Perth and Kinross LDP3 2027 - Evidence Report
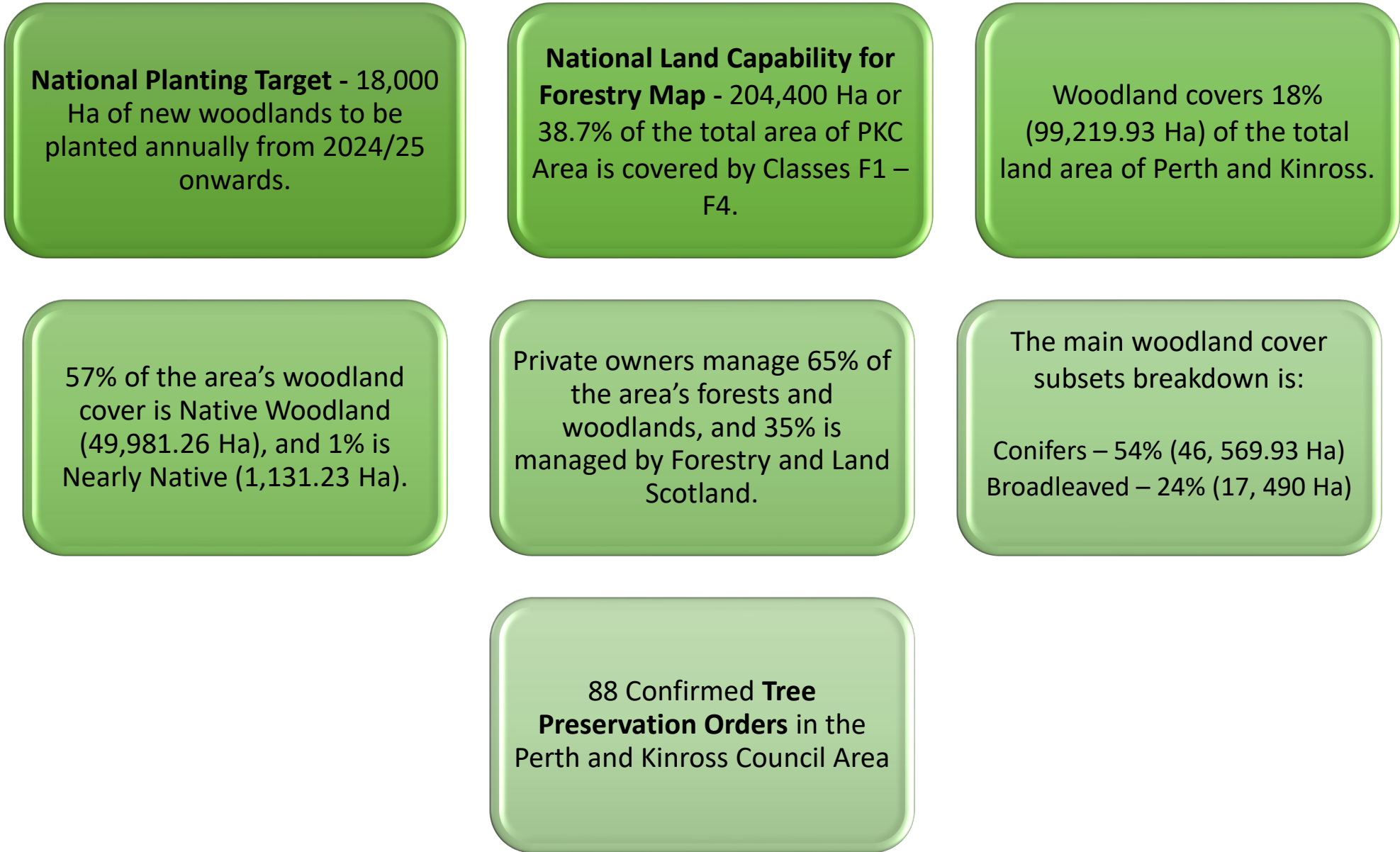
TOPIC PAPER NO. 007: FORESTRY, WOODLAND, AND TREES

July 2024

Figure 1: Overview of Key Forestry, Woodland, and Trees Information

National Planting Target - 18,000 Ha of new woodlands to be planted annually from 2024/25 onwards.

National Land Capability for Forestry Map - 204,400 Ha or 38.7% of the total area of PKC Area is covered by Classes F1 – F4.

Woodland covers 18% (99,219.93 Ha) of the total land area of Perth and Kinross.

57% of the area's woodland cover is Native Woodland (49,981.26 Ha), and 1% is Nearly Native (1,131.23 Ha).

Private owners manage 65% of the area's forests and woodlands, and 35% is managed by Forestry and Land Scotland.

The main woodland cover subsets breakdown is:

Conifers – 54% (46, 569.93 Ha)
Broadleaved – 24% (17, 490 Ha)

88 Confirmed **Tree Preservation Orders** in the Perth and Kinross Council Area

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Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Biodiversity	Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth at all levels (from genes to ecosystems), and the natural patterns that it forms. It is essential to the processes which support all life on earth ecosystem services. Protecting biodiversity is crucial in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Carbon Sequestration	A natural or artificial process through which carbon dioxide is removed from the earth's atmosphere and held in either a solid or liquid form.
Climate Resilience	Is the ability to prepare for, recover from, and adapt to the impacts of climate change whilst preventing those impacts from growing worse.
Ecosystem Services	Ecosystem Services are the benefits that come from nature to people. They can be provisioning services (e.g. supply of food, clean air, water, and materials), regulating services (e.g. water and climate regulation, nutrient cycling, pollination, formation of fertile soils), or cultural services (e.g. recreation opportunities, inspiration drawn from nature). Natural ecosystems are typically multi-functional, which means they can provide a wide range of these services at the same time.
Enforcement Charter	The Council's [Enforcement Charter 2024](#) has just recently been updated. It sets out Perth and Kinross Council's approach, as Planning Authority, to planning enforcement.
Evidence Report	A supporting document to the Local Development Plan. The Evidence Report provides a summary of the evidence base for a plan's spatial strategy, policies, and proposals. It demonstrates that consideration has been given to the issues relevant to the plan area, and that appropriate consultation and engagement has been carried out and taken account of in preparing a plan.
Gatecheck	This is an assessment of the sufficiency of the evidence base on which the Proposed Local Development Plan will be developed. It is undertaken by an appointed person from the Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals Division.
Local Development Plan (LDP)	A plan which sets out, for the land in the part of the district it relates to, a spatial strategy; any other such matters as may be prescribed by the Scottish Ministers, and any other matters which the planning authority consider appropriate to include.
National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)	NPF4 is the national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out the Scottish Government's spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments, and includes a suite of national planning policy. NPF4 was adopted in February 2023.

