

North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2

Survey Paper - Evidence Report

Topic 6 Forestry, woodland and trees

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires planning authorities to prepare an Evidence Report that contains sufficient information to enable the planning authority to prepare a Local Development Plan.
- 1.2 The Evidence Report has two main functions. The first is that it should set out the evidence that will be used to inform and prepare a new Local Development Plan. The second is for local authorities to identify the issues they think based on the evidence presented that need to be addressed by the new Local Development Plan, and for other interested parties and stakeholders to express what they think are the issues.
- 1.3 There are specific matters that the Evidence Report must cover; these are set out in the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019:
 - *the principal physical, cultural, economic, social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the district;*
 - *the principal purposes for which the land is used;*
 - *the size, composition, health, and distribution of the population of the district;*
 - *the housing needs of the population of the area, including, in particular, the needs of persons undertaking further and higher education, older people and disabled people;*
 - *the availability of land in the district for housing, including for older people and disabled people;*
 - *the desirability of allocating land for the purposes of resettlement;*
 - *the health needs of the population of the district and the likely effects of development and use of land on those health needs;*
 - *the education needs of the population of the district and the likely effects of development and use of land on those education needs;*
 - *the extent to which there are rural areas within the district in relation to which there has been a substantial decline in population;*
 - *the capacity of education services in the district;*
 - *the desirability of maintaining an appropriate number and range of cultural venues and facilities (including in particular, but not limited to, live music venues) in the district;*
 - *the infrastructure of the district (including communications, transport and drainage systems, systems for the supply of water and energy, and health care and education facilities);*
 - *how that infrastructure is used; and*
 - *any change which the planning authority thinks may occur in relation to any of the matters mentioned above.*
- 1.4 This survey paper examines the Forestry, woodland and trees evidence surrounding the forestry, woodland and trees topic for the forthcoming North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (NLLDP2). The paper identifies what evidence and information

has been sourced and subjected to an initial assessment as to the relevance of that evidence and information to NLLDP2.

- 1.5 Key points from the evidence and information on this topic are highlighted and potential future relevance is discussed with a view to this informing the approach in progressing the Evidence Report and NLLDP2 more generally.
- 1.6 The final Evidence Report will detail the stakeholder engagement and public survey that has taken place in developing its conclusions and will highlight the agreements and disputes that have arisen through this process.

2. Identification of Relevant Evidence

- 2.1 The relevant evidence has been identified through an evaluation of the Forestry, woodland and trees topic and assessment of available information linked to the topic. Where available evidence shared by external stakeholders has been included. Should additional evidence become available we will consider its implications for the Evidence Report.

3. Consideration of Relevant Evidence

- 3.1 The following is an explanation of evidence sources which have been used in this Survey Paper and are considered potentially relevant for NLLDP2.

Main Evidence considered:

Source: The Plan for North Lanarkshire (2019)

Main Evidence considered: The plan sets out the vision for North Lanarkshire to be a place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit. NLLDP2 will be a tool to assist in the realisation of this vision. The vision consists of five priorities that are comprised of 25 high level Ambition Statements. These statements amongst other issues cover refocussing town centres, maximising the use of marketable land, and maintaining a clean, safe and attractive environment and specific to this topic look to transform our natural environment to support wellbeing and inward investment and enhance it for current and future generations and ensure we keep our environment clean, safe and attractive.

Links to Evidence: [The Plan for North Lanarkshire](#) and [North Lanarkshire Council Climate Plan](#)

Source: Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019 – 2029

Main Evidence considered: This Strategy provides an overview of contemporary Scottish forestry, presents the Scottish Government 50-year vision for Scotland's forests and woodlands, and sets out a 10-year framework for action.

Links to Evidence: [Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029](#)

Source: Planted Woods on Ancient Woodland sites

Main Evidence considered: The [Native Woodland Survey of Scotland](#) (NWSS) surveyed all native woods and near-native woods currently present on ancient woodland sites, as well as all other planted woods on ancient woodland sites (PAWS). NWSS provides current information on ancient and semi-natural

<p>woodlands (ASNW) and so updates the information in the Ancient Woodland Inventory (Scotland). ASNW are often described as the most important single category of woods for nature conservation or biodiversity.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: Scottish Forestry - Planted Woods on Ancient Woodland sites</p>
<p>Source: Forestry and Woodland Strategy for Glasgow City Region 2020</p> <p>Main Evidence considered: The Glasgow City Region FWS is a strategic document which covers the entire Glasgow City Region area. The document has been agreed by all of the Glasgow City Region local authorities. The Strategy should be used to inform decisions on woodland creation, taking into account local context and site-specific information.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: Clydeplan Forestry and Woodland Strategy 2020</p>
<p>Source: North Lanarkshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2027</p> <p>Main Evidence considered: The document seeks to ensure that NLC continue to conserve and enhance the habitats and species that contribute to the unique character and heritage of North Lanarkshire whilst also contributing to the target to halt the current Nature Emergency. Specific to this topic the document references NLC Woodland Action Plan</p> <p>Links to Evidence: North Lanarkshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2027</p>
<p>Source: NLC Tree Preservation Orders</p> <p>Main Evidence considered: Protected trees are trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), are within a conservation area or protected by a planning condition. The interactive map allows you to identify if a tree is protected by a TPO or within a conservation area in North Lanarkshire Council.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: NLC Interactive Map - Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas</p>
<p>Source: North Lanarkshire Council Ash Dieback Disease</p> <p>Main Evidence considered: Ash Dieback Disease (ADD) is a highly destructive fungal disease of ash trees. Evidence suggests that at least 50% to 75% of Scotland's 11 million mature ash trees may die over the next 20 years. NLC are developing a long-term operational plan to manage our woodlands, which will include compensating for the impact of the loss of trees through ADD and to increase and improve woodland cover.</p> <p>Links to Evidence: Ash Dieback Disease North Lanarkshire Council Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) - British Trees - Woodland Trust</p>

