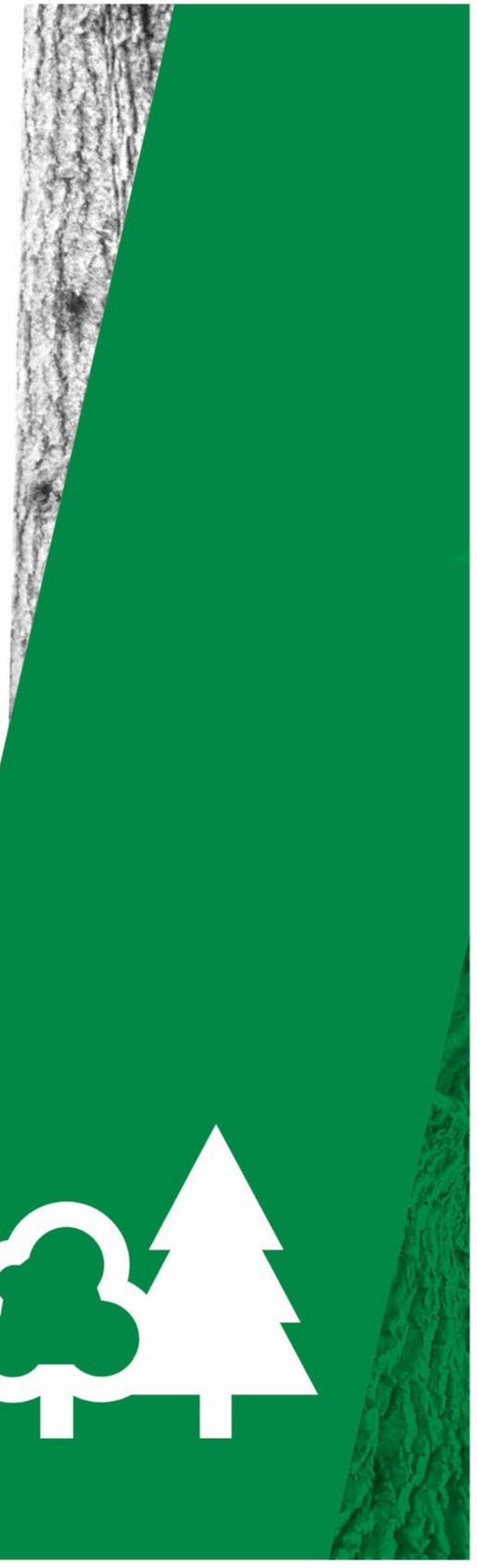
Forestry England

The Cheviots Forest Plan 2025

North Forest District



Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

FSC www.fsc.org FSC® C123214 The mark of responsible forestry

PEFC PEFC/16-40-1001 Promoting Sustainable Forest Management www.pefc.org

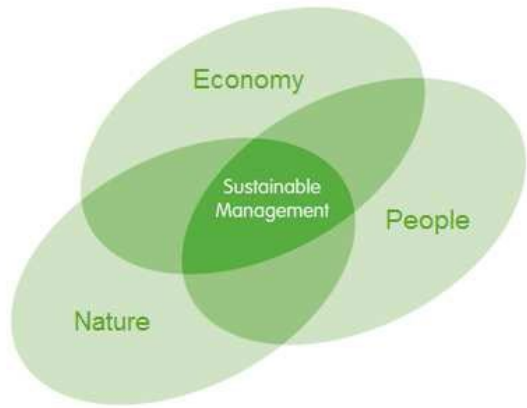
Planning and District Context

The Strategic Plan for the Nation's Forests outlines the delivery of forest policy at a national level. At a regional level there are six Forest Districts covering the country that directly oversee the implementation of policy actions in the nation's forests. North Forest District (NFD) is an extensive area encompassing 9 county or unitary authority areas from the Scottish border to Durham and Lancashire.