Native Woodland	Native Woodlands are woods where the canopy cover is mainly made up of native species i.e., over 50%.
Nearly Native Woodland	Nearly Native Woodlands are where native tree species make up between 40% and 50% of the canopy. These woods have the potential to be converted into native woodlands through changing their species mix.
Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)	PAWS are surveyed in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS), where they are recorded in the Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory. These woodlands seem to have originated as a result of natural regeneration sometime prior to the mid-19th Century but were later converted to planted woods.
Proposed Plan	The draft stage of the Local Development Plan, which must be approved by full Council before it can move on to its consultation stage.
Spatial Strategy	The detailed statement (usually represented through mapping as well accompanying text) of a planning authority's policies and proposals regarding the development and use of land for the area for which the plan applies.
Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	A TPO is made by the Local Authority, under Section 160 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, and within the procedures set out in the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 1975-1984. They are made to protect individual trees, groups of trees or woodlands which have particular amenity value, make a significant contribution to the landscape or townscape or because there may be a potential threat to the trees. Any management work to trees which are subject to a TPO requires consent from the relevant planning authority for the area.
Woodland of High Nature Conservation Value	Woodland of high nature conservation value are all woodland included within the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) and Ancient Woodlands, including Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) as detailed in the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) Scotland.

1   Introduction

1.1   Under Section 53 of the Act [1], planning authorities are required to prepare an Evidence Report that contains sufficient information to enable the planning authority to move on to the next stage and prepare their Local Development Plan (LDP).

1.2   The purpose of an Evidence Report is to provide the planning authority's interpretation of the evidence it has gathered and the likely implications of that evidence for the preparation of their LDP. The Report will provide a summary of what the evidence means for the plan, rather than contain all the detail of evidence collected.

FORESTRY, WOODLAND, AND TREES

1.3   This topic paper sets out the key evidence relating to the NPF4 Policy 6 subject area of 'Forestry, Woodland, and Trees.'   It will, alongside a range of other topic papers, contribute towards the preparation of the Council's Evidence Report, which is programmed to be submitted to the Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) during November 2024 for the 'Gatecheck' process.

1.4   It is important to note that our LDP3 will also be prepared within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan. The current Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2022-2027 sets out the Council's vision for a Perth and Kinross 'where everyone can live life well, free

from poverty and inequality.' It proposes a number of key priorities for the 5-year period 2022 to 2027. It also reflects the principles of the Perth and Kinross Offer.

1.5   The Corporate Plan identifies 7 priority areas which the Council feels it can directly influence and have the most impact upon, and those which are most important to delivering the Vision for Perth and Kinross. These priorities are:

1) Working in partnership with communities
2) Tackling poverty
3) Tackling climate change and supporting sustainable places
4) Developing a resilient, stronger, and greener local economy
5) Enabling our children and young people to achieve their full potential
6) Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people
7) Supporting and promoting physical and mental wellbeing

1.6   Delivery of the Corporate Plan's Priorities will be underpinned by a set of Key Principles and delivered through a range of Key Actions. Developing our Local Development Plan 3 in alignment with National Planning Framework 4, should help support the delivery of all of the Corporate Plan's Priorities, with the exception of 'Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people' which is not within the remit of the land use planning system.   By implementing NPF4 Policy 6, Corporate Priorities 1, 3, 4 and 7 in particular should be delivered.

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[1] The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

Figure 2: Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan Priorities

1.7 This topic is specifically covered by NPF4 Policy 15: Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods. However, given the nature of what this policy seeks to achieve, it has key policy connections other NPF4 policies relating to - Tackling the climate and nature crises; Climate mitigation and adaptation; Biodiversity; Natural places; Soils; Historic assets and places; Green belt; Energy; Design, quality and place; Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods; Heat and cooling; Blue and green infrastructure; Play, recreation and sport; Flood risk and water management; Health and safety, and Tourism.   As such, the

subject matter may be touched upon across a number of the different LDP3 Topic Papers.

LEGAL AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

1.8 Section 53 of the Act requires planning authorities to prepare a forestry and woodland strategy which:

- Identifies woodlands of high nature conservation value within the planning authority's area.
- Sets out the planning authority's proposals as to the development of forestry and woodlands; the protection and enhancement of woodlands, in particular those of high nature conservation value; the resilience of woodlands of high nature conservation value; 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, and any other matter which the planning authority consider appropriate.

1.9 In line with the requirement of the Act, this paper will provide important background information for the Plan Area regarding forestry, woodland, and trees.

1.10 Under Policy 6, NPF4 expects Local Development Plans to:

- Identify and protect existing woodland and the potential for its enhancement or expansion to avoid habitat fragmentation and improve ecological connectivity, helping to support and expand nature networks, and
- LDP spatial strategies should identify and set out proposals for forestry, woodlands, and trees in the area, including their

development, protection and enhancement, resilience to climate change, and the expansion of a range of types to provide multiple benefits. This is to be supported and informed by an up to date Forestry and Woodland Strategy.

1.11 In addition to the above, the Scottish Government published [Local Development Planning Guidance](#) in May 2023. Under the documents 'Step by step guide' section, advice is provided on relevant evidence for the NPF4 policy topics to help planning authorities in considering the national planning policies when preparing their Evidence Report. The guide summarises any legislative requirements and the evidence likely to be required to allow NPF4 policies to be taken account of by an LDP, it also signposts to various information sources.

1.12 With respect to NPF4 Policy 6, the Guidance advises that planning authorities should take account of existing woodland in the plan area and should be informed by an up to date forestry and woodland strategy. Other relevant information suggested for consideration include – inventories such as the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland, and the Ancient Woodland Inventory, alongside records such as Tree Preservation Orders, to help identify trees and woodlands of high nature conservation value in the plan area.

1.13 This information will help to provide an overview of evidence relating to forestry, woodland and trees within the Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) area, setting the context within which LDP3 should be prepared.

1.14 To inform this topic paper, a range of datasets and information sources have been reviewed, and where relevant, analysed. A breakdown of the datasets/information sources included are noted in Appendix A.

2   Information Analysis

DATA AND INFORMATION SOURCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PLAN

2.1   To follow is a list of sources of data and information directly related to the policy subject of forestry, woodland, and trees, plus a summary of why that evidence is considered relevant to the Proposed Plan's preparation.

2.2   As previously highlighted under paragraph 1.4, because the subject matter has key policy connections with a number of other NPF4 policies, this paper will be unable to cover in detail the relevant objectives for each of those policy areas. Therefore, not all sources of data and information for the subjects will be listed below. Instead, these matters will be picked up under each of the relevant individual topic papers.

National Policy Context

2.3   The Scottish Forestry Strategy 2019 - 2029 outlines the Scottish Government's ambition for forestry in Scotland. Underpinned by sustainable forest management principles, the Forestry Strategy aims to expand Scotland's forests and woodlands and to deliver multiple benefits. The expansion target set is to increase the annual level of woodland creation up to 18,000 Ha in 2024/25.

2.4   The Forestry Strategy Implementation Plan 2022 - 2025 sets out emerging priorities and actions to be delivered which will progress the long-term objectives of the Forestry Strategy.

2.5   The 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity sets out ambitious policy proposals for restoring nature and getting more benefits from it, including improving the condition of native woodlands identified in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland.

2.6   Forest Research has created a new analysis method to determine the ecological condition of Scotland's woodlands (both plantation and semi-natural) to help inform policy and land management decisions. The Woodland Ecological Condition assessment is based on NFI data and uses 15 indicators of woodland ecological condition and a further classification of woodland habitat into its condition status of favourable, intermediate and unfavourable.

2.7   Under the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy, loss of woodland should only be permitted if it results in significant public benefits. Planting in other areas to make up for any loss of woodland is often expected.

Box 1: Summary of Importance of Evidence to LDP3

These documents are important for setting the national policy context within which the Council's review of our Forest and Woodland Strategy (FWS) should be undertaken, as well as providing an important guide for decisions taken regarding new planting proposals, or proposals for development which will affect our forest, woodland, and tree resources.

