



Angus Forestry & Woodland Strategy 2024-2034

Consultation Draft January 2024



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Executive Summary

With the twin climate and biodiversity crises, it is more important than ever that our landscapes change significantly to address the challenges. There is an urgent need for significant land use change across Angus with a substantial increase in forestry and woodland.

With increased likelihood of flood events due to climate change, forestry and woodland can contribute to natural flood management by slowing the flow of water through river catchments and providing resilient landscapes which can absorb flood water on flood plains. Forestry and woodland can be part of the solution to protect our settlements from flooding.

Woodland covers 13% of the UK land area and 18.8% in Scotland. (Forestry Statistics 2020, Forest Research). In Angus, forest and woodland cover is currently around 10.7%. The lower than the Scottish average percentage is probably, in part, a reflection on lowland areas being some of the most productive agricultural land in Scotland. In addition, the high levels of grazing pressure on upland areas by deer and sheep, together with muirburn associated with sporting estate management, have also contributed to low levels of woodland cover.

Native woodland covers only 2.3% of the area of Angus. According to the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland around half of this is in poor condition and importantly it is often severely fragmented. Woodland in poor condition is at risk of being progressively lost. Woodlands which are in good condition, regenerating naturally and part of a wider woodland habitat network are much more resilient to climate change and will have substantially increased biodiversity value. There is compelling justification for substantially increasing the area and connectivity of native woodland in Angus.

The Strategy identifies Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value (WHNCV) in Angus and is defined as all woodland included within the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland and woodlands as Ancient, including Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) in the Ancient Woodland Inventory Scotland. The Strategy contains policies and a proposal to protect them and encourage their management and expansion. It aspires to create woodland habitat networks within Angus. Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value is 6,300 hectares, which equates to 3.35% of Angus (excluding the part within Cairngorms National Park). This percentage includes Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) which are excluded from the native woodland calculation.

There is substantial scope to increase productive forestry within Angus to help contribute towards the ambitious Scottish Government target of 18,000ha per year by 2024/2025. The Strategy supports new forestry where it complies with the guidance contained within the UK Forestry Standard and within this Strategy.

There is substantial scope for increasing forest and woodland cover in Angus, contributing towards Scottish Government targets:

- On flood plains or along river corridors to increase biodiversity, enhance woodland habitat networks and the resilience of landscapes to absorb natural flood events.
- On fertile lowland areas to grow quality timber, provide shelter, create landscape structure and reduce wind-blown soil erosion with associated impacts on air quality within our settlements.
- On upland farmland to provide livestock shelter and to diversify farming; produce timber; increase biodiversity and contribute towards natural flood management by slowing water flows through river catchments to reduce downstream flooding.
- On moorlands (excluding peat soils) to create a natural tree line with montane scrub; increase biodiversity; potentially produce timber with native trees; and slow water flows through river catchments to reduce downstream flooding.
- Close to towns and villages to increasing opportunities for woodland recreation, link to urban nature networks, produce quality timber and strengthen the landscape setting of settlements.
- To connect native woodland fragments to create woodland habitat networks and landscape structure within which farming and productive forestry can take place.

Forests and woodlands have significant potential to mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration. Forests and woodlands can increase biodiversity and can help create landscapes with increased resilience to climate change by slowing water flows through river catchments as well as reducing erosion. Wind-blown soil erosion can often be an issue in lowland Angus, not only eroding valuable soils but also creating dust storms which affect air quality in settlements. With the climate predicted to become warmer and stormier, forests and woodlands can create shelter and reduce wind-blown soil erosion and provide shade.

Across Angus, there is a range of international, European, national and local biodiversity designations. Whilst some of these are woodland, they are sometimes a sensitivity to be assessed as part of any proposals. There may be particular sensitivities in relating important sites for wading birds and the Cairngorms Massif Special Protection Area for Golden eagle. There may be a need for either a Wader Impact Assessment or an Eagle Impact Assessment.

Opportunities for montane woodland when associated with existing forests is encouraged as it would deliver landscape enhancement by removing the sharp transition between afforested and open habitats by the establishment of natural tree

line. Typically, more than 50% of the riparian vegetation along Angus watercourses is in poor condition and in some cases this percentage is greater than 75%. The management of existing riparian trees and woodland and increased riparian woodland could lead to significant improvements and is therefore supported by this Strategy.

Landscape Special Qualities have been assessed for each landscape character type in Angus which should be considered when developing proposals. NatureScot has identified Wild Land Areas in Scotland and Wild Land Area 16: Lochnagar - Mount Keen is partially within Angus. A Wild Land Assessment should be undertaken for any proposals whose nature, siting, scale or design are likely to result in a significant effect on the qualities of a WLA.


Angus has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Across the region there are 370 Scheduled Monuments and over 2,100 Listed Buildings, designated and protected for their importance locally and nationally, for their archaeological, cultural and architectural merits. There are also over 4,500 standing undesignated (non-statutory) heritage assets - historic sites without the protection of designated status. Although without protected status, these undesignated sites have a significant role in recording and presenting Angus's story.

NatureScot Deer Count Density (updated 2023) shows that most of the upper and southern parts of the Angus Glens have a density of between 19 – 99 or 100+ per km². It is generally considered that a Red deer population of around 5 animals per km² would enable native woodland to regenerate naturally. The high densities of deer in some parts of Angus is preventing woodland regeneration taking place, without deer fencing. It is encouraged that deer populations be reduced to a level whereby woodland is able to regenerate without the need for deer fencing.

Forests and woodland can absorb high levels of recreational use compared with other land uses. Access to accessible woodland close to where people live can increase physical and mental health, through a strong association with nature. Accessible woodland is supported by Scottish Forestry through Woodland in and Around Towns (WIAT). Across Angus, it is important that public access is not unduly restricted by forestry fencing. This particularly includes core paths, public rights of way and other promoted routes. In addition, it is also desirable that other potential off-path routes for which there may be demand remain unobstructed.

The Angus Forestry & Woodland Strategy contains Angus Council's policies in relation to forestry and woodland. Section A159 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) introduces a requirement for Local Authorities to prepare a Forestry & Woodland Strategy and indicates the scope of the strategy. It is a requirement that the strategy identifies Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value.

Lastly, Angus has been assessed according to sensitivities which may affect suitability for woodland and forestry expansion. Areas are categorised as either **Preferred**, **Potential** or **Sensitive**.



With the twin climate and biodiversity crises, it is more important than ever that our landscapes change significantly to address the challenges.

1. Introduction

With the twin climate and biodiversity crises, it is more important than ever that our landscapes change significantly to address the challenges. There is an urgent need for significant land use change across Angus with a substantial increase in forestry and woodland.

Forests and woodlands have significant potential to mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration. The report by Forest Research on Quantifying the Sustainable Forestry Carbon Cycle (2022) has quantified the significant carbon sequestration which can be achieved through forest and woodland expansion and can be as much as 14.4t of carbon per hectare per year.

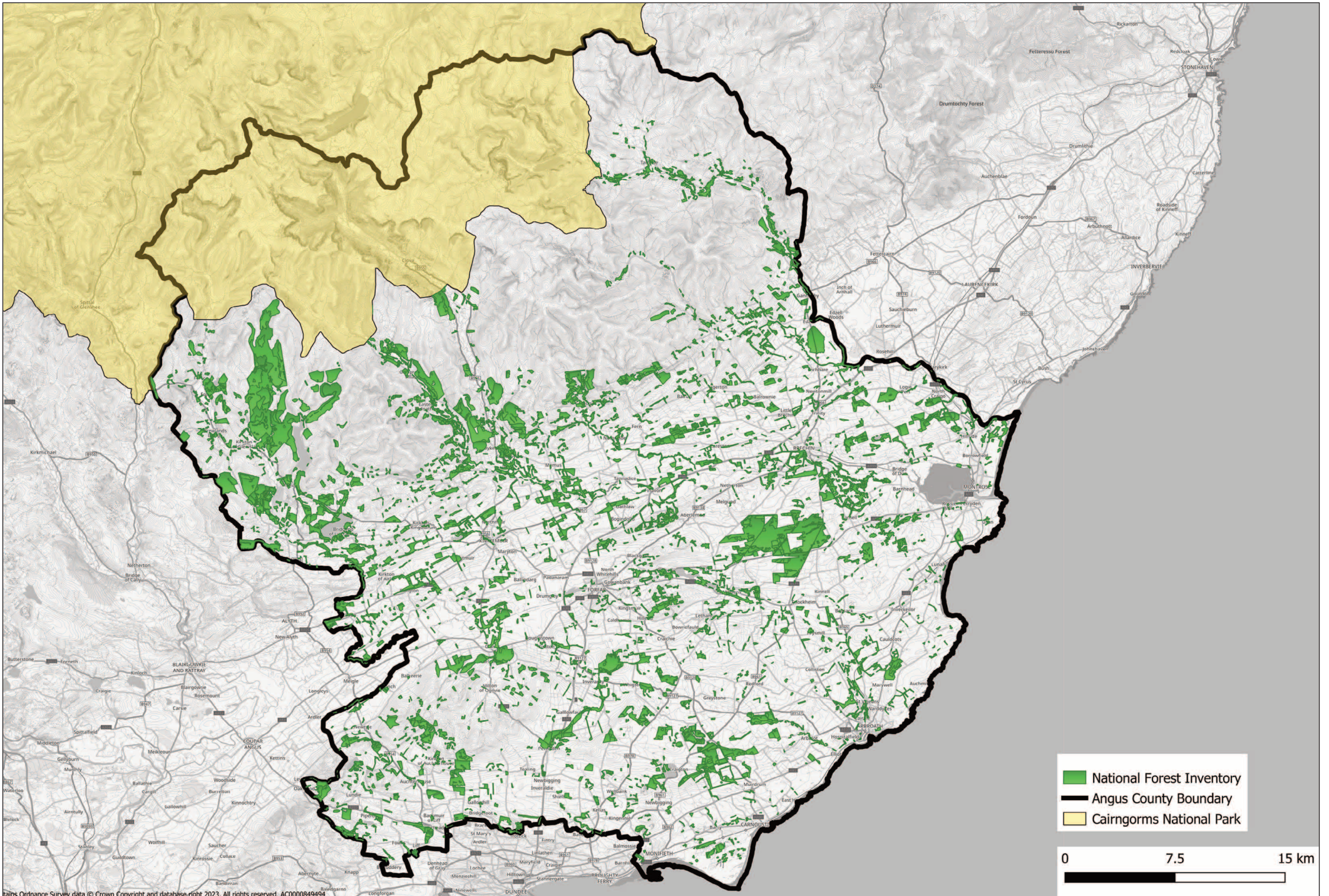
Increased locally grown timber provides opportunities to substantially reduce the use of cement-based products in construction with their associated high carbon footprint. This can assist in creating more sustainable settlements.

With increased likelihood of flood events due to climate change, forestry and woodland can contribute to natural flood management by slowing the flow of water through river catchments and providing resilient landscapes which can absorb flood water on flood plains. Forestry and woodland can be part of the solution to protect our settlements from flooding.

Woodland covers 13% of the UK land area and 18.8% in Scotland. (Forestry Statistics 2020, Forest Research). In Angus, forest and woodland cover is currently around 10.7% (see Map 1). The lower than the Scottish average percentage is probably, in part, a reflection on lowland areas being some of the most productive agricultural land in Scotland. In addition, the high levels of grazing pressure on upland areas by deer and sheep, together with muirburn associated with sporting estate management, have also contributed to low levels of woodland cover.

Native woodland covers only 2.3% of the area of Angus. According to the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland around half of this is in poor condition and importantly it is often severely fragmented. Woodland in poor condition is at risk of being progressively lost. Woodlands which are in good condition, regenerating naturally and part of a wider woodland habitat network are much more resilient to climate change and will have substantially increased biodiversity value. There is compelling justification for substantially increasing the area and connectivity of native woodland in Angus.

The Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2020-2021 included tree planting and woodland creation targets as part of the implementation of Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029. Annual woodland creation targets were set out in the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan. Since 2021 they have risen yearly in



steps from 12,000 hectares a year to 13,500 in 2021/22, to 15,000 for 2022/23. For 2023/24 it will rise to 16,500ha and in 2024/25 reach a target of 18,000 ha every year.

Section A159 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) introduces a requirement for Local Authorities to prepare a Forestry & Woodland Strategy and indicates the scope of the strategy. It is a requirement that the strategy identifies Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value.

Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 provides an overview of contemporary Scottish forestry, presents our 50-year vision for Scotland's forests and woodlands, and sets out a 10-year framework for action. It contains 6 priorities for action:

- Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed
- Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives
- Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets
- Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands
- Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands
- Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) details how sustainable forestry will be undertaken by setting out relevant legislation and good practice which all forestry proposals must comply with. It is the standard against which all woodland proposals are assessed, and provides detailed guidance in relation to biodiversity, climate change, historic environment, landscape, people, soil and water.

This Strategy does not replace or amend any part of UKFS, but rather provide an Angus context further developing the main themes of the Standard and provides new guidance and policy in relation to the legislative requirement that it identify and include policies in for Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value.

The It is intended that this Strategy provides the Council's policy in relation to forestry and woodlands for the period 2024–2034 and how Angus can contribute towards delivery of Scotland's Forestry Strategy.



2. Vision

Our vision is that forests and woodlands of Angus will flourish and expand, provide high quality timber and form woodland nature networks with increased biodiversity.

Angus landscapes will be resilient to climate change with forests and woodland storing carbon and playing a key role in natural flood management through slowing the flow of rainfall through the landscape. They will create attractive opportunities for recreation close to where people live and work and will provide opportunities for land-based businesses to adapt to a sustainable future.

