WOODLANDS AND FORESTRY

Local Development Plan

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Adopted July 2016

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1. Introduction and Purpose of the SG

1.1 The trees, woodlands and forests of Clackmannanshire contribute greatly to the quality of the landscape, environment, biodiversity, cultural heritage and the local economy. They also incorporate, or provide a backdrop to, popular recreation and tourism destinations such as Gartmorn Dam Country Park & Nature Reserve and the Ochil Hills Woodland Park. Given these inherent qualities it is essential to ensure that any future proposals for developing and expanding Clackmannanshire's woodlands and forests integrate, in a complimentary and balanced way, with other land uses.

1.2 They also play an important role in reducing the impact of climate change, through the storage of greenhouse gases, and are a vital part of the natural environment, providing a whole range of 'ecosystem services' (see glossary) such as cleaning our air and water, and storing carbon. In addition, woodlands and forests, along with other habitats such as uplands, wetlands and coastline, provide numerous opportunities to relax, be active, and enjoy the outdoors, making Clackmannanshire an attractive place to live in, work in and visit.
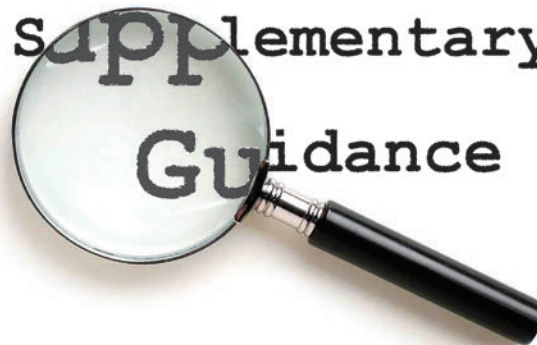
1.3 The Woodlands and Forestry SG contains advice on the management of existing trees and woodland in development areas and explains their value in creating high-quality new places. It explains the value of introducing new trees and woodlands and provides advice on the range of benefits trees and woodland can provide including addressing climate change, enhancing the water environment, providing habitat and supporting biodiversity, and creating recreational opportunities. Woodland can also offer economic benefits both in terms of the timber industry and tourism.

1.4 Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) manages the national forest estate and is also the Scottish Government's regulatory body for forestry. FCS assesses potential forest projects for their environmental impact, approves and monitors publicly funded woodland proposals and ensures compliance with local and national policies and best practice guidelines. As such, forestry activities such as planting and felling are not normally subject to planning controls. Local authorities are, however, consulted by FCS on a range of planting and felling proposals and longer term forest plans and therefore can influence where future woodland expansion should occur and the development of the forest industry within their areas. Where appropriate the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy (see Chapter 3) and this SG will inform the responses from Clackmannanshire Council to such consultations.

1.5 The SG is one of a suite of documents, promoting the importance and role of green infrastructure in providing a quality environment to live in, detailed in Figure 1. This adopted SG has the same weight as the Local Development Plan and its policies. It is a material consideration for development management when applications involve either the felling or planting of trees. Planning conditions will be utilised to deliver the creation, management and enhance of woodlands, in accordance with the issues in the SG, where this is appropriate.

1.6 The SG supports Local Development Plan's Vision that "The Plan will have significantly contributed to the realisation of the principles of the Central Scotland Green Network, a national planning priority, changing the appearance of Clackmannanshire for the better with more opportunities for healthy outdoor recreation, expansion of woodland cover and strengthening of habitat and outdoor access networks". It also supports Strategic Objective 3 in the Plan (Environmental Sustainability) which is "to deliver a sustainable pattern of development that supports community cohesion, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, supports waste minimisation and ensures that new development consistently contributes to environmental protection and enhancement by...minimising release of greenhouse gas emissions from natural sources including protection of carbon-rich soils, minimising waste and encouraging woodland expansion where appropriate...", and Strategic Objective 6 (Natural Environment) which seeks "to protect and enhance Clackmannanshire's natural heritage, regenerate our natural environment and support the strategic objectives of the Central Scotland Green Network by...expanding woodland cover wherever possible...".

1.7 The Woodlands and Forestry SG also provides key guidance on how new development will be expected to support the principles set out in the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy (SCFWS). The SCFWS will guide future options for new planting and the wider role of forests in terms of access, biodiversity and climate change (see Chapter 3).

Figure 1: Relationship of documents promoting Green Infrastructure
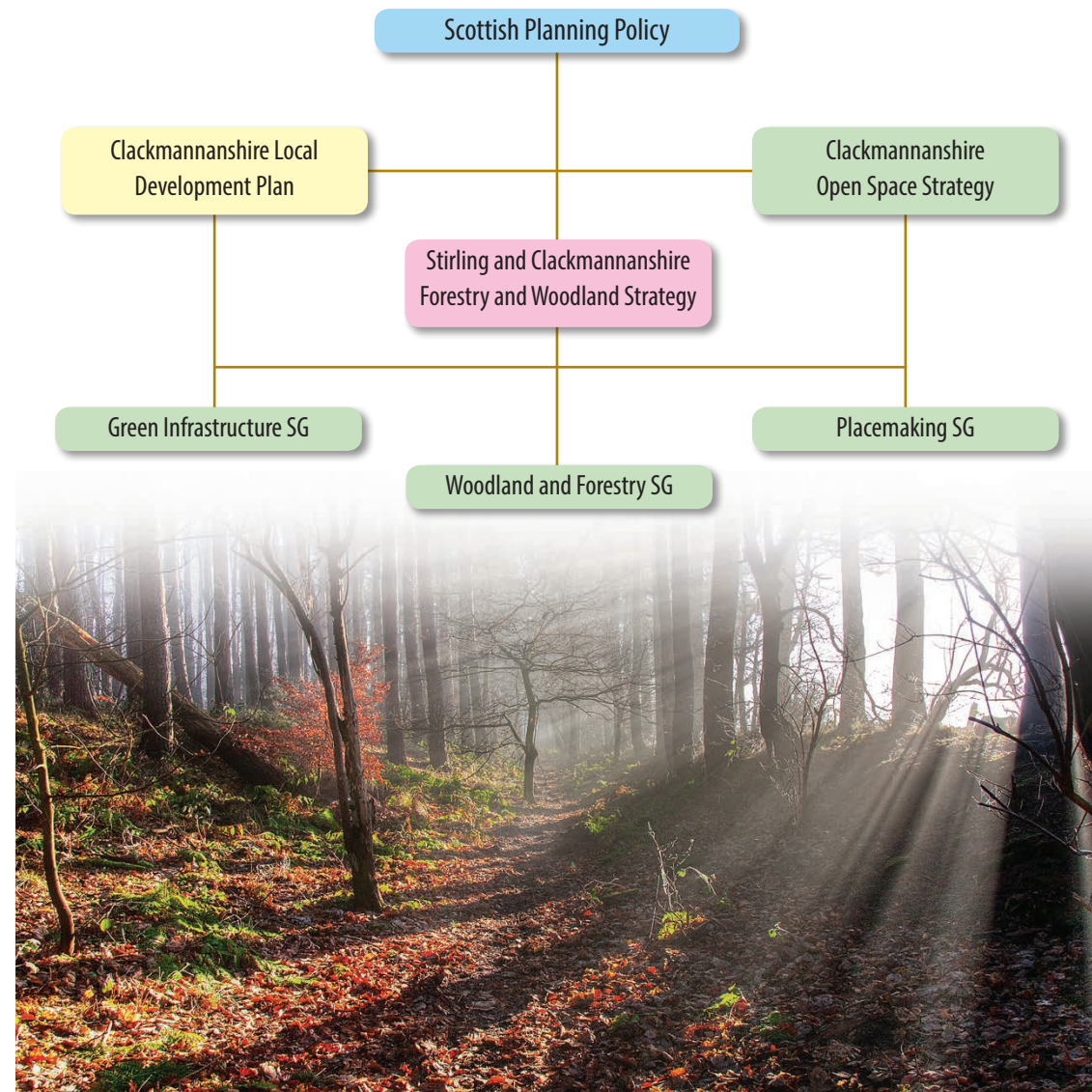
2. National Policy and Guidance

2.1 Scotland's Woodland and Forestry Resource

2.1.1 Scotland's trees, woodlands and forests make a vital contribution to the nation's economic, environmental and social wellbeing. Over 55% of Britain's trees are in Scotland where the total area of woodland and forest is currently 1.38 million hectares - equivalent to 17.8% of Scotland's total land area. Woodland cover has increased significantly in the past 50-60 years, however it still compares relatively unfavourably with the European average of 37%. Of Scotland's woodland area, approximately 70% is currently coniferous woodland producing softwood timber and 14% broadleaved woodland producing hardwood timber. 4% is mixed woodland and the balance is open space within woodland.

2.1.2 Over 70% of Scotland's forests were planted during the second half of the 20th Century. Since the 1990s there has though been a significant shift in the type and location of new planting. Prior to 1990 new forests were mainly planted on land with reduced capability for agriculture. Scottish Government policy is now to encourage planting on a wider aspect as detailed in 'The Right Tree in the Right Place'. At the same time species diversity is much greater and includes a higher proportion of broadleaves.

2.1.3 Native Scots pine and broadleaves have also been planted to re-create native woodlands lost in earlier times. A greater proportion of new planting is taking place on land that is privately owned, or owned by voluntary organisations, charities or community groups.

2.2 National Regulation & Control

2.2.1 There are a number of national policy and guidance documents relating to woodlands and forestry. The most relevant are identified below along with a brief explanation of their role in the management of woodlands and forestry. Links to the full documents can be found in the 'Further Information Sources' section of this SG.