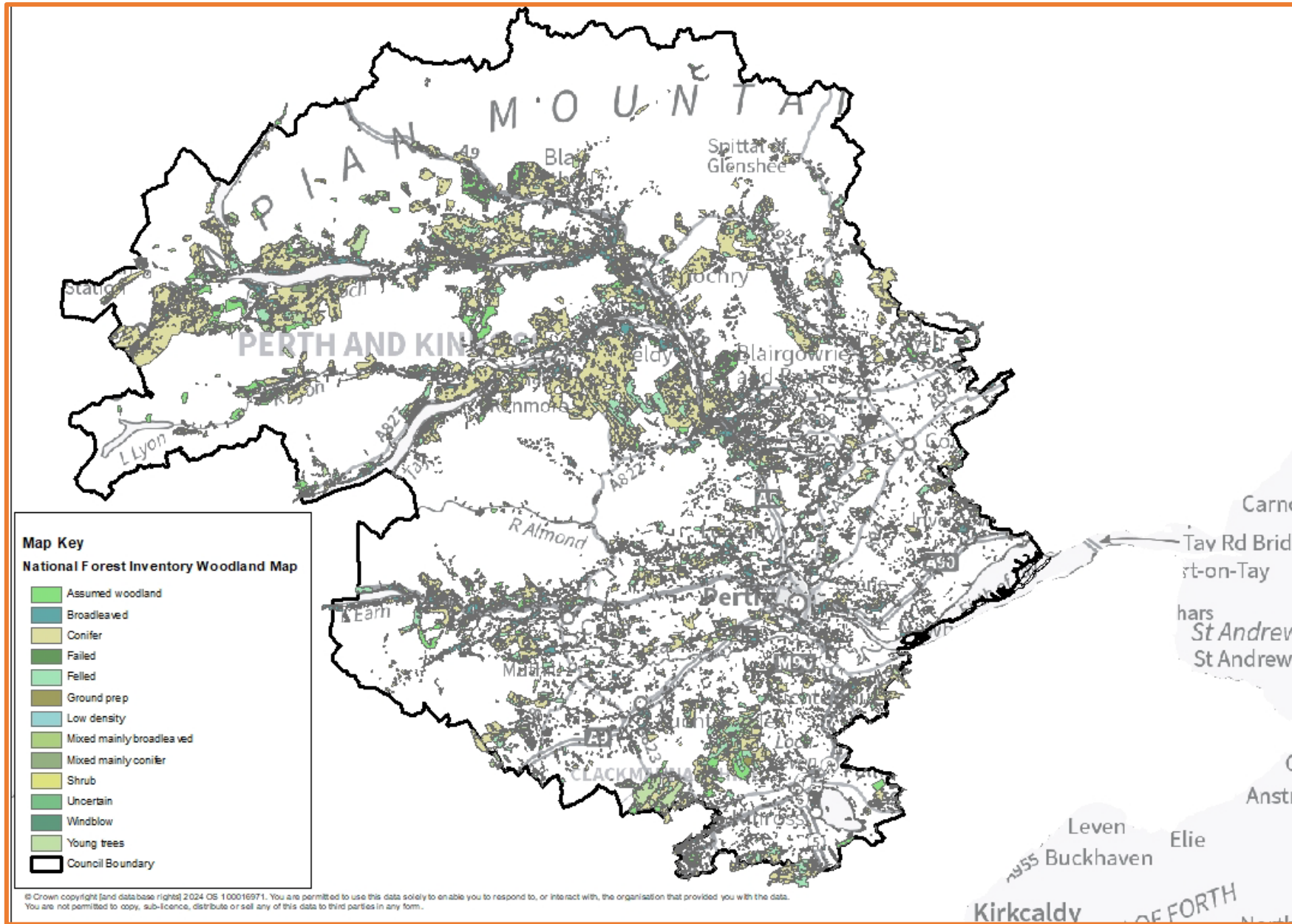### Existing Forestry, Woodland, and Trees within Perth and Kinross

2.8 The [National Forest Inventory](#) (NFI) provides information about the size, distribution and composition of all forests and woodlands in Scotland. Map 1 below shows the NFI for the Perth and Kinross Area.

2.9 Map 2 shows the [Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS)](#) for the Perth and Kinross Area. The NWSS focuses on Scotland's native woodlands. Native woods can be semi-natural (self-sown) or planted. They are defined as woods in which over 50% of the canopy is made up of species native to the region.

2.10 Woodland covers 18% (99,219.93 Ha) of the total land area of Perth and Kinross. 57% of the area's woodland cover is Native Woodland (49,981.26 Ha), and 1% is Nearly Native (1,131.23 Ha). Private owners manage 65% of the area's forests and woodlands, and 35% is managed by [Forestry and Land Scotland](#). The percentage breakdown of the main woodland cover subsets is:

- Conifers – 54% (46, 569.93 Ha)
- Broadleaved – 24% (17, 490 Ha)

2.11 The Woodland Trust's [Ancient Woodland Inventory](#) and [Ancient Tree Inventory](#) provide information on trees and woodland of high biodiversity value (see Map 3 to follow). Woodlands that have been continuously present in some form for at least 270 years are known as ancient woodlands.

2.12 [Scotland's National Forests and Land](#) provides a visual analysis of the national forests and land managed by Forestry and Land Scotland.