3. Objectives

There are 9 key objectives for the Strategy:

- 1** Protect and encourage the natural regeneration and significant expansion of woodland of high nature conservation value.
- 2** Ensure restoration of condition of existing native woodland, increase its biodiversity value and resilience to climate change.
- 3** Promote the increase in riparian woodland and the establishment of natural treelines.
- 4** Promote the creation of woodland habitat networks as part of an Angus-wide nature network.
- 5** Increase the contribution of forests and woodland to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- 6** Significantly increase the area of productive forestry to provide quality timber as a sustainable building material.
- 7** Ensure that where deer fencing is necessary, paths, promoted routes and access to landscape features including hills and riverbanks are not obstructed.
- 8** Increase opportunities for forest and woodland recreation close to where people live.
- 9** Encourage the integration of forestry and woodland management with other land uses as part of sustainable diversification of rural business.

These objectives have guided the content of the Strategy and will inform a wide range of other council plans, strategies and action plans including the Local Development Plan and the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.



Forestry and woodland can be part of the solution to protect our settlements from flooding.

4. Policy Background

Programme for Government 2020-2021

The Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2020-2021 included tree planting and woodland creation targets as part of the implementation of Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029. Annual woodland creation targets were set out in the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan. Since 2021 they have risen yearly in steps from 12,000 hectares a year to 13,500 in 2021/22, to 15,000 for 2022/23. For 2023/24 it will rise to 16,500ha and in 2024/25 reach a target of 18,000 ha every year.

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended)

Section A159 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) introduces a requirement for Local Authorities to prepare a Forestry & Woodland Strategy and indicates the scope of the strategy. It is a requirement that the strategy identifies woodland of high nature conservation value. In addition, it should set out the planning authority's policies and proposals in their area, as to:

- (i) the development of forestry and woodlands,
- (ii) the protection and enhancement of woodlands, in particular woodland of high nature conservation value,
- (iii) the resilience to climate change of woodlands, in particular woodland of high nature conservation value.,
- (iv) the expansion of woodlands of a range of types to provide multiple benefits to the physical, cultural, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area.

Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029

Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 provides an overview of contemporary Scottish forestry, presents our 50-year vision for Scotland's forests and woodlands, and sets out a 10-year framework for action. It contains 6 priorities for action:

- Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed.
- Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives
- Improving efficiency and productivity and developing markets.
- Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands.
- Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands.
- Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands.

The Angus Forestry & Woodland Strategy will provide a policy context for how Angus can contribute towards these priorities and to the ambitions of Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029.

UK Forestry Standard

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) details how sustainable forestry will be undertaken by setting out relevant legislation and good practice which all forestry proposals must comply with. It is the standard against which all woodland proposals are assessed and provides detailed guidance on seven elements of sustainable forest management covering:

- Forests and Biodiversity
- Forests and Climate Change
- Forests and Historic Environment
- Forests and Landscape
- Forests and People
- Forests and Soil
- Forests and Water

In addition to UKFS, there are voluntary certification schemes underpinned by the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS).

National Planning Framework 4

National Planning Framework 4 is the Scottish national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out our spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy. It contains policies relating to climate change, biodiversity, soils and forestry & woodland. It requires that the Forestry & Woodland Strategy will form part of the evidence report for the forthcoming Local Development Plan 2.

Tackling the Nature Emergency - Scottish biodiversity strategy to 2045

The Scottish Government Tackling the Nature Emergency - Scottish biodiversity strategy to 2045 sets out our clear ambition for Scotland to be Nature Positive by 2030, and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity across the country by 2045. An outcome is that forest and woodland management will have led to sustainable natural regeneration; a greater diversity of woodland species; increased woodland cover with a healthy understorey, enhanced woodland connectivity; and improved integration of trees into other land uses. In addition, Riparian woodland will have expanded reducing the average temperature of our rivers and burns, leading to increases in freshwater fish species and other wildlife.

Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan 2018-2032

Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan 2018-2032 sets out the Scottish Government's pathway to our new and ambitious targets set by the Climate Change Act 2019. The Plan sets out that this will require that appropriate

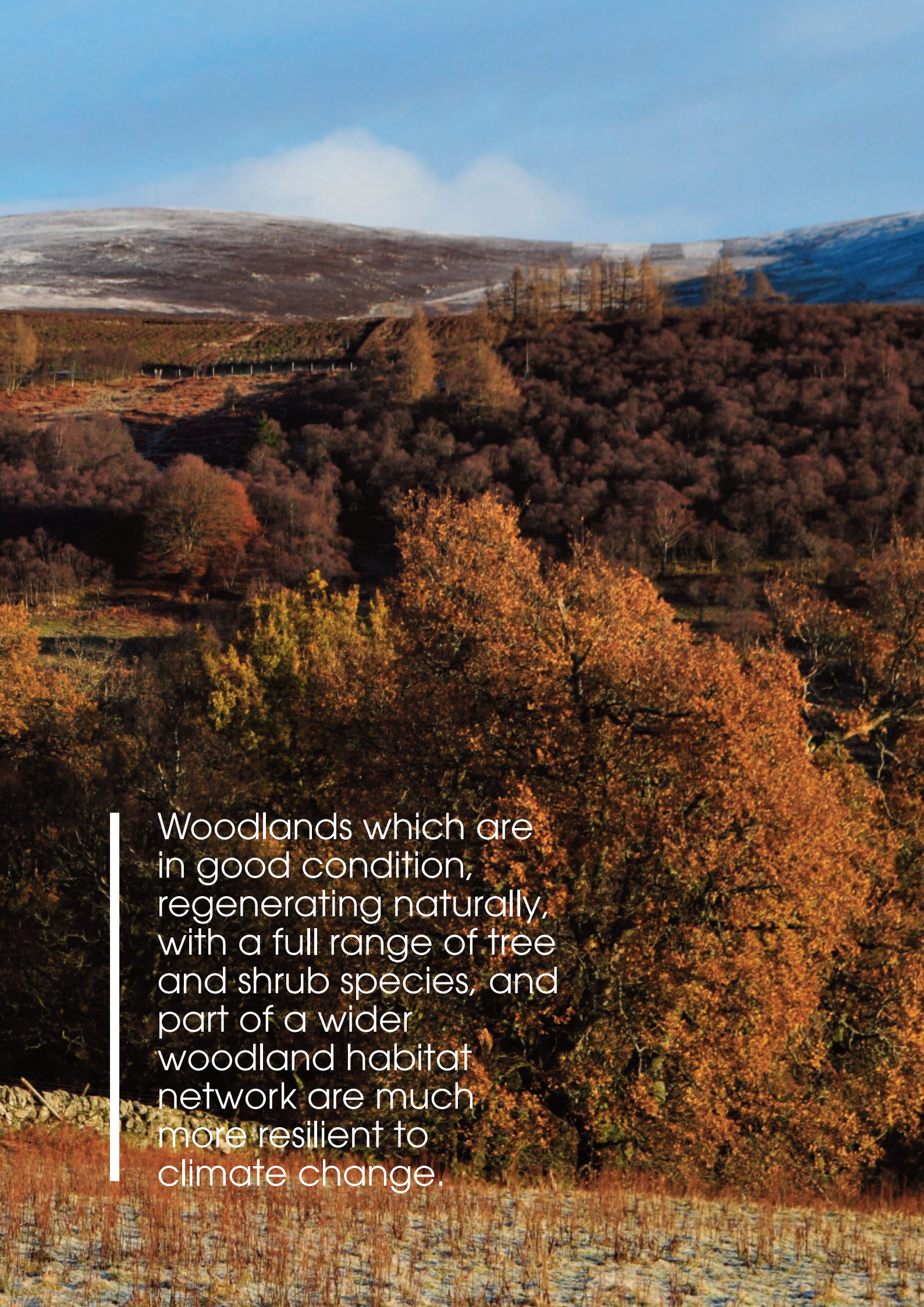
land be moved out of farming as we currently understand it into forestry and peatland.

Angus Local Landscape Areas (consultation draft 2023)

The draft includes an assessment of special qualities for all landscape character types within Angus, which will assist in assessing effects upon landscape. Landscape guidance is provided for the 4 areas proposed for designation which will be of further assistance.

Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2026

The requirement to produce a Forestry & Woodland Strategy and in particular, the requirement to identify and develop policies & proposals for woodland of high nature conservation value is supported by the Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2026. The action plan includes actions to protect and expand forests and woodlands. It also seeks to maintain and expand native woodlands and encouraging natural flood management through planting of wet woodland.



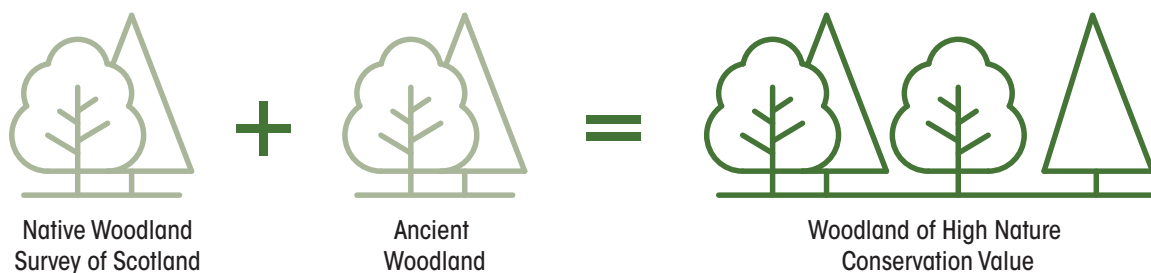
Woodlands which are in good condition, regenerating naturally, with a full range of tree and shrub species, and part of a wider woodland habitat network are much more resilient to climate change.

5. Policy Guidance

5.1 Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value

An intended outcome of Tackling the Nature Emergency - Scottish biodiversity strategy to 2045 (Scottish Government) is that forest and woodland management will have led to sustainable natural regeneration; a greater diversity of woodland species; increased woodland cover with a healthy understorey, enhanced woodland connectivity; and improved integration of trees into other land uses. The Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2026 includes actions to maintain and expand native woodlands.

Within this Strategy, Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value (WHNCV) is all woodland included within the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland and woodlands as Ancient, including Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) in the Ancient Woodland Inventory Scotland.



Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS)

All native woodlands have been surveyed and mapped by the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland 2013. Box 1 summarises the findings of the survey report for Angus.

Ancient Woodland

The Inventory of Ancient, Semi-Natural & Long-Established Woodland was created in the 1980s. Interpreted as semi-natural woodland from Roy's Military Maps of circa 1750 or the first edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1860 and continuously wooded to the present day.

Ancient Woods are important because:

- They include all remnants of Scotland's original woodland; their flora and fauna may preserve elements of the natural composition of the original Atlantic forests.
- They usually have much richer wildlife than that of more recent woods.
- They preserve the integrity of soil ecological processes and associated biodiversity.
- Some have been managed by traditional methods for centuries and demonstrate an enduring relationship between people and nature.

- Woods and veteran trees are ancient monuments whose value to the local community and historians may be as great as the older buildings in a parish.
- Once destroyed they cannot be recreated.

In some cases, Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) offer substantial opportunities for ancient woodland restoration at time of harvesting. Long-Established Woodland of Plantation Origin (LEPO) is not included within the definition of WHNCV.

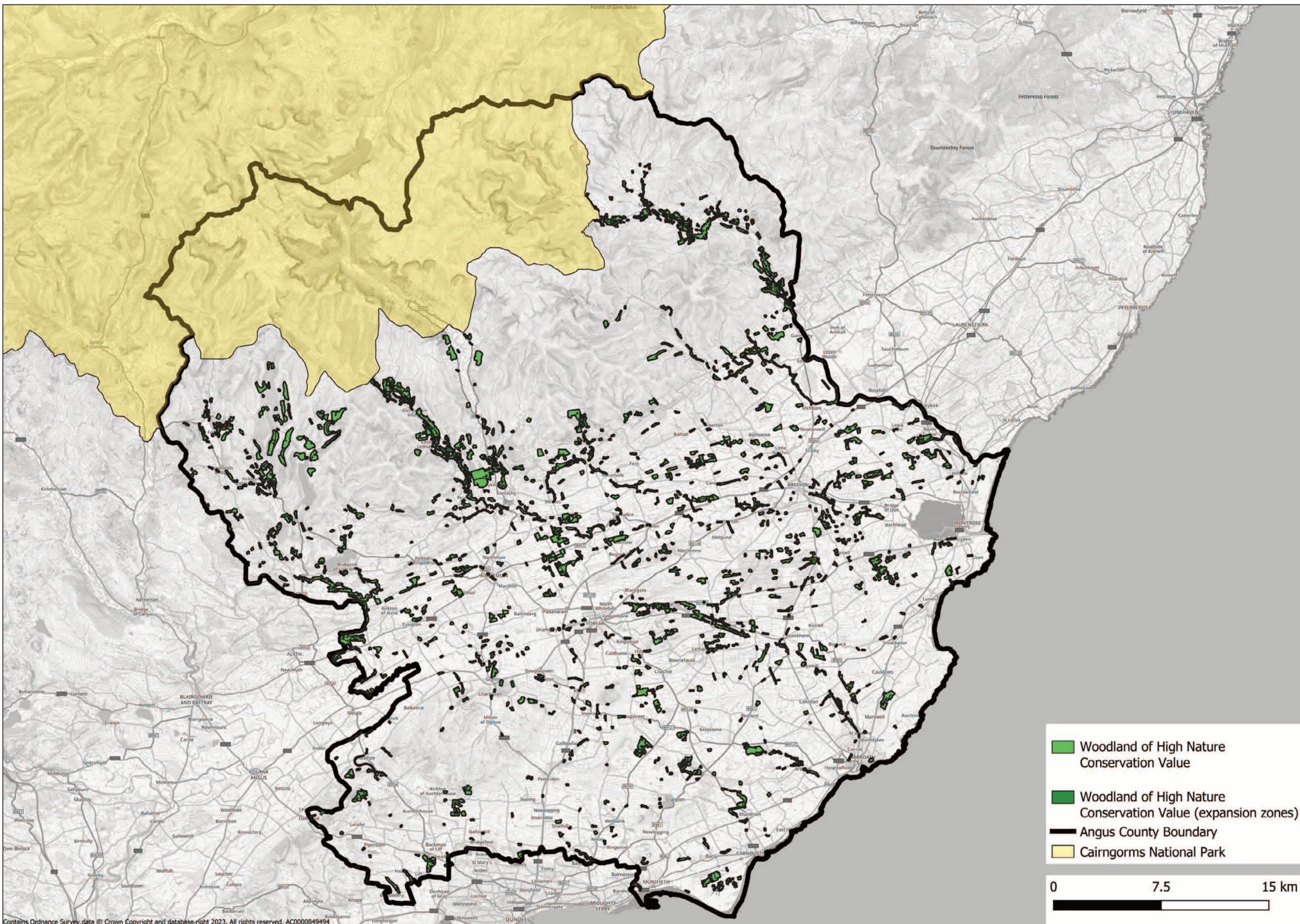
BOX 1: Native Woodland Survey of Scotland – Angus (2013) Executive Summary

1. Native Woodland

- The area of native woodland in Angus is 5,022ha, which is 21.7% of the total woodland area or 2.3% of the total land area of Angus.
- The main priority habitat types are Upland birch woods, Native pine woods & Wet woodland.
- Many of the native woods in Angus are highly semi-natural in their present structure and composition, with 61% of the total area in the 80-100% semi-natural category.
- The most common native tree species in the upper canopy are downy birch and Scots pine.
- Woodland canopy cover averages 75% across all native woods.
- Native species make up 89% of canopy cover averaged across all types of native woods; individual types range from 83% native species in the canopy of Lowland mixed deciduous woodland to 94% in Upland birch woods.
- Non-native tree species comprise 5% of the established regeneration stage and 14% of the canopy in mature woodland.
- Estimated deadwood volume averages 25m³ per ha.
- Invasive non-native species in the shrub and field layers occupy 1.6% of native woodland areas, with *Rhododendron ponticum* and other herbaceous invasive exotics as the main threats.
- Native woods in Angus have 86% of the total area in the lowest two categories of the herbivore impact assessment.
- 51% of native woodland is in good health for biodiversity, based on analysis of four key condition measures.