2.3 Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

2.3.1 Section 159 states that it shall be the duty of the planning authority -

▶ (a) to ensure, whenever it is appropriate, that in granting planning permission for any development adequate provision is made, by the imposition of conditions, for the preservation or planting of trees, and

▶ (b) to make such orders under section as appear to the authority to be necessary in connection with the grant of such permission, whether for giving effect to such conditions or otherwise.

2.4 Scottish Forestry Strategy (SFS) (2006)

2.4.1 The Scottish Government's framework for forestry up until 2050 and beyond is set out in the Scottish Forestry Strategy (SFS) (2006). It has the following seven themes:-

1. Helping Scotland mitigate and adapt to climate change.

2. Getting the most from Scotland's timber resource.

3. Supporting sustainable economic growth through the business development of the Scottish woodland sector.

4. Supporting community development to improve quality of life and wellbeing.

5. Improving access to woodlands, to help improve the health of Scotland.

6. Protecting the environmental quality of our natural resources.

7. Helping to conserve and enhance Scotland's biodiversity.

The Strategy has a target of 25% of woodland cover in Scotland by the middle of the century.

2.5   Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (June 2014)

2.5.1 SPP identifies that planning authorities should seek opportunities to create new woodland and plant native trees in association with development. If a development would result in the severing or impairment of connectivity between important woodland habitats, workable mitigation measures should be identified and implemented, preferably linked to a wider green network (See Glossary). Development impacts on habitat connectivity should be ameliorated through mitigation measures. Woodland removal should only be allowed where it will achieve public benefit. The Scottish Government's 'Control of Woodland Removal Policy' includes a presumption in favour of protecting woodland. SPP also confirms the need to protect existing woodland, with removal only permitted where there are significant and clearly defined public benefits. Scottish Government advice on planning for forestry and woodlands is set out in 'The Right Tree in the Right Place'.

2.5.2 The Ancient Woodland Inventory identifies that Clackmannanshire has a number of woods as "ancient, of semi-natural origin". Such woodland is highlighted in the SPP as an irreplaceable resource and along with other woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees, especially veteran trees of high nature conservation value, should be protected from adverse impacts resulting from development. In considering any development proposals the Council will utilise the relevant national and local development policies to ensure the retention and where appropriate the enhancement of such woodlands.
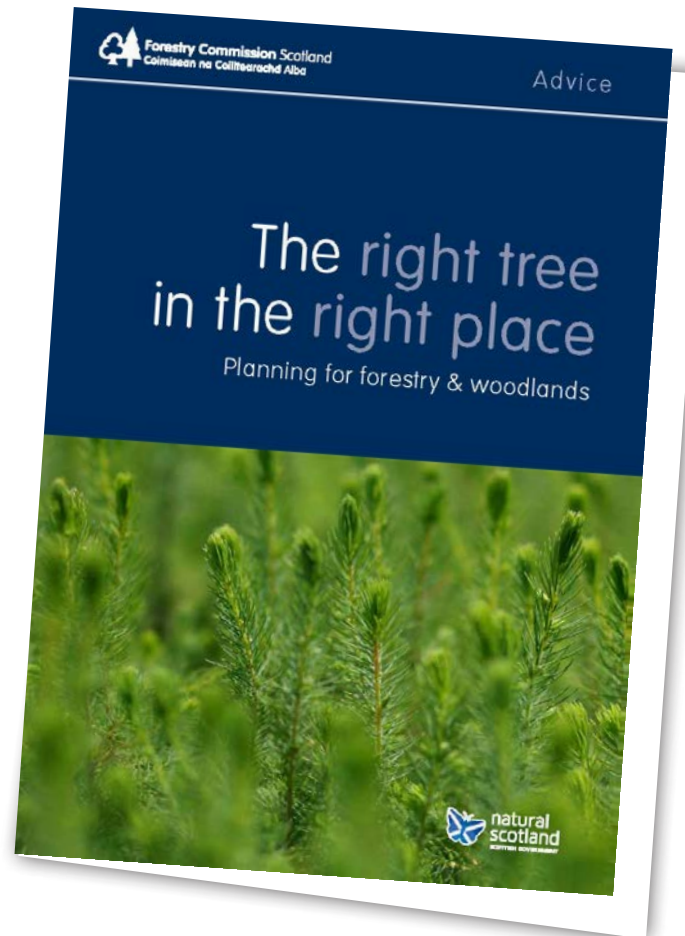
2.6   National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) (June 2014)

2.6.1 NPF3 identifies the need to plan for the expansion of woodland cover. The Scottish Government wants to build on the multiple benefits delivered by our forests by increasing the overall woodland area by 100,000 hectares between 2012 and 2022. Future reviews will assess what further woodland expansion is required in the 2020s to ensure that emissions reduction targets and wider land use objectives are met. It also recognises that biomass has a growing role to play in providing heat, and that as forests mature, there will be a need to consider timber transport networks and requirements for processing facilities.

2.6.2 For the next five years, the NPF3 strategy continues to prioritise environmental improvements in the Central Belt, with the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) objective to make this area more attractive to investors and residents. The CSGN therefore remains a national priority. The initiative is now well established, and in the coming years the priorities for the lead organisations should include promoting active travel, addressing vacant and derelict land and focusing action in disadvantaged areas, to maximise community and health benefits. Further integrated environmental initiatives are expected to emerge over time.

2.6.3 NPF3 also promotes green networks and habitat networks. The consequential increase in woodland cover will deliver landscape quality, biodiversity and amenity and help to absorb CO2.

2.7 The Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN)

2.7.1 NPF3 describes the CSGN as "A strategic network of woodland and other habitats, active travel routes, greenspace links, watercourses and waterways, providing an enhanced setting for development and other land uses and improved opportunities for outdoor recreation and cultural activity." Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage are the lead partners in the CSGN and, along with other groups including the Council, will support the development and implementation of projects and schemes to enhance it.

2.7.2 The CSGN aims to restore and improve the rural and urban landscapes of Central Scotland under the following five themes:

◗ A Place for Growth   Creating an environment for sustainable economic growth.
◗ A Place in Balance   Creating an environment more in balance to thrive in a changing climate.
◗ A Place to Feel Good   Creating an environment which supports healthy lifestyles and well being.
◗ A Place for Nature   Creating an environment where nature can flourish.
◗ A Place to Belong   Creating an environment that people can enjoy and where they live.

2.7.3 A major objective of the CSGN is to increase woodland cover in line with the Scottish Forestry Strategy target (see above) and to contribute to a high quality landscape throughout Central Scotland. However, it is important that this expansion happens in the right place and has regard to the impacts on Clackmannanshire's landscape character and quality.

2.8 Getting the best from our land - A land use strategy for Scotland (March 2011)

2.8.1 Three of the proposals in the Land Use Strategy for Scotland are particularly relevant to woodlands and forestry:

Proposal 4

Further encourage land-based businesses to take actions that reduce land-based greenhouse gas emissions and that enable adaptation to climate change threats and opportunities.

A key policy for reducing emissions is additional woodland planting to sequester carbon. The Forest and Forestry Sector Action plan of the Climate Change Adaptation Framework sets out ways to adapt to climate change impacts.

Proposal 6

Use demonstration projects to determine the best means by which land use and land management practice can contribute to climate change objectives.

Build on existing initiatives such as the livestock and woodland focus farms to showcase improved approaches and provide learning through monitoring their benefits.

Proposal 7

Identify more closely which types of land are best for tree planting in the context of other land-based objectives, and promote good practice and local processes in relation to tree planting so as to secure multiple benefits.

There is a need to demonstrate to land managers how they can best contribute to climate change targets. One important way is to plant trees, while respecting the other requirements that we have for our land. An important measure to deliver this is the development of Forestry and Woodland Strategies, which take account of local factors.

2.8.2 The Government has committed to increasing the rate of woodland expansion, so as to realise a range of social, economic and environmental benefits. Such expansion would take Scotland's woodland cover to 25 per cent by 2050. In achieving this, it must be ensured that the right trees are planted in the right places – avoiding, for example, areas of deeper peat soil where the carbon losses from soil disturbance could outweigh the gains in climate change mitigation. Additionally, it is important to protect existing woodland, with woodland removal only permitted in very specific circumstances where it will deliver a significant additional public benefit. This policy is detailed in **Control of Woodland Removal**. Woodland removal without compensatory planting is mostly likely to be appropriate where it would contribute significantly to:

◗ enhancing priority habitats and their connectivity;
◗ enhancing populations of priority species;
◗ enhancing nationally important landscapes, designated historic environments and geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
◗ improving conservation of water or soil resources; or
◗ public safety.

2.8.3 As described in the **Rationale for Woodland Expansion**, without additional plantings by 2020 the net amount of carbon sequestered by forestry will fall. To sustain the contribution from forestry, woodland creation rates will need to increase to at least 10,000 hectares per year and to sustain this rate thereafter, ensuring that new planting is sympathetic to the local landscape and wider environment.

2.8.4 A thriving timber industry will play an important part in the contribution that the woodland and forestry sector can make to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while using wood for fuel has a part to play in meeting renewable heat targets. To further reduce the environmental impact of timber harvesting the Strategic Timber Transport Fund supports projects to mitigate the impact of timber transport.

2.8.5 Scotland's **Climate Change Adaptation Framework** considers a range of different land based sectors including agriculture and forestry and provides a number of targeted actions to assist with adaptation. These include the development of programmes to assist farmers and foresters in dealing with threats from changing or increasing pests and diseases, in planning and managing extreme weather events and their consequences such as land slip. For example, farm woodland can stabilise land and provide livestock shelter, but also provide wider benefits such as flood risk management, wildlife habitats, recreation opportunities and carbon retention.