2.13 The [PKC Interactive Heritage Map](#) provides information about tree groups, tree lines and individual trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and those within a Conservation Area. All trees within Conservation Areas are protected from pruning, lopping, and felling.
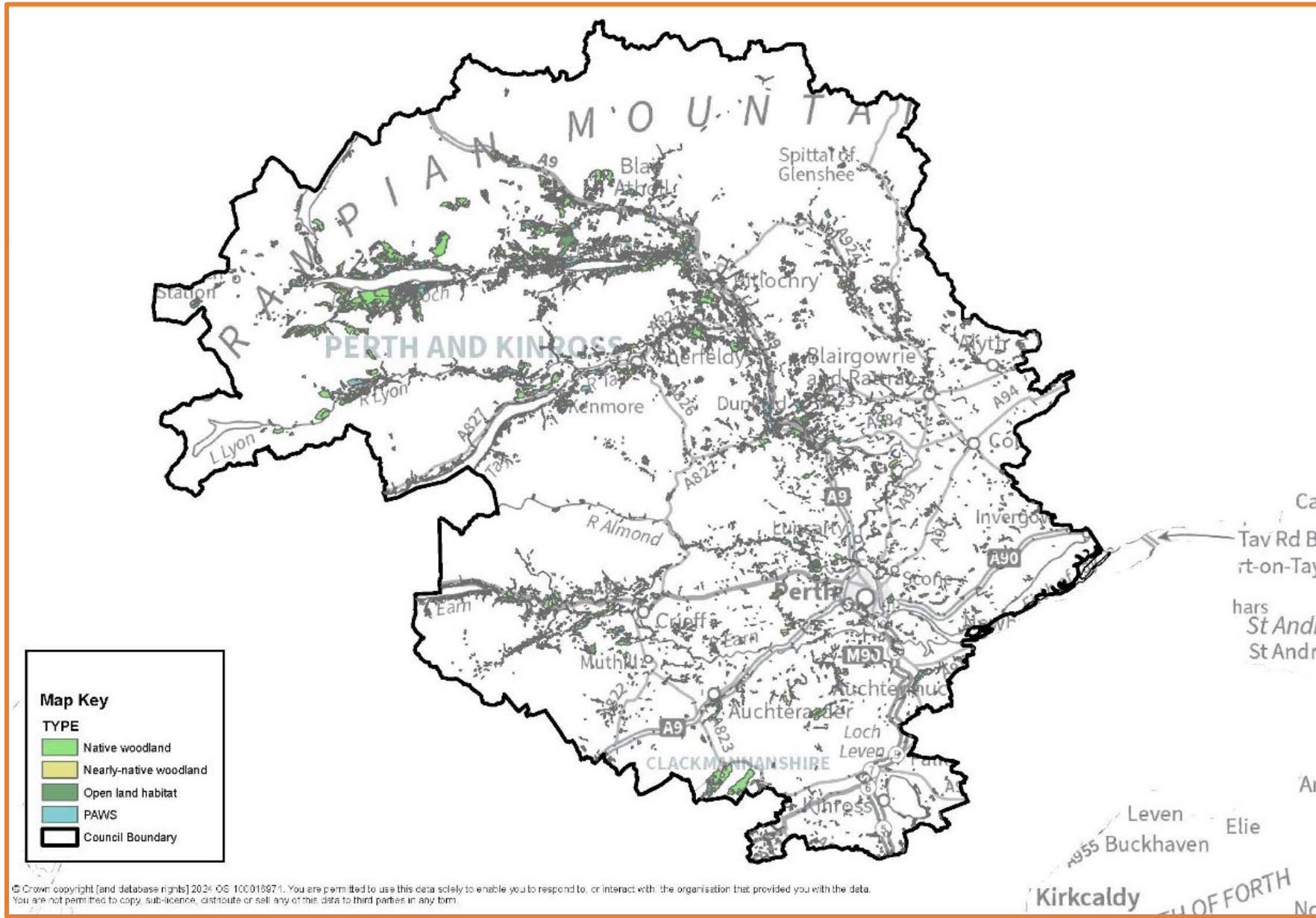

Box 2: Summary of Importance of Evidence to LDP3

The above mentioned data sources are important resources in understanding the current types and distribution of our existing woodland, forest and tree assets across the Perth and Kinross Council Area. This information will be incredibly useful for our Forestry, Woodlands and Trees spatial framework, the protection and enhancement of our existing assets, and also helping Scotland reach national tree planting targets by directing the planting of the right trees in the right places.

Map 1: National Forest Inventory for the Perth and Kinross Area

Map Key

National Forest Inventory Woodland Map

- Assumed woodland
- Broadleaved
- Conifer
- Failed
- Felled
- Ground prep
- Low density
- Mixed mainly broadleaved
- Mixed mainly conifer
- Shrub
- Uncertain
- Windblow
- Young trees
- Council Boundary

Map 2: Native Woodland Survey of Scotland for the Perth and Kinross Area

Map Key

TYPE

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

Map 3: Ancient Woodland Inventory and Ancient Tree Inventory

Map Key

◆ Ancient Tree Inventory

▮ Ancient Woodland Inventory

▭ Council Boundary

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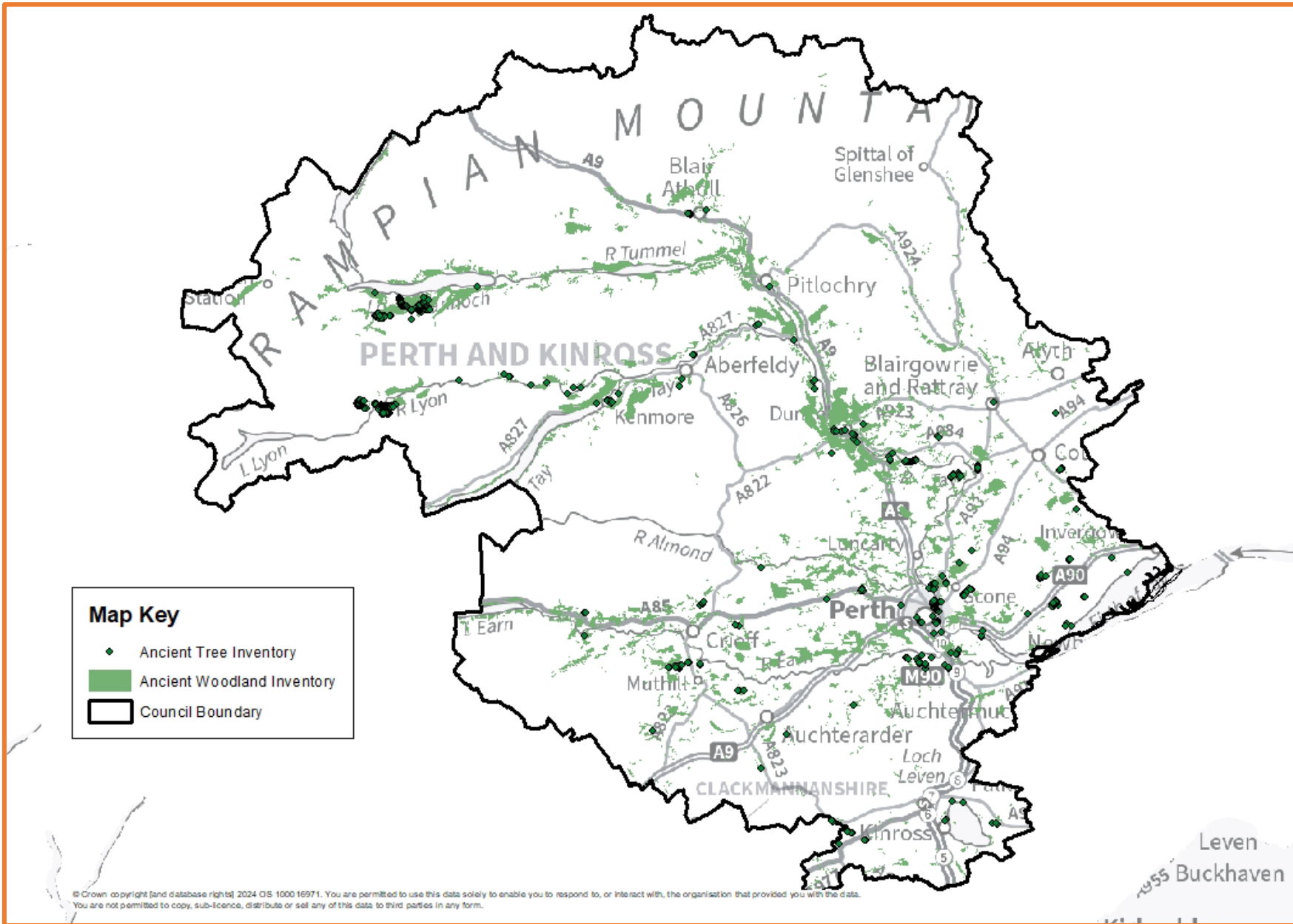
Management of Existing Forestry, Woodland, and Trees

2.14 The Scottish Forestry Map Viewer provides information on the management of existing forestry, woodland and trees including long-term forestry plans, felling permissions and re-stocking details.

