

WEST FRASER, INVERNESS

Public Consultation Event 1 | 6th June 2024



West Fraser

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INTRODUCTION

About West Fraser

West Fraser is a diversified wood products company with more than 60 facilities in Canada, the U.S., the U.K., and Europe. From **responsibly sourced** and **sustainably managed forest** resources, West Fraser produces lumber, engineered wood, and other products including pulp, newsprint, wood chips, and renewable energy.

West Fraser officially acquired Norbord inc. in February 2021, which added Oriented Strand Board (OSB), particle board, and furniture products to the Company's product offerings. The acquisition expanded operations across Canada, the U.S, the U.K, and Europe, bringing approx. 2,400 employees to the organisation.

The mill in Inverness was the first OSB plant in Europe to receive **Forestry Stewardship Council accreditation**, demonstrating the commitment to the environment. Furthermore, West Fraser's products are **renewable, environmentally sustainable, and responsibly sourced** from forests managed for our needs today and for the needs of future generations.



View of the existing West Fraser site in Inverness

CURRENT OPERATIONS

About West Fraser



West Fraser's site in Dalcross is a biomass-powered mill, which is used for the manufacture of Oriented Strand Board (OSB).



Currently, raw materials and finished products are transported to and from the existing site via the A96, which runs to the south of the existing site and is the main road connecting Aberdeen and Inverness.



The Aberdeen – Inverness railway runs in a southwest to northeast direction along the northern border of the site. The nearest existing railway station is located at Inverness Airport, which is approximately 2km northeast of the existing site.



In recent years, investment has delivered rail improvements between Aberdeen and Inverness, including: -

- Increasing opportunities for freight;
- Reducing passenger journey times; and
- Delivering an hourly passenger train service.



View of the existing West Fraser site in Inverness



SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

Morayhill, Dalcross, Inverness, IV2 7JQ

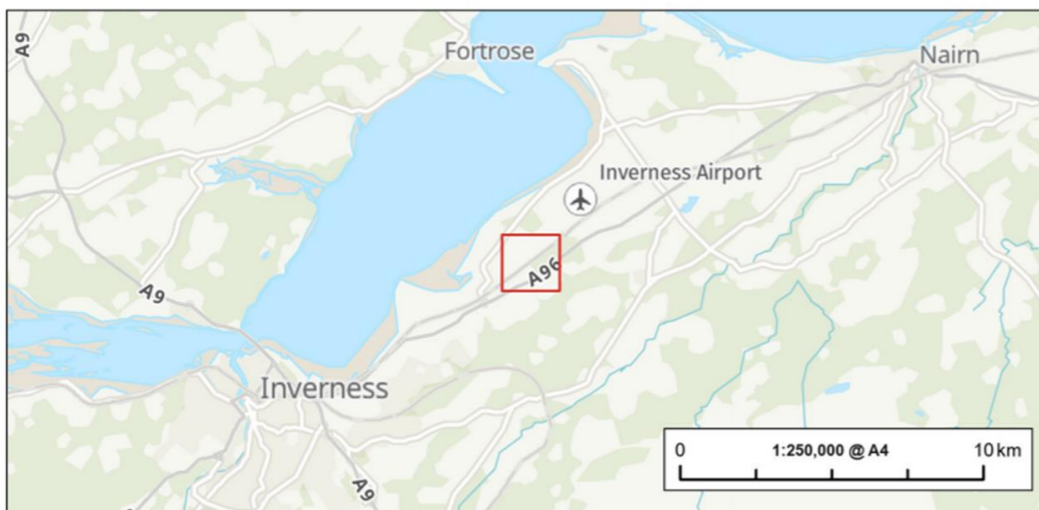
The Proposed Development is to be located adjacent to West Fraser's existing manufacturing facility, which lies to the west of Dalcross and approximately 8km northeast of Inverness, as shown to the left. The Proposed Development extends to the east of the existing site and south of the neighbouring Aberdeen – Inverness railway line.

The red-line boundary for the Proposed Development is also shown opposite, and covers an area of approximately 11.7 hectares, with the longest length alongside the existing railway measuring approximately 783m.

The western portion of the site is characterised by marshy shrubland, with two existing wetland ponds, while the eastern portion of the site is covered by woodland.

To the west, the site is bordered by West Fraser's existing site, which includes the timber mill, timber storage yards, infrastructure, and associated buildings.