4. **Assessment of Evidence**

Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029

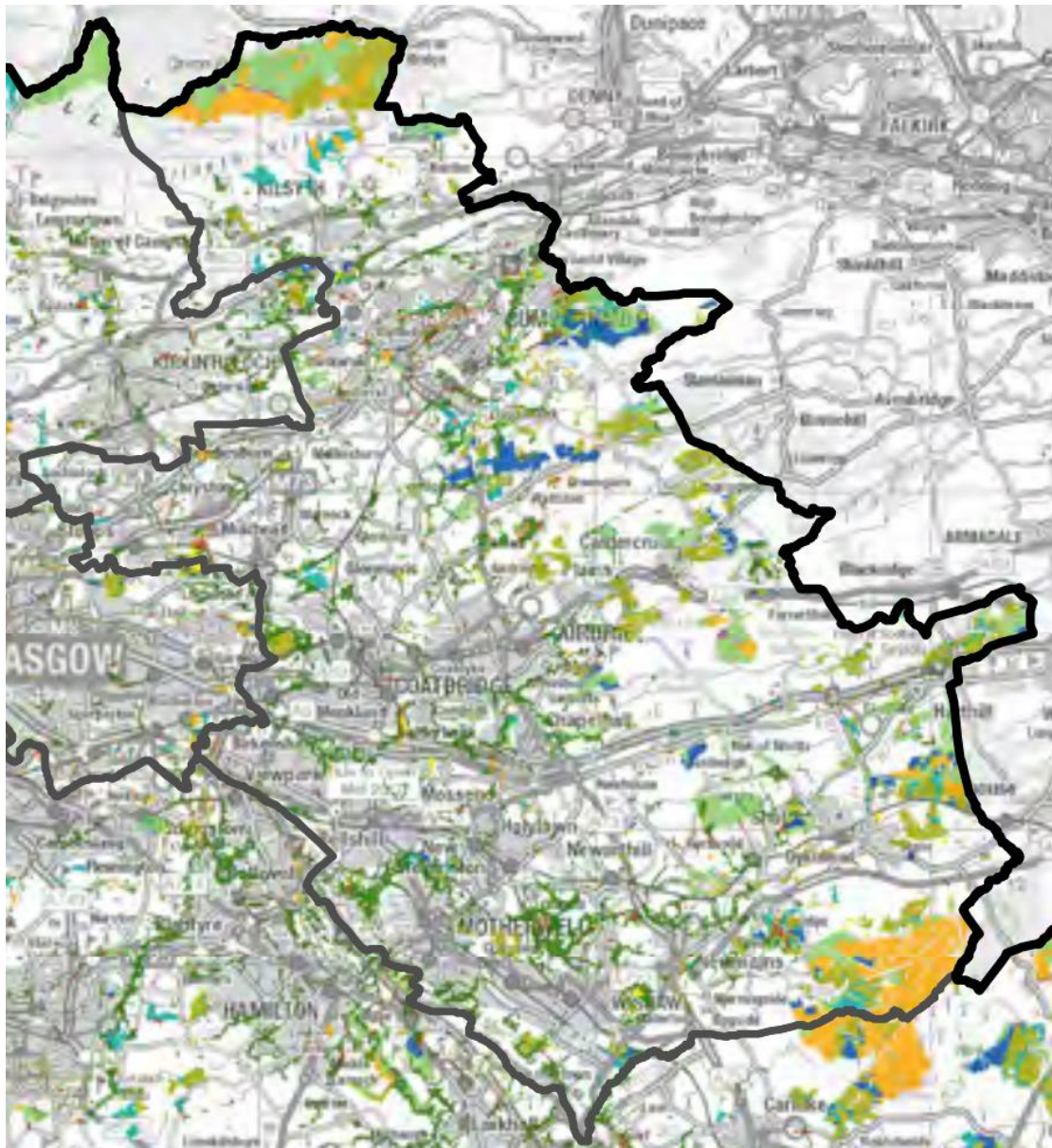
- 4.1 Scotland's Forestry Strategy (SFS) sets the Scottish Government's vision, objectives and priorities for the expansion of the nation's woodland and development of the forestry sector to 2070.

- 4.2 Critically, it establishes ambitious targets for woodland expansion, in the context of Scotland's commitments to tackle climate change. Refining the target set in the 2016 Scottish Forestry Strategy, SFS establishes the following aspiration for new woodland:
- 12,000ha per year from 2020/21
 - 14,000ha per year from 2022/23
 - 15,000ha per year from 2024/25
- 4.3 This is intended to contribute to increasing woodland cover to 21% of land area nationally by 2032. The Strategy also aims to increase the use of wood products in construction to 3.0 million m3 by 2031/32.
- 4.4 In relation to native woodlands the aim is:
- To increase the amount of native woodland in good condition;
 - Create 3000-5000 ha of new native woodland per year;
 - Restore approximately 10,000 ha of new native woodland into satisfactory condition in partnership with private woodland owners through Deer Management Plans; and
 - Ensure protected sites are under good conservation management

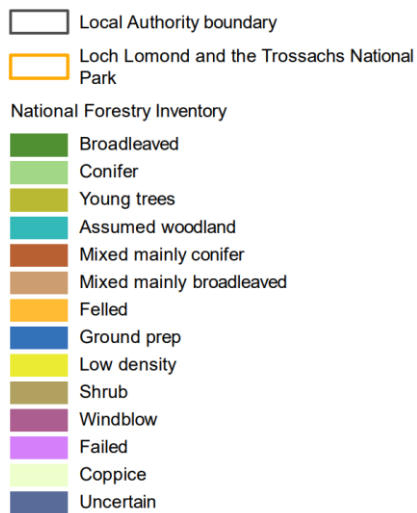
Forestry and Woodland Strategy for Glasgow City Region 2020

- 4.5 The Glasgow City Region FWS is a strategic document which covers the entire Glasgow City Region area. The document has been agreed by all of the Glasgow City Region local authorities. The Strategy should be used to inform decisions on woodland creation, taking into account local context and site-specific information.
- 4.6 The aim of the Strategy is to guide woodland expansion and management of woodlands in the Glasgow City Region area, providing a policy and spatial framework to optimise the benefits for the local economy, communities and the environment. This includes directing woodland to the most appropriate locations, and therefore supporting opportunities for the positive management of non-woodland habitats.
- 4.7 As a member Local Authority North Lanarkshire agreed to utilise the strategic aims whilst noting that it is intended to provide broad strategic locational and environmental advice to those seeking to manage or expand woodlands. The Strategy is not intended to and cannot provide detailed guidance on site-specific sensitivities or the suitability of individual proposals. Local considerations may affect the local application of the strategic framework.
- 4.8 The mapping is based on the best available data at the time of the Strategy development, however the environmental context for forestry and woodland planting will be influenced by a range of factors. It is important to recognise that the guidance provided by the mapping is the first stage in the process, and the most up-to-date available data should be used during site specific assessment.
- 4.9 The Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region, and associated spatial data, will inform the planning authorities' development management decisions that include proposals for woodland removal or creation, and in developing locally-focussed action plans for woodland expansion and management. It should be read in conjunction with other local authority policy and guidance for trees and woodland, such as local biodiversity action plans, tree and woodland strategies. open space strategies and rural development strategies.

