



Tay Forest National Park Public Engagement

Overview

The Scottish Government has announced its intention to create at least one new national park by the end of 2026.

Perth and Kinross Council is preparing a bid for a new national park in northern Perthshire, called the Tay Forest National Park. The proposed national park takes in Aberfeldy, Pitlochry, Dunkeld, Birnam, Crieff, Comrie and smaller settlements across the area. National Park status would provide benefits directly in this area, and indirectly for all of Perth and Kinross.

The opportunity to submit a bid to create a new national park is a rare opportunity to seek international recognition for Highland Perthshire's outstanding natural beauty and rich cultural and landscape diversity.

This engagement period runs for eight weeks, from 6th October 2023, closing on 1st December 2023.

The bidding process has several stages, which can be summarised as:

- . Nominations and Appraisal 2023-24
- . Reporter Investigation 2024-25
- . Designation 2025-26

The bid assessment criteria cover the following:

- . Outstanding national importance
- . Size, character and coherence
- . Special needs of the area
- . Visitor management and experience
- . Added value
- . Local support
- . Strategic contribution

Scottish Ministers have also indicated their wish to see National Parks as special places for wildlife and biodiversity that will actively support nature recovery and the transformational change needed in approaches to land-use, in order to achieve a just transition to net zero in Scotland.



Attributes

We believe that the stunning natural beauty and heritage of Highland Perthshire lends itself as the ideal location to be a new national park.

With over 200,000 acres of woodland, which throughout the year provides a stunning show of colour as we move through the seasons; between the spring bluebells and autumn colours - Big Tree Country is a truly stunning area.

We believe that the Tay Forest National Park will be an area where nature will be allowed to thrive and the natural biodiversity of the region will go from strength to strength. Combined with an increased and dedicated focus on issues such improvements to visitor management strategies and policies; we can create a national park to be enjoyed by all.

Why Bid for a National Park?

- Additional abilities to carry out visitor management and a joined-up strategy for sustainable tourism in the park and its approach routes.
- A national park planning authority, with a role to be defined but currently envisaged as having 'call-in' powers similar to those of Cairngorms National Park Authority.
- Additional funding from Scottish Government to provide the core resource for a national park authority, with the potential to lever in match funding from elsewhere.
- Additional capacity to help achieve the Council's climate change targets, for example through nature restoration and sustainable travel.

Your Views Matter

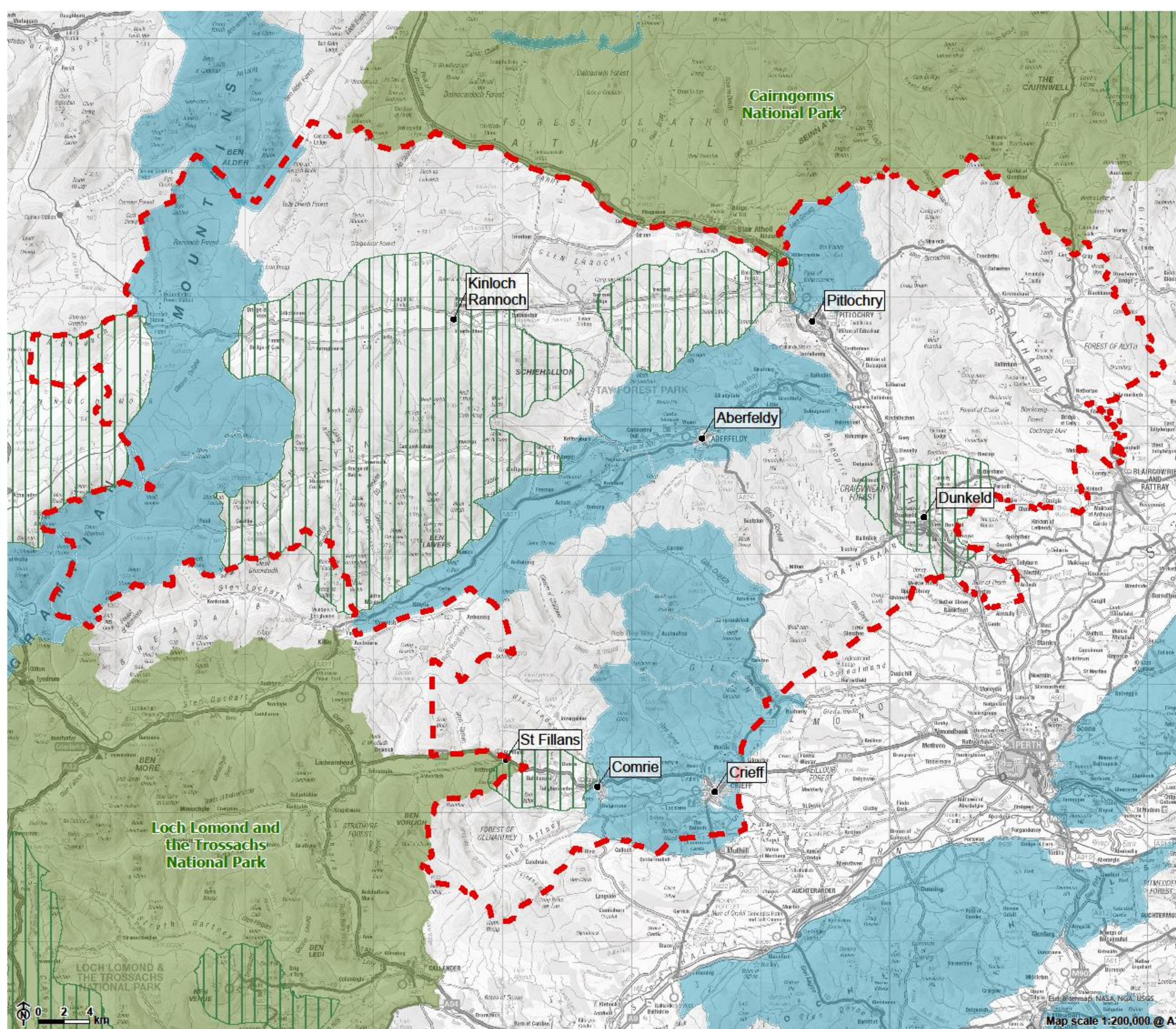
You can give us your views by answering our short on-line survey by scanning the QR code.