2. Ancient woodland

- There are 681 ha of woodland now present on ancient woodland sites, of which 61% is native woodland. Another 1% is nearly-native in composition (ie 40-50% native species in canopy).
- Native ancient woodland areas are very highly semi-natural in current composition and structure (91% of the area is in the 80-100% semi-natural category).
- Some 21% of planted woods on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) are native woodlands. Sycamore is the main component (18%) of the canopy of the non-native PAWS woods.





Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value in Angus

These woodlands have been mapped and are shown on Map 2 and in total cover 6,300 hectares, which equates to 3.35% of Angus (minus part within Cairngorms National Park). Woodland of high nature conservation value is a valued part of our landscape heritage in Angus. The Birch woodlands of the Angus Glens with their fresh green foliage in spring and spectacular autumn colour are a strong part of the identity of Angus. They are mostly the scattered remnants of originally more extensive, diverse birch, oak and Scots pine woodland, often along the sides of glens between the pasture on the glen floors and the heather moorland above or sometimes following the line of the rivers. Many of these are ancient woodland. The most extensive glen woodland habitat networks are in Glen Prosen and Glen Esk.

Woodland provide significant shelter for livestock farming with WHNCV commonly within grazed areas. Woodland pasture in Angus is estimated to be 1,158ha (based upon agricultural returns via IACS – claimed as woodland grazing). Whilst they offer valuable livestock shelter, they are commonly in decline due to grazing pressure from livestock and deer, and are often in a degraded condition. This use as wood pasture is often a valuable resource, but this should be managed with woodland fenced periodically on rotation to allow woodland regeneration. As well as regenerating these woodlands, they have substantial scope for expansion both to increase connectivity creating important nature networks and to diversify higher ground within the glens.

Where rivers cross the highland boundary fault in Angus, they have formed impressive gorges and dens, with waterfalls and rapids occupied by native oak, ash and elm woodland which are typically ancient woodland due to the rugged terrain.

They form woodland habitat networks on the River North Esk. The gorge and den woodlands along the River Isla and Melgam Water between Reekie Linn and Ruthven. The wooded den and gorge on the Melgam Water meets the River Isla at Airlie Castle forming the most extensive woodland network of its type in Angus. This network includes the Den of Airlie SSSI which occupies the confluence of the River Isla and the Melgam Water and connects to three different Local Nature Conservation Sites.

In lowland areas, woodlands have historically been cleared for cultivation of the land and are now often restricted to dens and shallow valleys along rivers which provide valuable woodland habitat networks. These include the main rivers including River North Esk, River South Esk and River Isla and also the Lunan Water. Many of these woodlands are wet woodland, flooding seasonally. They absorb the natural inundation of river floodplains helping protect settlements downstream. They are an important part of our climate change mitigation and increased native woodland alongside rivers and on floodplains would be desirable.

Pockets of native woodland exist in the Sidlaw Hills and the low moorland hills Brechin southwards, often on prominent hilltops. Across Angus, native woodland is often part of designed landscapes associated with large houses, where there is also often as tree avenues, field boundary tree lines and hedges.

Opportunities to Expand Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value

Natural regeneration of Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) can occur as far as 2 km from a single tree it is likely to be less for other tree species. However natural regeneration at reliable densities more typically occurs with 50 metres of a woodland. These theoretical natural regeneration zones have been mapped and are shown on Map 2. They demonstrate the substantial opportunities that exist to expand native woodland areas in a way which has greatest benefits to nature conservation. If implemented, it would almost triple the area of native woodland in Angus to 17,689 hectares or 8.03% of Angus (minus part within Cairngorms National Park). It also highlights the potential to create or consolidate woodland habitat networks. This mapping of natural regeneration zones should be considered alongside sensitivities which may affect the suitability of land for woodland expansion.

Climate Change Resilience

It is important that our native woodlands are resilient to climate change. According to the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland around half of native woodland is in poor condition and importantly it is often severely fragmented.

Many of our woodland in upland areas are often lacking natural regeneration and have an historic simplified species structure compared with what would naturally have existed. Increased warm humid weather increases the risk to trees by pathogens and pests. The scattered and fragmented nature of our native woodland can also reduce resilience to change.

Woodland in poor condition is at risk of being progressively lost. Woodlands which are in good condition, regenerating naturally, with a full range of tree and shrub species,

and part of a wider woodland habitat network are much more resilient to climate change (and will have substantially increased biodiversity value).

Policy 1: Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value

- a) There will be a presumption against the loss of woodland identified as woodland of high nature conservation value.
- b) Proposals to positively manage woodland of high nature conservation value will be supported where it increases nature conservation value and long-term viability of the woodland.
- c) The management of woodland pasture to encourage the natural regeneration of woodland will be encouraged.
- d) Proposals to re-introduce tree and shrub species originally within the National Vegetation Classification woodland type for the site will be encouraged to increase biodiversity and improve climate change resilience.
- e) Proposals to convert Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) to native woodland will be supported.
- f) Proposals to commercially manage woodland of high nature conservation value will be supported where it does not erode its nature conservation value or long-term viability.
- g) Proposals to extend woodland of high nature conservation value will be encouraged, particularly where they have the potential to form woodland habitat networks, which will increase climate change resilience. In such cases, woodland expansion through natural regeneration where it is within 50m of a site will be preferred.
- h) Commercial non-native woodland should not be planted within 50m of woodland of high nature conservation value.

Proposal 1

Explore the constraints which can lead to WHNCV not being positively managed and develop a project to address if required.

5.2 Productive Forestry

The Scottish Government's Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan 2018–2032 sets out the Scottish Government's pathway to our new and ambitious targets set by the Climate Change Act 2019. The Plan sets out that this will require that appropriate land be moved out of farming as we currently understand it into forestry and peatland.

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) details how sustainable forestry will be undertaken by setting out relevant legislation and good practice which all forestry proposals must comply with. It is the standard against which all woodland proposals are assessed, and provides detailed guidance in relation to biodiversity, climate change, historic environment, landscape, people, soil and water.

Background

Conifer forestry covers around 9,983ha in Angus. Land use and the quality of soils and their suitability for agriculture or forestry vary significantly between the lowland areas and areas above the Highland Boundary Fault line. A high proportion Lowland Angus consists of prime agricultural land (classes 1, 2 & 3.1).

Agricultural intensification in the mid twentieth century led to the amalgamation of fields, with field boundary hedges and trees being removed or lost due to an absence of pro-active management. Woodland and forest cover is restricted to pockets of poorer ground; within designed landscapes and along rivers.

With better soils and more favourable climate, lowland Angus has the greatest capability to grow trees with higher growth rates (yield class) and the potential to grow a greater range of species with silvicultural options other than clear fell systems. This has the potential to therefore increase productivity and contribution towards biodiversity and address climate change issues. However, it is recognised that high land prices is likely to be prohibitive at present.

Intensification has led to open arable landscapes often with light soils. Wind-blown soil erosion can often be an issue in lowland Angus, not only eroding valuable soils but also creating dust storms which affect air quality in settlements. With the climate predicted to become warmer and stormier, forests and woodlands can create shelter and reduce wind-blown soil erosion. Forestry proposals to create shelterbelts will be supported. There are also opportunities to connect sometimes isolated woodlands; in riparian areas (see section 4.5) and on floodplains where seasonal



floods make arable farming less appropriate. Productive forestry and woodland in lowland areas offer substantial potential for woodland recreation close to where people live within Angus (see section 5.10).

In contrast, within the Angus Glens and other upland areas of Angus, soils are typically poorer with mostly livestock farming and some rotational arable on the better land. Occasional better soils are agricultural class 3.2 or 4, rapidly reducing in quality with elevation. Forestry is commonly found on glen sides, and on tops of hills within the lowlands. Forestry and woodland provide significant shelter for livestock farming.

Opportunities for Expansion

There are significant opportunities for the expansion of productive forestry on agricultural land classes class 4 and 5. These are often mid-elevation on glen or hill sides and typically used as livestock pasture. Greatest opportunity is likely on improved grasslands where biodiversity value is lower.

There are extensive areas of upland heath within Angus, particularly with the Angus Glens. Much of this habitat has been subjected to high levels of grazing from sheep and deer. Large areas are managed by muirburn for grouse shooting. The combination of these factors has typically resulted in a simplified, botanically poor habitat, more vulnerable to erosion and less capable of slowing the flow of rainfall from mountains to watercourses compared with native woodland. Increased cover in upland areas can support important bird species such as black grouse, and ring ouzel. The NatureScot native woodland model considers that these areas would typically have been National Vegetation Classification either W17 (upland oak-birch with bilberry) or W18 (Scots pine with heather). Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) is a component of type W18. Increased native woodland and montane scrub in these areas would increase biodiversity and create more resilient landscapes better able to cope with climate change.

With the management and expansion of WHNCV (see section 5.1), there is potential for productive forestry to form part of wider woodland habitat networks, increasing connectivity. The management and expansion of WHNCV will often create a landscape framework within which productive woodland can exist.

There is substantial scope for increasing forestry cover in Angus, contributing towards Scottish Government targets:

- On flood plains or along river corridors to increase biodiversity, enhance woodland habitat networks and the resilience of landscapes to absorb natural flood events.
- On fertile lowland areas to grow quality conifer and broadleaved timber, provide shelter, create landscape structure and reduce wind-blown soil erosion with associated impacts on air quality within our settlements.
- On upland farmland to provide livestock shelter and to diversify farming; produce timber; increase biodiversity and contribute towards natural flood management by slowing water flows through river catchments to reduce downstream flooding.

- On moorlands (excluding peat soils) to create a natural tree line with montane scrub; increase biodiversity; potentially produce timber with native trees; and slow water flows through river catchments to reduce downstream flooding.
- Close to towns and villages to increasing opportunities for woodland recreation, link to urban nature networks, produce quality timber and strengthen the landscape setting of settlements.

POLICY 2: Productive Forestry

- a) Productive forestry will be supported where it is not contrary to other policies within this strategy.
- b) On upland heath productive forestry should consist of Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and other species typical of NVC W18 (Scots pine with heather).
- c) Mixed species and non-clear-felling silvicultural systems are encouraged to improve climate change resilience.

5.3 Climate Resilient Landscapes

With the twin climate and biodiversity crises, it is more important than ever that our landscapes change significantly to address the challenges. There is an urgent need for significant land use change across Angus with a substantial increase in forestry and woodland.

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) details how sustainable forestry will be undertaken by setting out relevant legislation and good practice which all forestry proposals must comply with. It is the standard against which all woodland proposals are assessed and provides detailed guidance in relation to climate change.

Carbon Sequestration

Forests and woodlands have significant potential to mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration. The report by Forest Research on Quantifying the Sustainable Forestry Carbon Cycle (2022) has quantified the significant carbon sequestration which can be achieved through forest and woodland expansion and can be as much as 14.4t of carbon per hectare per year. Over longer time horizons, carbon sequestration in the different woodland options are closer to one another (including natural recolonisation by broadleaves).

In addition to carbon sequestration, forests contribute to climate change mitigation by providing a source of renewable energy and sustainable wood products that continue to store carbon. Carbon comprises about 50% of the dry weight of wood. Timber and wood products can be used for a variety of purposes, and the longer they remain in use, the longer the carbon is stored. Increased locally grown timber provides opportunities to substantially reduce the use of cement-based products in

construction with their associated high carbon footprint. This can assist in creating more sustainable settlements.

Carbon substitution benefits also arise when wood is used as fuel instead of fossil fuels such as coal, gas or oil. Although burning wood generates carbon dioxide, an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide was relatively recently sequestered from the atmosphere as the trees grew.

Sustainability

It is predicted that due to climate change, summers will become warmer and drier whilst there will be an increase in precipitation in the winter months, which may be milder. Rainfall or snowmelt in the Angus Glens affect river levels and the potential for flooding in our settlements. Forests and woodlands can increase biodiversity and can help create landscapes with increased resilience to climate change by slowing water flows through river catchments as well as reducing erosion.