Our task is to realise the potential of each of the forests in our care for sustainable business opportunities, wildlife and nature conservation, and the enjoyment and well-being of local people and visitors. Each of our forests supports the economy through local jobs, sustainable timber production and the provision of recreation and tourism opportunities. All are funded by revenue from timber sales and recreation provision.

The woodlands of the district are currently arranged in 59 management areas, and their management is covered by individual ten-year forest plans that identify local issues and the broad silvicultural management of the woods. Forest plans are reviewed in detail every 10 years and submitted to Forest Services for the felling and restocking approvals to be renewed. Forest plans are reviewed internally every 5 years to check progress.

These plans and their associated forest operations ensure that produce from the woodlands is endorsed by the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) as being produced from woodlands under good management that meet the requirements of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS). Individual Forest Plans aim to deliver a range of public benefits with achievable objectives that deliver the three drivers of sustainable land management outlined in the North Forest District Strategy. Forestry England recognises its obligations under UK legislation and regulations such as the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006; as amended by the Environment Act 2021 (Sec 102)'.



These key drivers are supported by the following Forest District Policy:

- We will optimise the financial return from timber production compatible with achievement of other forest district objectives while complying with the UK Forestry Standard and meeting the requirements of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard.
- We will provide public access to all our forests and woodlands where there are no legal or safety restrictions. We will encourage and permit a wide range of recreational activities from walking and quiet enjoyment to more specialised activities.
- We will ensure that rare and threatened habitats are protected and managed to maintain or enhance their conservation value.

The Cheviots Forest Plan

The Cheviots Forest Plan is the revision of the combined forest plan for the areas of Kidland and Uswayford, following the first combined plan in 2017. They sit in a common landscape unit and are submitted as one plan to combine Red Squirrel Reserve management and operational objectives.

Part 1 Background Information

Introduction

This forest plan includes the following blocks:

- Kidland 1120.9 ha
- Kidland Lee 62.4 ha
- Uswayford 765.8 ha
- Hepden Burn 98.3 ha
- Total Area 2047.7 ha

These forests are located within the Cheviot Hills north of the village of Alwinton within the Northumberland National Park (Map 1).

Uswayford was acquired by the Forestry Commission in two parts; Hebden Burn in 1954 and later the remaining area of Uswayford in 1970. The forest extends to 862 ha of which 611 ha is managed as productive conifer plantation. The most common species is Sitka spruce planted in the period between 1975 and the early 1980s. With the forest fast approaching economic maturity a forest plan was first approved in 2017, although sufficient access had not yet been secured to commence operations. The forest provides important habitat for red squirrels and is significant due to the close proximity to the neighbouring red squirrel reserve at Kidland Forest which has implications for the choice of harvesting and restocking regime.

Kidland Forest occupies approximately 2100 ha of which 1121 ha is managed by Forestry England, the majority of the remainder being in a number of private ownerships managed by a private management company. Kidland was purchased by the Forestry Commission in parts between 1956 to 1962. The forest comprises a mixture of spruce, pine and larch with Sitka spruce dominant which reflects the primary aim of the initial planting to produce a timber resource. A forest plan for the public forest estate was first approved in 2002 and subsequently revised in 2007 and 2017. These latter plans adopted the accepted principles of managing the forest as a red squirrel reserve. This included delayed clearfelling, inclusion of early small seeding species and introduction of greater conifer species diversity at restocking and the exclusion of large seeded broadleaf species.

The forests have been affected by windblow during the winter storm season of 2021-2022, commencing with Storm Arwen in November and concluding with Storm Franklin in February. The scale of the damage requires the original felling plan to be redefined. It also allows changes in restocking proposals to be brought forward.