You can save your response at any time and return to complete before the closing date on **December 1st 2023.**

Thanks for Getting Involved

The display material, and staff, will explain the qualities of the area, and the potential benefits of a National Park, but we need your help to form our bid.



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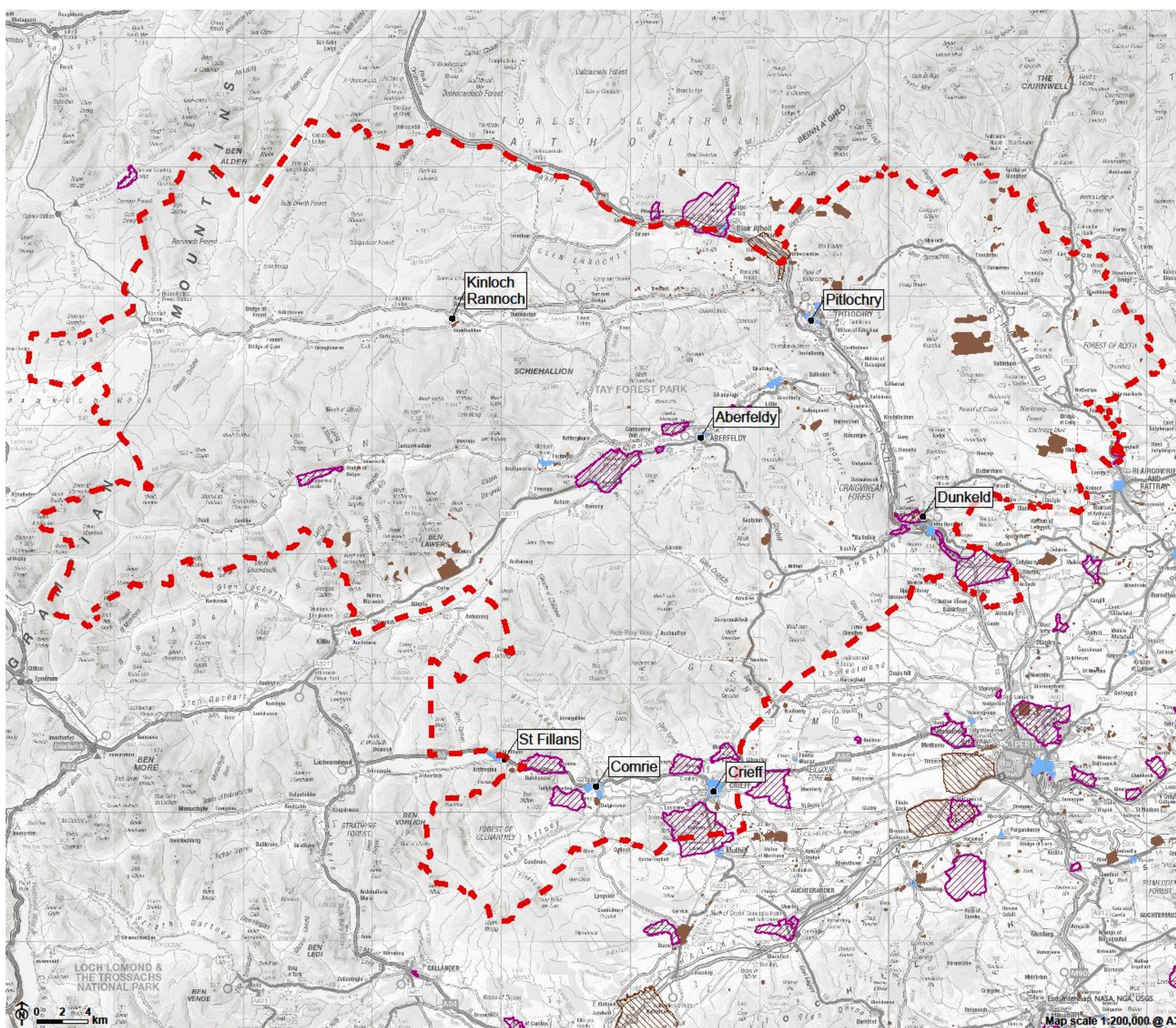


Figure 1: Designated landscapes

- Site boundary
- Key settlement
- ▨ National Scenic Area
- National Park
- Local Landscape Area



Figure 1 shows the proposed boundary of the National Park as well as the nearby designated landscapes of National Scenic Areas and Local Landscape Areas. National Scenic Areas are areas considered to be “of outstanding scenic value in a national context”, while Local Landscape Areas are areas where the scenery is highly valued locally. As seen in the figure, the Cairngorms National Park borders the proposed National Park boundary to the north, while Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park borders the proposed boundary to the southwest. Within the proposed boundary there are several National Scenic Areas and Local Landscape areas, covering a large area of the overall proposed National Park and demonstrating that there is already a good spread of recognised areas of importance to the Scottish landscape near and within the proposed National Park boundary.



