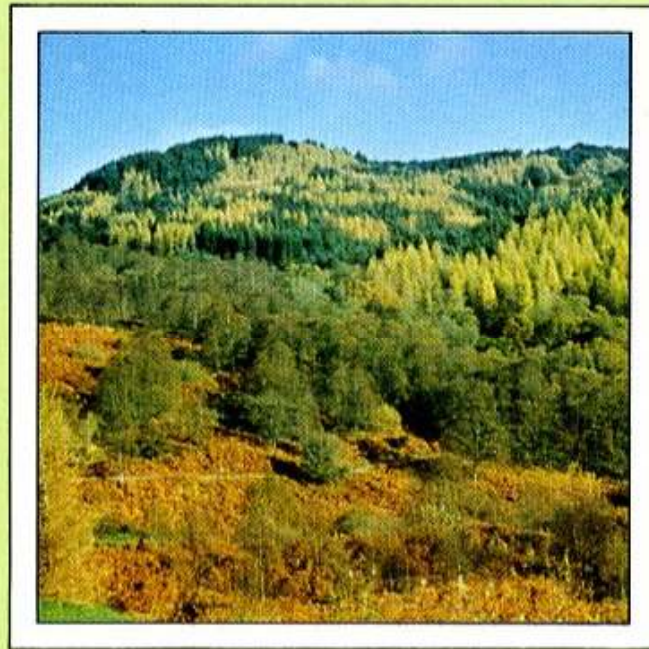
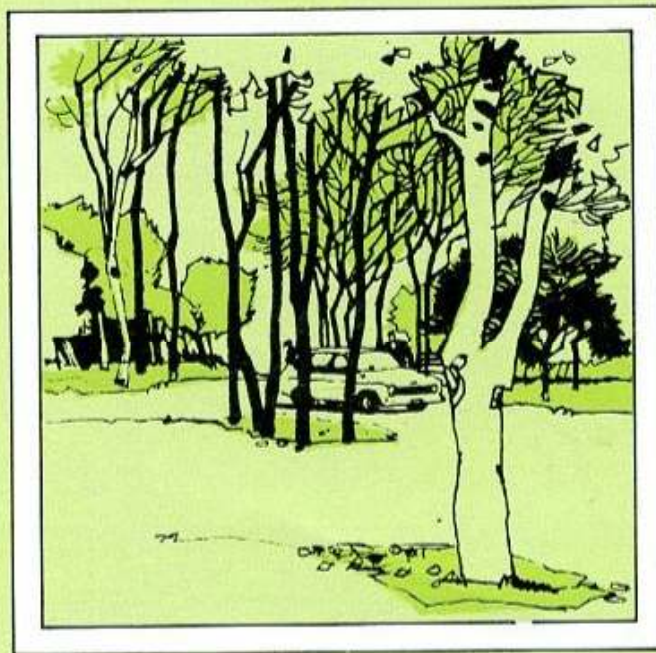


The Forestry Commission & Landscape Design



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Foreword

The Forestry Commission has recently published its aims in a booklet entitled *The Forestry Commission's Objectives*.

These objectives concern the Forestry Commission both as Forestry Authority and Forestry Enterprise and in the latter role one of the objectives is:— “To protect and enhance the environment”.

An important element in that objective concerns the landscaping of forests and this booklet sets out the policy of the Forestry Commission for Landscape Design.