Forestry and Woodland Creation

2.15 The National scale Land Capability for Forestry Map provides information on the potential for land across Scotland to grow trees (including future forestry that would support carbon sequestration activity) based on a number of factors, such as soil, climate, and topography. The map was produced by the Macauley Land Use Research Institute, and also uses a classification system of Classes F1 through to F7 in terms of capability. Classes F8 and F9, represent, respectively, built-up areas and areas of inland water.

2.16 Map 4 and Table 1 to follow show the location of those classes within Perth and Kinross and provide a breakdown of that coverage. The total amount of the PKC area which is covered by Classes F1 – F4, i.e. land which is excellent through to that with moderate flexibility for the growth and management of tree crops, is 2,044 Km^2, which equates to 38.7% of the total Council Area.

Table 1: Breakdown of Land Capability for Forestry within PKC

Map Key	Class	Area (Km2)	% of Perth and Kinross
	F1 – Land with excellent flexibility for the growth and management of tree crops	23.27	0.44%
	F2 – Land with very good flexibility for the growth and management of tree crops	247.04	4.67%
	F3 – Land with good flexibility for the growth and management of tree crops	342.28	6.48%
	F4 – Land with moderate flexibility for the growth and management of tree crops	374.68	7.09%
	F5 – Land with limited flexibility for the growth and management of tree crops	451.34	8.54%
	F6 – Land with very limited flexibility for the growth and management of tree crops	338.14	6.40%
	F7 – Land unsuitable for producing tree crops	266.94	5.05%

Map 4: Land Capability for Forestry in Scotland

Map Key

LANDCAP
- F1
- F2
- F3
- F4
- F5
- F6
- F7
- Built-up
- Water
- Council Boundary
- <all other values>
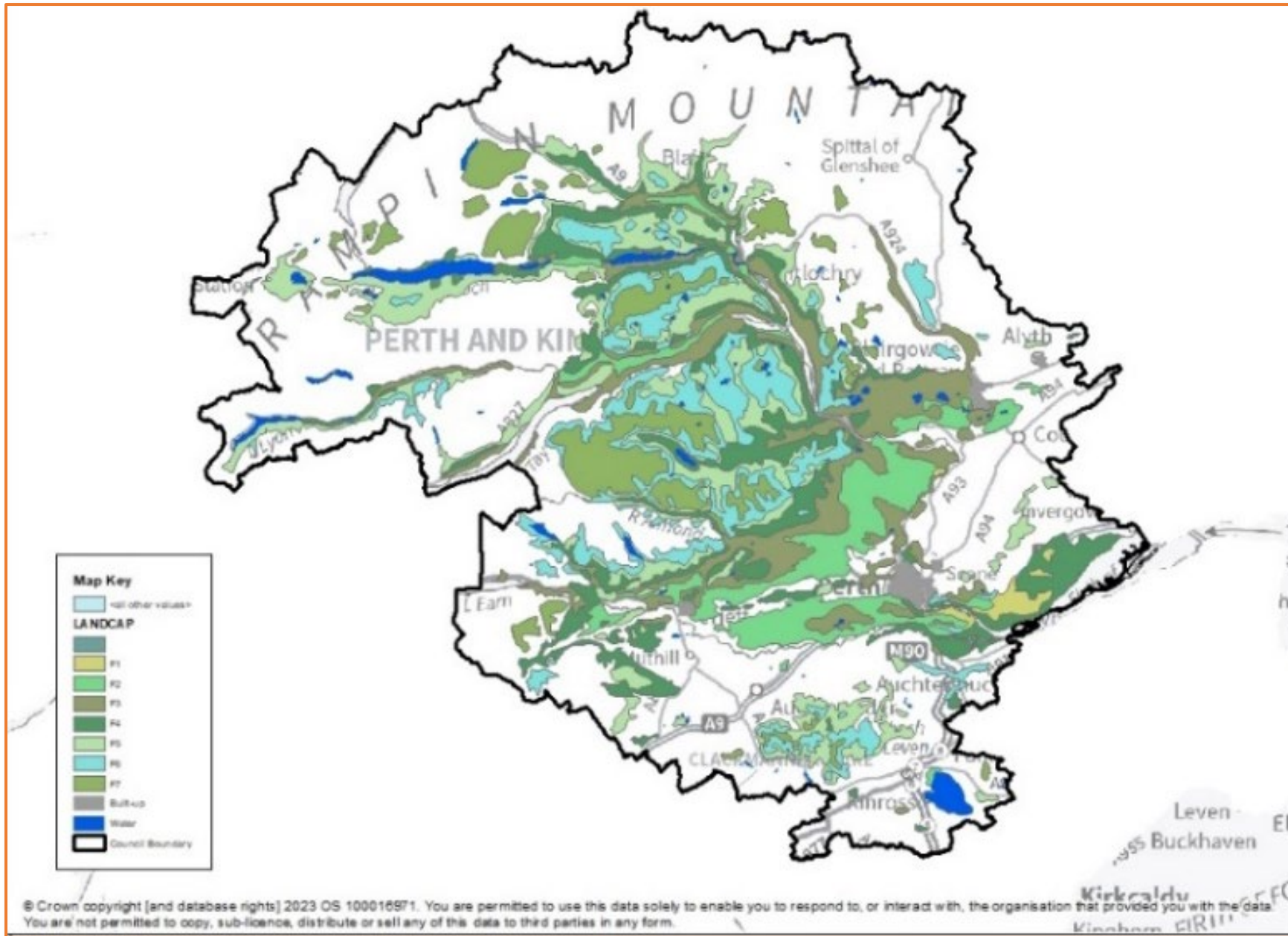
2.17 The Scottish Forestry Map Viewer provides information on Forestry Grant Scheme funding target and eligibility areas and details of successful funding. More detailed information including maps, size and species is provided on the Scottish Forestry Public Register.

2.18 The PKC Forest and Woodland Strategy (FWS) Supplementary Guidance provide a strategic framework for the development of forestry in the area and includes a map of sensitivities and opportunities. The map categories of preferred, potential, sensitive and unsuitable are used to inform forestry and woodland creation proposals.   Map 5 to follow highlights the opportunities for: forestry, forest habitat networks, water management through planting, and enhancement of existing woodland as identified in the Council's FWS 'Opportunities' map. Map 6 highlights where Class 2, 3.1 and 3.2 Prime Agricultural Land overlaps with the FWS preferred and potential opportunity areas. There are likely to be competing demands on our land across Perth and Kinross, and it will be important to ensure the development of our Spatial Strategy takes account of directing future land uses to the most appropriate locations to help achieve sustainable development.