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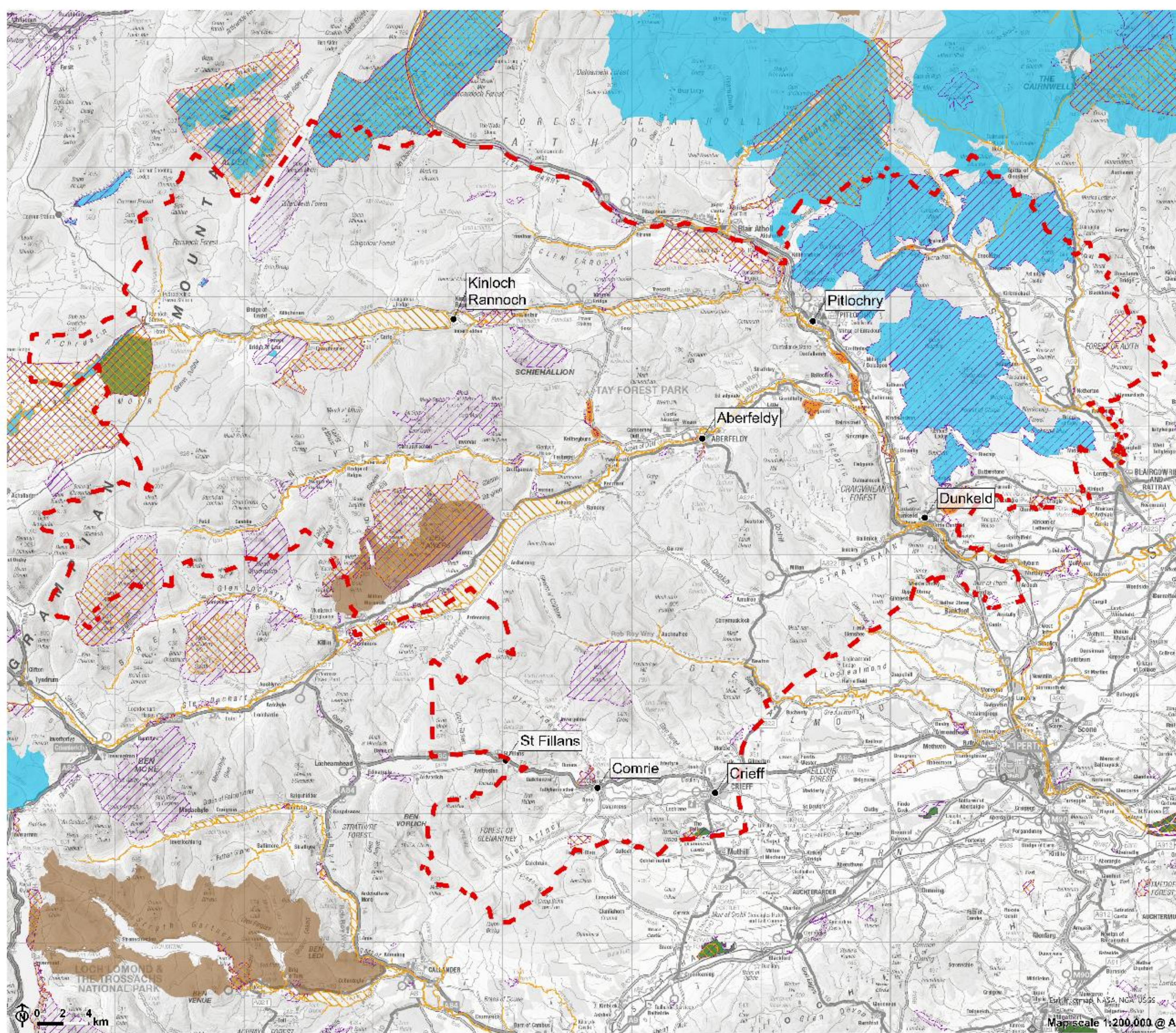
Figure 2: Designated historic sites

- Site boundary
- Key settlement
- ▨ Gardens and Designed Landscapes
- ▨ Battlefield
- ▨ Scheduled monument
- Conservation area



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Figure 2 shows the proposed boundary of the National Park as well as designated historic assets within the boundary, including Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Battlefields, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas. Gardens and Designed Landscapes are defined as grounds consciously laid out for artistic effect, Scheduled Monuments are protected nationally important historic monuments and sites, and Conservation Areas have special architectural or historic interest and are designated as such to preserve or enhance their character or appearance. As seen in the figure, there are several designated historic sites across the proposed National Park area. The Gardens and Designed Landscapes are generally associated with Castles in the area and Conservation Areas cover parts of the settlements of Pitlochry, Strathtay, Dunkeld, Birnam, Aberfeldy, Kenmore, Fortingall, Comrie and Crieff. Overall, the figure shows that the proposed National Park area has a large and varied spread of designated historic assets throughout, though designated historic assets are less common in the more rural areas to the northwest.