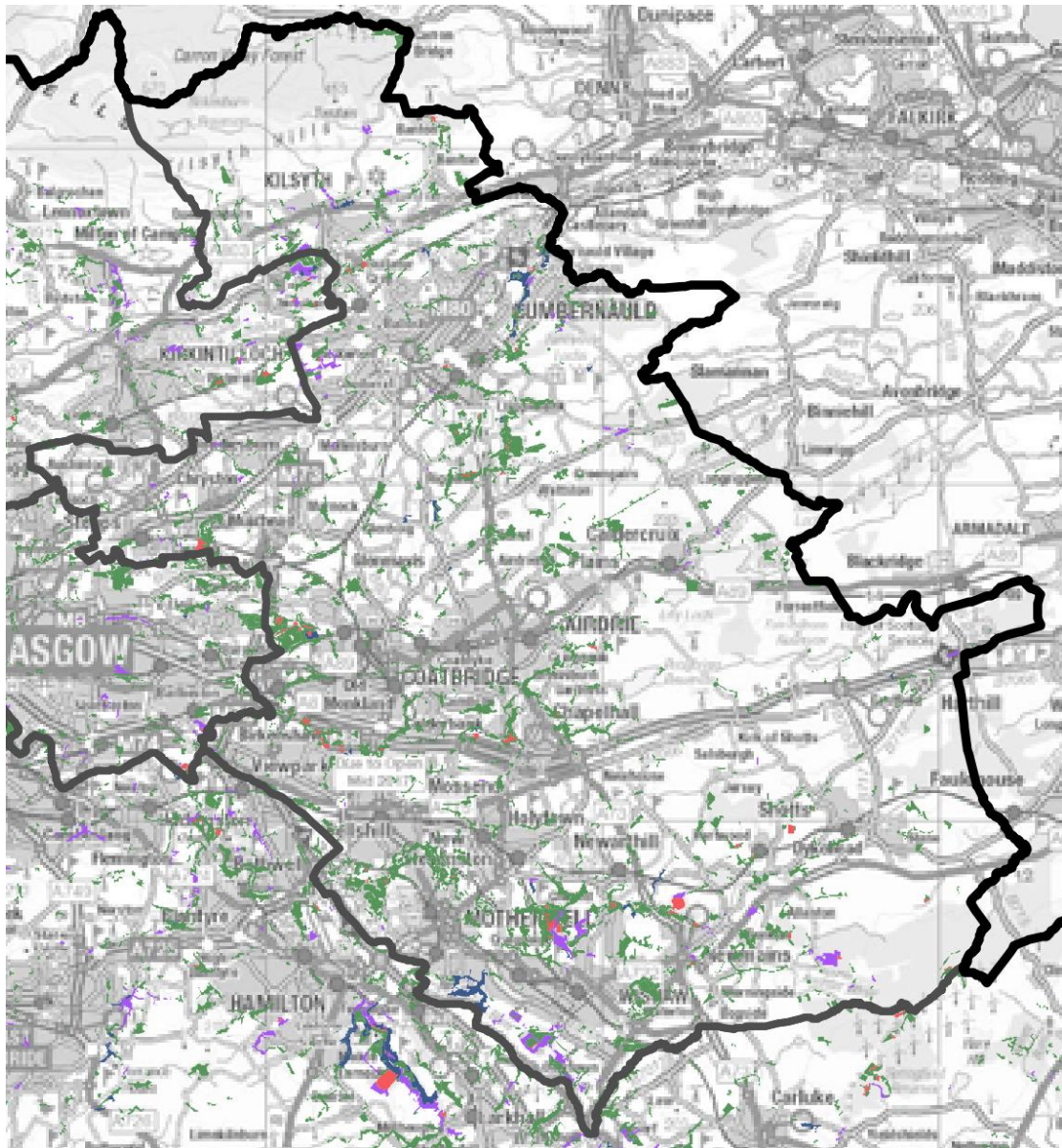
National Forestry Inventory





[Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA extract 2020](#)







Native Woodland Survey of Scotland



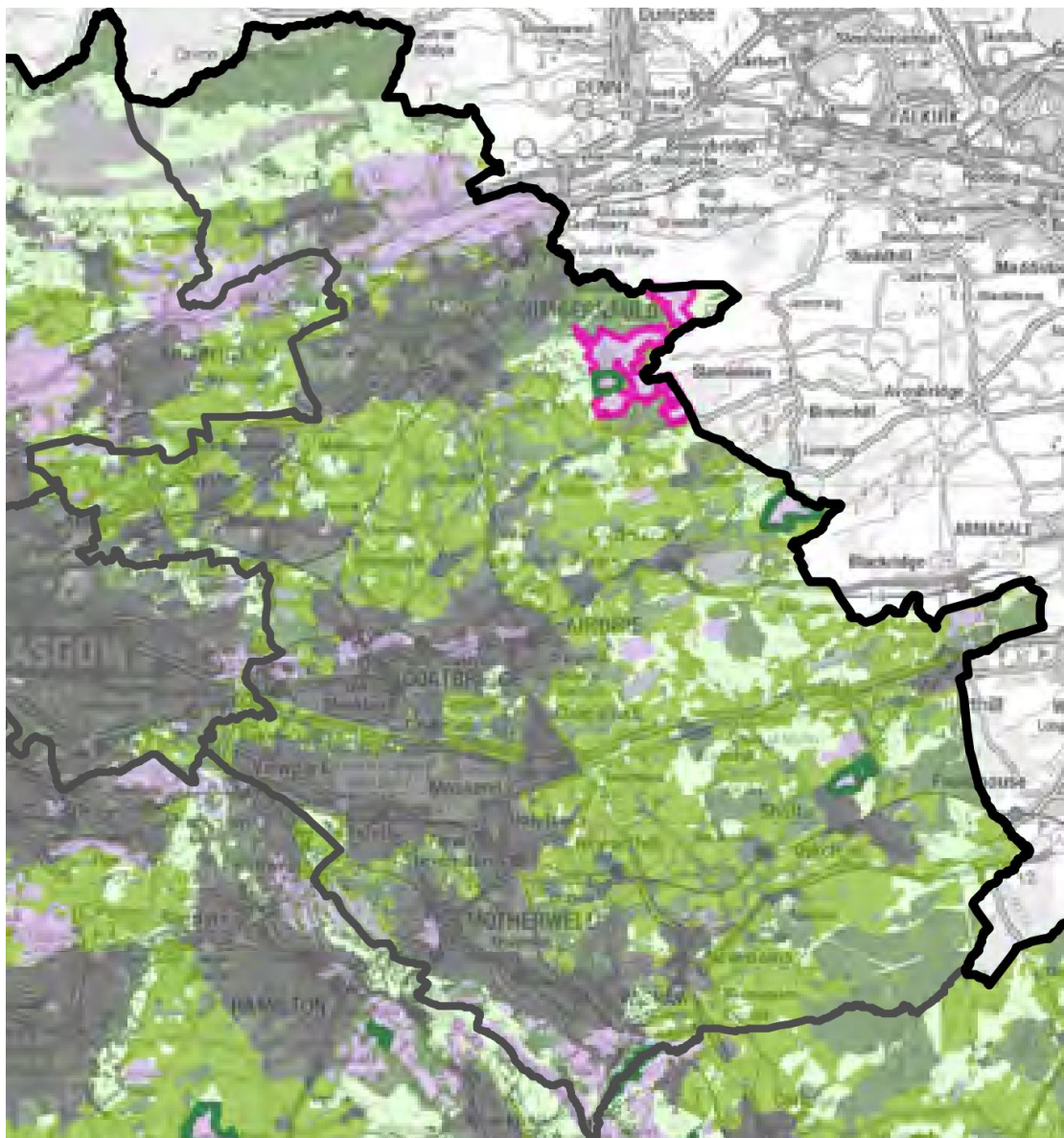
[Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA extract 2020](#)

-  Local Authority boundary
-  Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park