With a warming climate, shade from riparian woodland can regulate pollution interactions with light and temperature, controlling ecologically damaging phenomena such as excessive algae. With stormier weather and higher rainfall they can also reduce soil erosion, their roots acting to stabilise the stream and river banks.

With climate change, Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) is likely to become the most likely commercial conifer in Angus which will help break the often-false distinction between native woodland and commercial forestry.

Wind-blown soil erosion can often be an issue in lowland Angus, not only eroding valuable soils but also creating dust storms which affect air quality in settlements. With the climate predicted to become warmer and stormier, forests and woodlands can create shelter and reduce wind-blown soil erosion and provide shade.

POLICY 3: Climate Change, Sustainability & Resilient Landscapes

- a) Forestry and woodland proposals which contribute to addressing climate change and creating resilient landscapes will be supported.
- b) Forestry and woodland proposals on deep peat will not be supported.

5.4 Biodiversity

Woodland and forestry have the capacity to significantly increase biodiversity across Angus. The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) details how sustainable forestry will be undertaken by setting out relevant legislation and good practice which all forestry proposals must comply with. It is the standard against which all woodland proposals are assessed and provides detailed guidance in relation to biodiversity.

Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value

Whilst WHNCV will have the greatest value, other woodland or forestry also has a role in increasing biodiversity. Forestry plantations can have biodiversity interest particularly if comprised of native tree species, is varied in structure, and contains other features such as riparian planting of native trees. With climate change, Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) is likely to become the most likely commercial conifer in Angus which will help break the often-false distinction between native woodland and commercial forestry.

In the Angus Glens and other upland areas, WHNCV is often located within areas of low intensity farming often unimproved or semi-improved grassland used as pasture for livestock. These grasslands are often woodland sites without trees and are commonly in areas adjacent to woodland fragments which are progressively being lost due to a lack of regeneration. In these areas, woodland expansion through natural regeneration would be desirable subject to other considerations.

Designated Sites & Priority Species

Across Angus, there is a range of international, European, national and local biodiversity designations. These are listed in appendix 1. Some of these are woodland sites, most notably Den of Airlie SSSI and others are likely to influence suitability of and area for forestry or woodland expansion.

At a local level, 28 sites have been designated as Local Nature Conservation Sites in Angus. Many of these sites are woodland sites and others contain a mix of habitats which includes woodland. These sites would commonly also be WHNCV.

The Angus Glens have one of the best areas in Scotland for the UK critically endangered Scottish wildcat (*Felis silvestris*). Scottish wildcats prefer to live on the woodland edge, in the margins of mountains and moorlands, with rough grazing. Increased and diverse woodland cover would likely improve habitat for the species.

Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiberis*) is now found within Angus along the Dean Water and the River Isla. Riparian woodland is important for the species to thrive.

Habitats for wading birds, including wetland and wet grassland areas are important for the nationally important wader numbers in parts of the Angus Glens. The wader species found in Glen Clova are listed as Birds of Conservation Concern: lapwing is on the red list, while curlew (*Numenius arquata*), snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), redshank (*Persicaria maculosa*) and oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) on the amber list. Where it is likely that forestry or woodland proposals would affect the more important areas, a wader impact assessment would be appropriate to inform a decision on the balance of conservation priorities. Commercial forestry and native woodlands are likely to have very different impacts on waders. The long-term impacts of new or regenerated native woodland should be monitored.

Cairngorms Massif Special Protection Area

The Cairngorms Massif Special Protection Area (SPA) is a single species SPA for Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*). The SPA covers much of the highest elevations within the upper part of the Angus Glens, and most of the Angus part of the SPA is within the

National Park. The most notable exception is an area of plateau at the head of Glen Lethnot, between Glen Clova and Glen Esk extending around 2 – 5km beyond the National Park. Although golden eagles can be found breeding successfully and productively in areas where native woodlands predominate, densities tend to be lower and unwooded areas or areas with an open woodland structure are primarily used for feeding. Where proposals may affect the Golden eagle population an eagle impact assessment would be appropriate to inform a decision on the balance of conservation priorities and the design of any forestry or woodland.

POLICY 4: Biodiversity

- a) Forestry and woodland proposals which lead to significant adverse effects on the designated interest of designated biodiversity sites will not be supported.
- b) An eagle impact assessment will be required for forestry and woodland within the Cairngorms Special Protection Area.
- c) A wader impact assessment will be required where forestry and woodland proposals are close to known wader breeding areas.
- d) In so far as consistent with other policies, proposals which create or reinforce woodland habitat networks will be supported.
- e) Forestry and woodland proposals on upland heath habitats will be supported where they consist of predominantly native tree species. Planting including a naturalistic mix of tree and shrub species of varying densities would be desirable.
- f) Where it is likely that forestry or woodland proposals would affect the more important areas, a wader impact assessment will be required to inform a decision on the balance of conservation priorities.
- g) Where forestry or woodland proposals may affect the Golden eagle population within the Cairngorms SPA, an eagle impact assessment will be required.

5.5 Montane woodland

With elevation, tree cover would naturally thin as exposure and as soil conditions change. Trees become smaller and more scattered on higher ground and towards the tops of mountains and at the treeline becomes montane scrub, which can include now uncommon species such as Dwarf birch and Montane willow species. Montane woodland and scrub is almost non-existent within Angus due to a combination of intensive grazing and muirburn in the uplands. Nationally important fragments of the habitat do however exist within Corrie Fee, Glen Doll, within the Cairngorms National Park part of Angus. Here and elsewhere, remnants can persist on inaccessible ledges, cliffs, and ravines away from grazing and browsing animals.

There are some examples of re-emerging natural tree lines in the Cairngorms National Park resulting from a reduction in grazing pressure, but they are isolated and few and even these remain species poor. Many bird species including black grouse,

red grouse and ring ouzel benefit from the cover and foraging provided by a more natural tree line.

Opportunities for such montane woodland when associated with existing forests would also deliver landscape enhancement by removing the sharp transition between afforested and open habitats by the establishment of natural tree line. These woodlands naturally form part of a mosaic of habitats at the treeline. Woodland creation through natural regeneration where grazing pressure is sufficiently low to enable natural regeneration without the need for deer fencing has greatest capacity to create natural tree lines.

Whilst less natural in appearance, the creation of natural tree lines by fencing can provide both landscape and habitat benefit with a combination of natural regeneration or in some cases supplemented by planting.

POLICY 5: Montane Woodland

Proposals for forestry and woodland which extend towards the treeline should include the creation of montane woodland.

5.6 Riparian Woodland

An intended outcome of the Tackling the Nature Emergency - Scottish biodiversity strategy to 2045 is that riparian woodland will have expanded reducing the average temperature of our rivers and burns, leading to increases in freshwater fish species and other wildlife. The expansion of riparian woodland in Angus is also supported by Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2026 which includes actions to create riparian woodland and encouraging natural flood management through planting of wet woodland.

Riparian woodland improves water quality by reducing diffuse pollution and sedimentation risk from run off. Shading from trees reduce summer water temperatures for salmon and freshwater pearl mussel and contribute to bank stabilisation. Rivers and burns are natural corridors along which riparian woodland can create woodland habitat linkages within and between river catchments. Gullies formed by upland burns can be refuges for woodland remnants.

Riverwoods is a partnership initiative led by the Scottish Wildlife Trust with members including NatureScot, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Forest & Land Scotland. Riverwoods data indicates that typically, more than 50% of the riparian vegetation along Angus watercourses is in poor condition and in some cases this percentage is greater than 75%. The management of existing riparian trees and woodland and increased riparian woodland could lead to significant improvements. Many riparian woodlands are designated by this strategy as WHNCV and therefore will be covered by policy 1(f) and (g) which relates to 50m regeneration zones, and other policies within this strategy including policy 4 (d) which relates to waders.

Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiberis*) now found within Angus along the Dean Water and the River Isla and are likely to progressively colonise other rivers within Angus. Riparian woodland is important, particularly comprised of native trees is important for the species to thrive.

Invasive non-native species including Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) are often found within riparian woodland. These species shade out native plants and can create exposed soil which contributes towards siltation of watercourses during flood events and reduce biodiversity. Their removal as part of management is therefore supported. Supplementing ground flora may be desirable as part of plans for new riparian woodland, particularly on previously improved land.

POLICY 6: Riparian Woodland

- a) Woodland creation proposals for riparian native woodland will generally be supported.
- b) Proposals to extend riparian woodland through natural regeneration will be supported.
- c) Proposals to manage and safeguard existing riparian woodland will be supported including the control of invasive non-native species.

5.7 Landscape, Wild Land & Wildness

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) details how sustainable forestry will be undertaken by setting out relevant legislation and good practice which all forestry proposals must comply with. It is the standard against which all woodland proposals are assessed and provides detailed guidance in relation to landscape.

The Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland identifies eight landscape character types in Angus, with further sub-division of types within the glens and on the coast. In addition, landscape studies within Angus have further sub-divided Dipslope Farmland LCT into six sub-types and Low Moorland Hills into two. This has resulted in there being a total of 17 types or sub-types in Angus.

A study has identified a suite of four Local Landscape Areas for Angus. This will be reported to committee September 2023 as a basis for public consultation. This study included an assessment of special qualities for all 17 landscape types and sub-types which is included as appendix 1.

Landscapes need to evolve to meet the needs of society and address the twin climate and biodiversity crises. This can be done whilst taking care not to erode the landscape special qualities which provide an important part of local identity.

NatureScot has identified Wild Land Areas in Scotland and Wild Land Area 16: Lochnagar - Mount Keen is partially within Angus. A Wild Land Assessment should be



undertaken for any proposals whose nature, siting, scale or design are likely to result in a significant effect on the qualities of a WLA. Given this, assessments are more likely for proposals within a WLA, and are less likely for proposals outwith the WLA.

The process of identifying wild land areas included 4 separate assessments to determine levels of naturalness, remoteness, ruggedness, and lack of built modern artefacts. These were combined to create a generalised map of relative wildness, which along with a minimum size threshold, were used to identify Wild Land Areas in Scotland.

This wider assessment relates strongly to landscape character and provides a useful resource against which development proposals or changes to landcover can be assessed. The special qualities assessment referred to above specifically refers to wildness and therefore the relative map of wildness is helpful in assessing any proposals. In general:

- Native woodland created by natural regeneration is more likely to not affect wildness. This may often be particularly relevant in upland areas, dens, gorges and on the coast.
- Critical to any assessment of impacts on special qualities would be how harvesting would be carried out. New timber haul roads can have unacceptable impacts upon special qualities, including wildness.

POLICY 7: Landscape, Wild Land & Wildness

- a) Any forest or woodland proposal which may affect Wild Land Area 16 should be assessed through a Wild Land Assessment.
- b) Forestry and woodland proposal will be supported where they demonstrate that they do not erode landscape special qualities and comply with landscape and forestry guidelines.

5.8 Historic Environment

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) details how sustainable forestry will be undertaken by setting out relevant legislation and good practice which all forestry proposals must comply with. It is the standard against which all woodland proposals are assessed and provides detailed guidance in relation to the historic environment.

The Historic Land-use Assessment (HLA) is digitally recording land use across Scotland. It maps both current and historical land-use. It is a partnership between Historic Scotland and Royal Commission for Ancient Monuments in Scotland which merged to form Historic Environment Scotland in 2015. Whilst the project is on-going, there is currently limited mapped information for Angus within HLA.

Scheduled Monuments

Angus has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Across the region there are 370 Scheduled Monuments and over 2,100 Listed Buildings, designated and protected for their importance locally and nationally, for their archaeological, cultural and architectural merits. There are also over 4,500 standing undesignated (non-statutory) heritage assets - historic sites without the protection of designated status. Although without protected status, these undesignated sites have a significant role in recording and presenting Angus's story.

Heritage assets range in date from the Mesolithic period to the Modern period, with notable peaks in the Bronze and Iron Ages; the Pictish and Mediaeval periods; and the 18th – 19th Centuries. The greatest concentrations of sites are found within the Angus Glens, the foothills and along the coast. Post-mediaeval settlement remains in the form of abandoned farms and their associated dykes, grassy pastures and drainage systems are often under-stated features on the floors of glens, alongside earlier, prehistoric field systems and settlement remains. Cairns, dating from the Bronze Age, and hillforts, associated with the Iron Age and Pictish periods, are found on the higher ground, while promontory forts, also dating from the Iron Age and Pictish periods, can be found along the coastal cliff-tops with a particular focus between Arbroath and Lunan Bay.

Historic Gardens & Designed Landscapes

There are 13 designated historic gardens and designed landscapes within the statutory inventory of Historic Gardens & Designed Landscapes. They are invariably

surrounding a large house or castle, forming the settings of the buildings which are the focal point of the design, with some dating back to the seventeenth century.

There is currently no list of Local Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes within Angus. The Garden History Society in 2009 produced a preliminary and indicative list of designed landscapes in Angus. The list of 102 sites also included the sites within the statutory inventory. It is however noted that the statutory designations typically only protect the most important part a designed landscape. Designed landscapes beyond the designated site may be a locally important designed landscape and be likely to contribute towards special qualities within the landscape.

It is important that features of our historic environment are identified as part of the process of developing forestry and woodland proposals and that any such features and their setting are safeguarded in order that our rich historic landscape retains these qualities.

POLICY 8: Historic Environment

- a) Forestry & woodland proposals should identify, and safeguard designated and non-designated features of the historic environment and their settings. Proposals which adversely affect such features will not generally be supported.

5.9 Deer Management & Fencing

The high densities of deer in some parts of Angus is preventing woodland regeneration taking place, without deer fencing. In parts of the Angus Glens, this is due to high Red deer densities. In other parts of the Angus Glens, they are fenced out as part the management of the number of Roe deer can be an issue locally.