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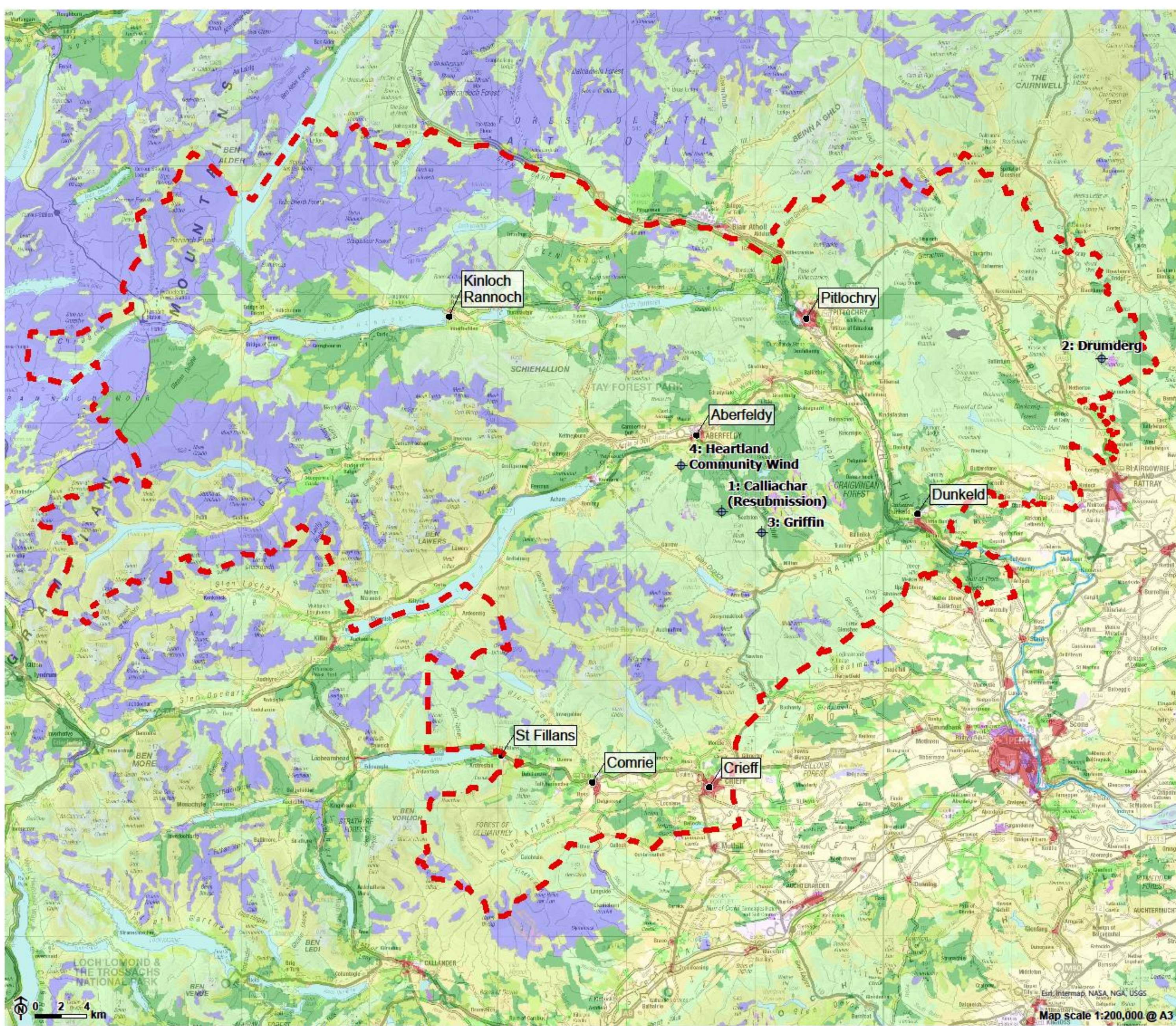
Figure 3: Nature designations

- Site boundary
- Key settlement
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Special Area of Conservation
- National Nature Reserve
- Special Protection Area
- RAMSAR site
- Scottish Wildlife Trust Reserve



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Figure 3 shows the proposed boundary of the National Park as well as the nearby designated areas for nature including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), RAMSAR sites and National Nature Reserves (NNRs). Sites of Special Scientific Interest are protected areas that NatureScot considers to best represent the country's natural heritage, Special Areas of Conservation protect specific special habitats and/or species, Special Protection Areas are selected to protect one or more rare, threatened or vulnerable bird species or certain regularly occurring migratory bird species, RAMSAR sites aim to protect certain wetlands, National Nature Reserves are areas of land set aside for nature considered to be Scotland's best wildlife sites, to promote their conservation and enjoyment and Scottish Wildlife Trust Reserves are areas managed by the Scottish Wildlife Trust for the protection of plants and animals as well as for educating and informing the public about them. As seen in the figure, there are a large number of SSSIs and SACs within and around the proposed National Park boundary and often these areas carry both designations. Of note is the River Tay SAC which covers the whole of the river Tay and several of its tributaries and is designated for the protection of Atlantic Salmon as well as several species of Lamprey and Otters. In addition, there are several SPAs within and near the proposed National Park boundary, particularly in the northeast. There is also one NNR within the boundary at Ben Lawers and one RAMSAR site at Rannoch Moor. Overall, this figure demonstrates the importance of the area's biodiversity through the range and spread of designated areas.