Native Woodland Survey of Scotland

-  Native woodland
-  Nearly-native woodland
-  Open land habitat
-  PAWS







Indicative Potential for Woodland Expansion



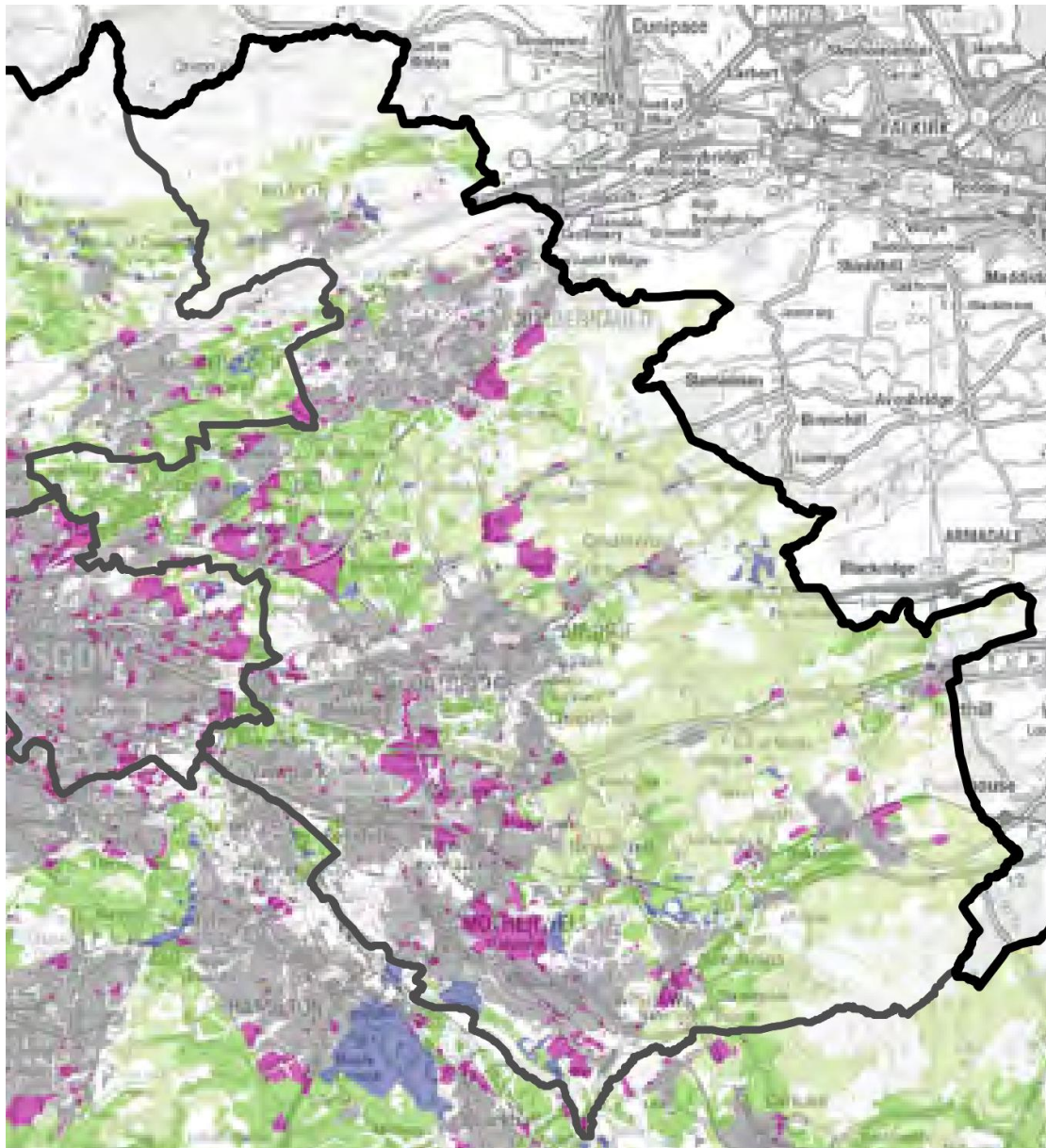
[Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA extract 2020](#)

-  Local Authority boundary
-  Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Special Protection Area (SPA)
-  Ramsar









Indicative Potential for Woodland Expansion

-  Built up
-  Existing
-  Potential
-  Preferred
-  Sensitive
-  Unsuitable

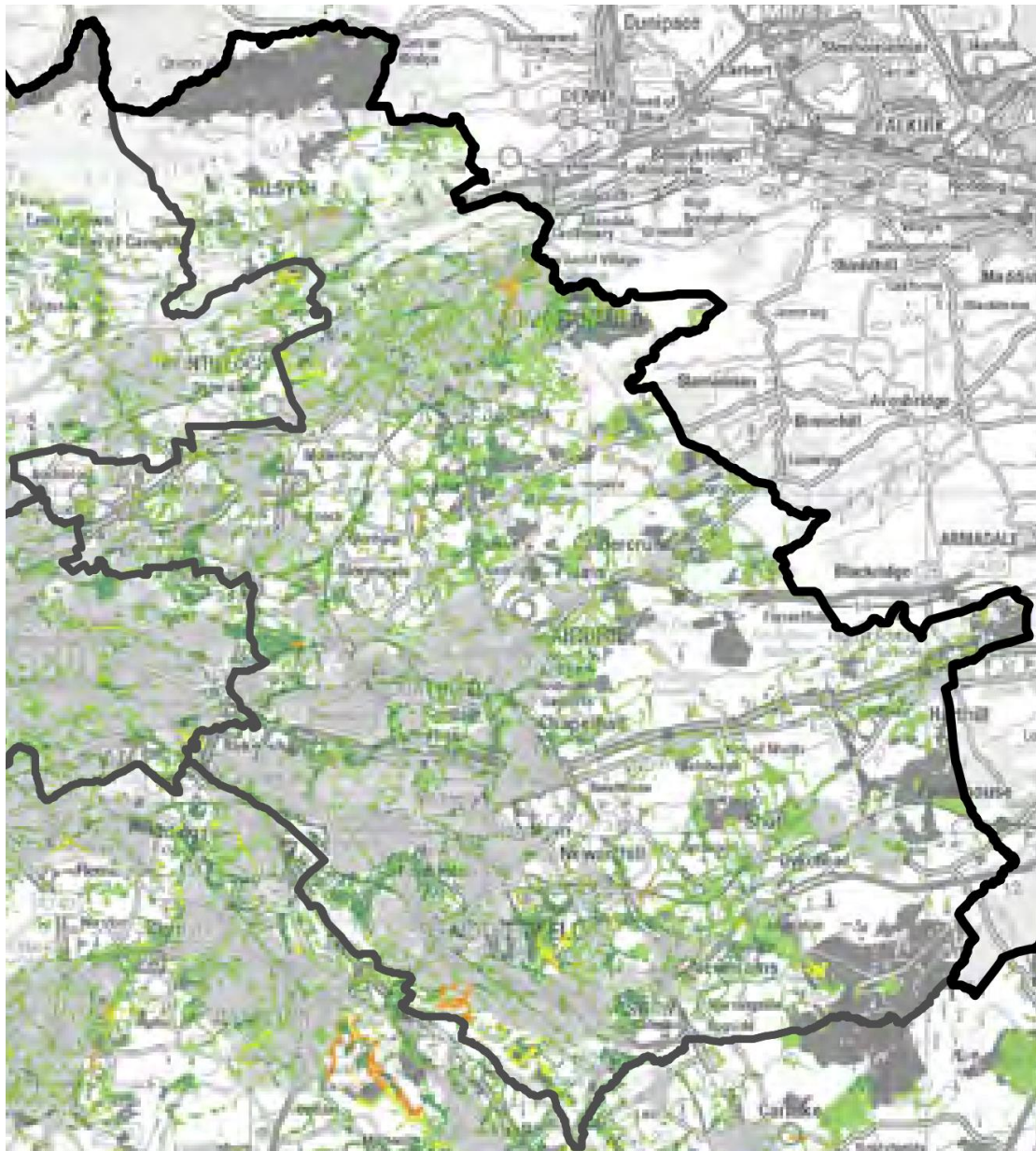
Opportunities for Mixed Woodland











[Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA extract 2020](#)