2.9 Water Framework Directive (WFD)

2.9.1 WFD covers the protection of the water environment detailed in the Scotland River Basin District Plan and the associated HYPERLINK "http://www.sepa.org.uk/media/37297/forth_area-management-plan.pdf" Forth Area Management Plan. The objective of the Plan and the associated Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations (CAR) is to maintain and improve the ecological status of water bodies and that their is there is no deterioration of ecological status.

2.9.2 Forestry operations and woodland creation have the potential to have detrimental impacts on the water environment by inappropriate storage and use of fertilisers, drainage, related engineering works and planting leading to pollution and increased sediments. The protection of this important resource is through CAR related to operations such as the storage and use of fertilisers, drainage and related engineering works. Full details of the regulations can be found on the SEPA website at HYPERLINK "http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/water_regulation.aspx" www.sepa.org.uk/water/water_regulation.aspx. SEPA's HYPERLINK "http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/"website has details of the plans and the water bodies affected by forestry pressures including a GIS interactive map to search individual water bodies and associated data sheets detailing the pressures and measures to address them). The Council in considering forestry proposals will take due cognisance's of potential water impacts. SEPA also has a dedicated Forestry page.

3. Local Policy Context

3.1 Context and Links

3.1.1 As with national policy and guidance, there are a number of pieces of local policy and guidance relating to woodlands and forestry. The most relevant are identified below along with a brief explanation of their role in the management of woodlands and forestry. Links to the full documents can be found in the 'Further Information Sources' section of this SG.

3.2 The Clackmannanshire Local Development Plan (June 2015)

3.2.1 A number of policies in Section 7 of the Local Development Plan (Environmental Assets) are supported by the information in this SG and these are summarised below. The full text of these policies can be found in appendix 1.

EA4 – Landscape Quality: Sets a framework for the protection and enhancement of the quality and distinctive character of Clackmannanshire's landscape and to protect the Special Landscape Areas.

EA6 - Woodlands and Forestry: Aims to protect and expand Clackmannanshire's woodland resources in accord with the Woodland and Forestry Strategy and CSGN's principles.

EA 7 – Hedgerows, Trees and Tree Preservation Orders: Aims to retain trees, woodland and hedgerows that make a positive contribution to local amenity. Planting required to replace any loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows resulting from development.

EA8 - Green Belt: Restricts development in the designated area and where it is permitted it will be required to enhance the quality and distinctive character of the local landscape.

3.3 The Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy (SCFWS)

3.3.1 The Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy (SCFWS) sets out the Councils' vision, strategy and objectives for the future of woodlands and forestry. It is based around a 40-year vision to 2052, with options for 5 yearly reviews in line with Local Development Plan timescales.

3.3.2 The Vision of the SCFWS is:

Through their expansion, protection and sustainable management, the forests and woodlands of Stirling and Clackmannanshire will provide a range of benefits for local people and visitors and contribute to economic, environmental and social well being.

Through partnership working and integrated planning, implementation and monitoring, new jobs will be created, opportunities provided for active and passive outdoor recreation, habitats enhanced for wildlife and attractive landscapes protected, so that local people can live and work and visitors enjoy the area's natural and cultural heritage.

3.3.3 The Strategy has been developed by Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils, in partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland and the Central Scotland Green Network Trust, and with advice and guidance from a Steering Group comprising a range of other key players including Scottish Natural Heritage and the Community Woodlands Association, with a specific aim of contributing to the complimentary aims of the SFS and CSGN.

3.3.4 The SCFWS forms a link between forestry and woodland activities and other Scottish Government initiatives aiming to enhance the wide range of economic, environmental and social benefits derived from woodlands and forests. It also provides a strategic framework for the development and expansion of a variety of forest and woodland types across Clackmannanshire.

3.3.5 The overarching principle of the SCFWS is that woodland expansion should be looked upon favourably in Clackmannanshire, but subject to appropriate scale, type, objective and overriding constraints. Furthermore it is an aspiration of the SCFWS that woodland expansion should be more integrated, more diverse, more inclusive, more productive, more resilient and more positive; thus contributing to the delivery of multiple economic, social and environmental benefits.

3.3.6 At the broadest strategic level, the purpose of the SCFWS is to provide a local expression of how the national vision and priorities for the protection and expansion of Scotland's forest and woodland resource as set out in the Scottish Forestry Strategy (SFS) will be achieved.

3.3.7 At the local level the SCFWS is informed by the existing plans and strategies of Clackmannanshire Council. Account has also been taken of views and comments of local residents, communities and other stakeholders submitted in response to the public consultation as well as environmental designations such as SSSIs, SPAs and GCRs (See Glossary).

3.3.8 The SCFWS links with the Council's **Single Outcome Agreement** and Local Development Plan, together with a range of other policy and strategy documents connected to the themes of the SFS. These include:

◗ **Community Plan 'Working Together for Clackmannanshire' (2010)** - provides the overall framework in which community planning operates and provides a basis for the Single Outcome Agreement.

◗ **Biodiversity Action Plan 2012-2017** - supports the Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2010).

◗ **Economic Development Framework 2008-2018** - provides a focus for economic development in the area and a set of priorities to help Clackmannanshire realise its economic ambitions for 2008 - 2018.

◗ **Open Space Strategy (2014)** - supports increased woodland cover in support of CSGN and SFS. This will help to mitigate climate change through the capture, storage and retention of carbon by woodland expansion and promotion of active travel. The Clackmannanshire Open Space Strategy is of key importance in supporting the delivery of greenspaces as Clackmannanshire's 'green' lungs. It lays down a Clackmannanshire Standard for a range of accessible green infrastructure from parks and amenity open space to woodlands and cycle routes for existing and proposed green infrastructure. It's purpose is to ensure that we achieve an appropriate quantity and quality of greenspace across Clackmannanshire.

◗ **Greening Clackmannanshire (2010)** - provides a framework for action on the local environment and for taking forward the environment theme of the Clackmannanshire Alliance. It aims to enlist everyone's help to care for the physical environment, address climate change impacts and enhance access.
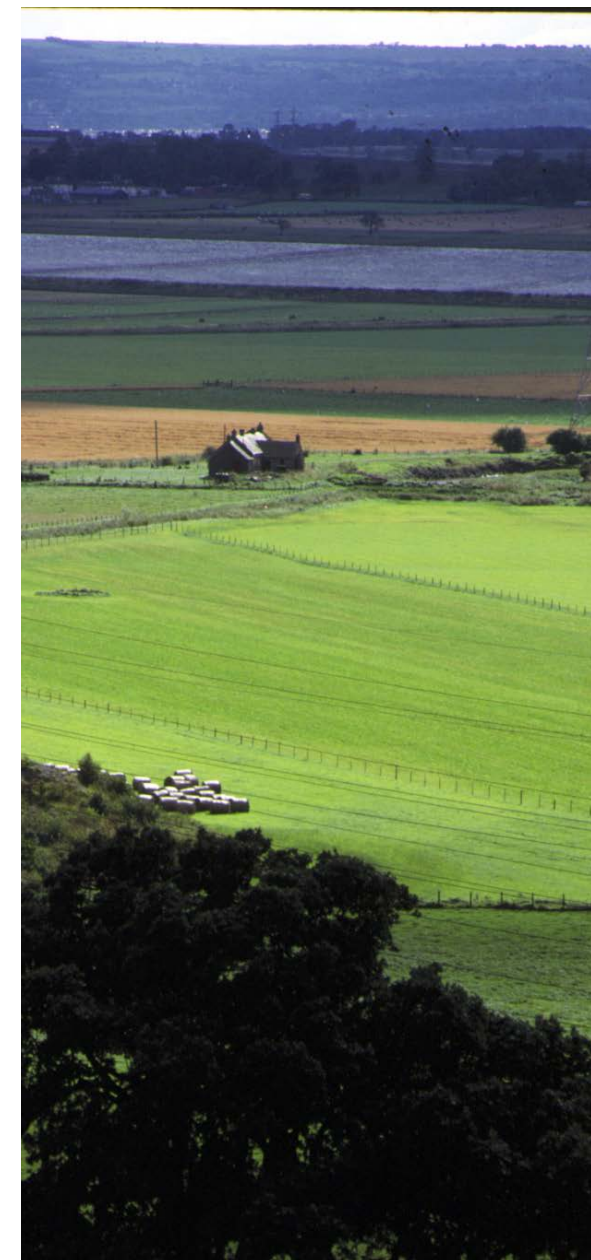
4. Clackmannanshire's Woodland and Forestry Resource

4.1 Woodland Cover and Type

4.1.1 Clackmannanshire's overall woodland and forest cover currently extends to some 2,314 hectares or 14% of total land area - see Map 1. This is smaller than the Scottish average of 17% woodland cover.

4.1.2 Conifer plantations of pine, mixed spruce and larch account for 38% of the total wooded area with the balance comprising a range of mixed broadleaved woodland. There are 146 ha (6%) of woodland present on ancient woodland sites of which approximately 40ha is native woodland. Ancient woodland sites are areas with continuous woodland cover since 1750.