NatureScot Deer Count Density (updated 2023) shows that most of the upper and southern parts of the Angus Glens have a density of between 19–99 or 100+ per km². It is generally considered that a Red deer population of around 5 animals per km² would enable native woodland to regenerate naturally. It is noted that within the Cairngorms National Park, it is a priority of the Park Authority that deer densities are compatible with the need to allow woodland regeneration. Given the biodiversity and climate crises, and the substantial contribution that woodland can make towards addressing both issues, it is considered appropriate that across Angus, deer populations should be managed at a level which enables woodland to regenerate naturally. Reduced deer densities will also allow upland vegetation to recover, reduce erosion and create more resilient landscapes able to adapt to and mitigate effects of climate change.

Whilst less satisfactory, deer fencing can sometimes allow forestry and woodland projects to be undertaken which might not be possible. However, fencing creates abrupt landscape edges which can reduce the natural transition from woodland to montane scrub. Fencing can therefore be less desirable in areas outwith rectilinear

enclosed landscapes and areas where wildness is a characteristic. They can also increase pressure outwith the enclosed areas leading to localised erosion.

POLICY 9: Deer Management

- a) The reduction in deer populations to enable the natural regeneration of woodland without deer fencing is supported.

5.10 Forests, Woodland and People

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) details how sustainable forestry will be undertaken by setting out relevant legislation and good practice which all forestry proposals must comply with. It is the standard against which all woodland proposals are assessed and provides detailed guidance in relation to people.

Woodland in and Around Towns

Forests and woodland can absorb high levels of recreational use compared with other land uses. Access to accessible woodland close to where people live can increase physical and mental health, through a strong association with nature. Accessible woodland is supported by Scottish Forestry through Woodland in and Around Towns (WIAT).

The Woodland Access Standard produced by the Woodland Trust suggests that residents of Angus have the second highest level of access to woodland in Scotland. This however remains modest with 53% of residents with access to a 2ha+ woodland



within 500m and 54% with access to a 20ha+ woodland within 4km. Whilst this standard remains an aspiration of the Woodland Trust rather than government policy, it nevertheless provides a basic indication of the accessibility of woodland close to where people live.

The Angus Millennium Forest was undertaken between 1996 and 2001 on Angus Council land within 8 settlements of Angus. The project planted 190 hectares of new woodland on council land across the Angus burghs and brought a further 68 hectares of existing woodland into management. A management plan for the council's woodland is currently under preparation.

The settlements in lowland Angus are typically located within high quality agricultural land, therefore opportunities for the creation of new accessible woodland may sometimes be limited. However, there will commonly be opportunities in association with land allocated for development through the Local Development Plan. Such new woodland is often also required to provide a landscape framework for new development and to provide adequate open space.

Access Rights

There is a general right of access to land and water in Scotland under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Angus Council has identified Core Paths which are published within the Angus Core Paths Plan (2010). In addition, there are public rights of way and promoted path networks around the main settlements.

Across Angus, it is important that public access is not unduly restricted by forestry fencing. This particularly includes core paths, public rights of way and other promoted routes. In addition, it is also desirable that other potential off-path routes for which there may be demand remain unobstructed. These routes may include landscape features such as hills, ridges, rivers or archaeological sites and routes between such features.

POLICY 10: Forests, Woodland and People

- a) The creation of new accessible woodland with Angus will be supported, particularly when close to where people live.
- b) Forestry and woodland proposals should include an assessment of impacts upon access and include fence crossing facilities as necessary.

Proposal 2

- a) Angus Council will continue to develop and implement proposals which increase the quantity and quality of accessible woodland in Angus.
- b) Angus Council will consider the need for the creation of accessible woodland as part of land allocation within the Local Development Plan.

A photograph of a waterfall in a forest during autumn. The water is white and foamy as it cascades over dark, moss-covered rocks. The surrounding trees have vibrant yellow and orange leaves, with some green foliage still visible. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up the waterfall. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image, enclosed in a white vertical bar.

Forests and woodlands
have significant
potential to mitigate
climate change
through carbon
sequestration.

6. Area Guidance

This Strategy aims to encourage the management and expansion of woodland of high nature conservation value. It also encourages the expansion of productive forestry in accordance with the guidance contained within the UK Forestry Framework and this Strategy.

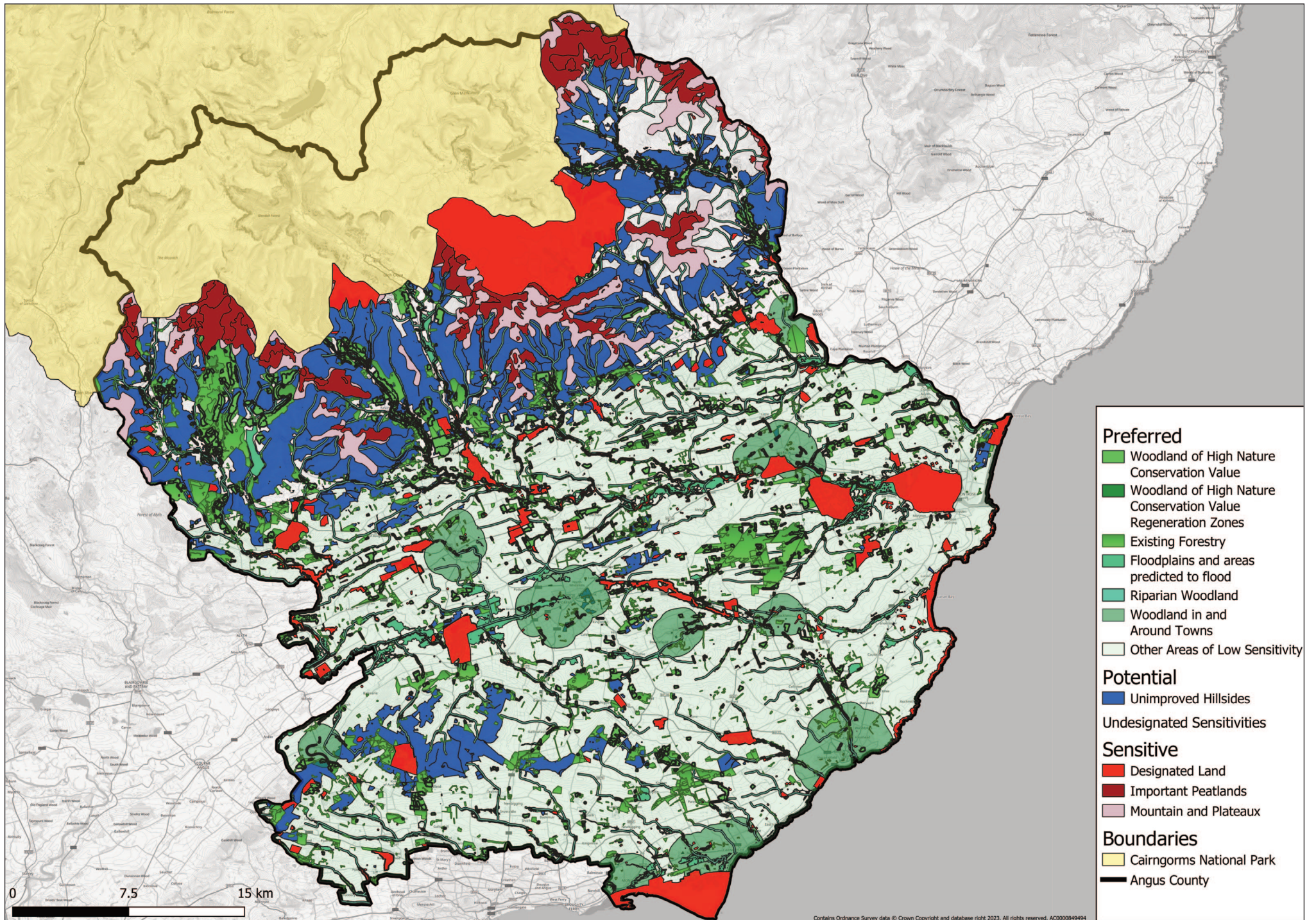
Angus has been assessed according to sensitivities which may affect suitability for woodland and forestry expansion. These are shown on Map 3 - Suitability for Forestry & Woodland as the categories below. A more detailed [online map viewer](#) is available.

- **Preferred** land will be that which offers the greatest scope to accommodate future expansion of a range of woodland types, and hence, to deliver on a very wide range of objectives. Within preferred areas sensitivities are, in general, likely to be limited, and it should be possible to address any particular site specific issues within well designed proposals that meet the UK Forestry Standard and associated guidelines.
 - **Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value** – there is support for the sustainable management of these woodlands.
 - **Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value (expansion zones)** – there is support for expansion of these woodland through natural regeneration.
 - **Floodplains and areas predicted to flood** – there is support for native woodland creation in areas predicted to flood to create natural flood management.
 - **Riparian woodland** – there is support for native woodland creation alongside watercourses to enhance natural flood management and biodiversity.
 - **Woodland in and Around Towns** – there is support for accessible forestry and woodland close to the 7 Angus towns and 4 service centre villages.
 - **Other areas with low sensitivity** – this includes high quality agricultural land in lowland areas and improved grassland in livestock farming

- **Potential** land will be that which offers considerable potential to accommodate future expansion of a range of woodland types, but where at least one significant sensitivity exists. The extent to which specific proposals in potential areas will be permissible will depend on how well sensitivities can be addressed within the proposals. The design of schemes in such areas will require careful consideration.
 - **Undesignated sensitivities** – where there may be undesignated sensitivities to be considered and may include archaeological areas and biodiversity interest including the more important areas for breeding waders.

- **Unimproved hillsides** – areas of semi-natural vegetation typically between improved agricultural fields and hilltops. These areas are best suited to native woodland creation and expansion, but also for productive forestry with native species.
- **Sensitive** areas will be those where a combination of sensitivities means there is limited scope to accommodate further woodland expansion. Limited woodland expansion is only likely to be possible within sensitive areas where it is of a scale and character which can be accommodated without significant negative impacts and/or where it would positively enhance the features of interest locally. In some areas cumulative impact may be a relevant consideration.
 - **Designated Land** – Designations may restrict the scope and type of forestry and woodland which is considered appropriate.
 - **Important Peatlands** – This includes areas surveyed Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot) as nationally important peatlands (classes 1 & 2 of SNH Carbon & Peatland Soils 2016) and deep peat as mapped by James Hutton Institute). It is unlikely that it would be accepted that woodland creation occurs in these areas. According to the Native Woodland Model, montane scrub may be the natural vegetation cover in some areas and could be acceptable.
 - **Mountain & Plateaux** – The highest areas are unsuitable for producing tree crops (Land Capability for Forestry class F7) but may be suitable for native woodland and montane scrub.

The map was produced using a range of mapped data, none of which are 100% reliable. Other sensitivities have not been systematically mapped. Therefore, all mapped categories (even the preferred areas) may contain significant sensitivities to woodland and forest creation.



- Preferred**
- Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value
 - Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value Regeneration Zones
 - Existing Forestry
 - Floodplains and areas predicted to flood
 - Riparian Woodland
 - Woodland in and Around Towns
 - Other Areas of Low Sensitivity
- Potential**
- Unimproved Hillsides
- Undesignated Sensitivities**
- Sensitive**
- Designated Land
 - Important Peatlands
 - Mountain and Plateaux
- Boundaries**
- Cairngorms National Park
 - Angus County

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Glossary

Ancient woodland

Interpreted as semi-natural woodland from Roy's Military Maps of c1750 or the first edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1860 and continuously wooded to the present day. Ancient Woods are important because:

- They include all remnants of Scotland's original woodland; their flora and fauna may preserve elements of the natural composition of the original Atlantic forests.
- They usually have much richer wildlife than that of more recent woods.
- They preserve the integrity of soil ecological processes and associated biodiversity.
- Some have been managed by traditional methods for centuries and demonstrate an enduring relationship between people and nature.
- Woods and veteran trees are ancient monuments whose value to the local community and historians may be as great as the older buildings in a parish.
- Once destroyed they cannot be recreated.

Fluvioglacial landforms

A variety of landforms are associated with meltwater from glaciers, including Outwash plains or Sandur, Varves, Braided Streams, Eskers, Kames and Kame terraces, Kettle holes and drumlin.

Gestalt

Where the whole is greater (other) than the sum of the parts. Often referred to as *pragnanz*. There are 8 laws of gestalt.

Historic land use assessment

The process of mapping the extent of past and present land use areas, categorised according to their form, function and period of origin.