To the south of the site lies farmland, with the A96 located approximately 350m from the southern boundary of the site



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PROPOSED SITE



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

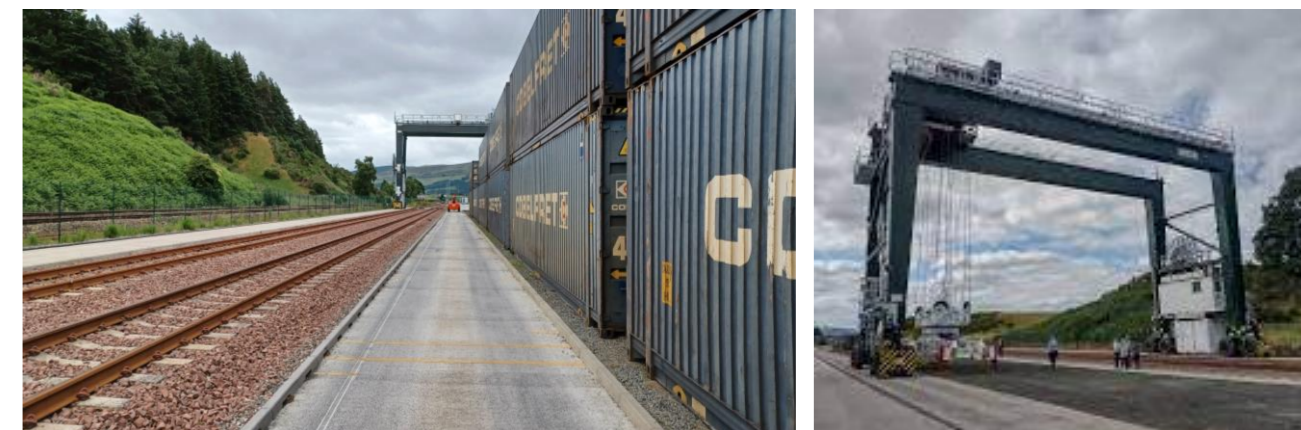
The preferred option at this stage of design development comprises:-

- x2 approximately 560m long rail sidings to the south of the existing Aberdeen – Inverness rail line;
- Connection to the main line to the west of the sidings; and
- The use of a gantry crane to carry out the loading and unloading of containers – the height of the proposed gantry crane is anticipated to be 24-30m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), allowing for ground height.

The Proposed Development will involve the creation of a new area of hardstanding on land south of the railway line. It is anticipated this will be a reinforced concrete slab, with the size depending on the final design. The area of hardstanding will need to accommodate the following: the x2 railway sidings, an entry and exit road, x3 lanes for the storage of containers, a gantry crane with space for its required runway, and a parking area for articulated lorries and trailers.

An office building (likely in the form of portacabins) and appropriate car parking will also form part of the final design, as will Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and the creation of new wetland ponds.

A forested area will require to be cleared however compensatory planting is proposed. Fencing and access routes to the Proposed Development will be designed to meet the requirements for rail safety and site security.



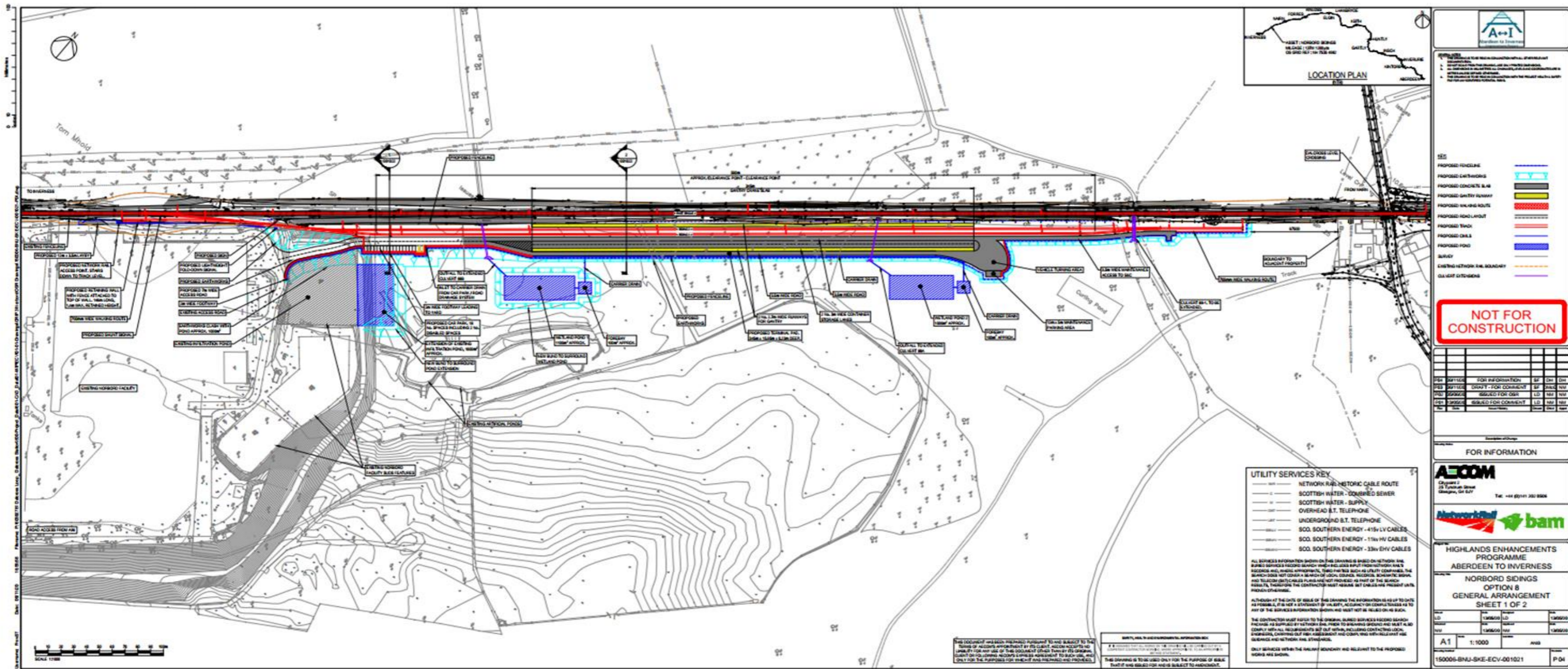
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PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT – PROPOSED PLANS