4.1.3 Woodland in Clackmannanshire can be divided into two main categories:-

▶ Small areas of woodland on the edge of settlements whose main purpose is to provide an open space resource for the local community, such as Gean Park - Alloa, Back Wood -Clackmannan and Delph Wood -Tullibody;

▶ Larger areas of woodland/traditional woodland estates in more rural parts of Clackmannanshire such as the area around Gartmorn Dam - Sauchie and Harviestoun Estate - Tillicoultry.
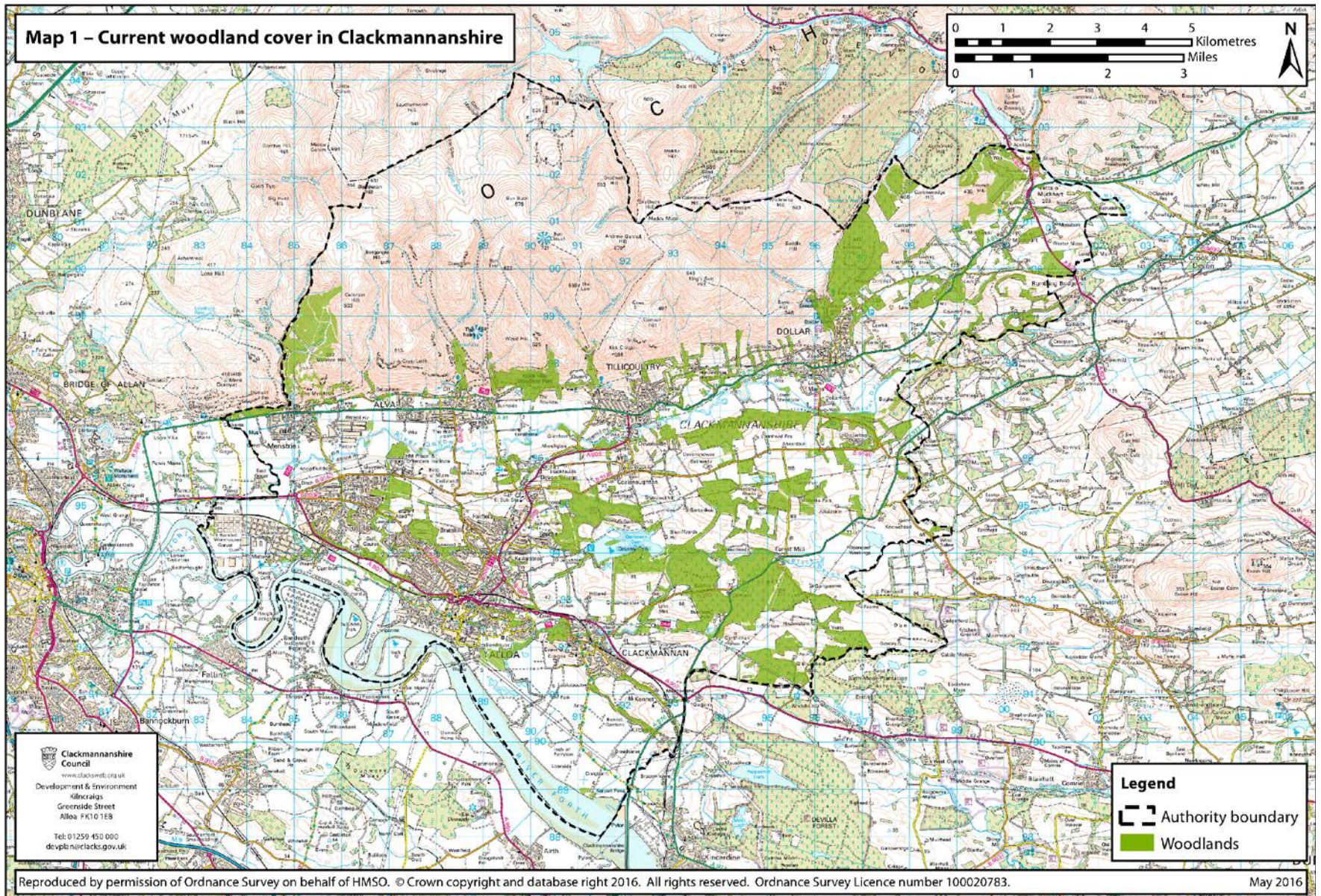
4.2 Woodland Ownership

4.2.1 In Clackmannanshire at 2016, privately owned woodlands predominate accounting for 2095ha (90%) - with the balance in public ownership 125ha (5.4%) and 94ha (4.1%) respectively - owned and managed by Forestry Commission Scotland and Clackmannanshire Council. As elsewhere in Scotland the pattern of private ownership is highly fragmented, though there are a number of large scale private commercial plantations in eastern Clackmannanshire.

4.2.2 An area of emerging interest is that of community woodlands. These are woodlands which, whilst not necessarily directly owned by the community, are used - and in some situations involve activity by - the local community in conjunction with the woodland owner, on a formal or informal basis. Examples include woodlands owned and managed by the Local Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland or charitable bodies such as the Woodland Trust. They can also be partly or wholly owned and/or managed by a local community woodland group, such as Menstrie Community Woodland. The woodland may be owned or leased by the group, or managed in partnership with another organisation such as FCS.

4.2.3 Community woodlands are extremely diverse, embracing all woodland types from ancient semi-natural woods to extensive conifer plantations, and ranging from less than a hectare to over a thousand hectares in size. Some of the larger groups now employ staff to manage and develop their woods, while others are managed entirely by volunteers. Whilst aims and objectives vary, with account taken of local needs and aspirations and the type and scale of the woodland managed, all groups are working towards sustainable, flourishing, creative, resilient and vibrant community woodlands that deliver an impressive range of public benefits, such as local recreation, nature conservation, economic development, renewable energy and social inclusion. For more information on community woodlands, see www.communitywoods.org.

Map 1: Current Woodland Cover in Clackmannanshire

Map 1 – Current woodland cover in Clackmannanshire

Legend
Authority boundary
Woodlands

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4.3   Management of Existing Woodlands & Forests

4.3.1 Woodlands and forests are an important element throughout Clackmannanshire and tend to be multi-functional, fulfilling a number of roles. In addition to physically defined areas such as the Green Belt, or Clackmannanshire Green Network, they can help define a sense of place, provide landscape settings for settlements and an attractive landscape framework for new developments.

4.3.2 Clackmannanshire contains impressive high quality **wildlife habitats and biodiversity**, with examples of major habitat types including; the Ochil Hills uplands, estuarine habitats along the River Forth and all that lies between including woodlands, freshwaters, wetlands and lowlands. The Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Action Plan identifies several woodland habitats, including Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, Upland Mixed Ashwood, Upland Oakwood, Wet Woodland and Wood Pasture, all UK priority habitats. It includes actions to encourage more scrub species to be planted as part of woodland creation and manage existing woodlands to have more scrub as well as improving upland oakwoods and lowland mixed deciduous woodland for biodiversity.

4.3.3 There are ten Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Clackmannanshire of which six include woodland as a notified feature of their designation. These are - Back Burn Wood and Meadows, Craigmad Wood, Damhead Wood, Devon Gorge, Dollar Glen and Linn Mill. There are also twenty one Local Nature Conservation Sites, which include woodlands such as Cowpark Wood, Pond Wood, Red Carr Wood, Silver Glen and Ochils Woodland Park.

4.3.4 These areas provide important green corridors for wildlife and biodiversity reservoirs. Despite this rich diversity, a combination of agricultural, industrial and urban pressures, including development works, has degraded and/or fragmented many habitats, including woodlands, within Clackmannanshire. Invasive species such as rhododendron and Japanese knotweed also diminish the value of our green corridors.

Good woodland and forestry management can help address these issues, address biodiversity decline and enhance the biodiversity network. Development works should be informed by a design led approach to incorporate woodland and trees into their proposals.

4.3.5 Another benefit of woodlands, forestry and green infrastructure in general is their importance in providing **ecosystem services** (see Glossary). These are services provided by nature which we often take for granted or are unaware of but on which life depends. Natural resources are finite but yet the clean air and water which we need for our health and quality of life depend on them. They can also help address climate change through carbon sequestration, and the provision of shade, shelter and urban cooling.

Development proposals can have a variety of adverse impacts on these features of the natural landscape and consequently our well being. The Council in considering proposals will take due account of the design and proposed management arrangements to ensure that woodland's role is not diminished as a consequence, which may include a requirement for offset planting. Developers should also take due notice of complimentary issues in Green Infrastructure SG6.

4.3.6 Woodland and forestry may play an important role in **natural flood risk management**. Restoration and enhancement of natural features and characteristics of a landscape may play a role in managing the sources and pathways of floodwaters. Woodland planting may provide an opportunity to manage downstream flood risk via land use change in upland areas, for example through a combination of reduced stocking densities, blocking of drains and creation of upland woodlands.

As climate change leads to more unpredictable weather patterns and increases in rainfall, often over short periods, the management of woodlands and forestry to contribute to water runoff management will become an important consideration. In particular, proposals for removal of areas of woodland require to be very carefully considered with appropriate replanting plans put in place in time to address any potential flood issues.

4.3.7 Although often overlooked, the **economy** also depends on the natural environment to source raw materials such as minerals, timber, food and water. Energy production depends on sourcing fuel or water from the natural environment.

4.3.8 The forest and timber industry spans the complete lifecycle of wood - the growing of tree seedlings; the planting, managing and harvesting of forests; manufacturing activities such as sawmilling, pulp and paper production, panel and board manufacturing and the development and production of higher value goods such as engineered wood products. Forest and processing co-products such as wood chips and pellets and specifically planted biomass crops can be used in renewable energy production. In Scotland 90% of renewable heat generation comes from wood energy.

4.3.9 The past decade has seen considerable growth in the economic impact of forest and timber industries, accounting for 1.8% of the total Scottish economy, and 38,500 direct and 'downstream' jobs.

4.3.10 Timber harvesting within Clackmannanshire is set to increase over the next 5 years due to the maturing of private sector commercial woodlands. Though timber prices, especially those for fuel and firewood, have recovered significantly from recent past lows, mainly due to increased demand for biomass, future prices cannot be predicted with confidence. At 2012 levels, however, developing markets offer real opportunities of income from low quality timber in previously unprofitable or otherwise undermanaged smaller woodlands.