2.19 In terms of woodland expansion potential, the project report identifies significantly higher levels of carbon sequestration potential from the planting of Production Sitka Spruce, and lower from the expansion of Native Broadleaf (after 25 years). It is important to remember the national objective of expanding native woodlands, and policy of planting the right tree in the right place. As such, it is most likely that a mixed approach to planting will be most appropriate.
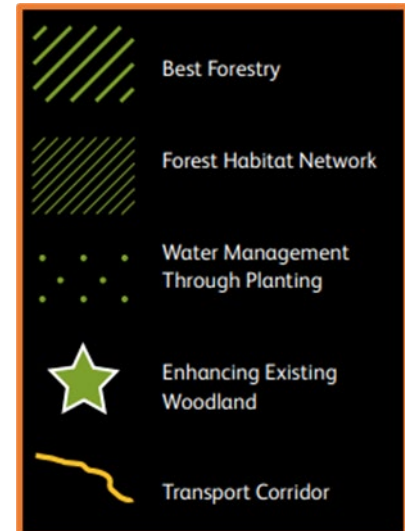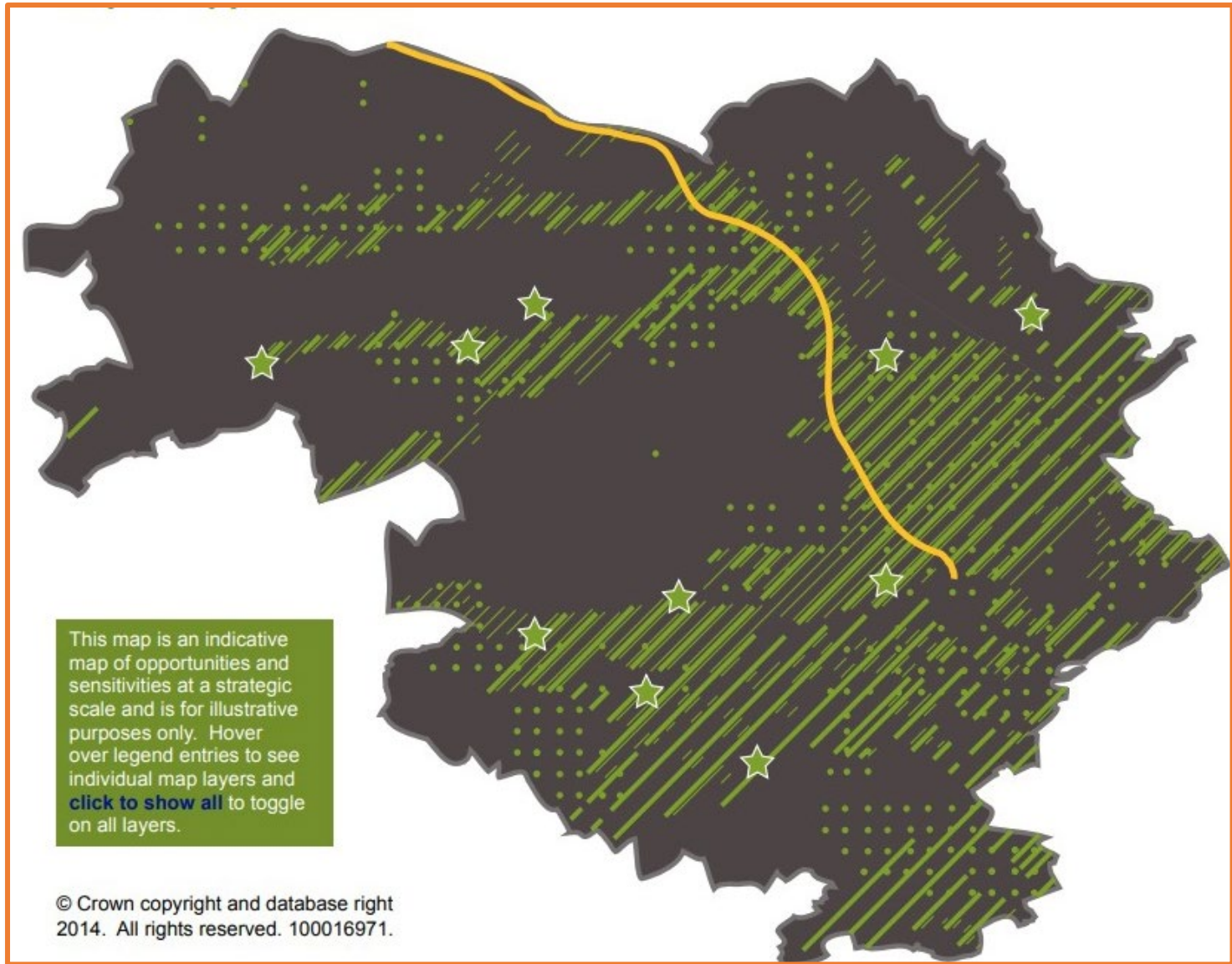
2.20 The Council commissioned the James Hutton Institute (JHI) to undertake a Carbon Sequestration Study of the Perth and Kinross Council Area. The study's concluding report was submitted to the Council in December 2021. The project focussed on the sectors of land-based industries and natural resources, and how these can be considered when looking at the carbon resources of the area, and its potential for sequestering or reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

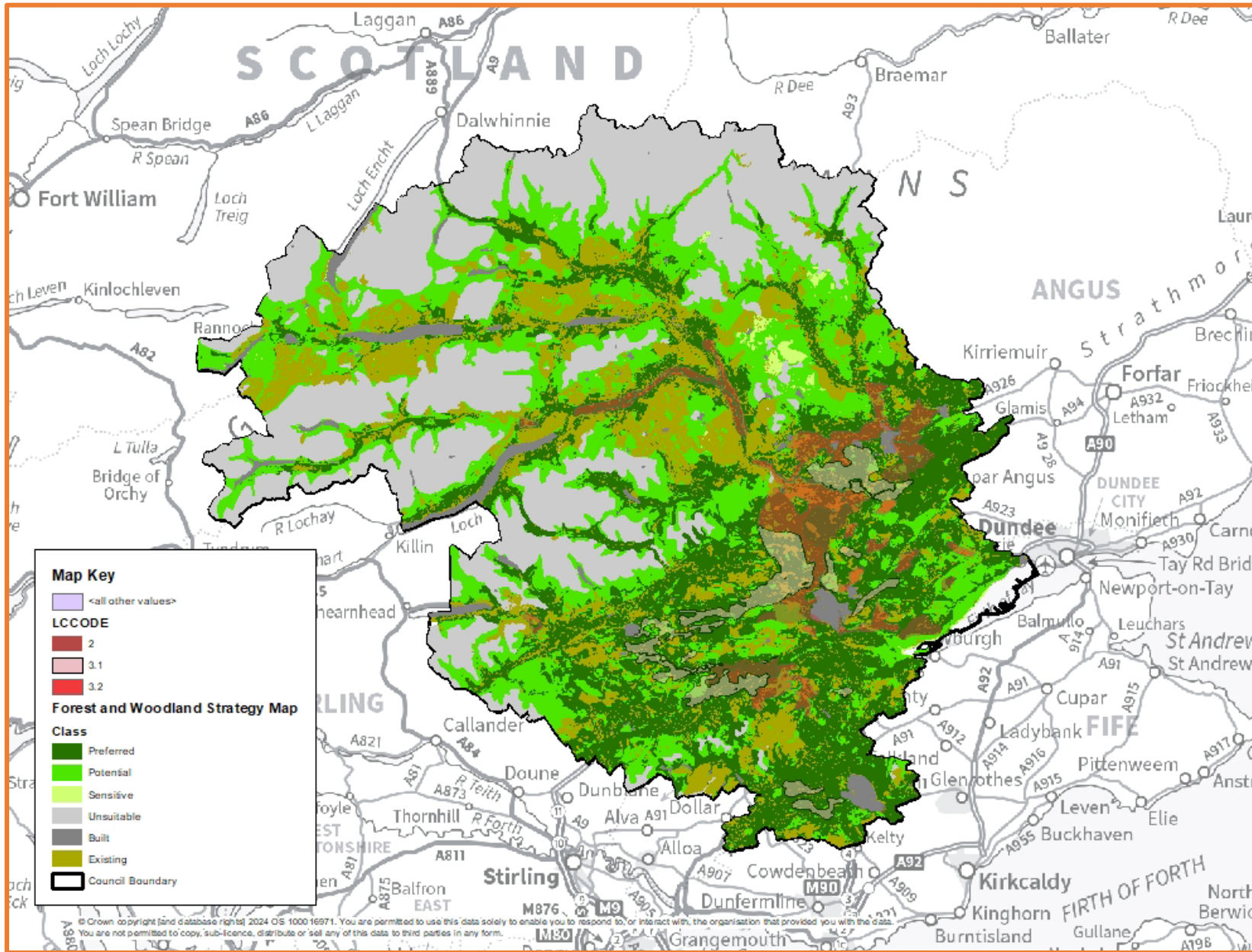Box 4: Summary of Importance of Evidence to LDP3