-  Local Authority boundary
-  Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
-  Supporting agriculture on higher quality land
-  Supporting resilience and diversification
-  Wider range of opportunities
-  Supporting development priorities
-  Conserving and enhancing historic gardens and designed landscapes
-  Built-up area

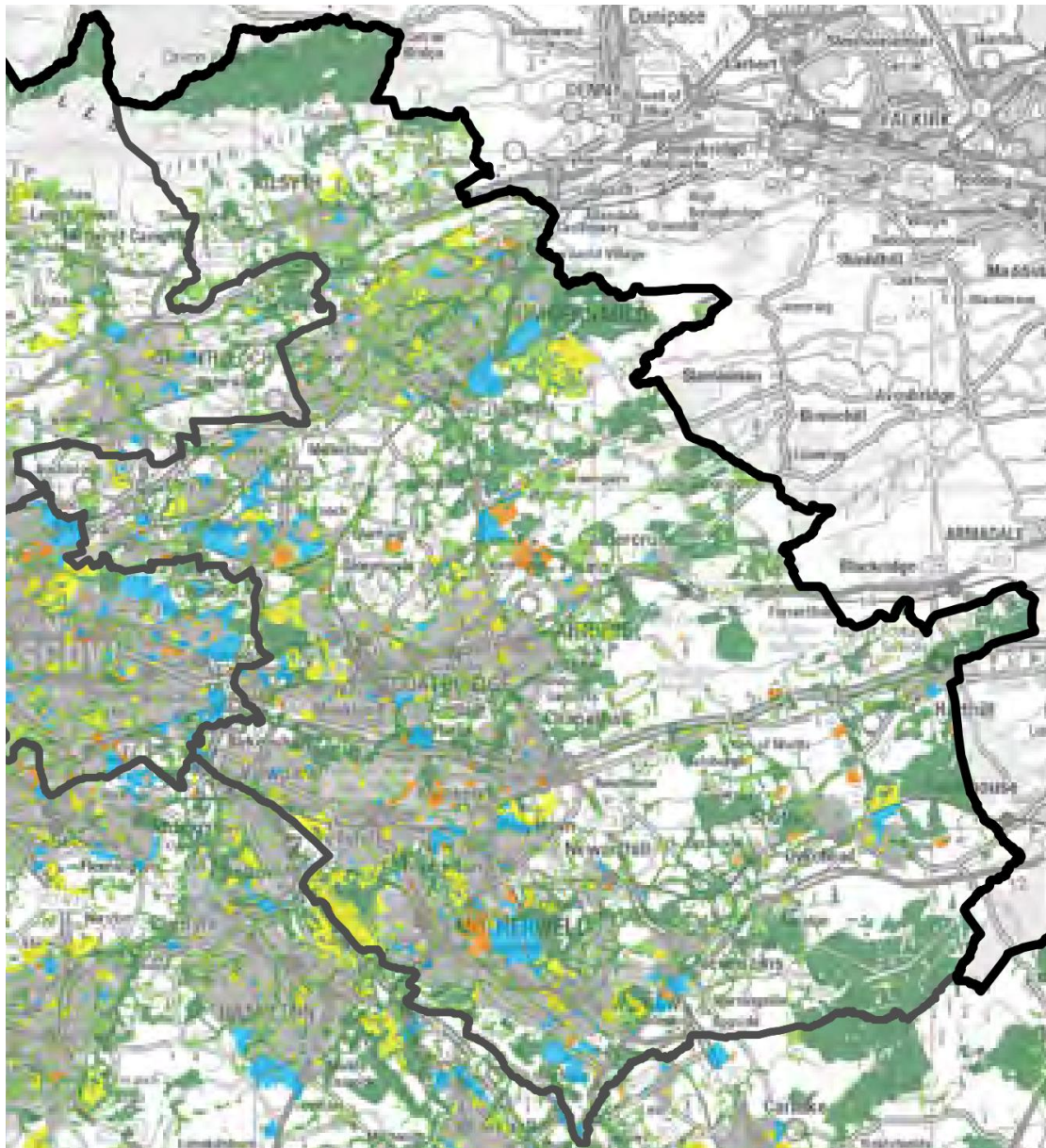
Opportunities for Native Woodland











[Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA extract 2020](#)

-  Local Authority boundary
-  Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
-  Native woodland
-  Nearly-native woodland
-  PAWS
-  Opportunities to contribute to woodland habitat networks
-  Other woodland
-  Built-up area