4.3.11 In the 1990's schemes such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC), were established to provide assurance to business and consumers that forest products were sourced from well managed forests. An estimated 8% of world and 45% of UK forests are now certified. At the national level, forest certification is an important mechanism for delivering national policy objectives for achieving sustainable forest management. As at 2009 approximately 87% of the 8 million tonnes of softwood roundwood harvested in the UK was certified.

4.3.12 At a more local level, the uptake of certification can be used as an indicator of the environmental, social and economic credentials of the timber resource. However, the decision to apply for certification is entirely voluntary and the inspection/audit process is funded by the owner or manager. Whilst many larger scale traditional estates and commercial plantations are certified, the level of uptake of certification elsewhere within privately owned woodlands remains relatively low, reflecting the prevalence of fragmented, small scale woodlands within Clackmannanshire where costs of certification can be disproportionate to the benefits. As all Forestry Commission woodlands in Great Britain are certified against the UKWAS, by definition 5.8% of the woodland cover in Clackmannanshire is certified. The picture is less clear within the private sector.

With increasing requirements for timber products, particularly for renewable energy, there will be pressure for woodland and forestry proposals to meet this demand. This should be considered within the overall woodland and forestry landscape, ensuring that such woodlands are appropriately located and can be commercially run without adverse effects on the wider environment, including other types of woodland and forestry.

Certification of private commercial woodlands should also be encouraged to demonstrate the environmental, social and economic credentials of the timber resource.

4.3.13 The Proposed LDP identifies a strategic **Clackmannanshire Green Network** and acknowledges the multifunctional benefits of the network for Clackmannanshire's economy and environment and the vital role it has to play in delivering a high quality of life for the area's residents. It supports the LDP's vision, and includes the following elements, all of which can include important elements of woodland and forestry:

◗ Core Paths
◗ Woodland
◗ Green Belt
◗ Urban parks and open spaces including allotments and community growing spaces
◗ River corridors and their flood plains
◗ Special Landscape Areas
◗ Designated Sites (SSSIs & Inventory of Designed Landscapes and Gardens)

The Green Network map is contained in the LDP and can be viewed on the Clackmannanshire Council website.

4.3.14 This network builds on the Clackmannanshire Green Infrastructure Mapping (CGIM) Study (2010). The CGIM study set out a vision to guide investment in future greenspace, focusing on green infrastructure, community well-being and health. In this context, CGIM highlights the following issues of importance:

◗ Climate Change Adaptation
◗ Flood Risk Management
◗ Active Leisure
◗ Transport
◗ Food Production
◗ Health (Physical & Mental)
◗ Deprivation

4.3.15 The study highlights the strategic significance of Gartmorn Dam Country Park, Ochils Woodland Park and the Black Devon Wetlands. However, it highlights the fact that these assets along with lesser strategic assets have no existing framework to promote their enhancement. The Green Network recognises their multi-functional nature and seeks to address their value by improving their connectivity with other green infrastructure assets.

4.3.16 The Council has already undertaken significant works to enhance the network such as extending and enhancing the core path network, implementing a programme of environmental improvement works as part of the Ochils Landscape Partnership, enhancing access and undertaking woodland projects including Gartmorn Dam, Ochils Woodland Park, Gean Park and Arnsbrae in Alloa. These works have been undertaken in partnership with a variety of external bodies including the Forestry Commission Scotland, Central Scotland Green Network Trust and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Development proposals should include elements aimed at enhancing the Clackmannanshire Green Network where appropriate, either on or off-site, particularly with regard to connectivity and multi-functional use. It is important to bear in mind that the Green Network does not stop at settlement boundaries, but should permeate all areas.

4.3.17 As highlighted above as part of the Clackmannanshire Green Network, woodlands are an important element in the **Green Belt** and their management and extension can support the functions of the green belt, the delivery of the Clackmannanshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the wider health and climate change agendas. There may be potential in the green belt for small scale timber production for biomass and fire wood as well as soft and hard woods for construction use.

4.3.18 A 'Review of Green Belt in Clackmannanshire' (August 2012) highlighted the potential of green belt to deliver a number of related green infrastructure measures including increased woodland cover and the promotion of woodland management for longevity.

As part of the green network, the green belt can deliver a number of woodland and forestry developments which, as well as contributing to green belt objectives, can contribute to the other areas considered in this section of the SG. Development outwith the green belt may also be able to create linkages to the green belt, or contribute to improvements to the green belt where appropriate.

4.3.19 Management measures, including forest plans, should ensure that appropriate **access, leisure and recreation** activities can be accommodated without detriment to the resource and include replanting with native species to retain their biodiversity value. Access for leisure and recreation can enhance the general wellbeing of residents, local communities and visitors, for example by facilitating outdoor recreation in high quality landscapes, and providing local recreational opportunities to nearby towns and villages.

4.3.20 In recent years Clackmannanshire Council has accessed funding from Forestry Commission Scotland's 'Woodlands In and Around Towns' (WIAT) Challenge Fund to make improvements to woodlands around settlements. Many elements of Clackmannanshire's rich cultural heritage are found in and around woodlands, an added 'draw' that enhances the visitor experience and can also act as a focus for environmental interpretation and education.

5.   Opportunities For Woodland and Forest Expansion

5.1   Landscape Types

5.1.1   There are a range of landscape types in Clackmannanshire, from coastal mudflats to high moorlands of the Ochil Hills. Between these are the river valleys of the Devon and the Black Devon as well as the carse lands of the Forth. Woodlands are a significant feature in Clackmannanshire and can be found in the character areas detailed below apart from the high peatlands of the Ochils.

5.1.2   There are 5 distinct landscape character areas which are outlined on map 2.

1 - Ochil Hills - Prominent hill mass forming the northern boundary of the Forth Valley. The hills reach a peak in Ben Cleuch (721m), characterised by extremely steep southern scarp on the edge of the broad level plain of the River Devon. The tightly knit hills plateau is capped by smooth, rounded tops, with deep cuts of minor watercourses which merge and carve gorges into the steep southern face of the hills. Commercial woodlands and Woodland Trust amenity woods are present on the northern eastern part of this area, recently a large scale plantation has been planted in the west above Menstrie. Native woodlands are scattered along the lower slopes of the scarp.

2 - Middle Devon Valley - Area of undulating low hills, buffs and spurs which enclose and conceal the middle stretches of the River Devon which winds through a twisting narrow valley with native riparian woodland. The farmland above the River Devon is characterised by deciduous trees which stud boundary hedgerows with a scatter of shelter belts and blocks of small scale coniferous and mixed woodland blocks.
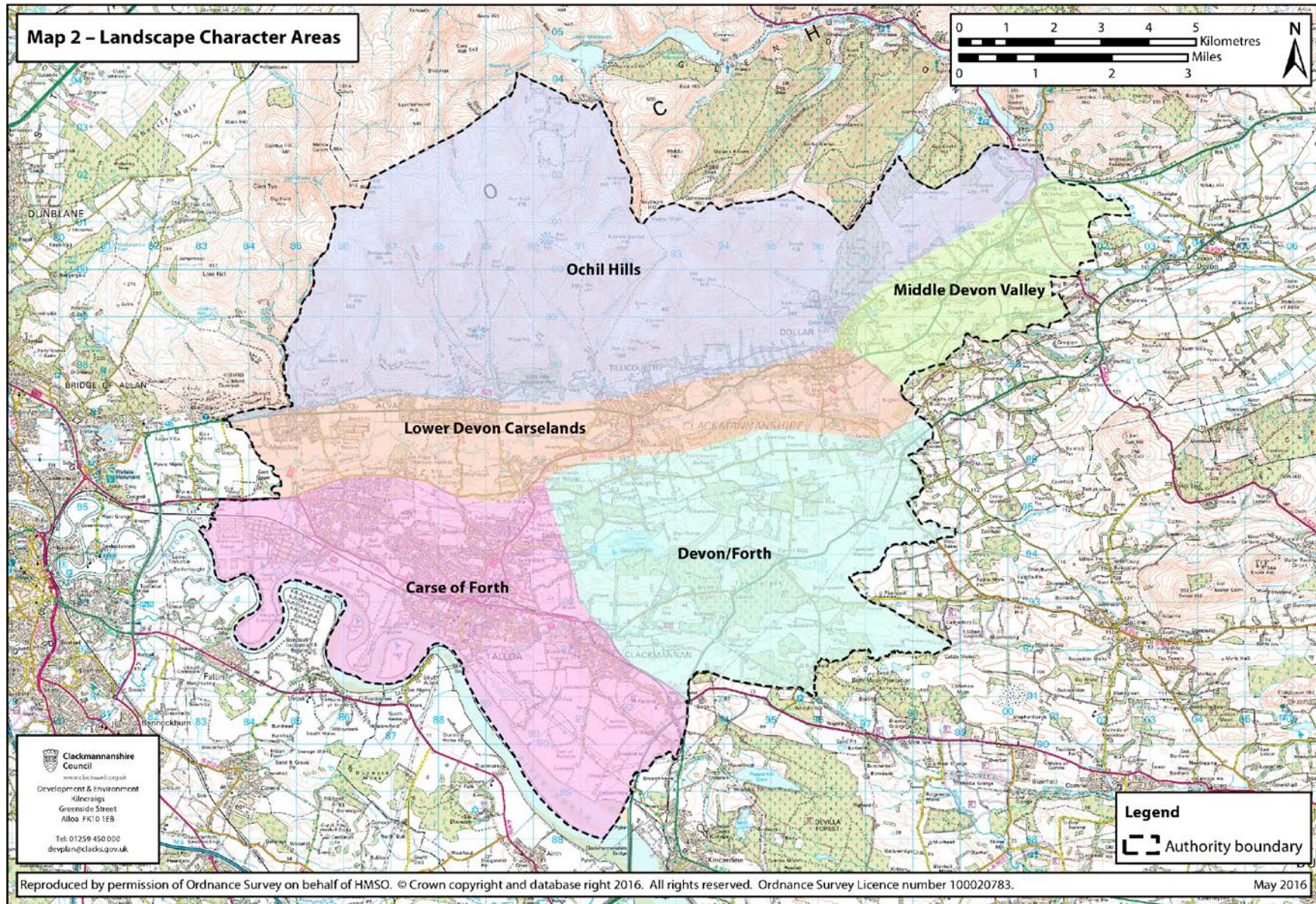
3 - Lower Devon Carseland - Open flood plain of the River Devon, which runs a twisting course through the landscape and intersected by a number of fast flowing tributaries from the Ochils scarp. There a few small isolated blocks of trees dispersed across the notably unwooded floodplain.