Introduction

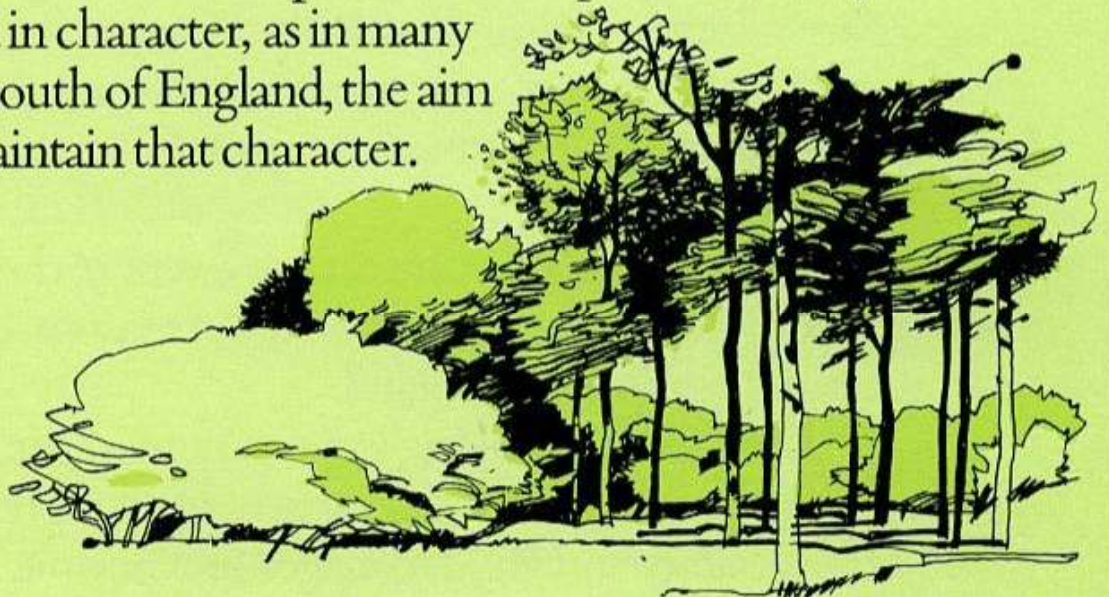
Forests and woodlands are important parts of the landscape and the planting of trees or the felling of areas of mature forest can bring about great changes in the appearance of the countryside. The Forestry Commission's landscape design policy is based on the principles outlined in FC Booklet No 44 "The Landscape of Forests and Woods".

While pursuing its main objective of wood production the Forestry Commission seeks to achieve an acceptable balance between efficient and timely forest operations and good landscape design.

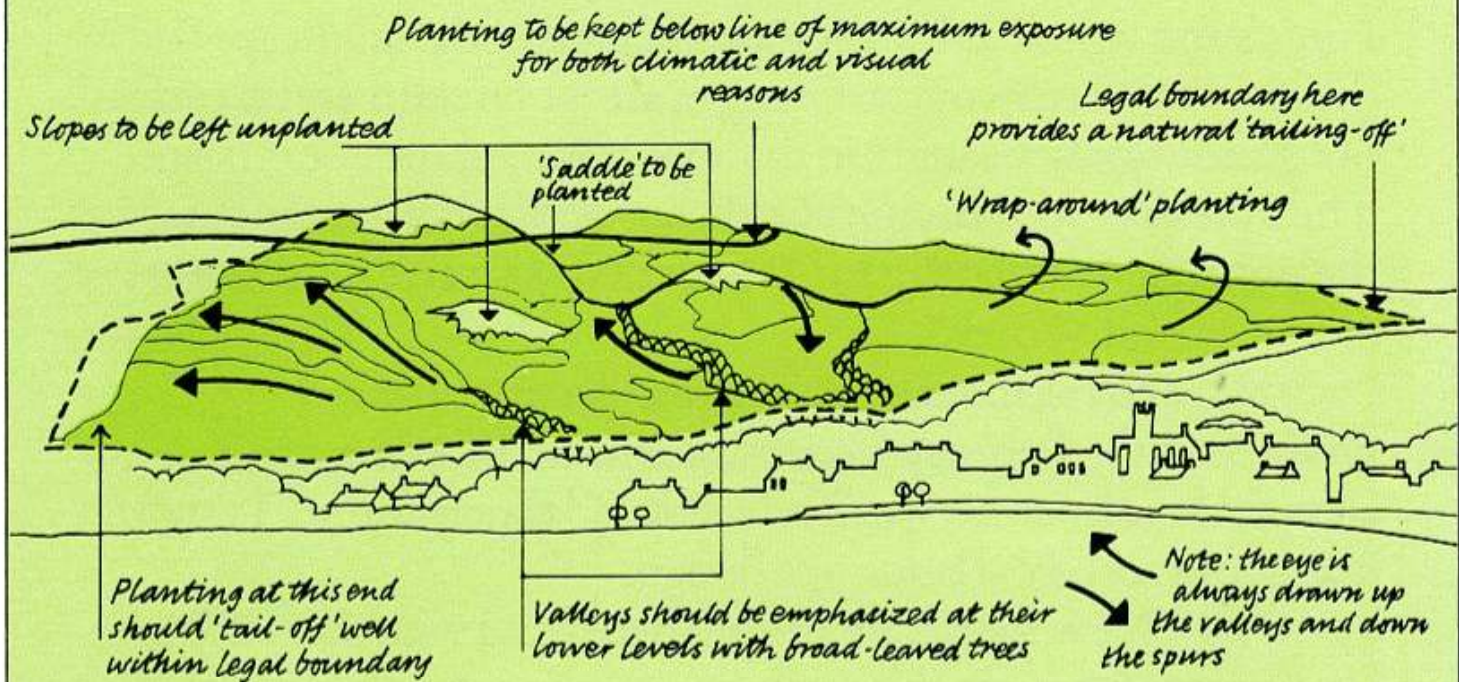
New forests are designed to blend with the landscape as far as possible, and opportunities are taken to improve the pattern of existing forests so that they too blend sympathetically with the form of the land. The intrusive effects on the landscape caused by any forest operations are kept to a minimum.