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Figure 4: Landcover

- Site boundary
- Key settlement
- Wind farm

Corine land cover 2018

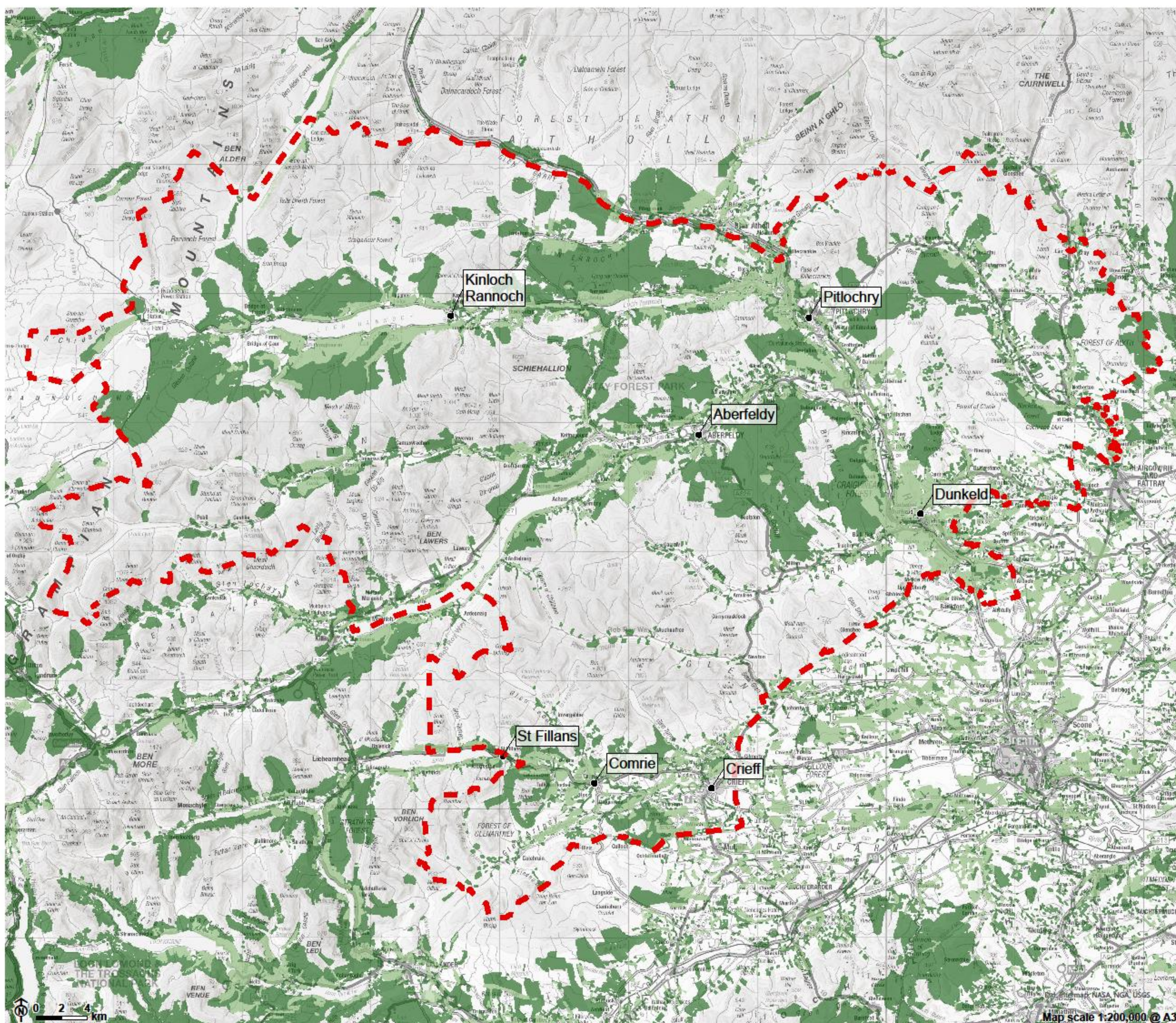
- 111: Continuous urban fabric
- 112: Discontinuous urban fabric
- 121: Industrial or commercial units
- 122: Road and rail networks and associated land
- 124: Airports
- 131: Mineral extraction sites
- 133: Construction sites
- 141: Green urban areas
- 142: Sport and leisure facilities
- 211: Non-irrigated arable land
- 222: Fruit trees and berry plantations
- 231: Pastures
- 242: Complex cultivation patterns
- 243: Land principally occupied by agriculture, with significant areas of natural vegetation
- 311: Broad-leaved forest
- 312: Coniferous forest
- 313: Mixed forest
- 321: Natural grasslands
- 322: Moors and heathland
- 324: Transitional woodland-shrub
- 332: Bare rocks
- 333: Sparsely vegetated areas
- 334: Burnt areas
- 411: Inland marshes
- 412: Peat bogs
- 421: Salt marshes
- 423: Intertidal flats
- 511: Water courses
- 512: Water bodies
- 522: Estuaries

Map scale 1:200,000 @ A3



Land cover data sourced from the European Union's Copernicus Land Monitoring Service information. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database rights (2023) OS AC0000805756. Use of this data is subject to terms and conditions.

Figure 4 shows the proposed boundary of the National Park as well as types of landcover within and around the area. Land cover is what covers the surface of the earth and land use describes how the land is used. Non-irrigated arable land is the most common land cover type in the proposed area, covering 53% of the area, followed by moors and heathland (31%), woodland, including ancient woodland (29%), natural grassland (17%) and peat bogs (15%). The figure shows that the area is largely rural landcover types, many of which are providing important habitats, with only a very small proportion an urban or built-up area.