4 - Carse of Forth - The topography is striking flat with a small ridge to the north and is the most urbanised area of Clackmannanshire, containing the main settlements of Alloa, Sauchie and Tullibody. Woodland in the main is found along the low ridge with some riparian woodland along the lower reaches of the River Devon and River Black Devon. Woodland blocks are important landscape feature in defining edges to the urban areas.

5 - Devon/Forth - Broad area of elevated strongly rolling ground that separates the Devon Valley from the flat lands of the Carse of Forth. The area contains two significant water features, the River Black Devon meanders through a small narrow valley and Gartmorn Dam which is hidden in the higher undulations of this landscape. This area contains the most significant blocks of commercial woodland in Clackmannanshire.

5.1.3   These are derived from Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs), a standard system for identifying, describing and mapping landscape variation. LCAs provide baseline information to guide landscape changes, which can then be used in development plans, decisions of development proposals, land management plans, forest and woodland strategies and agrienvironmental schemes. General information on LCAs, together with more detailed landscape assessment reports guidance are held by Scottish Natural Heritage and can be viewed via the link - http://www.snh.gov.uk/protectingscotlands-nature/looking-afterlandscapes/lca/

Map 2 : Clackmannanshire's Landscape Character Areas

Map 2 – Landscape Character Areas

Ochil Hills

Middle Devon Valley

Lower Devon Carselands

Devon/Forth

Carse of Forth

Legend

Authority boundary

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5.1.4 The 5 landscape character types found within Clackmannanshire have been used in the SCFWS to identify links between each landscape character and woodland potential, along with the seven key themes of the SFS. These links are highlighted in Table 1 and help show where to best target appropriate woodland expansion across Clackmannanshire.

Table 1: Landscape Character Areas and Woodland Potential

Landscape Character Area	Woodland Potential	Main Match with SFS Themes						
		Climate Change	Timber✳	Business Development	Community Development	Access & Health	Environmental Quality	Biodiversity
Ochil Hills	Mostly unsuitable -limited on lower slopes in the east, and generally below the 300m contour	✔					✔	✔
Middle Devon Valley	Yes (with some sensitivities)	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔
Lower Devon Carseland	Yes (with some sensitivities)	✔				✔	✔	✔
Carse of Forth	Yes (with some sensitivities)	✔				✔	✔	✔
Devon Forth	Yes	✔	✔					✔

✳ All woodland in the Landscape Character Areas has the potential for timber production to some extent.

5.2 Sensitive, potential and preferred locations

5.2.1 In order to achieve this, the Strategy has classified land under three broad categories for woodland expansion – "sensitive", "potential" and "preferred". This follows recommendations in The Right Tree in the Right Place: Planning for Forestry and Woodlands (RTRP) which sets out the broad criteria Forestry and Woodland Strategies should follow. It states that "...woodland strategies should divide land into categories, including the suitability of different locations for new woodland planting." It will be for planning authorities to determine the detailed list of local sensitivities that will inform the categorisation of land, but it is expected this will include priority species and habitats, landscape, the cultural and historical environment, and interactions with the water environment and soils.

5.2.2 In seeking to encourage such woodland expansion in Clackmannanshire however, the SCFWS recognises that both woodland expansion and associated forest management operations have the capacity to generate both positive and negative environmental impacts. Furthermore, it should be noted that the classification of "preferred" or "potential" does not automatically mean that any proposal would proceed. Where woodland creation/expansion is recommended, this would need to follow current regulatory, approval, assessment and monitoring processes and industry recognised good practice to ensure compliance with the UK Forestry Standard and associated Guidelines (including the consideration of local sensitivities) and be approved by the relevant regulatory bodies. Environmental Impact Assessment maybe required for potential woodland schemes depending on their scale and relationship to environmental sensitive sites and accordingly prior to developing a proposal woodland managers should contact the local FCS conservancy office to assess any requirement for EIA.

5.2.3 The SCFWS also recognises that the level of woodland creation in Clackmannanshire should be subject to review every five to ten years, as too should the overall aims and objectives of the Scottish Forestry Strategy. In addition, any individual woodland creation proposal, regardless of its size, should be assessed on its ability to deliver the strategic priorities highlighted in the Scottish Forestry Strategy and identified specifically in the Stirling & Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy.

5.2.4 The RTRP Categories:

Preferred - land which offers the greatest scope to accommodate future expansion of a range of woodland types, and hence 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. Future woodland expansion is therefore likely to be focused on preferred areas.

Potential - land 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.

Sensitive - land where the nature or combination of sensitivities restricts the scope to accommodate woodland expansion or removal. Limited expansion is only likely to be possible where proposals are of a scale and character which can be accommodated without significant negative impacts, and/or where it would positively enhance features of interest. In some areas cumulative impact may be a relevant consideration.

Map 3 opposite identifies the land covered by each of the above RTRP recommended categories with the following additional land categories:

Table 2: Woodland Sensitivities

Woodland Type	Definition
Preferred	No significant constraints
Potential	Land capability for Agriculture Class 2-3-2 Special Landscape Areas Sensitive historic/archaeological landscapes
Sensitive	Natura 2000 sites and Ramsar Wetlands National and Local Nature Reserves SSSIs Scheduled Monuments Conservation areas Inventory listed Gardens & Designed Landscapes
Unsuitable	Land Capability for Forestry - Unsuitable Water Bodies Operational and consented wind farm footprints
Built up	Urban Areas - Parkland and amenity trees

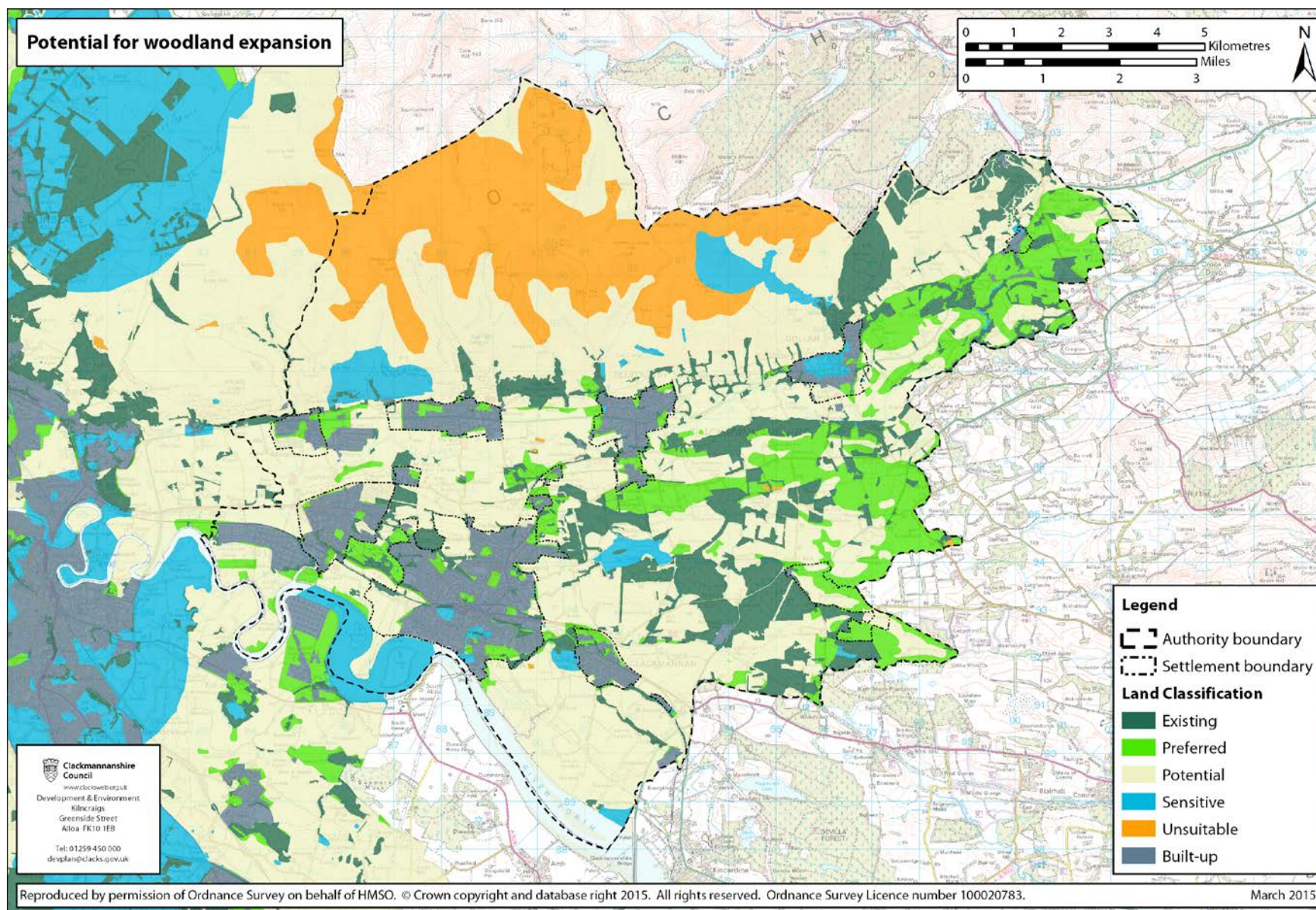**Existing woodland** (the current woodland resource);

Unsuitable (areas assessed as being physically unsuitable for the growth or management of trees, based on the former Macaulay Institute's Land Capability Maps for Forestry and wind farm footprints);

Built-up areas

Please note that this mapping is necessarily **indicative**.