Current woodland composition

- Total area: 2047.7 ha 100%
- Woodland: 1375.1 ha 67.1%
- Open: 562.8 ha 27.5%
- Felled: 52.6 ha 2.6%
- Agricultural: 56.2 ha 2.7%
- Other: 1.0 ha 0.1%

The Cheviots are overwhelmingly coniferous with 98% of species being conifer (Figure 1). This reflects the original planting aim of producing an economic timber resource. While diversification through felling and restocking is already well advanced in Kidland, a lack of access to Uswayford means this block has remained as planted in the 1970s and 1980s as a purely even-aged conifer block. Species are dominated by Sitka Spruce, which is well suited to the climate and soils of the region, providing an average spruce yield class of 12 across the blocks (Map 3). The small amount of broadleaf cover is limited to the valleys and gullies.

The largest proportion of the plantation in the plan is from the 1975-86, with 48% of the forested ground being planted in this period (Figure 2). Most of this even age crop is situated in Uswayford due to a lack of operational access. Recent operations in Kidland have started to address the uneven age distribution of the forest, with 26% of the forest being replanted since the year 2000. The age distribution is becoming increasingly uneven between the Uswayford and Kidland blocks, because the lack of operational access to Uswayford & Hepden Burn has prevented active management and restructuring here. As such, while Kidland has been going through a process of restructuring over the last twenty years to increase age diversity, Uswayford continues as an overwhelmingly 1970s and 1980s forest.

The forests are vulnerable to wind owing to their relatively high elevation and exposure, the average wind hazard class is 4 across the blocks, representing a high risk of windthrow. The lowest wind hazard class is 3, which is still a moderate risk, and the highest is 5, which is very high (Map 4).

2021/22 Windblow

The Cheviots forests were affected by the winter storm season of 2021-2022, with 265 ha of damage across all the blocks. This damage was distributed evenly between the two main blocks. Kidland was exposed to 133 ha of windblow, while the figure for Uswayford and Hepden Burn was 132 ha. Partly, this reflects the aging composition of the blocks, with the oldest stands getting beyond their terminal top heights for the exposure value of the site (Figure 4). Additionally, the wind came from an unusual direction in relation to root development and stability and at an incredibly high force.

The species affected by the wind damage are broadly in line with the overall species composition, with Sitka Spruce making up 74% of the blown crop. Proportionally more other conifers, predominantly larch, were affected by the storm than the overall species composition would suggest, with 14% of windblow occurring in other conifer stands, despite these composing just 7% of the forests, (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Cheviots Current Species Composition