Landscape

An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. (Article 1, European Landscape Convention. Council of Europe, 2002).

| | |
|--|---|
| Landscape character/ Landscape character assessment | The distinct and recognisable pattern of landscape elements that occurs consistently in a particular area, and how these are perceived by people, that makes one landscape different from another. Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is the process of systematic description, classification and analysis of landscape, in order to identify, describe and understand its character. The scale and detail of the assessment will depend upon the purpose for which it is being undertaken. |
| Landscape sensitivity | The degree to which the character and qualities of the landscape would be affected by specific types of development and land-use change. Sensitivity depends upon the type, nature and magnitude of the change. High sensitivity indicates landscapes are vulnerable to the change; low sensitivity that they are more robust to the change and that the key characteristics of that landscape will essentially remain unaltered. |
| Landscape topology | Where lines and shapes in the landscape are distorted by landform. |
| Landscape qualities | Less tangible and experiential aspects of a landscape, such as the appreciation of its beauty or history, its sense of wildness or its challenge for recreation. While these qualities are dependent on individual perception, they are commonly recognised and valued by people. |
| Long-established woodland | <p>Long-established woodlands of plantation origin (LEPO) (1b and 2b) Interpreted as plantation from maps of 1750 (1b1) or 1860 (2b) and continuously wooded since. Many of these sites have developed semi-natural characteristics, especially the oldest ones, which may be as rich as Ancient Woodland.</p> <p>Woods shown on Roy's Military Map of Scotland c1750 as plantation or present on the first edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1860. These woods are likely to be less old compared with ancient woodland but retain intrinsic biodiversity value. Many may be ancient woodland but are not shown on older maps.</p> |
| Natural beauty and amenity | A composite term that refers to those qualities of the landscape that appeal to all our senses, but particularly the visual. The use of the word natural does not exclude landscapes or features which result from, or are changed by, human activity - a canal for instance may have considerable natural beauty and amenity. |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Picturesque | Landscapes which combine beautiful with the sublime. |
| Riparian | Relating to or situated on the banks of a river. |
| Scenery | A popular term for landscape, which emphasises people's visual perception of their surroundings and the landscape's composition in views. |
| Scenic quality | The attributes of a composition in views which create valued scenery. |
| Seascape | An area, as perceived by people, in which the character is a composite of maritime and terrestrial elements where they meet at the coast. |
| Semi-natural woodland | Woodland which has developed through natural regeneration. |
| Special landscape area | Another name for local landscape area. |
| Wildness | <p>Wildness depends on the presence of four physical attributes, each of which can be measured and mapped:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● perceived naturalness of the land cover● ruggedness of terrain● remoteness from public roads, ferries or railway stations● visible lack of buildings, roads, pylons and other modern artefacts <p>SNH have mapped Scotland for each of these attributes.</p> |
| Wild Land Areas | <p>Wild Land Areas describe the most extensive areas of high wildness. It is not a statutory designation, but wild land areas are considered nationally important.</p> <p>SNH have identified 42 Wild Land Areas in Scotland.</p> |

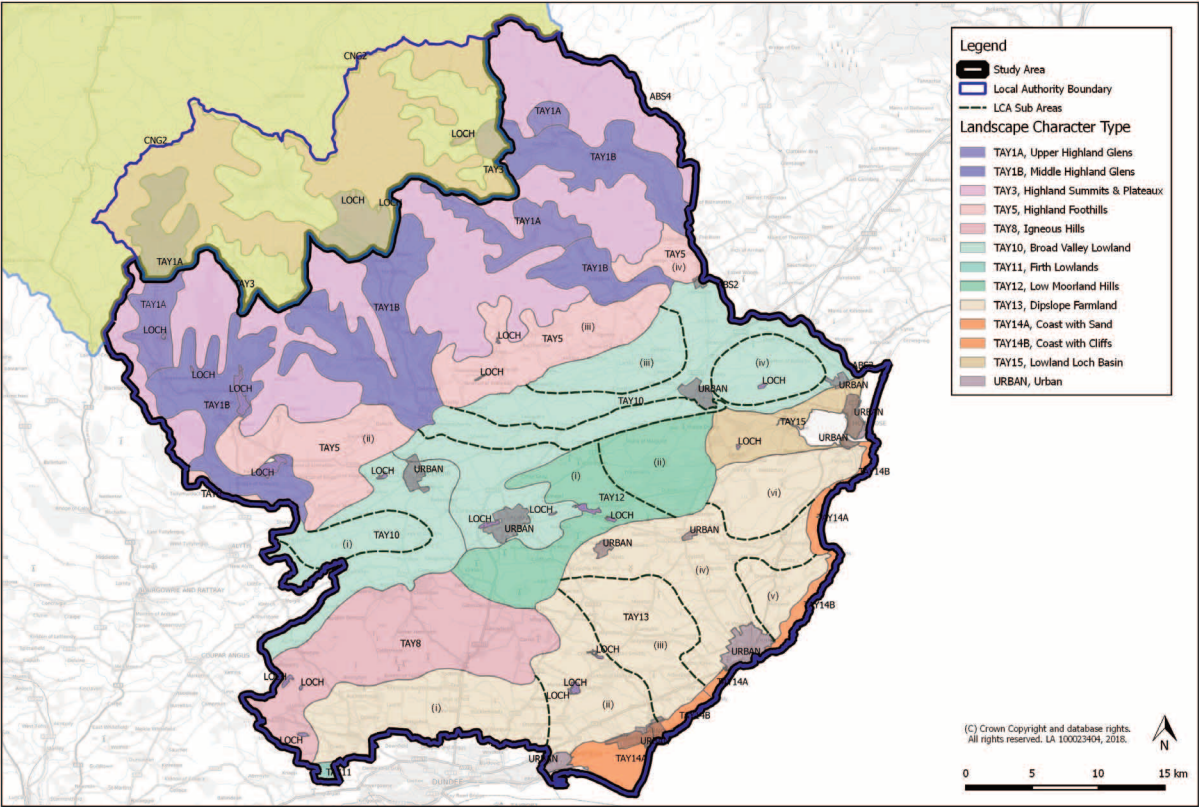
Appendices

1. Sites Designated for their Natural Heritage Value

| Designation | Site Name (Angus excluding Cairngorms National Park) | |
|--|---|--|
| Ramsar | Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary Loch of Kinnordy | Loch of Lintrathen Montrose Basin |
| Special Protection Area | Cairngorms Massif Firth of Tay & Eden Estuary Loch of Kinnordy | Loch of Lintrathen Montrose Basin |
| Special Area of Conservation | Barry Links Firth of Tay & Eden Estuary | River South Esk River Tay |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest | Auchterhouse Hill Balloch Moss Balshando Bog Barry Links Blackmire Hill Mire Carrot Hill Meadow Craigs Of Lundie & Ardgath Loch Crossbog Pinewood Den of Airlie Den of Fowlis Den of Ogil Dilty Moss Dryleys Brick Pit Dun's Dish Easthaven Elliot Links Forest Muir Gagie Marsh Gannochy Gorge | Little Ballo Loch of Kinnordy Loch of Lintrathen Lochindores Long Loch of Lundie Monifieth Bay Montrose Basin North Esk & West Water Paleochannels Red Craig Rescobie & Balgavies Loch Restenneth Moss Rickle Craig to Scurdie NessRossie Moor Round Loch of Lundie St Cyrus & Kinnaber Links Turin Hill Whitehouse Den Whiting Ness-Ethie Haven |
| Local Nature Reserve | Montrose Basin | |
| Inventory of Historic Garden & Designed Landscape | Airlie Castle Ascreavie Brechin Castle Cortachy Castle Craig House Dunninald Glamis Castle | Edzell Castle Guthrie Castle House of Dun House of Pitmuies Kinnaird Castle The Burn (part) The Guynd |

2. Assessment of Landscape Special Qualities in Angus

This assessment has been adapted from the study Local Landscape Areas in Angus (2023). The assessment has been undertaken by landscape character type, as shown in the map.



TAY1A Upper Highland Glens (outwith National Park)

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Scenic | <p>Much of this sub-type within Angus is within CNPA with the exception of the upper part of Glen Isla and Glen Lethnot. Dramatic U-shaped Glen Isla, less pronounced in and generally there is often with strong contrast between green pasture of glen floor and the forestry, heath and unimproved grassland on the hillsides.</p> <p>Regular lines of rugged crags above the Glen Isla add drama and contrast with more tamed glen floor adding picturesque qualities.</p> | High |
| Cultural | <p>Primary feature types in this sub-type are prehistoric and post-medieval settlement and cultivation remains, visible as earthworks, the footings of buildings and walls. The 17th Century Forter Castle (Category B Listed Building) is also a prominent focal feature in Glen Isla.</p> | Medium |
| Natural | <p>Rivers are a strong focal point in the glens often more visible within the northern parts of the glens where land cover becomes semi-natural and remote in character. Often a strong linear network of native woodland along the West Water in Glen Lethnot. There is an overall higher sense of perceived wildness within the sub-type.</p> | High |
| Enjoyment | <p>The Catevan Trail crosses the centre of the type within Glen Isla and in Glen Lethnot there are Core Paths towards Glen Ogil and Glen Esk. Across the sub-type, paths lead to nearby hilltops and up the glens.</p> | High |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>This sub-type (along with types TAY1B & 3) is the iconic 'Angus Glens' or 'Braes of Angus' which is an important part of the identity of Angus as a place. Condition is however variable often with poorly maintained field boundary dykes and native woodland.</p> | Medium/High |

Discussion: The sub-type has overall high levels of special qualities. Special qualities are inherently inter-related to its relationship with other types and the National Park.

TAY1B Mid Highland Glens (outwith National Park)

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| <p>Scenic</p> | <p>There are differences of character between different glens and between those parts within the National Park and outwith. All however have high scenic qualities, but there are notable differences with varying combinations of glacial landforms; rivers with gorges, rapids and waterfalls; dykes enclosed and unenclosed pasture; birch woodland and heather moorland.</p> <p>Glens Prosen and Esk in particular contain significant areas of native Birch woodland which often form a strong linear pattern as the ground steepens between the glen floor and the heather moorland above. In both glens, their respective rivers gently meander through the flat pasture dominated glen floors. In Glens Lethnot native woodland follows the route of the river creating an attractive organic pattern, emphasising the route of the river and transitioning into heath and occasionally pasture as the landform rises up the sides of the glen. In all glens, there is strong pattern and unity adding special qualities.</p> <p>Glen Isla is broader, with a more rolling valley floor and a less pronounced U shape (within sub-type 1B). In the lower part of the sub-type (Lintrathen and Kilry) it is more inhabited and less wild, but with higher levels of special qualities resulting from the extensive policy woodland and field boundary trees around Airlie Castle and the Den of Airlie. There is also more arable farming. In the upper part of this sub-type (Kirkton of Glenisla and Backwater) the landscape is more characterised by commercial forestry and pasture.</p> <p>More generally, the mosaic of pasture, native woodland and heath combine in views to form patterns and scenic views with strong gestalt properties.</p> | <p>High</p> |
| <p>Cultural</p> | <p>There is a high concentration of prehistoric and post-medieval settlement and cultivation remains in these areas, visible on the glen floors as earthworks and the footings of buildings, dykes, drainage systems, field systems and differences in vegetation cover. Whilst often subtle, they can contribute significantly to the special qualities of the landscape and act as tangible evidence of the region’s societal and historical development. Many areas of prehistoric settlement remains are designated as Scheduled Monuments.</p> | <p>High</p> |

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Natural | <p>The type is strongly characterised by the consequences of glaciation with pronounced U-shaped valleys with corries above and extensive areas of distinctive hummocky glacial moraine landforms. The glacial landscape is particularly prominent in Glen Clova.</p> <p>As the type cuts through the Highland Foothills, it crosses the Highland Boundary Fault where there are dramatic gorges, waterfalls and rapids along the route of all of the larger Angus rivers. Overall, there are significant areas of native woodland within the sub-type as well as semi-improved pasture and heath.</p> | High |
| Enjoyment | <p>There are regular parking areas in the larger glens and they are known for scenic drives particularly during summer and autumn for the heather flowering and autumn colour. The Cateran Trail is routed through this sub-type within Gen Isla, where Backwater Reservoir is a popular walking area; Lintrathen Loch is an RSPB reserve with bird hides and Reekie Linn is a popular tourist attraction. There are also some core paths, most notably along the length of Glen Esk. Whilst this sub-type is often the starting point for walks on higher ground, this is more common within the National Park.</p> | Medium/High |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>This sub-type (along with types TAY1A & 3) is the iconic 'Angus Glens' or 'Braes of Angus' which is an important part of the identity of Angus as a place. Condition is however variable often with poorly maintained field boundary dykes and native woodland.</p> | Medium/High |

Discussion: The sub-type has overall high levels of special qualities, but many of the qualities and the nature of these qualities can vary significantly between different glens. Special qualities are inherently inter-related to its relationship with other types.

TAY3 Highland Summits and Plateau (outwith National Park)

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------|--|-------------|
| Scenic | <p>An extensive elevated plateau and rounded hill tops which has strong unity despite being regularly incised by the Angus Glens. Extensive areas are managed as grouse moor with the distinctive patchwork muirburn mosaic.</p> <p>The rounded heather clad hills of TAY5 are often viewed alongside the birch woods of the Angus Glens and together contribute towards scenic qualities, particularly during autumn.</p> <p>The edges of the type are often fringed by dramatic cliffs and crags where it abuts types TAY1A & 1B particularly within the National Park, but these features are also present outwith the National Park, where the edge of type becomes more strongly defined by abrupt change in gradient from upland plateau towards glens and foothills (TAY5). Overall a highly scenic landscape type.</p> | High |
| Cultural | <p>The high elevation contains limited evidence of historic human activity within this type but a number of historic paths and drove roads cross the hills connecting communities. These include the Minister's Path between Glen Prosen and Glen Clova and Jock's Road between Glen Clova and Braemar. Scant settlement post-medieval settlement remains, and occasional stone cairns on high ground are testament to the inhospitable nature of this terrain.</p> | Low |
| Natural | <p>Almost entirely comprised of semi-natural upland heath, grassland and bog. Despite extensive muirburn, it has strong natural characteristics to many observers. The north-western part of the type is within Wild Land Area 16. The other parts of the type also have wildness of moderate or high relative levels. This has however in part been eroded by new and upgraded hill tracks in many parts of the type</p> | High |
| Enjoyment | <p>A popular hillwalking landscape, with a number of hilltop destinations and nationally promoted routes. Also increasingly popular for mountain biking and wildlife watching. Much of this landscape is managed for the shooting of grouse and deer.</p> | High |

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Rarity and Typicality | Rounded heather clad hills are a particularly feature of the eastern Cairngorms and is a character which is often associated with the Braes of Angus (along with the birch woods of the Angus Glens (TAY1a, 1b & 5)).Intensive muirburn in parts of the type can lead to the erosion of peatlands, reduces biodiversity, particularly in the ground flora and also can inhibit scrub and woodland regeneration. Condition is therefore variable. | Medium |

Discussion: A landscape type with an overall high level of special qualities. Often experienced in association with the parts of the type within the National Park. From some areas within the type there is also a strong association with types 1A, 1B & 5 from where the majority of recreational visitors are likely to travel from. From outwith the type to the south-east, the type forms the skyline which highlights the dramatic change from lowland to highland landscapes.