Within the limits imposed by good silviculture and sound forest management, the range of age categories and species within forests is being extended in order to provide diversity.

In those landscapes which are predominantly broadleaved in character, as in many parts of the south of England, the aim will be to maintain that character.



New Planting



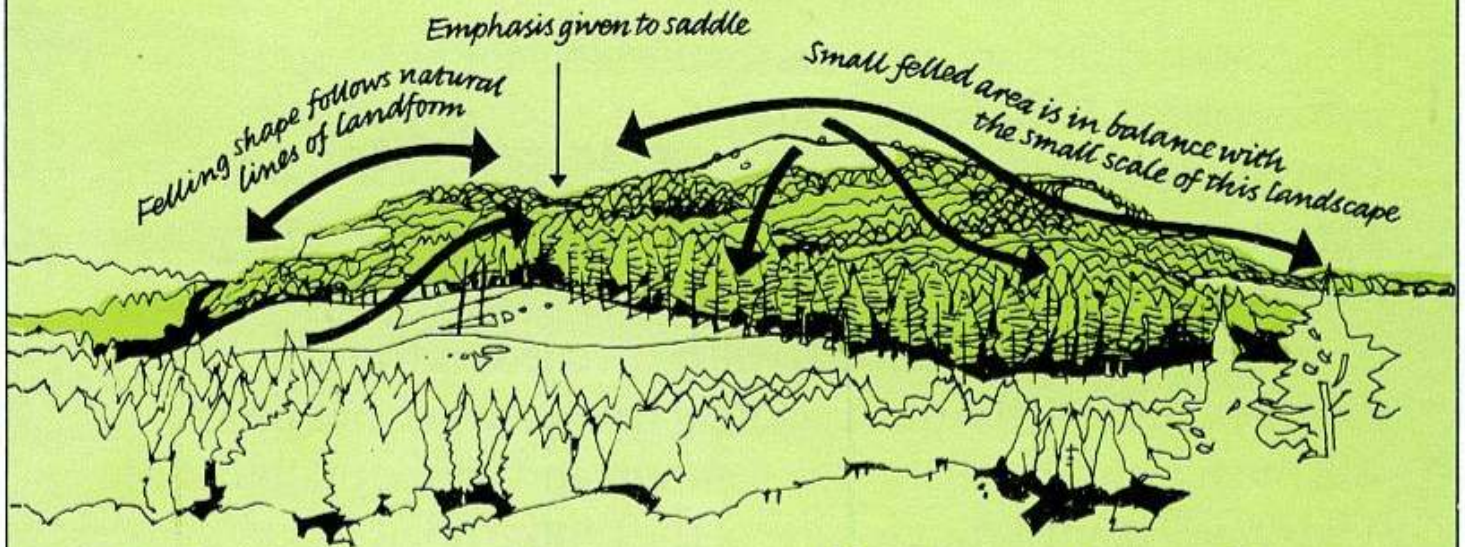
Planting on land which has not carried trees for centuries can have a major impact on the appearance of the countryside. The design of new forests, therefore, is very important and involves an analysis and understanding of the essential character of the landscape where trees are to be planted. Almost all new planting takes place on infertile sites in the uplands and it must be recognised that only a limited number of species, all of them coniferous, are capable of economic growth there.