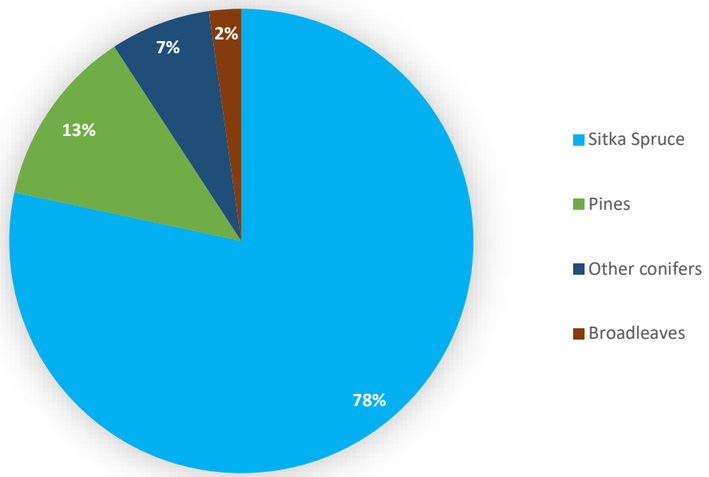


Figure 2. Age Distribution of Cheviots

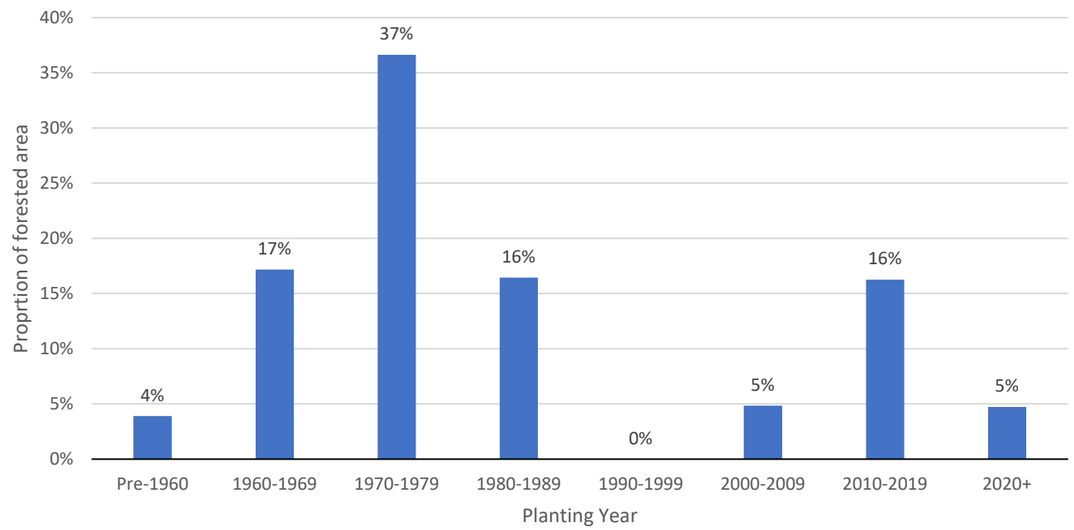


Figure 3. Windblown Species in Cheviots

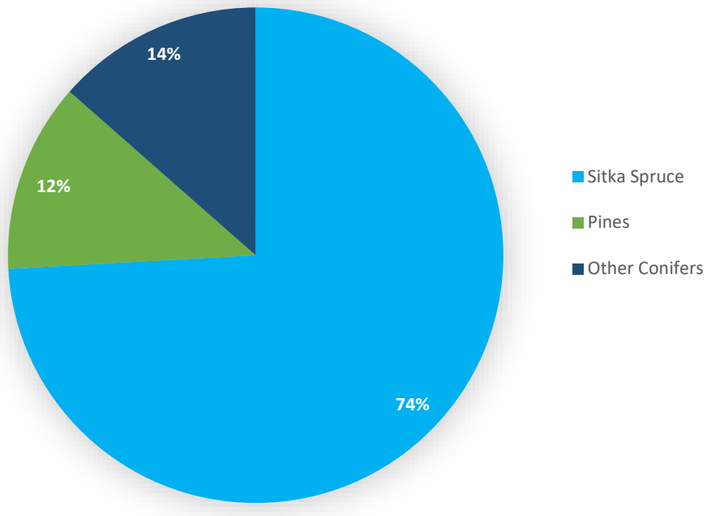
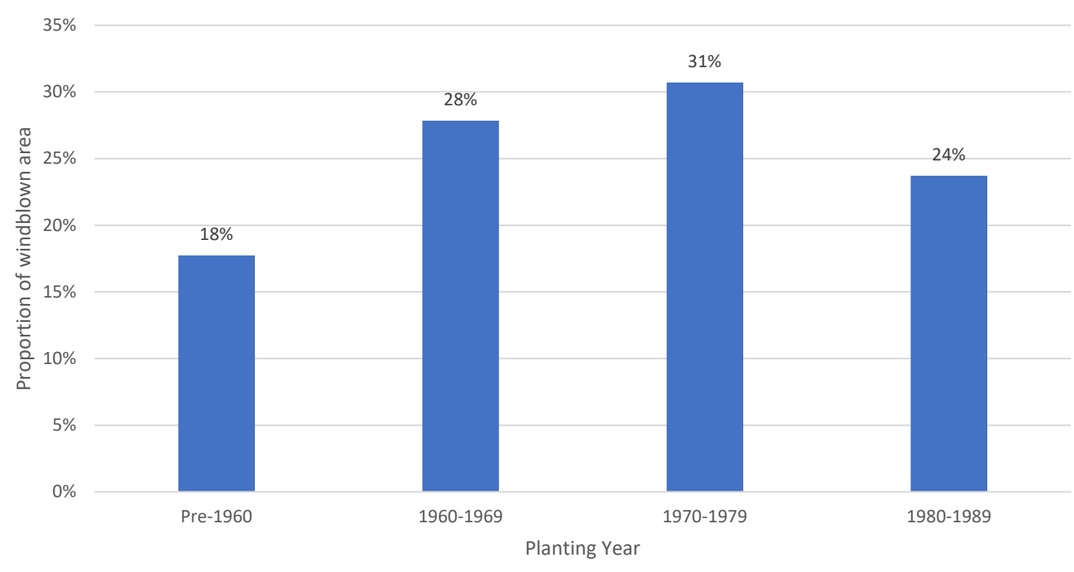