The information contained in the Scottish Forestry Map Viewer, our existing Forest and Woodland Strategy, and the JHI Carbon Sequestration Study commissioned for the Perth and Kinross Area, can support both the development of the Spatial Strategy in terms of forestry, woodland, and trees as well as the assessment of development proposals against relevant policies including NPF4 Policy 6.

Through considering the existing forestry, woodland, and trees assets in our area, as well as identifying potential opportunities for enhancement and expansion via our LDP3 Spatial Strategy, we can help tackle the twin climate and nature crises.   In developing our Spatial Strategy, consideration will also need to be given to competing demands on our land, such as where opportunities for tree and woodland planting overlaps with our prime agricultural land resource to ensure we are directing different land uses to the most appropriate locations to achieve sustainable development.

Map 5: Forest and Woodland Strategy Opportunities Map

This map is an indicative map of opportunities and sensitivities at a strategic scale and is for illustrative purposes only. Hover over legend entries to see individual map layers and **click to show all** to toggle on all layers.

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Best Forestry

Forest Habitat Network

Water Management Through Planting

Enhancing Existing Woodland

Transport Corridor

Map 6: Land Capability for Agriculture (Prime Quality Land) and Perth and Kinross Council Forest and Woodland Strategy Opportunities Map

Map Key

<all other values>

LCCODE
- 2
- 3.1
- 3.2

Forest and Woodland Strategy Map

Class
- Preferred
- Potential
- Sensitive
- Unsuitable
- Built
- Existing
- Council Boundary

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2.21 Public engagement took place from October 2020 through to January 2021 on the Council's draft Climate Emergency Report and Action Plan (2019). The engagement exercise consisted of an online survey split into five series of questionnaires and several thematic online sessions. It was initially scheduled to take place in early 2020 but was delayed due to the pandemic outbreak and the Council's emergency response to it.

2.22 The engagement survey received 480 responses while an approximate of 280 attendees took part to the online sessions. The feedback received throughout the engagement survey was considered in the development of the finalised Strategy and Action Plan. Consultation (pkclimateaction.co.uk).

2.23 Participants were asked their views under the Land Use theme of the survey on a range of topics, including biodiversity, greenspaces, open spaces, planning controls, agriculture, and other land uses. There were 67 responses overall to this theme. Feedback from the public was that it is their perception that current policies are not enforced rigorously enough, which leads to tree and biodiversity loss. In response, the Council's 'Enforcement Charter' has recently been reviewed, and part of that review it was considered whether appropriate priority is given to cases impacting on Perth and Kinross Council priorities, such as climate change, trees affected by tree preservation orders, and biodiversity. A monitoring exercise will also be conducted as part of the development of the new Local Development Plan 3 to assess the effectiveness of planning policies and planning conditions, keeping in mind that for the most part, current LDP2 policies have been superseded by national policies contained in NPF4.

2.24 A further, focused consultation and engagement process will be undertaken in the future to help inform the development of the Council's review of our Forestry and Woodland Strategy.

2.25 The Council carried out its 'Big Place Conversation' exercise to kick start the LDP3 process across Perth and Kinross communities during most of 2023. The exercise involved over 100 events across the Council Area.

2.26 The results of the Big Place Conversation are currently being collated to produce a separate report on the outcomes and findings across the different locality areas. A summary of the results of the exercise, and the topic and place-based actions to be taken forward as part of the development of the Proposed Plan, will be provided as part of LDP3's Evidence Report under the required statement of steps taken by the Council in preparing the report to seek the views of various stakeholders, as prescribed by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.

2.27 Consultation events were carried out as part of the development of Perth and Kinross Council's Tay Forest National Park bid. The consultation period ran for 8 weeks from 6th October to 1st December 2023. A variety of engagement methods were used and comprised a launch event, an online survey, five community drop-in

events, two targeted workshops for land managers and environmental organisations, an online webinar and an in-person Q&A session. 162 people attended the drop-in events in Dunkeld, Pitlochry, Comrie, Aberfeldy and Crieff, where staff from PKC and Land Use Consultants (LUC) were available to answer questions and record verbal feedback. Attendees were also able to record additional feedback on post-it notes and were encouraged to participate in the online survey.

2.28 The focused land manager event, held in Pitlochry (organised in consultation with NFUS and SLE and promoted to their members), was attended by around 40 land managers. The 'Nature Voices' online workshop was attended by 24 representatives, from 19 environmental organisations.

2.29 A [Consultation Analysis report](#) was produced by LUC. In terms of key points for consideration in the bid preparation, most respondents considered trees and woodland as being one of the top special qualities of the area, along with nature and wildlife, lochs/rivers, and scenery. Participants recognised the importance of encouraging the right type of trees and woodland in the right place, and in particular in relation to supporting sustainable farming and an integrated approach to land management. Encouragement of natural regeneration was also highlighted as being important. The associated benefits from trees and woodland in relation to natural flood management was also acknowledged.

2.30 Policy 6 seeks to protect and expand forests, woodlands, and trees. Existing woodlands and trees are to be protected and tree cover expanded whilst avoiding habitat fragmentation and improving ecological connectivity to help support and expand nature networks.

2.31 NPF4 Policy 6 identifies that development will not be supported where it results in:

- Any loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition.
- Adverse impacts on native woodlands, hedgerows, and individual trees of high biodiversity value, or identified for protection in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy.

2.32 No single dataset provides a comprehensive overview of all trees and woodland of high biodiversity value within Perth and Kinross. The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland, the Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory, the Ancient Tree Inventory, and Tree Preservation Orders combined provides the best available information. Although smaller scale woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows may be omitted.

2.33 Under NPF4 Policy 6, LDPs are expected to identify and protect existing woodland though ensuring this is difficult due to pre-emptive felling taking place prior to sites being considered through the planning process.

2.34 NPF4 and a range of other Scottish Government policy and guidance identifies forests, woodland, and trees as key assets to be protected and expanded. As such, the issues that have been identified to

inform the site selection process are the presence of existing forests, woodland and trees and the opportunities to enhance and expand woodland coverage and nature networks.

2.35   Proposals in woodland should only be supported where there are clearly defined additional public benefits, mitigation is demonstrated, and compensation is proposed.

2.36   During site selection, proposals that aim to enhance and expand existing forests, woodland, and trees and, by tree planting, enhance nature networks should be given added weight, particularly where these prioritise opportunities to improve and strengthen existing woodland fragments.