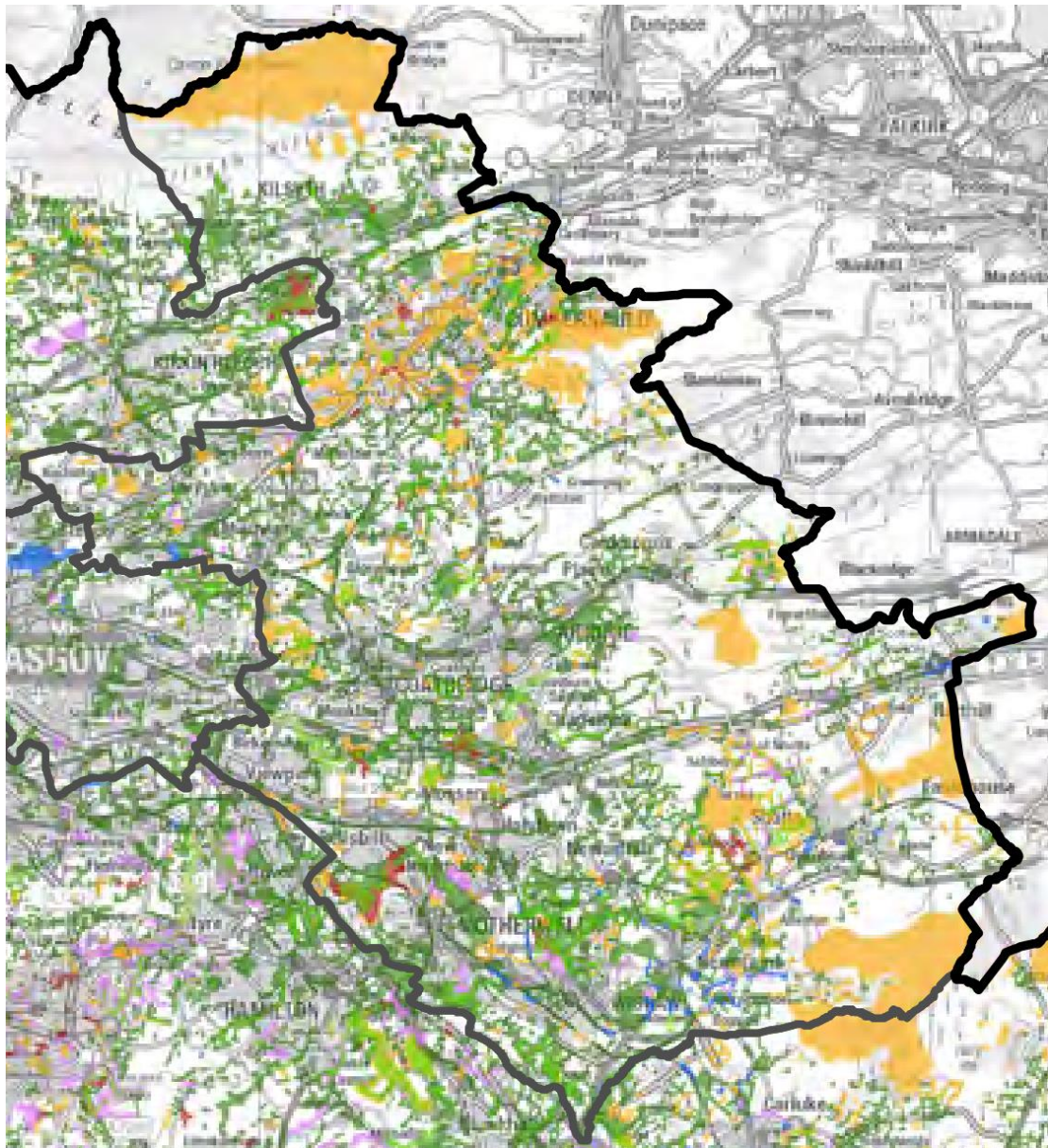
Opportunities for Urban Woodland



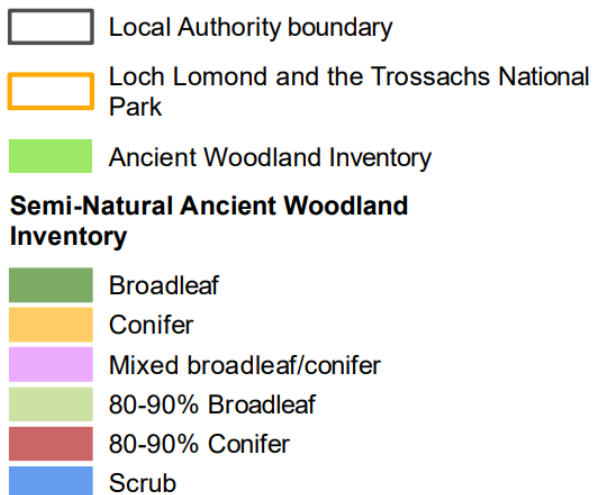
[Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA extract 2020](#)

-  Local Authority boundary
-  Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
-  Contributing to the setting of new housing development
-  Contributing to enhanced greenspaces
-  Contributing to temporary greening of vacant and derelict land
-  Managing existing woodlands
-  Opportunities to contribute to woodland habitat networks
-  Built-up area

Ancient and Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland



[Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA extract 2020](#)



North Lanarkshire

- 4.10 Prior to the conifer plantations of the 20th century North Lanarkshire had only 4.2% woodland cover. This reflected the agricultural and industrial land uses that dominated the area. During the 1980's there was a huge amount of coniferous planting, significantly increasing the woodland cover.
- 4.11 The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland shows that North Lanarkshire has 2,916 ha of native woodland (6.2% of the LA land area), with an additional 239 Ha as near native. Ancient Woodland only covers 461 ha (1.1%) which is below the national average of 4.2%). Much of the ancient woodland is concentrated along the North and South Calder, linking to the woodlands of the Clyde Valley and the burns around Cumbernauld and the Kilsyth hills. Though discontinuous, these woodlands have the potential to be part of a larger woodland network in North Lanarkshire and subsequently across Central Scotland. Native woodland comprises 29.2% of the woodland cover of North Lanarkshire, suggesting that there is a total woodland cover of 20% of the land area, which is above average.
- 4.12 The average size of a woodland in North Lanarkshire is 7ha with the largest woodland at Carron Valley being over 1000ha.
- 4.13 Only a small percentage of woodlands are protected by formal nature conservation status, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The conditions of these woodlands are as follows:

North Bellstane Plantation (Upland Birch woodland and Raised Bog) – Remains in unfavourable condition (last monitored in 2009). The current area of birch woodland is estimated to be approximately 21 hectares (ha). There is a conflict on site between the two designated features as expansion of one compromises the quality of the other.

Woodend Loch (Wet Woodland) – Designated as a base-rich Loch but has a component of wet woodland within its boundary. There has been no loss of habitat on this site, though the loch itself has been classed as unfavourable declining in the 2010 monitoring.

Garrion Gill (Mixed Broadleaf gorge woodland) – Favourable Condition, 2009 monitoring. Current area of semi-natural woodland 39.75 hectares. Special Area of Conservation (SAC) notification in 2000 as part of the Clyde Valley Woodlands SAC along with 10 other woodlands in South Lanarkshire.

- 4.14 The Council owns most of the non-conifer woodland in North Lanarkshire. Between 2007 and 2013, The Scottish Rural Development Programme funded 46.15 ha of woodland creation in North Lanarkshire, with 12.94 ha being native woodland, the remaining is mixed woodland. The area of woodlands on ancient woodland sites (before 1750) or long established (before 1860) woodland stands at 551 ha (5.5% of the woodland cover), 31% of this is of plantation origin.
- 4.15 The expansion of woodland has occurred mainly on unwooded sites, derelict farmland and vacant and derelict land, meaning that the areas of ancient woodland have not been expanded.
- 4.16 Woodland distribution within North Lanarkshire reveals a large number of small, linear sites. These semi-natural (non-plantation) woods are found in river gorges and on steep slopes where there has been little human intervention, particularly in the north. These sites may represent the only relics of the more extensive, past woodland cover.

The semi-natural woods are mixed but mainly broadleaved woods of Oak, Birch and Rowan with Ash, Elm and Alder.

- 4.17 Introduced broadleaves, including Beech and Sycamore are frequently present especially in the policy plantations associated with the public parks of Colzium, Cumbernauld House, Palacerigg, Coltness, Dalzell, and Cambusnethan. There has been, however, opportunities through the grant support system to gradually improve woodland habitats. Since 2008, NLC has taken advantage of grant schemes such as SFGS and WIAT and have been able to undertake management and enhancement works at 20 sites (table 1). Since 2015, the total area benefitting from WIAT projects totalled 83 hectares.