PLANNING POLICY

Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 (IMFLDP2)

Given that the new IMFLDP2 is intended to be adopted in the coming months, it is assumed that this will be the development plan that any future application will be considered against.

Whilst IMFLDP2 does not formally allocate the site for a rail siding at this location, the Transport Strategy section of the plan does provide support for the decarbonisation of transport for the region.

The Inner Moray Firth Transport Strategy map identifies Inverness to Nairn, and further east as a travel corridor, and recognises rail as a sustainable option for that travel corridor. Furthermore, the Delivering the Transport Strategy section explains that for rural places this means “Maximising the opportunities to utilise rail halts and park and ride/park and share sites, and the use of rail in the decarbonisation of transport for the region, including rail freight and passenger transport.”

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

Support is also given to this type of proposal in the broad location within NPF4 Spatial Planning Priorities for “North” along with a number of other documents including National Transport Strategy 2, Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) Regional Transport Strategy 2018 and the Draft HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy 2024.

The principle of efficient and sustainable freight transport, particularly a shift from road to rail, is supported by NPF4 and Transport Scotland's National Transport Strategy 2. The significant environmental benefits are widely recognised, particularly in terms of reduced carbon emissions of approximately 75% when freight is transported by rail instead of road.



Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

We are carrying out environmental assessments to determine the Proposed Development's impact on the local area. The results of the assessments, including any surveys undertaken, mitigation, and enhancement measures, will be reported in an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) that will be submitted with the planning application. The following information will be included:

- **Climate Change**

Greenhouse gas emissions associated with both the construction and operational stages of the Proposed Development

- **Forestry**

An area of existing woodland must be cleared for the Proposed Development. Compensatory planting will take place in accordance with the Control of Woodland Removal Policy (CoWRP) guidelines.

- **Ecology and Biodiversity**

A chapter on Ecology and Biodiversity will assess the impact on designated sites, ancient woodland, habitats, and protected species such as badgers.

- **Landscape and Visual**

Assessment will be provided of construction and post-construction impacts on the Landscape Fabric of the site, road, rail, and recreation routes, and a range of settlements.

- **Lighting**

A Lighting Environmental Impact Assessment will assess operational effects of external lighting on sensitive receptors.

- **Noise**

A Noise chapter will assess identified impacts that could result in significant effects from construction and operation of the scheme, including operational effects.

- **Transport**

The access, traffic, and transport issues will be examined in detail.

- **Water Environment**

Construction stage and Completed Development effects of the Proposed Development on the hydrological features within the zone of influence will be assessed, including flood risk, groundwater, and contamination.

- **Cumulative Impacts**

The combined effects of the scheme on a single receptor and the cumulative effects of the scheme when it interacts with other developments will be assessed.

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GET IN TOUCH

Next Steps

Public Consultation Event 1: Thursday 6th June 2024 at Croy Village Hall

Public Consultation Event 2: Thursday 27th June 2024 at Croy Village Hall

Comments on the project proposals can be left either in person at the public events, or if visiting the website, comments can be left using the online feedback form. Comments from the first event are invited until 21st June 2024 whereby we will then provide feedback at the second event.

Alternatively, should you wish to respond by email or post you can do so at the below address:

Montagu Evans
4th Floor, Exchange Tower
19 Canning Street,
Edinburgh,
EH3 8EG

Email: WestFraser@montagu-evans.co.uk

<https://www.montagu-evans.co.uk/public-consultation-for-west-fraser-inverness/>

Timeline

Target Application Submission: Summer / Autumn 2024

We will consider all comments in the design development ahead of submitting a formal planning application. Please note this is your opportunity to influence and inform the proposals before the application is submitted. Comments once the application has been submitted should be made directly to The Highland Council.

Please note that comments made at the event, or via post and email, are to West Fraser Europe Ltd as the Applicant and are not representations to the planning authority. There will be an opportunity to make representations to the planning authority when an application for planning permission is submitted.

Those unable to access the information, or consultation boards and feedback form online, or who have further questions, can email the address opposite.