Wherever possible the boundaries of new forests are designed to follow the natural land form. Every effort is made to avoid hard unnatural lines, and to prevent obscuring prominent landmarks and other interesting features such as crags, streams, waterfalls and gullies.

Broadleaved trees are retained where they are important for visual or nature conservation reasons, especially near water and bordering farmland.

Forest margins along important roads and streams are kept irregular and as informal as possible. Plough lines will be varied as far as safety and good management permit.

Harvesting

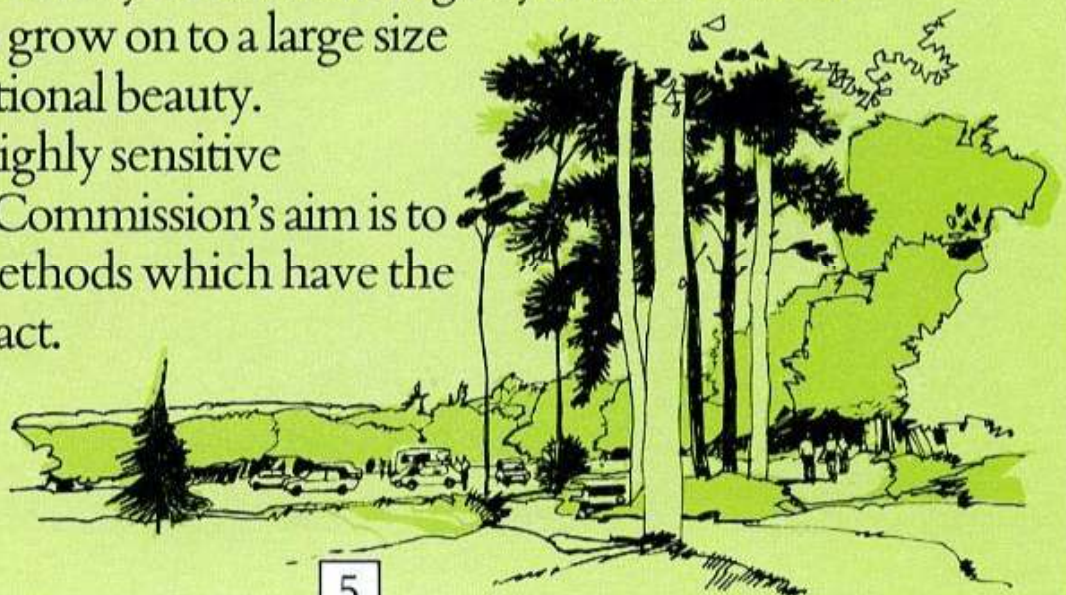


The forest is a renewable resource and harvesting is part of a natural and necessary sequence of events in forest management. The first harvesting in a crop may involve the removal of rows of trees which can have a temporary impact on the landscape until the tree canopy closes. Felling at maturity offers an opportunity to create diversity by altering the composition of the forest both in age and species.

While areas to be felled are governed by the age and condition of the crop, the shape of felling areas is designed as far as possible to reflect land form, and their size is related to the scale of the landscape.

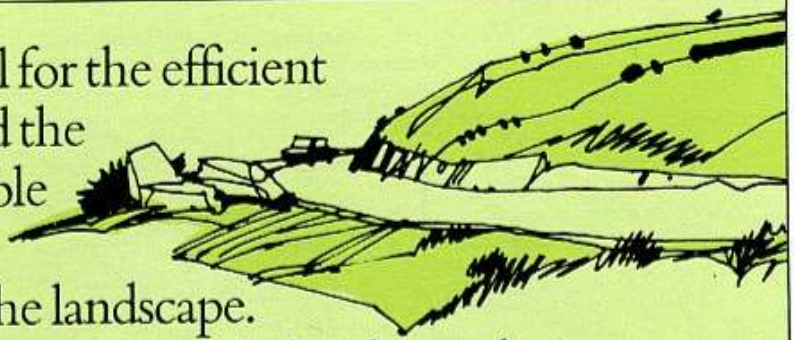
In some areas, particularly where recreation is important, trees may be left standing beyond the normal age of felling to grow on to a large size to provide additional beauty.