Table 1: WIAT schemes implemented since 2008	
1	Broadwood
2	Cairnhill woods
3	Calderbank
4	Cambusnethan and Carbarns Woods
5	Chapelhall
6	Coltness and Branchalwood
7	Colzium Lennox Estate
8	Cumbernauld Community Park
9	Cumbernauld Woods, West
10	Dalzell Estate
11	Drumpellier Woods
12	Glencryan Woods
13	Moodiesburn Glen
14	Newarthill
15	Petersburn Woods
16	Riccard Johnston
17	Shields Glen
18	Strathclyde park
19	Thornwood
20	Viewpark Glen

- 4.18 In 2006, North Lanarkshire Council carried out an Audit of Council owned woodlands, including an ecological audit. This resulted in the production of 12 woodland management plans and also the development of the Councils Woodland Strategy which has resulted in successful WIAT grants and biodiversity gains. Since 2008, the Council has completed 20 woodland and access improvement projects throughout the local authority under the WIAT initiative. Most recent projects in the last 5 years have included woodland sites at Thornwood, Newarthill, Chapelhall, Calderbank and Broadwood. There is a long-term forest plan for Palacerigg Country Park, which has been developed to coordinate with SWTs forest plan for neighbouring land in Cumbernauld. Phase 1 of the long term forest plan has been completed. Going forwards the Council are carrying out a number of woodland creation projects in response to the Climate Emergency where 40,000 trees will be planted across the local authority.

Current Factors Affecting this Habitat

- 4.19 Whilst there are some locally specific factors affecting woodlands in North Lanarkshire (for example, involving people in their local environment, litter and vandalism), the majority of issues are larger scale, either regional or national such as Ash Dieback Disease, control of invasive species, pollution, climate change, habitat fragmentation and development.
- 4.20 In terms of current action:
- Implementing a long-term operational plan to manage our woodlands, including compensating for the impact of the loss of trees through Ash Dieback Disease and to increase and improve woodland cover.
 - On-going consultation on Forest Design Plans and all schemes which are entered on the Scottish Forestry Register.
 - Extensive use of woodlands for environmental educational through Forest Schools, environmental education, and Branching Out.
 - Investigating improved access to GIS system for ancient woodland maps etc.
 - The Council's Greenspace Officers comment, as necessary, on all applications that affect areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland and SINC's.
 - Treatment/Control of Invasive Species as part of current and on-going grant schemes.
 - Diamond wood project.
 - NLC - Green Action Trust partnership to plant woodland on suitable areas of bare ground, particularly vacant and derelict land through available funding channels.
 - Woodland Management of sites through WIATS and other grants, for example woodlands at Broadwood Loch and Chapelhall.
 - Forestry & Land Scotland woodland management at Croy, Carron Valley, Nether braco, Arns and Longriggend.
 - The Clyde Climate Forest will see 18 million trees planted in both urban and rural parts of Glasgow City Region over the next decade.

NLC Woodland and Forestry Strategy

- 4.21 National targets relate to the creation, expansion and restoration of specific native woodland types. These targets aim to ensure that the right types of woodlands are planted in the right areas when working towards the Scottish Forestry Strategy targets.
- 4.22 The Scottish Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 has three main objectives:
1. Increase the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland's sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
 2. Improve the resilience of Scotland's forests and woodlands and increase their contribution to a healthy and high-quality environment.
 3. Increase the use of Scotland's forestry and woodland resources to enable more people to improve their health, well-being and life chances.
- 4.23 The objectives are underpinned by 6 priorities as follows:

Priority 1: Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed.

Priority 2: Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives.

Priority 3: Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets.

Priority 4: Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands.

Priority 5: Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands.

Priority 6: Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands.

4.24 NLC Proposed Objectives, Targets and Actions include:

1. To maintain and expand the current extent of woodland within North Lanarkshire.
2. To improve the quality of woodland within North Lanarkshire.
3. To improve the quality of access to woodlands.
4. To improve the biodiversity of woodlands.

Action	Meets objective number:	Action by	Target
Habitat management and protection			
1.1 Native woodland restoration.	1, 2	NLC, GATrust, SF, SWT	Encourage restoration through management and facilitate natural regeneration through SF and SG grant schemes and Long Term Forest Plans.
1.2 Native woodland expansion.	1, 2	NLC, GATrust, SF, SWT	Encourage expansion through natural regeneration and planting through SF and SG grant schemes and Long Term Forest Plans. Create 4 new woodlands sites by 2023.
1.3 Develop and implement strategies for targeted control or containment of non-native species.	1, 2	NatureScot, SF, GATrust NLC	3 strategies developed by 2027.
1.4 Woodland Management.	All	NLC, GATrust, SF, SWT	Submit 2 new WIAT applications when the grant scheme reopens.
Survey research and monitoring			
2.1 Use GIS mapping and other spatial datasets to proactively identify woodland expansion and creation areas.	1, 2 and 4	NLC, GATrust	Develop Partnership implementation plans to take forward woodland creation on identified areas where appropriate.
2.2 Improve quality of practical woodland management skills through Grounds Maintenance Apprenticeship Schemes and ILM schemes.	1, 2	NLC	Encourage working between Land Maintenance, Arbor and NLC Ranger Service.
2.3 Promote incorporation of woodlands, woodland planting and management within development, in accordance with good practice guides and grants.	All	NLC, GATrust, NatureScot	Produce guidance for all relevant council departments (planning, developers and architects, roads, flooding etc) on greening within developments by end of 2025.
Communications and awareness raising			
3.1 Deliver environmental education schemes within woodlands.	3	NLC	Continue the Forest Schools and Branching Out programmes until at least 2026.
3.2 Monitor the spread of tree pests and diseases and contribute to the national monitoring programmes.	2, 4	All	Train staff in identification of the main pests and diseases and how to submit records (and to whom) by end 2026.

North Lanarkshire Biodiversity Action Plan: Woodlands. 2022, Pardeep Chand, NLC. Emilie Wadsworth, Green Action Trust.

Tree Preservation Order

4.25 North Lanarkshire as the planning authority have a duty to ensure, whenever it is appropriate, that in granting permission for any development adequate provision is made, by the imposition of conditions, for the preservation or planting of trees. In addition we have a duty to make such tree preservation orders as appear to the

authority to be necessary with the grant of such permission; and from time to time to review any TPO and consider whether it is requisite to vary or revoke the TPO.

- 4.26 A planning authority may make a TPO if it appears to them to be expedient in the interest of amenity and/or, that the trees, groups of trees or woodlands are of cultural or historical significance.
- 4.27 North Lanarkshire will continue to designate TPO's where it appears expedient to do so in the interest of amenity or in circumstances whereby a sufficient case is made that the trees, groups of trees or woodlands are of cultural or historical significance to warrant protection.
- 4.28 The Council has a map based record of trees that are protected by a TPO or within a conservation area by utilising the interactive map [NLC Interactive Map - Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas](#).
- 4.29 It is anticipated that National Planning Framework (NPF) Policy 6(b-d) coupled with the site-specific protective designations of such sites and the woodland strategy targets outlined in 4.24 above should afford adequate control of development proposals to ensure that development proposals affecting forestry, woodland and trees will not be supported where they will result in:
- Any loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition;
 - Adverse impacts on native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees of high biodiversity value, or identified for protection in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy;
 - Fragmenting or severing woodland habitats, unless appropriate mitigation measures are identified and implemented in line with the mitigation hierarchy;
 - Conflict with Restocking Direction, Remedial Notice or Registered Notice to Comply issued by Scottish Forestry.
- 4.28 Development proposals involving woodland removal will only be supported where they will achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits in accordance with relevant Scottish Government policy on woodland removal. Where woodland is removed, compensatory planting will most likely be expected to be delivered.
- 4.29 Development proposals on sites which include an area of existing woodland or land identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy as being suitable for woodland creation will only be supported where the enhancement and improvement of woodlands and the planting of new trees on the site (in accordance with the Forestry and Woodland Strategy) are integrated into the design.