Map 3: Potential for Woodland Expansion

5.2.5 Site specific constraints and opportunities exist within each land classification, but cannot be effectively recorded or depicted at a scale appropriate for the FWS. Detailed assessment of individual woodland creation proposals, as required by forestry legislation and regulations, remains the primary means of environmental safeguarding. The maps in this document are therefore intended only to guide readers towards suitable sites and to highlight areas where particularly objectives apply.

5.2.6 As a regional strategy, the SCFWS focuses on regionally significant sensitivities and environmental effects. Information on sensitivities for woodland expansion was therefore compiled using GIS datasets depicting the most important environmental features. In line with RTRP, each of the identified sensitivities was then assigned to the 'sensitive' or 'potential' category, depending on the likely level of constraint their presence would impose on *any type* of future woodland expansion.
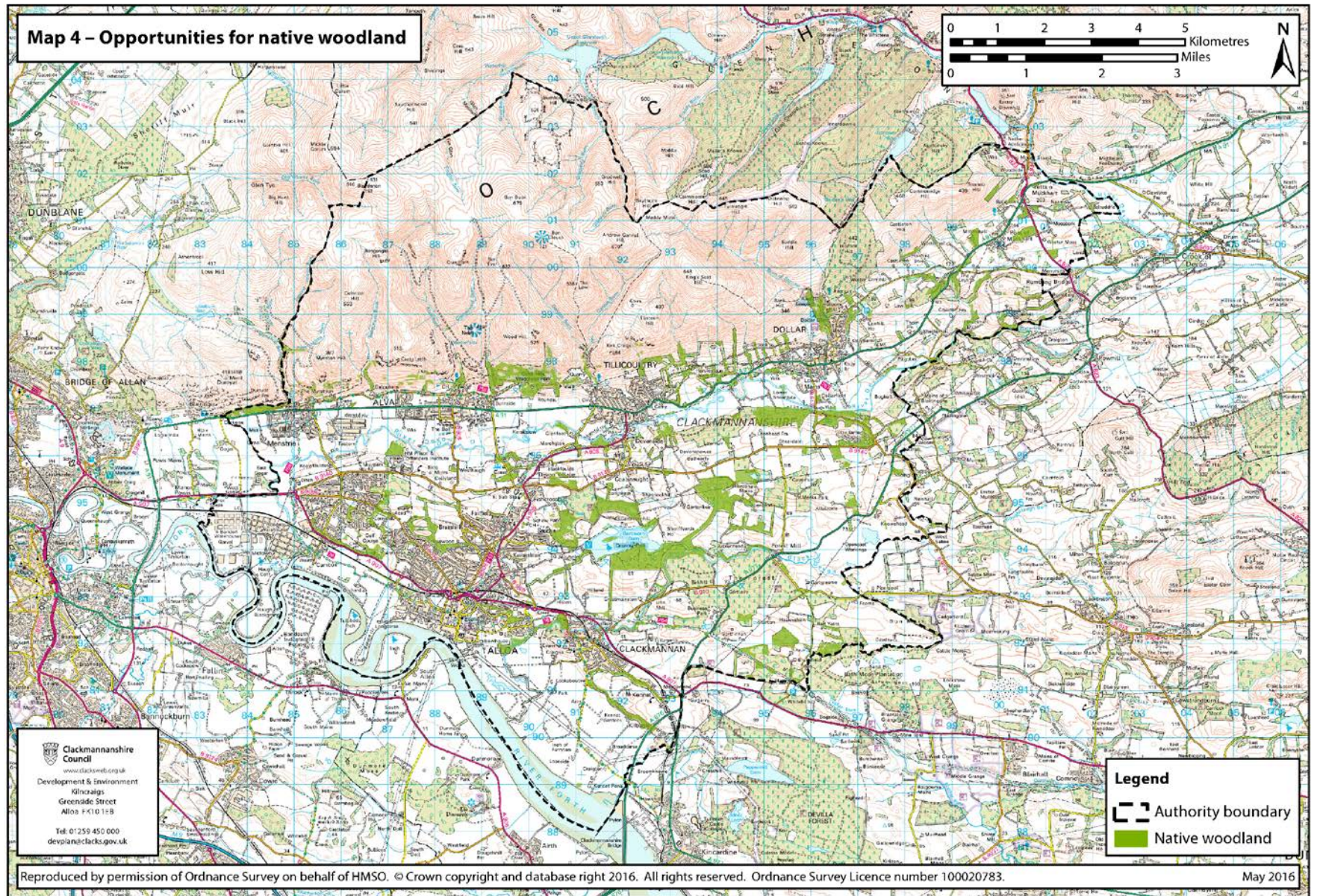

Table 3: 'Right Tree in the Right Place' Woodland Types

Woodland Type	Definition
Native Woodlands 	**Native woodlands contributing to integrated habitat networks** Woods composed of native species, matched to local site conditions, making use of natural colonisation where evident. They are managed mostly using low intensity or minimum intervention systems with an emphasis on developing the structural and species diversity appropriate to the woodland type. As well as providing biodiversity benefits, native woods are usually well fitted for water management and soil conservation, recreation and amenity, stock shelter, fishery enhancement and sporting uses. Some are also capable of producing high quality timber or woodfuel at low intensity.
Mixed Woodlands 	**Mixed woodlands such as farm and riparian woodlands** Mixed species woodlands often including native broadleaves, traditional broadleaves (such as beech and sycamore) and conifers designed to provide year-round shelter, landscape enhancement, screening or enclosure as well as the potential to provide products for local use. In a traditional estate setting they are often known as 'policy woods'.
Softwood Forests 	**Forests to provide a source of softwood timber** Woods designed to provide a sufficient quantity and consistency of predominantly softwood timber for economically viable timber production. Careful design uses opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity while also providing a backdrop for outdoor access and recreation. Modern softwood forests have substantial areas of open space, areas of native species and a growing emphasis on the use of mixed species and different silvicultural systems (where feasible) to increase diversity and resilience in the face of climate change.
Energy Forests 	**All woodland types capable of producing fuelwood** Woodlands where fuel wood production is the principle objective e.g. short rotation coppice using willow and short rotation forestry or coppicing systems; particularly on lower quality ground. This type of planting can also be used in flood risk areas or areas of poor quality land, acting to stabilise soils and ameliorate pollution.

(Forestry Commission Scotland 2010)

Map 4: Opportunities for Native Woodlands

Map 4 – Opportunities for native woodland

Legend

⬛ Authority boundary

🟩 Native woodland

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5.3   Woodland Types

5.3.1   As well as setting out guidance on planning for forestry and woodland, RTRP also encourages planning authorities to consider what **types** of woodland they may wish to include within their Strategies; particularly in relation to the four main types listed and defined in Table 4 opposite.

5.3.2   Native woodland and mixed woodland with a significant productive timber component are considered to be the two most appropriates types of woodland expansion for Clackmannanshire and that descriptions of softwood and energy forests are included for general reference only.

5.3.3   In order to determine areas for potential woodland expansion, for these two woodland types – native woodland and mixed woodland – two maps have been developed using the indicative potential dataset as their basis, to ensure that key sensitivities were respected in each instance (see Maps 4 and 5).
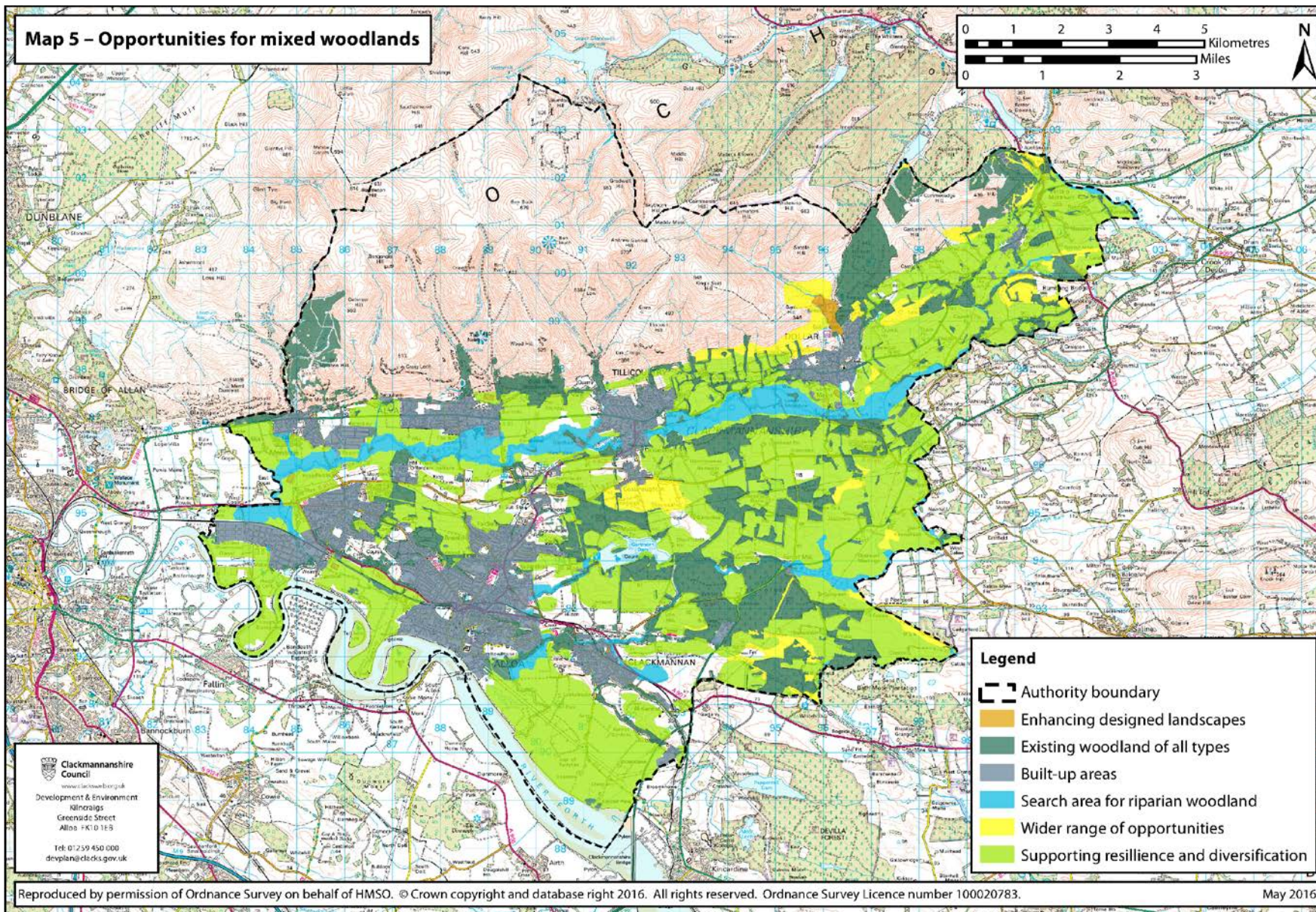
Table 4: Native Woodland Opportunities