Figure 4. Age Distribution of Windblow in Cheviots



Landscape and topography

The altitude over the sites varies from 210 m entering Kidland forest along the Alwin valley to over 600 m above sea level on the hill tops. Kidland is dominated by a series of steep valleys with rounded ridges and hilltops whereas Uswayford is more characteristic of the gentler rolling landform of the Cheviots. Soil types vary with altitude with skeletal soils generally dominating the steep valley sides and gleyed/peaty soils covering the upper plateaus.

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) are the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that makes one area of landscape different from another. Kidland and Uswayford are classified in the Cheviot Rounded Hills LCA (Northumberland National Park Authority, Update of Landscape Character Assessment for Northumberland National Park, 2019).

Key characteristics of significance to the plan for the Cheviots include:

- Open rounded topography which has a visual simplicity and flowing form and offers panoramic unbroken views.
- Extensive semi-natural habitats including heather and grass moorland and blanket bog.
- Wildness and remoteness derived from the area's upland character, limited accessibility and lack of overt man-made features.
- Ecosystem Services include food provision, climate regulation through carbon storage, soil erosion and water quality/flow and a range of cultural services related to the qualities listed above.

Guidelines for land management of forestry and woodland include:

- Future felling of coniferous plantations should seek to reduce their visual dominance on open moorland areas and upper reaches of valleys, by removal or replacement with broadleaved planting.
- Removal of uncharacteristic woodland planting, particularly coniferous shelterbelts on the valley floor and lower valley slopes, is also desirable in the long term. Where removal is not possible, opportunities should be sought to soften the impact of these woodlands by replanting with native species or by linking the woodlands to those within the tributary valleys.
- Encourage the growth of birch and rowan regeneration particularly where it accentuates craggy outcrops. Protect from overgrazing where necessary.

While neither forest is close to an area of significant population, the siting of the forests in the Northumberland National Park, general topography, the surrounding areas of open access land and public rights of way mean that both forests are subject to high levels of visual scrutiny. Uswayford can be seen by hill walkers from a number of key receptor sites, including the Pennine Way, and Salters Road, two popular rights of way which provide extensive views over the forest.

In contrast Kidland is less visible from popular routes, and the undulating topography means that less of the forest is visible at once. But its presence as a forest is visible from a greater distance.

Natural Environment

Designated Sites

A summary of the statutory and non-statutory conservation and landscape designations that coincide with this plan is given in Table 1.

Forestry England has an objective to work to bring Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated features into favourable condition. Currently the features related to this plan are both in favourable status. There are actions within this plan to increase the presence of riparian woodland adjacent to the SSSI, which would enhance the biological value of the rivers.