2.37   Through the LDP3, site selection should seek to avoid pure woodland sites and consideration given to applying TPOs to sites with significant trees or groups of trees when identified in the LDP.

Existing Forestry, Woodland, and Trees within Perth and Kinross

2.38 The National Forest Inventory Scotland covers all forest and woodland area over 0.5 Hectare, with a minimum of 20% canopy cover, or the potential to achieve it, and a minimum width of 20 metres. As such, smaller woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows may not be included.

2.39 The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) identifies and maps the location, extent, type and condition of all of Scotland's native woodlands in 2014.   Some limitations of the dataset include:

- Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) may not display in the Habitat later if a surveyor has not recorded a native priority habitat type for the site – this will happen when a site is non-native.
- NWSS Canopy Cover displays as a percentage, an assessment of the area covered by trees/shrubs. Values range from 0% to 100% in 10% of the classes. A minimum of 20% canopy cover is required to define woodland, as such the 10% and 20% bands are skewed to allow for this.

2.40 The Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) is a provisional guide to the location of Ancient Woodland. It contains three main categories of woodland, all of which are likely to be of value for their biodiversity and cultural value by virtue of their antiquity. It is worth noting that the NPF4 definition of ancient woodland is contrary to the AWI definition.

2.41 The Ancient Tree Inventory maps ancient, veteran, and notable trees in the UK managed by the Woodland Trust. Data is often supplied by members of the public but is verified by local recorders, as such although it is publicly available, it needs enhancement via citizen engagement.

2.42 The Council's Interactive Heritage Map provides information about tree groups, tree lines, and individual trees that are protected through a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), and those within a Conservation Area.   TPO's are primarily located in settlements, with less in the rural countryside areas. The Council's TPO's require a review to ensure the records remain up to date and relevant.

Forestry and Woodland Creation

2.43 Whilst for the most part still relevant, the Council's Forestry and Woodland Strategy will require a review to ensure that it is fully aligned with the National Strategy and meets the expectations and requirements of National Planning Framework 4. It is not anticipated that this review will lead to significant changes to the existing Strategy, as much of the data used to inform its development has not really changed. However, a review will ensure any changes at a national level in terms of outcomes, priorities and policy drivers are reflected, and that it is up to date in line with the requirements of the Planning Act, particularly in relation to the protection of woodlands of high nature conservation value, their resilience to a changing climate, and the multiple benefits which they can offer.

2.44 The James Hutton Institute Carbon Sequestration Study focused on the sectors of land-based industries and natural resources, and how these can be considered when looking at the carbon resources of the area, and its potential for sequestering carbon or reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions. In terms of woodland expansion potential, the project report identifies significantly higher levels of carbon sequestration potential from the planting of Production Sitka Spruce, and lower from the expansion of Native Broadleaf (after 25 years). It is important to remember the national objective of expanding native woodlands, and policy of planting the right tree in the right place. As such, it is most likely that a mixed approach to planting will be the most appropriate one in reality. The project report also includes limited data on species resilience to the effects of a changing climate.

Appendix A: Identification of Datasets and Information

Table A1: Summary of Evidence Required or Suggested for NPF4 Policy 6

Act or NPF	Requirement or Expectation	Dataset or source	Relevance of evidence and why it is required to inform the Proposed Plan (what it tells us and / or how we will use it?)	Gaps or uncertainties in data
Section 53 NPF4 Policy 6	A forestry and woodland strategy. An up-to-date forest and woodland strategy.	PKC Forest and Woodland Strategy	The Strategy provides data on existing woodlands in PKC area and the Preferred and Potential Areas identify potential for its enhancement or expansion to improve connectivity.	Review required in line with the requirements of the Act. This Topic Paper begins the process of this review.
NPF4 Policy 6	LDPs to identify and protect existing woodland	National Forest Inventory Scotland (NFI) 2021 Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) Scotland's National Forests and Land PKC Interactive Heritage Map Scottish Forestry Map Viewer	The NFI is a national dataset detailing the size, distribution and composition of all forests and woodlands in Scotland. The map covers all forest and woodland area over 0.5 hectare with a minimum of 20% canopy cover, or the potential to achieve it, and a minimum width of 20 metres. The NWSS identifies and maps the location, extent, type, and condition of all of Scotland's native woodlands in 2014. The National Forests and Lands data provides a visual analysis of the National Forest Estate managed by Forestry and Land Scotland. The Council's online Heritage Map provides information about tree groups, tree lines and individual trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order and those within a Conservation Area. The Scottish Forestry Map Viewer provides information on the management of existing forestry,	Smaller woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows may not be included in the NFI. NWSS presets data from 2014. TPOs are primarily in settlements with less in rural countryside. The Council's TPO records require a review.

Act or NPF	Requirement or Expectation	Dataset or source	Relevance of evidence and why it is required to inform the Proposed Plan (what it tells us and / or how we will use it?)	Gaps or uncertainties in data
			woodland and trees including long-term forestry plans, felling permissions and re-stocking details.	
NPF4 Policy 6	LDPs to identify the potential for its enhancement or expansion to improve ecological connectivity, helping to support and expand nature networks.	Land Capability for Forestry	A national map which identifies land that is potentially capable for future forestry based on several factors including soil, climate, and topography.	
NPF4 Policy 6	LDPs to identify the potential for its enhancement or expansion to improve ecological connectivity, helping to support and expand nature networks.	James Hutton Institute (JHI) – PKC Carbon Sequestration Study (December 2021)	The JHI project on carbon sequestration focused on the sectors of land-based industries and natural resources, and how these can be considered when looking at the carbon resources of the area, and its potential for sequestering or reducing GHG emissions. This report can help guide the development of the Plan's spatial strategy, through highlighting existing sources of GHG sequestration and storage, and identifying new opportunities.	The project report identifies significantly higher levels of carbon sequestration potential from the planting of Production Sitka Spruce, and lower from the expansion of Native Broadleaf (after 25 years). It is important to remember the national objective of expanding native woodlands, and policy of planting the right tree in the right place. As such, it is most likely that a mixed approach to planting will be the most appropriate one in reality. The report also contains limited data on species resilience to climate change.

Act or NPF	Requirement or Expectation	Dataset or source	Relevance of evidence and why it is required to inform the Proposed Plan (what it tells us and / or how we will use it?)	Gaps or uncertainties in data
NPF4 Policy 6	LDPs to identify the potential for its enhancement or expansion to improve ecological connectivity, helping to support and expand nature networks.	Scottish Forestry Map Viewer Scottish Forestry Public Register	The Scottish Forestry Map Viewer provides information on Forestry Grant Scheme funding target and eligibility areas and details of successful funding. The Public Register contains detailed information including a map, size, and species.	
NPF4 Policy 6	b) i) no loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees	Ancient Woodland Inventory	The Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) is a provisional guide to the location of Ancient Woodland. It contains three main categories of woodland, all of which are likely to be of value for their biodiversity and cultural value by virtue of their antiquity.	Important to note that the NPF4 definition of ancient woodland is contrary to the AWI definition.
NPF4 Policy 6	b) i) no loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees	Ancient Tree Inventory	Mapping of ancient, veteran, and notable trees in the UK managed by the Woodland Trust. Data is often supplied by members of the public but is verified by local recorders.	ATI available but needs enhancing with public engagement.