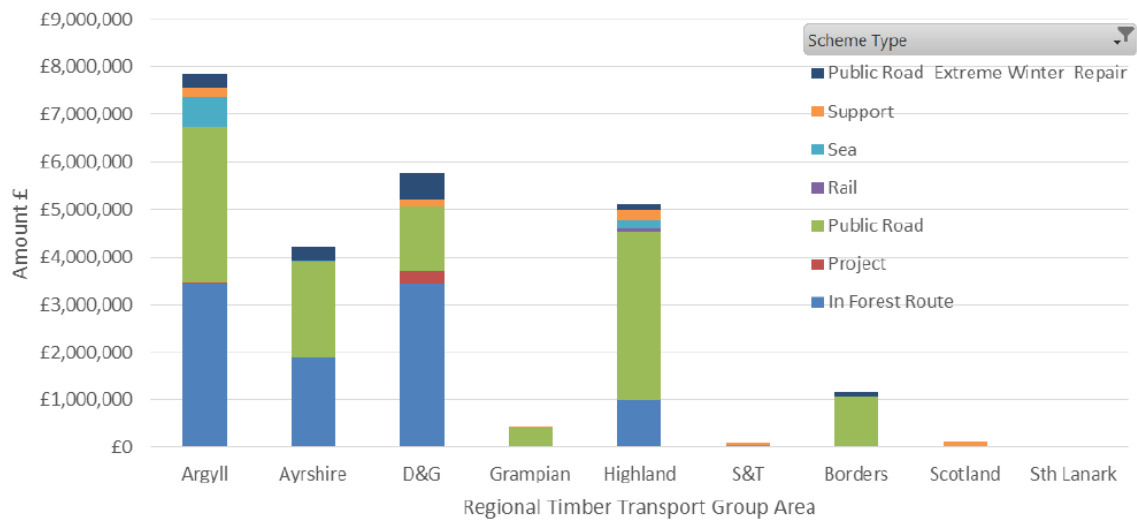
Number of Projects Awarded STTS Grant by Area



RTTG Area

Amount Awarded

STTS Awards by Area and Type



RTTG Area

Appendix 2 – TTMP

Argyll Timber Transport Group

Timber Traffic Management Plan: UC 33 Auchenlochan Back Rd, Tighnabruaich, Cowal.

Refer to Council webpage at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/timber-transport as indicated.

Pre-conditions: The following schedule relates to the sensitive Council road, newly classified on the Agreed Routes Map as Severely Restricted. The UC33 Auchanlochan Back Road, Tighnabruaich from its junction with A8003 Agreed Route, adjacent to Tighnabruaich School is exceptionally narrow and runs adjacent to residential properties. There are no passing places and the verges are weak and the shortest journey to an agreed route dictates a northbound exit.

Lorry Configuration and Frequency. Although this road would normally be considered unsuitable for industrial use, due to the short distance of affected road to reach the agreed route, haulage by CTI equipped vehicles, with double wheel or Maxi tyres would be acceptable. Loaded vehicles should not leave the forest at an interval less than 1 hour. Operators wishing to increase this frequency should consult with the A&BC Technical Officer for Bute and Cowal listed in **contacts** on the webpage.

Public Consideration. Due to the proximity of the Tighnabruaich primary school, due consideration must be given to other road users. Where practicable, operations should be planned for periods when the School is not in use. Where this is not possible, vehicle movements should be restricted to periods when pedestrians and the like, are least likely to be using the road. e.g avoiding school opening and closing times and lunch time period.

Forest access and loading points. These should be agreed with the A&BC prior to any haulage being carried out and should meet standard requirements, detailed in **protocols and guidance** on the webpage

Seasonal/Weather condition restrictions. Haulage should ideally be carried out **May– September**, with due consideration given to school term times.

Driver Awareness and Speed Limit. Drivers involved with the haulage must be familiar with the nature of the road and should have read and be in possession of this management agreement, prior to operating on this route. The maximum speed on this haulage route (loaded or empty) will be **20 mph, reduced to 10mph in the proximity of the school**, until reaching A8003 main Road.

Monitoring. Road conditions are subject to **fortnightly inspections** by Council staff during the period of operations. Parallel inspections by the ATTG Project Officer will be carried out when practicable. Any deterioration of the road surface observed by interested parties (hauliers, land owner, agents etc) should be notified to the local Council Roads Operations office as soon as practicable. Haulage should be suspended immediately if there is any doubt that significant damage is evident or likely to occur and only resumed after consultation with A&BC Technical Officer-B&C.

The purpose of this local agreement is specifically to ensure that reasonable access is maintained for the forestry owner, and their neighbours, but in a sustainable fashion, in accordance with regional and national forest strategy.

Prepared by ATTG / Council.

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