This landscape type extends outwith the study area to the east, north-east and to the north. Towards the east Perth & Kinross Council have not designated the abutting part of the type as a local landscape area but Aberdeenshire Council have done so to the north. There is a need to assess both the extent to which the special qualities within Aberdeenshire extend into Angus and whether special qualities extend to the Perth & Kinross boundary. A local landscape area contiguous with the National Park boundary to the north-east presents no consistency issues.

TAY5 Highland Foothills

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Scenic | <p>Strongly characterised by SW-NE valley and ridge landforms, associated with the Highland Boundary Fault (HBF) which generally follows this type. This has created a number of hidden valleys at right angle to the Glens and with highly scenic ridge top minor roads between glens.</p> <p>Often pasture with a strong pattern of enclosure by dykes which creates scenic landscape topology where lines in the landscape are distorted by landform and emphasise the often pronounced undulating landform.</p> <p>National grid electricity pylons follow some of these hidden valleys through the entire SW-NE length of this type detracting from their scenic qualities locally.</p> | Medium |
| Cultural | <p>The hill forts at the White and Brown Caterthuns, occupied in the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Pictish/Early Medieval periods, are highly visible in the wider landscape and provide views over landscapes peppered with the visible remains of contemporary, and later, settlement and cultivation remains. Both hillforts are designated as Scheduled Monuments.</p> | High |
| Natural | <p>This type is strongly associated with the HBF where the descending of the Midland Valley of Scotland and subsequent planes of over thrust created complex geology with the scenic landforms referred to above. The fault has also created dramatic gorges, rapids and waterfalls where type TAY1B passes through (outwith) this type.</p> <p>Much of this type is pasture, a proportion of which is semi-improved grassland. Fragments of native, birch dominated woodland persist despite heavy grazing pressure and together could form a green network connecting the Angus Glens.</p> | High |
| Enjoyment | <p>Much of this type is little visited by the public, but The Caterthuns near Edzell are popular tourist and recreational attractions in the care of HES, with associated parking and interpretation.</p> | Medium |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>Landscapes associated with the HBF extend across Scotland between Kintyre and Stonehaven. The geology has created a complex and unusual landscape with special qualities.</p> <p>Native woodland, tree lines and dykes are being progressively lost due to lack of active management and therefore condition is typically low to medium.</p> | Medium/High |

Discussion: A landscape type with overall medium/high levels of special qualities in its own right. However, more so than other landscape types its qualities are strengthened by the strong relationship with other types, particularly enabling a fuller appreciation of the features associated with the HBF and the dramatic transition between highland and lowland across Angus.

The special qualities of this type closely relate to the HBF (which the type follows) and it would seem necessary that much of the type should be included within an area of search as a whole to create a coherent description of the qualities. This may also include parts of Mid Highland Glens (TAY1B) where features associated with the HBF exist.

In addition, there is a need to consider the special qualities which result from the strong association between mountain (TAY3), foothills and strath (TAY10).

TAY8 Igneous Hills

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Scenic | <p>The dramatic cliffs at Lundie Crag add picturesque qualities towards the eastern edge of Angus, whilst the ruined observatory on Kinpurney Hill forms a scenic landmark.</p> <p>Often pasture with a strong pattern of enclosure by dykes which creates scenic landscape topology where lines in the landscape are distorted by landform and emphasise the often pronounced undulating landform.</p> <p>However, in the central part of this type, masts and wind turbines at Craigowl and Ark Hill detract from scenic qualities.</p> | Low to High |
| Cultural | <p>The key sites in this area are the hillforts at Kinpurney Hill, Denoon Law (both Scheduled Monuments) and Auchterhouse Hill, thought to have been occupied during the Iron Age and/or Pictish periods. Kinpurney hillfort, the largest in Angus, is topped by a now ruined observatory built in the 18th Century (designated as a Scheduled Monument). It is a prominent feature on the hilltop from both within the Sidlaws and also from Strathmore and The Braes of Angus to the north.</p> | High |
| Natural | <p>Often arable and improved pasture on lower slopes but with semi-natural pasture and areas of heath on higher ground.</p> | Medium |
| Enjoyment | <p>The Sidlaws are a popular recreational area for those who live in south Angus and Dundee, with Lundie Crag, Kinpurney Hill, Auchterhouse Hill and Carrot Hill and Balkello community woodland being the most visited areas. There is also an extensive network of paths used locally and by visitors.</p> | High |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>Often visible from the northern part of Dundee and in particular from Dundee Law but separated by TAY13 Dipslope Farmland. The Sidlaws are important in framing Strathmore. Dykes are common feature in this type but are often poorly maintained.</p> | Medium |

Discussion: The eastern part of this type within Angus has a concentration of scenic qualities and highly visible cultural heritage features. These areas are also popular for recreation with a network of paths.

TAY10 Broad Valley Lowland

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <p>Scenic</p> | <p>The historic field pattern and field boundary features such as dykes hedges and treelines have often been lost, and fields often amalgamated with the cropping patterns often being the dominant element which creates landscape pattern. Therefore much of the type has low relative scenic qualities but there are some areas which are the exception.</p> <p>The area east of the River Isla between Airlie and the Dean Water has smaller scale complex landform resulting from glacial moraine. This has led to sinuous tree-lined water-courses contrasting with smaller fields with a strong rectilinear pattern of field boundary trees and dykes. South of Airlie, the complex landforms mixed with the strong field pattern create some of the most scenic landscape topology within Angus, where lines in the landscape are distorted by landform.</p> <p>To the east and west of the statutory designed landscape at Glamis are extensive non-designated designed landscapes with a strong rectilinear pattern of hedges and tree lines which contribute.</p> <p>Around Careston and west of the Brechin Castle statutory designed landscape there is a strong rectilinear larger scale pattern of woodland strips; field boundary tree lines and road avenues. Between both areas the River South Esk has large sweeping meanders lined with trees and narrow woodland strips which visually connect both designed landscapes. Views across these areas from higher ground to the south towards the Braes of Angus are highly scenic.</p> <p>There is a non-statutory designed landscape at Kinnordy, Kirriemuir. Similarly, the non-statutory designed landscape to the north of Newtyle with its hedges, tree lines and woodland is important to the setting add a strong pattern and special qualities locally.</p> | <p>Low to High</p> |
| <p>Cultural</p> | <p>There are a number of non-statutory designed landscapes within the type, but those at Ruthven House, Kinnordy, Careston and adjacent to the statutory designation at Brechin Castle contribute most to special qualities of landscape more widely. There are also several standing castles in this area, variously designated as Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings and the medieval Restenneth Priory (a Scheduled Monument).</p> | <p>Low to High</p> |

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|-----------------------|--|---------------|
| Natural | The river corridors associated with rivers Isla, South Esk and North Esk and to lesser extent the Dean Water form blue/ green networks which are often focal features in views. Locally hedges, trees and woodland add qualities, but much of the landscape is intensive arable. | Low to medium |
| Enjoyment | Over much of this large type, recreational use of paths and tracks is typically restricted to local usage, with few visitors from outwith the area. However locally around Forfar, Kirriemuir and Brechin levels of public usage are relatively high, with well-developed path networks. Glamis Castle and its grounds is a major national attraction. The rivers are popular for salmon and trout angling, particularly South Esk and North Esk. Both these rivers also have some use for kayakers and canoeists. | Low to High |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>An extensive landscape type with some similarities to TAY13 Dipslope Farmland which is also intensive arable. Landscapes of these types with higher levels of special qualities are uncommon. Field boundary features including hedges, trees and dykes are often poorly maintained and in poor condition.</p> <p>The areas south of Brechin at Burghill; south of Forfar at Balmashanner Hill and to the north of Kirriemuir at Kinnordy, provide a setting for each town.</p> <p>The complex fluvioglacial landforms south of Airlie create an unusual landscape.</p> | Low to High |

Discussion: A landscape type with highly variable levels of special qualities. It is proposed that selected areas of this large type be included within the areas of search. Often different special qualities combine to create areas with particularly high special qualities.

These include a corridor along the River South Esk, with its large sweeping meanders lined with trees and narrow woodland strips which visually connect the designed landscapes at Careston and Brechin Castle. This area of search abuts other areas within landscape types 1B, 5, 12 & 15.

The area east of the River Isla between Airlie and the Dean Water characterised by small-scale complex fluvioglacial landforms also contains the non-statutory designed landscape associated with Ruthven House, which together create an unusual landscape with special qualities.

TAY12(i) Low Moorland Hills (Forfar Hills)

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Scenic | <p>A mixture of arable on the lower ground and pasture with a strong pattern of enclosure by dykes which creates scenic landscape topology where lines in the landscape are distorted by landform and emphasise the often pronounced undulating landform particularly around Aberlemno. There is a repeating pattern of hilltop woodland across the type which adds a richness due to their prominence in views.</p> <p>Scenic minor road between Aberlemno and Finavon with complex landforms, steep twisting road, woodlands, hillfort and views across Strathmore. Dramatic cliffs add interest to the south of Pitscandy and Turin Hills.</p> <p>Balmashanner Hill is an important viewpoint over-looking Forfar and Strathmore towards the Angus Glens.</p> <p>Electricity pylons in the northern part and wind turbines south of Forfar reduce special qualities.</p> | Medium to High |
| Cultural | <p>The area around Aberlemno is a rich historic landscape with Pictish carved standing stones by the roadside and at the church. There are Iron Age/Pictish period hillforts at Hill of Finavon and Turin Hill and a small number of castles with associated landscapes. The Balmashanner war memorial (Category C Listed) is a prominent historic feature in the landscape.</p> <p>There is a small non statutory designed landscape around Lour which locally has a strong pattern of tree lines and hedges.</p> | Medium |
| Natural | <p>The complex smaller scale landforms around Aberlemno add interest locally. Higher ground in the northern part of the sub-type is typically semi-improved pasture with a mosaic of broadleaved woodland including</p> | Medium |
| Enjoyment | <p>The area south of Balmashanner Hill is part of the Forfar Path Network and well visited for recreational walking. The standing stones and hillforts are visitor attractions. Enjoyment qualities are therefore locally high.</p> | High |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>The northern part is particularly distinctive with strong historic features and a ridge top village. Balmashanner Hill is an important part of the setting of Forfar. Dykes are an important characteristic of this landscape and they are often poorly maintained.</p> | Medium |

Discussion: A landscape type with variable levels of special qualities, with the most distinctive area with strong cultural heritage qualities being around Aberlemno.

TAY12(ii) Low Moorland Hills (Montreathmont Moor)

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Scenic | <p>The largest part of this sub-type is relatively flat domed landform with large areas of forestry and arable farming. The historic field pattern and field boundary features such as dykes hedges and treelines have often been lost, with fields often amalgamated with the cropping patterns often being the most apparent element which creates landscape pattern. This part has relatively low scenic value.</p> <p>The western part of the sub-type is more elevated and open in character with a character closer to sub-type 12(i).</p> | Low to Medium |
| Cultural | The area around Aberlemno is a rich historic landscape and whilst most of this is within 12(i), it includes the western part of this sub-type. | Low to High |
| Natural | The land use is a mixture of arable and plantation forestry, but large parts of the type are relatively flat with poor drainage leading to some small and localised areas of wetlands and semi-natural woodland. | Low |
| Enjoyment | There are some recreational visitors to Montreathmont Forest for walking and mountain biking. Otherwise, recreational use of paths and tracks within this sub-type is typically restricted to local usage, with few visitors from outwith the area. | Low to Medium |
| Rarity and Typicality | This is a sub-area of a much larger landscape type. There has been an extensive loss of field boundaries and overall there is poor maintenance of the remaining field boundary trees hedges and dykes. | Low |

Discussion: A sub-type with overall lower levels of special qualities.

TAY13(i) Dipslope Farmland – Tealing Farmland

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Scenic | <p>This sub-area is gently rolling and tilted towards the south. With the exception of the extreme south western part of the type around Fowlis, intervening landform typically prevents views towards the Tay estuary to the south, but to the north the Sidlaw Hills commonly forms a backdrop to views.</p> <p>The historic field pattern and field boundary features such as dykes hedges and treelines have often been lost, but fields have not been amalgamated to the same extent as in other parts of Dipslope Farmland type. The limited field boundaries however mean that the cropping patterns often being the most apparent element which creates landscape pattern.</p> <p>Parts of the type are dominated by electricity pylons, wind turbines with some areas of polytunnels, eroding special qualities.</p> | Low |
| Cultural | <p>There are non-statutory designed landscapes around the former Baldovan House, Balmuir and the former Strathmartine Hospital on the southern edge of the type. These are however small and located on the edge of the type limiting their contribution towards special qualities overall.</p> <p>Craighill hillfort and broch, likely dating from the Iron Age, occupies a promontory over the Fithie Burn in the east of this sub-area, while at the west end is the broch and fort site of Hurlly Hawkin, again thought to date to the Iron Age period possibly with later, medieval, occupation. Both are designated as Scheduled Monuments.</p> | Low-Medium |
| Natural | <p>The intensive arable farming has led to only a few fragments of semi-natural character within this sub-type, but at the south west of the type there are several wooded dens.</p> | Low |
| Enjoyment | <p>Recreational use of paths and tracks within this sub-type is typically restricted to local usage, with few visitors from outwith the area.</p> | Low |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>This is a sub-area of a much larger landscape type.</p> <p>Unfortunately this is one of the least intact sub-areas of the landscape type with the traditional character elements of a lowland arable landscape having been lost through agricultural intensification.</p> | Low |

Discussion: A sub-type with overall low levels of special qualities.