5. Potential Connections in Evidence

- 5.1 The Plan for North Lanarkshire is the council's main strategy for the area to improve services and outcomes for the communities who live here. It provides a shared ambition for inclusive growth and prosperity for all. It sets a path for the council and partners to follow. The Plan covers a wide range of activities that can impact on carbon emissions and help to make North Lanarkshire a more sustainable place to 'live-learn-work-invest-visit'.

5.2 In the UK the past four decades have been warmer than the one before. In North Lanarkshire it is expected that the average summer temperatures will increase, and the number of rainy days will reduce. The volume of rain on summer's wettest day will increase. Our winters are expected to be milder. Whilst the impact of climate change may seem to be less severe locally, in recent years we have seen an increase in severe weather events. These can affect us through:

- *Travel Disruption*
- *Emergency Response Situations*
- *Loss of power supply*
- *Landslides*
- *Flooding*
- *Disruption to service Delivery*

5.3 The council recognised that it must take action and declared a climate emergency in June 2019. It has committed itself and the area of North Lanarkshire to achieving net-zero by 2030. Concerned about the impact of climate change on biodiversity, the council became a signatory of the Edinburgh declaration on Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Forestry, woodland and trees – implications for topic 1 tackling the climate and nature crises

5.4 It is noted that when considering all development proposals significant weight is to be given to the global nature crises. Scotland has ambitious climate targets, including a commitment to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. Development proposals would need to align with these targets by promoting land-use practices such as afforestation and reforestation given the importance of trees in sequestering carbon dioxide and biodiversity conservation.

5.5 Scotland's Forestry Strategy (SFS) sets the Scottish Government's vision, objectives and priorities for the expansion of the nation's woodland and development of the forestry sector to 2070.

Forestry, woodland and trees topic - implications for topic 2 climate mitigation and adaptation

5.6 Scotland's forests and woodlands are an important resource of natural capital providing us with a range of environmental benefits which contribute to improvements in people's quality of life such as clear air, water, timber and renewable energy. For example, forests and woodlands help mitigate the impact of climate change by absorbing substantial amounts of carbon. Many wood products also contribute to climate change mitigation by continuing to store captured carbon. Thus uniquely, the more economic activity in the sector, the more we can replenish and expand Scotland's forests, helping to slow the increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

5.7 The globally important environmental role of sustainably managed and appropriately planted forests has been recognised as important by international environmental organisations such as the WWF⁸, as they can help conserve biodiversity and meet human needs by relieving pressure on more fragile native ecosystems, while contributing to sustainable economic growth and local livelihoods.

5.8 Forests and woodlands support a diverse range of species and are rich in biodiversity; to date, researchers at Stirling University have recorded over 1000 species associated

with Scottish forests. Forests and woodlands also help to purify our water and air, reduce flood risks, improve slope and riverbank stability, and help to decontaminate soils on post-industrial sites.

- 5.9 Scotland's forestry objectives include increasing the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland's sustainable and inclusive economic growth, improve the resilience of Scotland's forests and woodlands and increase their contribution to a healthy and high quality environment and to increase the use of Scotland's forest and woodland resources to enable more people to improve their health, well-being and life chances.

Conclusion in terms of implications for topic 1 and 2

- 5.10 It is considered that the proposed issues addressed by the forestry, woodland and trees topic in seeking to protect and avoid allocations or extensions to settlements that would impact existing native woodland areas, areas for potential native woodland expansion or land identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy as being suitable for woodland creation aligns with the intentions of the national woodland strategy and also the principles of climate mitigation and adaptation. Scotland has been actively involved in afforestation and reforestation efforts to enhance carbon sequestration and biodiversity conservation and as noted above similar efforts at restoration and protection of forestry and woodland areas have been and will continue to be a focus of North Lanarkshire going forward.

Other topic/policy overlaps stated in NPF4

- 5.11 It is possible that connection may exist with the following topics and in the following ways.
- 5.12 There is potential for some positive effects for the following topic areas:
- Policy 3 Biodiversity
 - Policy 4 Natural places
 - Policy 5 Soils
 - Policy 7 Historic assets and places
 - Policy 8 Green belts
 - Policy 14 Design quality and place
 - Policy 20 Blue and green infrastructure
 - Policy 21 Play, recreation and sport
 - Policy 22 Flood risk and water management
 - Policy 30 Tourism

Given that the proposals seek to promote the conservation of fragile habitat areas by limiting development and where possible redirecting development to locations that do not erode finite land.

- 5.13 There is potential for some limiting effects for the following topic areas:
- Policy 11 Energy
 - Policy 16 Quality Homes
 - Policy 17 Rural Homes
 - Policy 29 Rural Development
 - Policy 33 Minerals

Given that the proposals seek to promote the conservation of fragile habitat areas by limiting development it is possible that some proposals falling within these categories would have further restrictions and/or additional justification required if they sought to encroach or would impact on the proposed protected areas. It is envisaged however that such conflicts would be minimised due to the existing policy requirements outlined by the policies contained within NPF4.

6. Site Selection Implications

6.1 The issues that have been identified to inform the site selection process are:

- Issue 1 Allocations on existing native woodland areas, areas for potential native woodland expansion or land identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy as being suitable for woodland creation as identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA should be avoided and allocations should be carefully considered for any proposals or extensions to settlements that would impact such areas unless there are clearly defined public benefits in accordance with the Scottish Government policy on woodland removal.
- Issue 2 Allocations on Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland as identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA should be avoided and allocations should be carefully considered for any proposals or extensions to settlements that would impact such areas.
- Issue 3 The limited areas of Ancient Woodland as identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for Clydeplan SDPA should be avoided and allocations should be carefully considered for any proposals or extensions to settlements that would impact such areas.
- Issue 4 North Lanarkshire will continue to designate TPO's where it appears expedient to do so in the interest of amenity or in circumstances whereby a sufficient case is made that the trees, groups of trees or woodlands are of cultural or historical significance to warrant protection.

7. Implications for North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2

- 7.1 New and updated development allocations in the proposed LDP2 will need to take account of existing and proposed areas of protection for existing native woodland areas, areas for potential native woodland expansion or land identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy as being suitable for woodland creation and Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland by limiting development and allocations on such areas and where possible redirecting development to locations that do not erode a valuable resource. The areas identified as Ancient Woodland should be avoided as a finite resource and designation of TPO's in the interests of amenity or cultural or historic significance would continue in circumstances where a sufficient case is made.
- 7.2 Based on the evidence, analysis and views presented in this survey paper, North Lanarkshire Council currently considers that the topic policy in NPF4 for Forestry, woodland and trees should be applied as per NPF4 in North Lanarkshire as there is no need to consider locally specific policy to support decision making in this regard.