Landscape Character Area	Native woodland Potential	Main Match with SFS Themes						
		Climate Change	Timber✳	Business Development	Community Development	Access & Health	Environmental Quality	Biodiversity
Ochil Hills	Mostly unsuitable -limited on lower slopes in the east, and generally below the 300m contour	✔					✔	✔
Middle Devon Valley	Yes (with some sensitivities)	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔
Lower Devon Carseland	Yes (with some sensitivities)	✔				✔	✔	✔
Carse of Forth	Yes (with some sensitivities)	✔				✔	✔	✔
Devon Forth	Yes	✔	✔					✔

✳ All woodland in the Landscape Character Areas has the potential for timber production to some extent.

Map 5: Opportunities for Mixed Woodlands

Table 5: Mixed woodland Opportunities

Landscape Character Area	Mixed woodland Potential	Main Match with SFS Themes						
		Climate Change	Timber✳	Business Development	Community Development	Access & Health	Environmental Quality	Biodiversity
Ochil Hills	Mainly unsuitable - Limited potential in the east , and generally below the 300m contour	✔					✔	✔
Middle Devon Valley	Yes (with sensitivities)	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔
Lower Devon Carseland	Yes (with sensitivities)	✔				✔	✔	✔
Carse of Forth	Yes (with sensitivities)	✔				✔	✔	✔
Devon Forth	Yes	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔

✳ All woodland in the Landscape Character Areas has the potential for timber production to some extent.

5.3.4 Additional sources of data were used to draw out opportunities and different priorities; these including:

Integrated Habitat Network datasets - highlighting opportunities for new native woodland (see Habitat Networks and the Central Scotland Green Network http://www.snh.gov.uk/land-and-sea/managing-the-land/spatial-ecology/habitat-networks-and-csgn/)

Land Capability for Agriculture - highlighting better quality agricultural land where the priority would be supporting existing agriculture, and more marginal areas where woodland could add value for farmers and the environment alike. (see James Hutton Institute http://www.macaulay.ac.uk/explorescotland/lca.html)

Land Capability for Forestry - highlighting land which is most suitable for forestry, taking account of soils, climate and relief (see Scotland's Soils http://www.soils-scotland.gov.uk/data/soil-lcf)

Indicative Flood Risk Map - highlighting the 'area of search' for new flood plain and riparian woodland to contribute to climate change adaptation. (see SEPA Flood Maps http://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/flood_maps.aspx)

Further Information Sources

UK Forestry Standard

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

Clackmannanshire Local Development Plan

Stirling and Clackmannanshire Forestry and Woodland Strategy (SCFWS)

The Scottish Government's Policy on Control of Woodland Removal (FCS 2009)

Forestry Commission Scotland's Native Woodland Survey of Scotland

Scottish Government The Right Tree in the Right Place

Scottish Government's Scottish Forestry Strategy (SFS) (2006)

The Scottish Government's Rationale for Woodland Expansion (FCS 2009)

Climate Change Action Plan 2009-11 (FCS 2009)

SEPA's **Forestry webpage**

Glossary

Ecosystem Services - the benefits that people obtain from the natural environment through ecosystem processes. They include services such as flood and coastal protection, climate regulation, food and timber production, waste breakdown and detoxification, air quality, water for drinking, energy and industrial processes, soils and landscape and biodiversity.

Forestry - the practice of all aspects of tree management, including forest and woodland management, arboriculture, urban forestry and environmental forestry and research, education and training in these fields.

Forest - usually applied to a large area of woodland of varied ages and tree species.

Geological Conservation Review sites (GCR) - geological sites of national and international importance which have been indentified by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. The sites show all the key scientific elements of the Earth heritage of Britain. These sites display sediments, rocks, fossils, and features of the landscape that make a special contribution to our understanding and appreciation of Earth science and the geological history of Britain, which stretches back hundreds of millions of years.

Green Network - connected areas of green infrastructure and open space that together form an integrated and multi-functional network.

Special Protection Area (SPA) - a site designated under the Birds Directive. These sites, together with Special Areas of Conservation (or SACs), are called Natura sites and they are internationally important for threatened habitats and species. Natural sites form a unique network of protected areas which stretches across Europe SPAs are selected for a number of rare, threatened or vulnerable bird species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive, and also for regularly occurring migratory species.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - areas of land and water that Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) considers to best represent our natural heritage - its diversity of plants, animals and habitats, rocks and landforms, or a combinations of such natural features. They are the essential building blocks of Scotland's protected areas for nature conservation. Many are also designated as Natura sites. SNH designates SSSIs under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. SSSIs are protected by law It is an offence for any person to intentionally or recklessly damage the protected natural features of an SSSI.

Wood or woodland – more often describes a smaller area of trees.

Appendices

Appendix 1   Full text of relevant Local Development Plan Policies

Policy EA4 - Landscape Quality

This policy sets a framework for the protection and enhancement of the quality and distinctive character of Clackmannanshire's landscape and to protect the Special Landscape Areas.

All development proposals should be informed by, and be sympathetic to, the distinctive landscape character of Clackmannanshire as described in the Landscape Character Assessment for Clackmannanshire. Development should be designed and located in such a way that the landscape quality and visual characteristics of the surrounding area and the overall integrity of the local landscape character is maintained and, wherever possible, enhanced. Particular attention should be given to the distinctive local landscape character, including features such as watercourses, trees, traditional construction materials, woodland, geological features, and key views to and from the site...

Environmental Implications

This policy is likely to have significant beneficial impacts for protection and enhancement of the distinctive character of the landscape, including, but not limited to, areas designated for their landscape importance.

Policy EA6 - Woodlands and Forestry

This policy aims to protect and expand Clackmannanshire's woodland resources. Proposals for new woodland planting will be supported where they are consistent with the Council's Forestry and Woodland Strategy, and on Woodlands and Forestry SG, and the principles of the Central Scotland Green Network. Proposals for the removal of woodland will only be supported where they are consistent with the Council's Forestry and Woodlands Strategy, and the Forestry Commission Scotland's Control of Woodland Removal policy.

See also: SC5, EA1, EA4, EA7

Environmental Implications

This policy is likely to have significant positive impacts on promotion and connectivity of the Central Scotland Green Network; it is likely to contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and is likely to be beneficial for biodiversity through an increase in woodland habitat and improved habitat connectivity. There is the potential for further biodiversity benefits: opportunities for habitat creation and protection, particularly for protected species, should be considered at the planning application stage.

Appendices (continued)

Policy EA7 - Hedgerows, Trees and Tree Preservation Orders

This policy aims to retain trees, woodland and hedgerows that make a positive contribution to local amenity. Where necessary, the Council will protect endangered trees and woodlands through the designation of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Development will not be supported within TPO areas unless the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Council that the proposals will not adversely affect the longevity, stability or appearance of the trees.

Where development is permitted which will involve the loss of existing woodland, trees or hedgerows the Council will require the development proposals to include appropriate replacement planting in terms of number, size and species. The Council will favour the use of native species or species of known biodiversity value.

All proposals which involve new or existing woodland and trees will be expected to be accompanied by a management plan, including provisions for future management.

See also: EA1, EA2, EA4, EA6

Environmental Implications

This policy is likely to have positive impacts on biodiversity, including priority species and habitats, and adaptation to climate change. It is likely to contribute to sustainable flood management, and to the Central Scotland Green Network, as well as to community cohesion and the distinctive character of the landscape.

Policy EA8 - Green Belt

This policy explains restrictions on development within areas designated as Green Belt, the exceptions to these restrictions and requirements where development is permitted within the Green Belt.

New development will not normally be permitted within designated Green Belt areas except where it meets any of the following criteria:

◗ essential development directly related to woodlands and forestry;...

See also: SC14, SC22

Environmental Implications

This policy is likely to protect and enhance the landscape.