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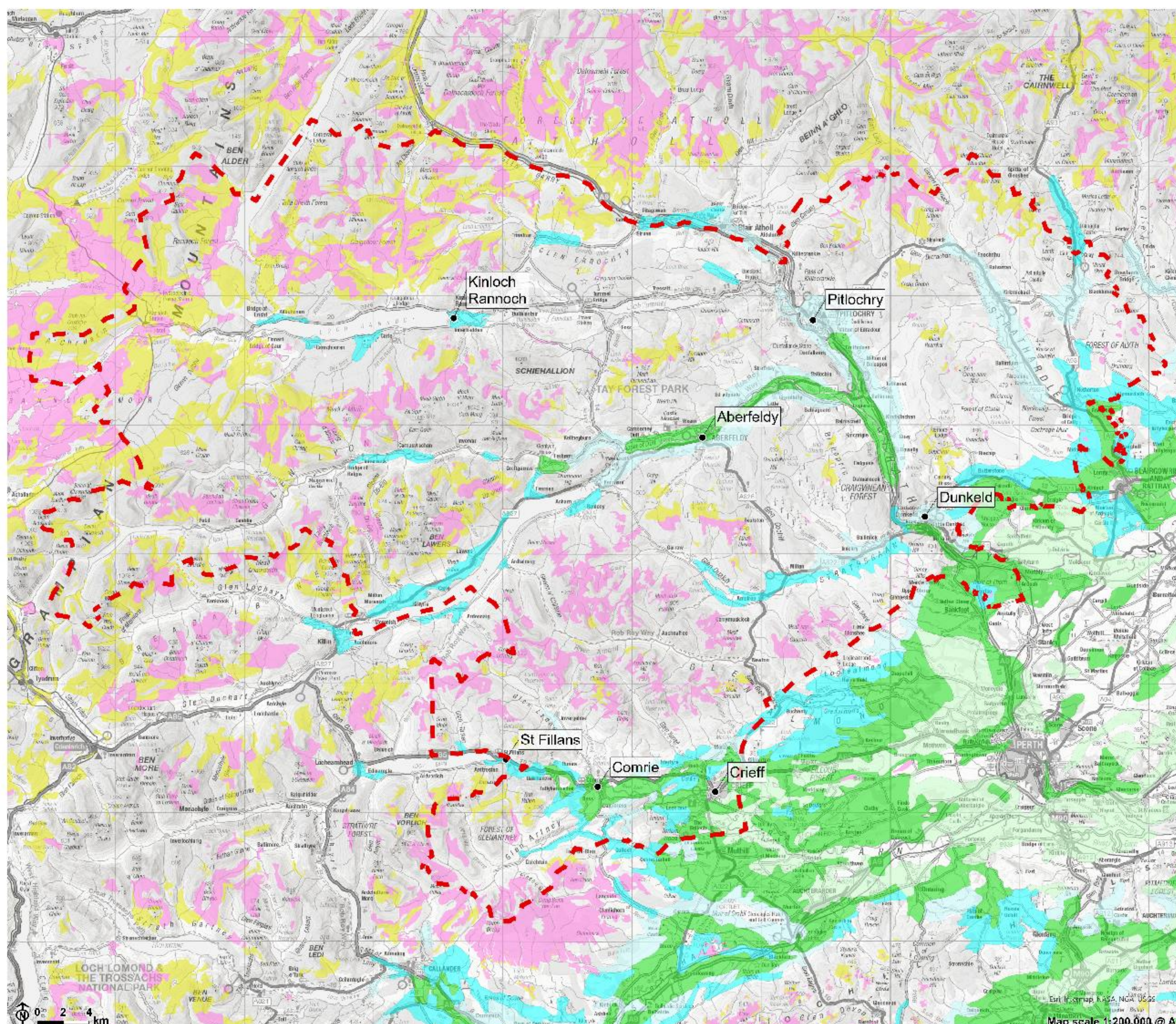
Figure 5: Woodland

- Site boundary
- Key settlement
- Ancient Woodland Inventory
- National Forest Inventory



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Figure 5 shows the proposed boundary of the National Park as well as nearby woodland, including ancient woodland. The areas in dark green is woodland identified by the National Forest Inventory, and cover all types of woodland in the proposed National Park boundary. The areas in light green are woodlands identified to be ancient, defined as land that is currently wooded and has been continually wooded since at least 1750. As seen in the figure, there is significant woodland cover within the proposed National Park boundary, making up 29% of the proposed area. Non-ancient woodland makes up the majority of the woodland, covering 23% of the proposed National Park area, while ancient woodland is much smaller at 6%, this ancient woodland is particularly concentrated around Loch Rannoch and in central and eastern areas near Aberfeldy, Pitlochry and Dunkeld. The figure also shows that much of the woodland in the area is in larger, less fragmented areas which is important to support wildlife and the movement of species.



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Figure 6: Agricultural land and peatland

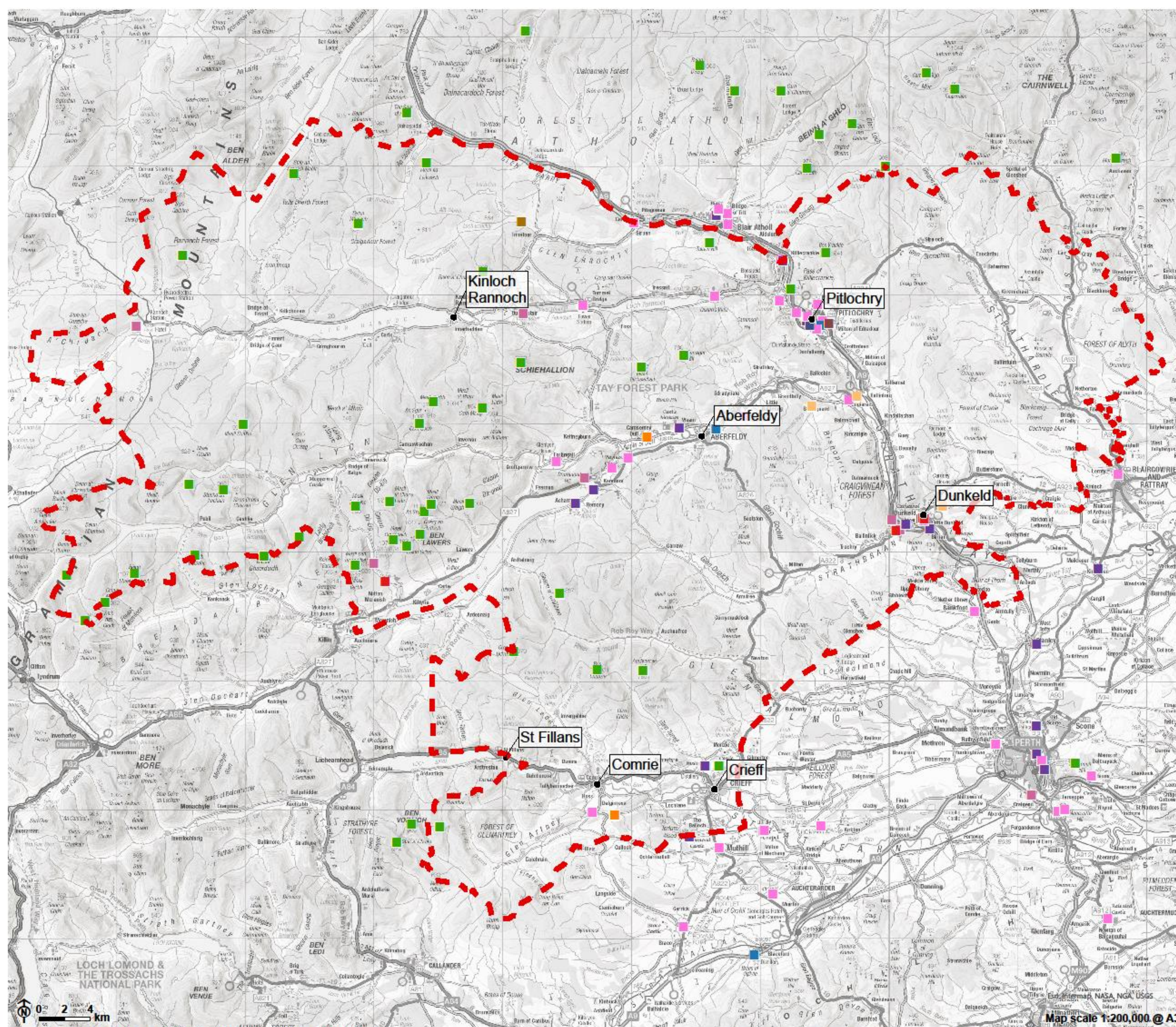
- Site boundary
- Key settlement
- Land capability for agriculture
 - 3.1
 - 3.2
 - 4.1
 - 4.2
- Peatland
 - 1
 - 2