Table 1: Designations

Designation	Influence on Site	Actions required
SSSI, River Coquet & Coquet Valley Woodlands; ref 1060724	SSSI within Kidland forest on Allerhope Burn, River Alwin & Meadow Sike, Unit 6 (39.53 ha). Favourable status, 25/08/2010. Uswayford has indirect link via Usway Burn, 9.2 km to the river Coquet at Shillmoor, Unit 1. Favourable status, 25/08/2010.	No specific actions needed, both units in favourable condition. Opportunity to develop riparian woodland along river system. Preventing silt movement from the forest to river system is the priority action when planning forest operations
Northumberland National Park	The full area of the forest plan is within the Northumberland National Park.	Consult with the Park on the development of the forest plan.
Local Wildlife Site (LWS), Upper Breamish and Bloodybush Edge. Hill and moorland habitats.	The open habitats in the upper margins of Uswayford and Kidland are included within this designation. The proposal for a new forest road connecting the two forests does impact on this site.	Survey the habitats within the proposed development corridor. Maintain the areas as open habitats, free of non-native conifers. Accept naturally regenerating native broadleaves.
Local Wildlife Site, Allerhope Burn. River and hill ground habitats.	Adjacent to the forest. Partly encompassed by the SSSI but extends to take in some private hill ground.	None which are specific to this LWS.
Scheduled Monument, Memmerkirk Chapel	Scheduled monument within Kidland forest.	Maintain the scheduled monument plan and check that site management actions are completed.

Habitats & Species

The forests in this plan hold a diverse range of habitats and species. Summaries of the most notable features are presented in Tables 2 and 3 and have been drawn from site survey and historical records.

The most significant change proposed in this forest plan relates to the restoration of peat bog from coniferous forest. This plan proposes to move 203 ha of coniferous forest into a peat bog restoration programme.

In 2022 the UK government published a policy approach for restoring towards forests on peat[1]. This policy set out a decision-making process to help forest managers determine where best to change from forest and restore to peat bogs. The policy was presented as a voluntary approach where the restoration phase is not supported by additional funding. At the time of writing this plan, the cost of restoration is not supported through carbon funding conservation schemes, therefore, the choices of where and when to restore need to focus on land where it will deliver the best, most sustainable results. Our strategy for peat restoration in this forest plan is presented in the separate paper, 'Cheviots Forest – forest to bog restoration opportunities'.

Table 2: Habitat priorities

Habitat	Objectives & Actions supported by this forest plan
Deep peat; extensive in Uswayford. Existing open peat-based habitat of c87 ha around upland boundary of the forests.	Maintain the existing open habitat in good condition. Approximately 203 ha for forest plantation to be moved in to a peat bog restoration programme over the period 2027 to 2041.
Upland open habitat in Kidland. Wet & dry heaths. Acid grassland.	Maintain the areas as open habitats, free of non-native conifers. Accept naturally regenerating native broadleaves.
Riparian habitats: Usway burn, Clay burn & tributaries. Hepden Burn & tributaries. Allerhope and Yoke burns & tributaries.	Freshwater riparian habitats to be in good condition on our land, with no adverse effects from the forests. Continue monitoring of water quality in Uswayford and Hepden Burn. A programme of water sampling began in February 2021 and has provided a baseline for future comparison. Sampling continued in to 2022. Development of riparian native woodland along the tributaries. Non-compliant drainage systems to be blocked during restocking operations.