TAY13(ii) Dipslope Farmland – Crombie/Monikie Farmland

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Scenic | <p>The extensive typically rectilinear woodland blocks associated with designed landscape of the former Panmure House and to a lesser extent Crombie Country Park and other commercial forestry provides a strong landscape pattern. Mortared stone walls line both sides of the B9128 as it passes through the designed landscape at Panmure. Field tree lines and hedges particularly around Mains of Panmure further add scenic value locally.</p> <p>Elsewhere within the sub-type the historic field pattern and field boundary features such as dykes, hedges and treelines have often been lost, with fields often amalgamated, with the cropping patterns often being the most apparent element which creates landscape pattern.</p> | Medium |
| Cultural | <p>The extensive designed landscape around the former Panbride House substantially adds to the special qualities of this sub-type. Whilst the house is no longer present, the policy woodland, parkland trees, dykes, Panmure Memorial, gatehouses and entrance features remain an important in adding special qualities.</p> <p>The remains of a hillfort and broch at Laws Hill, Monifeith, thought to date to the Iron Age and designated as a Scheduled Monument, is located on a low summit in the south west of this sub-area, one of three such sites in Angus.</p> | Medium |
| Natural | <p>Much of the woodland and forest area is of Long-established origin giving intrinsic biodiversity value within the soils and ground flora irrespective of tree cover composition. Guildy, Corrieara, Boath and Pitlivie Dens twist their way through the central part of the sub-type within the designed landscape adding to the richness of the landscape experience.</p> | Medium |
| Enjoyment | <p>The country parks at Monikie and Crombie are busy recreational attractions and there is a path network around Carnoustie. Away from these attractions, recreational use of paths and tracks within this sub-type is typically restricted to local usage, with few visitors from outwith the area.</p> | Medium/High |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>This landscape sub-type is unusual in that it is an intensive arable landscape with strong larger scale structure provided by rectilinear woodland. Field boundary features including hedges, trees and dykes are often poorly maintained and in poor condition.</p> | Low/Medium |

Discussion: A sub-type with overall medium levels of special qualities, higher than other TAY13 sub-types.

TAY13(iii) Dipslope Farmland – Redford Farmland

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Scenic | <p>The slightly raised elevation of most of this sub-area relative to the Strathmore and the coast, together with its open character, allows for frequent panoramic views towards the coast and the Braes of Angus.</p> <p>The historic field pattern and field boundary features such as dykes hedges and treelines have often been lost, with fields often amalgamated with the cropping patterns often being the most apparent element which creates landscape pattern. This can sometimes create interesting topology where lines in the landscape emphasise the undulations in topography.</p> <p>Scenic qualities principally relates to views to other landscape types rather than intrinsic scenic qualities.</p> | Low |
| Cultural | <p>With the exception of the statutory designed landscape at The Guynd, there are few cultural features which contribute to the landscape quality of the sub-area. The designed landscape appears as wooded area within an overall open landscape. The Guynd House does not form a focal feature within the wider landscape. The Camyllie Quarries, which previously produced roofing slate and paving slabs, is disused and partially colonised by woodland and scrub and also provides some visual interest in the landscape.</p> | Low/ Medium |
| Natural | <p>The intensive arable farming has led to only a few fragments of semi-natural character within this sub-type.</p> | Low |
| Enjoyment | <p>Recreational use of paths and tracks within this sub-type is typically restricted to local usage, with few visitors from outwith the area.</p> | Low |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>Unfortunately this is one of the least intact sub-areas of the landscape type with the traditional character elements of a lowland arable landscape having been lost through agricultural intensification.</p> <p>Where they persist, field boundary features including hedges, trees and dykes are often poorly maintained and in poor condition.</p> | Low |

Discussion: A sub-type with overall low levels of special qualities.

TAY13(iv) Dipslope Farmland – Letham, Lunan Water & Arbroath Valleys

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Scenic | Over much of this sub-type, historic field pattern and field boundary features such as dykes hedges and treelines have often been lost, with fields often amalgamated with the cropping patterns often being the most apparent element which creates landscape pattern. The landscape is often smaller in scale than elsewhere within the type and where designed landscapes exist there are often tree lines, woodlands and sometimes mortared boundary walls, typically leading to higher scenic qualities locally. | Medium |
| Cultural | Statutory designed landscapes at Guthrie and Pitmuies. In addition there are non-statutory designed landscape at Idvies, Gardyne, Middleton, Douglasmuir, Letham Grange and Anniston. Kelly Castle, a 15th Century Category B Listed castle, stands on the shoulder of a wooded valley at the south end of the Elliot Water. | Medium |
| Natural | Water courses, most notably the Lunan Water together with associated semi-natural vegetation and the route of disused railway. | Medium |
| Enjoyment | Recreational use of paths and tracks within this sub-type is typically restricted to local usage, with few visitors from outwith the area, but are well used around Letham and Frockheim. | Low to Medium |
| Rarity and Typicality | Whilst this is a sub-area of a much larger landscape type, it is notably different in character, with river valleys and regular small designed landscapes. Field boundary features including hedges, trees and dykes are often poorly maintained and in poor condition. | Medium |

Discussion: A sub-type with medium levels of special qualities.

TAY13(v) Dipslope Farmland – Ethie Farmland

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Scenic | <p>A sub-type often with scenic views towards other landscape types, but with lower levels of scenic qualities due to relatively featureless open arable landscape. The southern and eastern parts of this sub-type have a smaller scale rectilinear field pattern defined by drystone dykes; and woodland and tree lines around the designed landscapes add some visual interest typically missing in other parts of the sub-type.</p> <p>Areas of poly-tunnels at Kinblethmont and Seaton locally erode special qualities.</p> | Low to Medium |
| Cultural | <p>Non-statutory designed landscapes at Park Hill, Kinblethmont, West Newton and Ethie Castle.</p> <p>In the southern part of this sub-area, a Bronze Age cairn (Scheduled Monument) stands on the summit of Dickmount Law, within a small clump of trees. The view from the summit is one reputedly one of the most extensive in this part of area.</p> | Low-Medium |
| Natural | <p>The West Woods of Ethie is large long-established woodland within the centre of the sub-type and along with smaller woodland associated with designed landscapes adds some natural heritage interest.</p> | Low to Medium |
| Enjoyment | <p>The West Wood of Ethie is well used locally and contains core paths which link more widely. The type often a route to access the coast with some links to the coastal path starting within the sub-type.</p> | Medium |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>Field boundary features including hedges, trees and dykes are often poorly maintained and in poor condition.</p> | Low |

Discussion: A sub-type with low to medium levels of special qualities.

TAY13(vi) Dipslope Farmland – Rossie Moor

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Scenic | <p>The historic field pattern and field boundary features such as dykes hedges and treelines have often been lost, with fields often amalgamated with the cropping patterns often being the most apparent element which creates landscape pattern. There is however there are some areas, detailed below, where landform, woodland, tree lines and semi-natural vegetation combine to enhance special qualities.</p> <p>There are however widespread scenic views in most directions due the elevated domed landform. There are however to other landscape types, most notably over Montrose Basin to the north and seaward from the eastern part of the sub-type.</p> | Low to High |
| Cultural | <p>There are small statutory designed landscapes at Craig House and Dunninald Castle as well as non-statutory designed landscapes at Usan House and Rossie Castle. With their woodland and tree lines they locally enhance special qualities. In the north of this sub-area are the remains of a burial mound (a Scheduled Monument) probably dating to the Bronze Age which occupies the summit of Maryton Law. Now enclosed by trees, but formerly with extensive views across the area.</p> | Medium |
| Natural | <p>The steep scarp slope which forms the northern edge of this sub-type provides a striking landform change to the relatively flat low-lying Lowland Basin type to the north. Woodland on the northern scarp slope and around Rossie School together with semi-natural landcover on parts of Rossie Moor enhances special qualities.</p> | Medium |
| Enjoyment | <p>Core paths around Rossie Moor link minor roads, but are likely to mostly be used by nearby residents rather than as a recreational destination.</p> | Medium |
| Rarity and Typicality | <p>This is a sub-area of a much larger landscape type. It is however one of the more distinctive sub-types, with a stronger sense of place. Field boundary features including hedges, trees and dykes are often poorly maintained and in poor condition.</p> | Medium |

Discussion: A sub-type with overall medium levels of special qualities.

TAY14a Coast with Sand

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|-----------------|--|-----------------------|
| Scenic | <p>Dramatic sandy bays at Montrose, Lunan Bay, Arbroath, Carnoustie and Monifieth. The urban frontages with coastal defences are typically less scenic. Barry Buddon contains scenic dune landforms.</p> <p>The abrupt change in character between 14a and 14b particularly at Lunan Bay add drama and scenic qualities. The ever changing interactions of the sea with the beaches, creates strong patterns on the inter-tidal areas and rhythmic lines of waves with scenic 'white horses'. These patterns are often emphasised by light and reflections.</p> | Medium to High |
| Cultural | <p>The medieval Red Castle, a Scheduled Monument, is a focal feature at the mouth of the Lunan Water at Lunan Bay as well as being an important viewpoint. On the fringe between TAY14a and TAY 14b, at the north end of Lunan Bay is a promontory fort, designated as a Scheduled Monument, thought to have been occupied in the Iron Age.</p> <p>In the furthest north area of TAY14a, the remains of Montrose airfield are an important cultural and landscape feature on the coastal plain. The airfield is the oldest military airfield in Scotland. Parts of the runways, aprons and other associated features (including pillboxes) can still be seen.</p> <p>Further military remains are to be found in the southernmost part of TAY14a at Barry Buddon links, a military training area in active use since the 19th Century. Practice trenches and defensive features are visible. There are also two 19th Century lighthouses, the High and Low lighthouses. Prominent features in the landscape both are Category B Listed and built by the Stevenson Engineers.</p> | Medium |
| Natural | <p>Strong sense of nature with the twice daily tidal movement and dynamic ever-changing beaches and dunes. There is a strip of semi-natural habitat along the coastline, which combines with a similar feature within 14b to form a continuous green corridor along the Angus coast.</p> <p>Barry Links is an extensive triangular foreland with extensive dune systems and associated habitats designated as SSSI. The site contains impressive parabolic dunes, unique in the UK.</p> | High |

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Enjoyment | The Angus Coastal Path is within this sub-type between Carnoustie and Arbroath. The beaches at Montrose, Lunan Bay, Arbroath, Carnoustie and Monifieth are popular both for local recreation and for tourism. There are links golf courses beside each town and Carnoustie in particular is of international importance. Overall, this sub-type is a particularly important recreational area within Angus. | High |
| Rarity and Typicality | By area, this sub-type covers a small part Angus, but is important to the overall identity of Angus, with 4 of the 7 Angus towns within this sub-type and Lunan Bay having won awards in the past. Field boundary features including hedges, trees and dykes are often poorly maintained and in poor condition. | Medium/High |

Discussion: A landscape sub-type with overall high levels of special qualities. The urban frontages are often less scenic than other parts of the sub-type, but typically have much greater levels of public use.

TAY14b Coast with Cliffs

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| <p>Scenic</p> | <p>Highly scenic with dramatic cliffs, panoramic views along the coastline with stacks arches, shingle beaches, extensive inter-tidal rock slabs and a gloop (collapsed cave). Fields close to the cliffs are often small in size often with a strong enclosure pattern of dykes, which significantly add to unity and the rugged qualities. The ever changing interactions of the sea with this rugged coastline, together with changes in light add interest.</p> <p>The abrupt change in character between 14a and 14b particularly at Lunan Bay add drama and scenic qualities. The cliffs of this sub-type form the setting to Ethiehaven, Auchmithie and Arbroath (outwith the sub-type).</p> <p>Between Arbroath and Carlingheugh Bay there are extensive areas of poly-tunnels, which can detract from scenic qualities in some views.</p> | <p>High</p> |
| <p>Cultural</p> | <p>There are 6 highly visible promontory forts between Arbroath and southern end of Lunan Bay with often pronounced defensive ditches and embankments. All are designated as Scheduled Monuments, and are thought to have been occupied during the Iron Age – some with later reuse as strategic defensive positions during World War II.</p> <p>Auchmithie Conservation Area is located on the edge of the cliffs and a key feature of interest along this coast. The stone for Arbroath Abbey was quarried from Seaton Cliffs.</p> <p>At Boddin Point, north of Lunan Bay, are lime kilns dating from the 18th Century which are Category B Listed. These stone-built structures occupy a low promontory and are a prominent landmark on this stretch of coastline. Another promontory fort can also be found at Boddin, west of the kilns, traditionally said to be the first castle of Dunninald. It is situated on a precipitous promontory, isolated by a ditch crossed by a causeway. Evidence from this site indicates medieval occupation, though it is possible the site was occupied prior to this.</p> <p>In the northernmost area of TAY14b, the Category B Listed Scurdie Ness lighthouse, built in the 19th Century by D & T Stevenson Engineers, is a prominent coastal landmark.</p> <p>The Category A Listed Bell Rock lighthouse, the UK’s oldest functioning lighthouse, is within Angus and located 11 miles from Arbroath. It is an important part of the cultural identity of Arbroath and is intrinsically linked with the Category A Listed Signal Tower, itself a prominent landmark on the Arbroath coastline.</p> | <p>High</p> |

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Natural | There is strong sense of nature, with the combination of the rugged cliffs and the sea. On SNH maps, this type has high relative wildness in relation to ruggedness. Wildness is heightened by a high sense of exposure and vulnerability. There is also a strip of semi-natural vegetation between the agricultural fields and the coast, much of which is SSSI, which combines with a similar feature within 14a to form a continuous green corridor along the Angus coast. | High |
| Enjoyment | The promoted Angus Coastal Path includes the cliff top path between Arbroath and Auchmithie. The section north of Arbroath is particularly busy. The route continues northwards to Lunan Bay but follows a combination of farm tracks and another cliff top path at Redhead and Ethiehaven. There is also a well-used path from Ferryden to Scurdie Ness and beyond to Mains of Usan. Overall, this sub-type is an important recreational area within Angus. | High |
| Rarity and Typicality | By area, this sub-type covers a small part Angus, but is important to the overall identity of Angus. Field boundary features particularly dykes are often poorly maintained and in poor condition. | Medium/High |

Discussion: A landscape sub-type with overall high levels of special qualities. This will include inter-tidal rocks along the coastline and at Bell Rock. The sub-type has a strong inter-relationship with sub-type TAY14b where they abut particularly north and south of Lunan Bay.