Notes:
There is no land present within the extent displayed that is given the National Land Capability for Agriculture classification 1 or 2.



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Figure 6 shows the proposed boundary of the National Park as well as agricultural land of class 3.2 – 4.2 which is the highest grade agricultural land in the area and defined as being capable of being used for mixed agriculture with a moderate range of crops including cereals, forage crops and grass. The figure also shows land which was classed as grade 1 or 2 peatland within the Carbon and Peatland 2016 map carried out by NatureScot. Class 1 peatlands are national important carbon-rich soils and priority peatland habitat likely to be of high conservation value and class 2 are national important carbon-rich soils and priority peatland habitat which is of potentially high conservation value and restoration potential. These peatland areas are not considered suitable for agriculture, including grazing due to their value as carbon stores and important habitats for protected species. As seen in the figure, there are fairly large amounts of peatlands within and around the proposed National Park boundary, of both importance grade 1 and 2. Away from these areas, there are swathes of agricultural land suitable for mixed agriculture, largely running through the valleys and on flatter land to the south.



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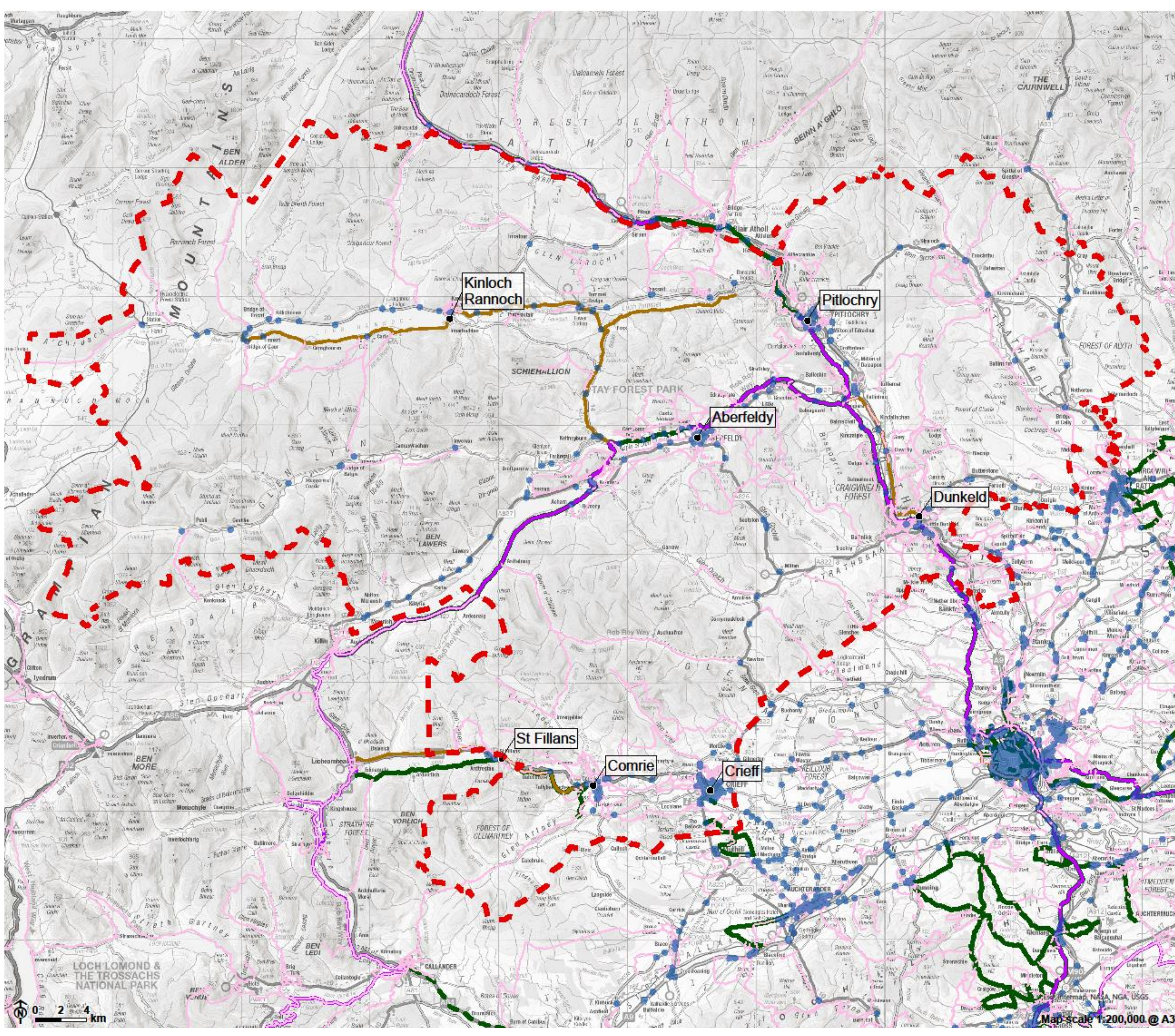
Figure 7: Visitor destinations