In highly sensitive landscapes the Commission's aim is to use thinning methods which have the least visual impact.



Roads

Roads and bridges are essential for the efficient management of the forest, and the Commission takes all reasonable steps to minimise the effect of new road construction on the landscape.

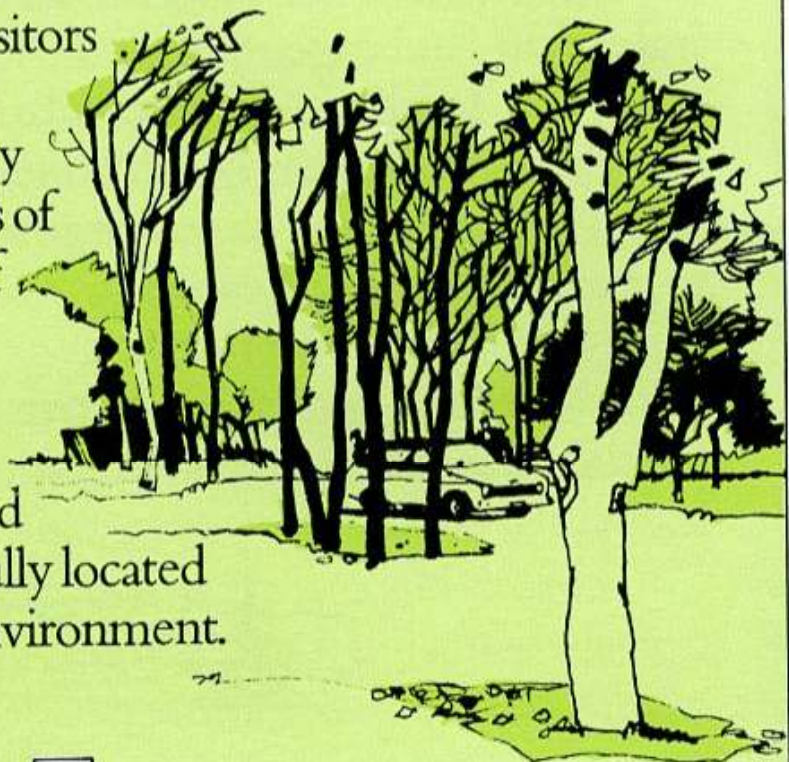


Forest access roads will be needed and must lie roughly central to the main planting blocks. In general, these will run roughly parallel to the contours and will be unobtrusive. The critical point is the crossing of the central ridge. It is recommended that only one crossing of the ridge be made, and that this should be in the form of a long 'u' loop following the contours. It should occur at a low 'nick' in the ridge preferably lying immediately below, and wrapping around a small spur, so that practically no cutting or filling will be needed.

Recreation

Forests offer unique opportunities for informal recreation and the Commission welcomes visitors and makes provision for their enjoyment. Where there is any conflict between the demands of recreation and conservation of the forest, the latter will take precedence.

Facilities for recreation will be of simple and good design and will be carefully located in harmony with the forest environment.



Buildings

Buildings are required for a wide variety of forest purposes – houses, offices, workshops and visitor centres. The Commission aims at a high standard of design for all new buildings, and uses materials and colours compatible with local conditions.



Signs

Signs are needed to identify Forestry Commission property, facilities and activities and to direct and inform visitors.

A distinctive standard system has been designed for use throughout the Commission. All Commission signs conform to this standard, and numbers are kept to a minimum consistent with the identification of Commission property and the adequate direction and information of visitors.



Staff

The success of the Commission's landscape policy depends on well trained staff at all levels.

The Commission retains the services of an independent landscape architect as its consultant and also employs a small team of landscape architects. It promotes the principles of good design throughout the service to ensure that care for the landscape is a normal part of forestry practice.