- Site boundary
- Key settlement
- Point of Interest**
- Arts & Culture
- Distilleries & Breweries
- Hills and Mountains
- History & Heritage
- Low Level Walks
- Nature & Animals
- Nature Reserves
- Outdoor Activities
- Scenic Views
- Visitor Attractions
- Waterfalls



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Figure 7 shows the proposed boundary of the National Park as well as existing visitor destinations categorised by type. There are a substantial number of visitor destinations within the proposed National Park boundary. In particular there are many “hills & mountains”, especially in the west of the proposed area, as well as many “history & heritage” points of interest, many of which are concentrated in and near Pitlochry, Blair Atholl and west of Aberfeldy. There are also a few “visitor attractions” in the proposed boundary, at Dunkeld, near Pitlochry and west of Aberfeldy. Overall, most visitor destinations apart from “hills & mountains”, are generally concentrated near settlements. The figure demonstrates that there are many points of interest throughout the proposed National Park area, which are appealing to a wide range of differing visitor interests.



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Figure 8: Access routes

- Site boundary
- Key settlement
- Transport node
- National Cycle Network
- Existing route - Non-NCN
- Corepath
- Active travel green route
- Active travel route - proposed by authority



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Figure 8 shows the proposed boundary of the National Park as well as nearby key access routes, including transport nodes, core paths, active travel green routes, proposed active travel routes, the National Cycle Network and other existing routes. Transport nodes represent all bus stops and train stations, core paths are designated routes which form the main local routes for recreation and travel, and green routes are narrow country roads where reduced speed limits have been introduced to make them safer and more attractive for pedestrians and cyclists. The figure shows that there is a good provision of cycle routes between key settlements within the area of search, particularly settlements in the east such as Dunkeld, Pitlochry and Aberfeldy, this includes the National Cycle Network and several public transport nodes. In addition, there are a good amount of core paths throughout the proposed boundary, though there is a higher density of these in the east and south of the area compared to in the west where there is some fragmentation. Overall, the figure demonstrates that while the key settlements are fairly well connected, access routes in the east of the area and to more sparsely populated areas are relatively less connected with gaps in the overall network.



The role of National Parks in Scotland lessons from Loch Lomond and the Trossachs and The Cairngorms National Park

A summary of key actions taken by the two existing National Park Authorities in Scotland are provided under several themes. This information is intended to provide an overview of the kind of activities which could be delivered by a future Tay Forest National Park Authority but is not intended to be either prescriptive nor exhaustive. Some of these benefits may not be reliant on establishment of a National Park, but their achievement would be made easier.

Strategic benefits

- . Scottish Government statutory funding to support the core costs of a National Park Authority and the services they deliver.
- . A dedicated Authority can assist in attracting additional funding from a variety of other sources to deliver targeted projects which help meet the challenges of the local area.
- . Better partnership working across the area, facilitated through the production of a partnership plan which outlines the objectives of the National Park for a 5 year period.

Visitor Management

- . Alleviating pressures from high visitor numbers including through; education and engagement, investment in facilities and management measures and regulation to support sustainable use of the area.
 - . E.g. Camping Management zones introduced around Loch Lomond prevent wild camping and encourage people to new managed facilities instead
 - . Provision of an enhanced ranger service in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs and The Cairngorm's National Park
- . Encourage more sustainable access to the National Park by improving strategic routes, active travel infrastructure and public transport provision.
- . Promote the area as a year round destination, increasing off-peak tourism.
- . Provide opportunities for a wider demographic to visit and enjoy the area.



Land Management

- . Promote joined up working, including through Land Use Partnerships to deliver things such as;
 - . Deer management
 - . Sustainable farming practices
 - . Grouse moor management
 - . Invasive species management
- . Support knowledge exchange and sharing of good practice.
- . Target rural payments to support sustainable food production.

Climate change

- . Joined up working to take action to mitigate against the risks of climate change through things such as;
 - . Woodland creation
 - . Peatland restoration
- . Actions taken to prevent risks such as increased fire risk such as implementation of strategic firebreaks and specific approaches on campfires and barbecues.
- . Implement natural flood management schemes which contribute to a reduction in flood risk.

Rural economy and communities

- . Help to reverse working-age population decline through education and skills programmes which meet local business needs and a growing green sector in the local economy.
- . Promote opportunities for community land ownership.
- . Support community participation in decision making.
- . Provide opportunities for outdoor learning and volunteering.



Heritage

- . Protect landscape and historic character.
- . Provision of grant funding and support for community heritage projects.

Nature recovery

- . Coordinating and leading on efforts to deliver landscape-scale nature restoration projects including projects that connect habitat networks; deliver on species recovery for priority species,
- . Undertake research to inform the development of nature restoration projects.
- . Explore and attract new kinds of investment, including private green finance.
- . Develop case studies and share knowledge.

Planning

- . The Cairngorms National Park Authority prepares a Local Development Plan and supplementary guidance which guides all new development in the park. It has call in powers which allow it to determine planning permission for the most significant development in the National Park (around 10% of total applications), with the rest decided by local authorities.