Table 3: Species and actions supported by this forest plan

Species	Records	Actions supported by this forest plan
Red Squirrel, Schedule 5 & 6 WACA 1981	RSNE Sightings recorded. Cone feeding survey 2001-2021.	Uswayford & Kidland are designated as a red squirrel stronghold. Change of habitat from forest to bog in Uswayford does reduce the habitat for red squirrels. Kidland will maintain a forest structure.
Badger, Protection of Badgers Act 1992	Three records of setts, 2015-22.	Protect existing setts. Coupe checks prior to operations & apply appropriate mitigation.
Brown Hare, Schedule 5 WACA 1981, UK BAP priority species	Forestry England records in Kidland, 2011.	Commitment to woodland edge and grassland habitat provides opportunities for this species.
Goshawk, Schedule 1 WACA 1981	Records from 2015-22. Breeding confirmed within the forest	Maintaining a diverse mature forest canopy will continue to support breeding territories.
Peregrine Falcon, Schedule 1 WACA 1981	No records in the forest, but forest within impact zone of known nest.	Forest habitats provides a productive hunting resource for this species.
Pine Marten, Schedule 5 WACA 1981	Sightings of animals recorded in 2017 & 2018.	A monitoring scheme using den boxes is in place. The forest structure will support a small population.
Otter, European Protected Species, Schedule 5 WACA 1981	Otter known to use the watercourses. Potential for holt/couch sites in the forest riparian zones.	Creating better riparian woodland zones should benefit the habitat value for this species; feeding and holt opportunities. Coupe checks prior to operations & apply appropriate mitigation.
Adder, Schedule 5 WACA 1981	Breeding site. Old records from 1999.	Maintain suitable habitat. Open space and glade network provides good habitat. Seek new records to confirm presence/absence.
Small Heath butterfly	North East records centre.	UK BAP 2010 species. FDP provides for open habitats. Further guidance needed to provide guidance on priority zones.
Brown Trout	North East records centre.	UK BAP 2010 species. Habitat indicator. The forest plan will promote improvement to the riparian woodland zone.
Lesser Redpoll	FE survey 2022. Breeding confirmed.	Bird of conservation concern status 2021. Forest will continue to provide essential habitat.
Tree Pipit	FE survey 2022. Probably breeding in forest.	Bird of conservation concern status 2021. Forest will continue to provide suitable habitat.
Nightjar	UK BAP 2010 species. 1 record from 2015.	The clearfell system produces temporary open space. This is well utilised by nightjar for breeding in other forests.
Salmon	One record for Salmon in the Trows burn, 2024.	Development of riparian woodland and reduction of silting risks.

Red Squirrels

The Cheviot forests are designated as Red squirrel reserves. These forests have supported a small, self-contained population that is quite isolated from other woodland. The advantage of this position is that it made it less likely that grey squirrels would reach the forests, whilst

[1] DEFRA, Forestry Commission, Natural England. 2022. Decision support framework for peatland protection, the establishment of new woodland and re-establishment of existing woodland on peatland in England.

the disadvantage is that a small population is vulnerable to habitat change and recruitment of new animals.

The 2021/22 winter storm damage substantially altered the forest structure, affecting a large proportion of the older age classes which would be most valuable as food resources for squirrels. As a result, it is expected that there will be a substantial reduction in the population through natural causes which is difficult to remedy in the short term.

The proposals to move 203 ha of forest into a peat restoration programme creates a conflict of interest between priority conservation features. The reduction in forest cover will make Uswayford less productive for squirrels. However, the move towards restoring the peat habitat will benefit a broader range of species. A detailed analysis of the effect of the changes on red squirrels is given in the 'Cheviots Forest Plan - Red Squirrel Strategy 2023'.

The forest plan seeks to increase the diversity of the retained forest cover, which will improve the overall habitat resource for the remaining squirrel population. If neighbouring land owners can be encouraged to develop additional woodland around these forests that would also increase the prospect for supporting the red squirrel population.

Historic environment

Memmerkirk Chapel (List Entry Number: 1006489) is the scheduled remains of a chapel dating from the 14th to 17th century in Kidland. This site is well documented and covered by a management plan agreed with Historic England. There are no scheduled monuments (SMs) within Uswayford Forest.

Memmerkirk Chapel is situated in the fork of the confluence of the Sting Burn and the Yoke Burn on an area of raised ground (Grid Reference, NT 921 123). Thought to have been a chapel for the 14th-17th century shielings, there is little evidence to substantiate its existence until 1650. Tradition holds that this building was a medieval chapel built by the monks of Newminster Abbey, although it is most likely just a farmhouse. The building was excavated by archaeologists in 1962. They found a long narrow roughly built building, with pottery dating to the 14th century. No finds were made of a religious nature and there was no sign of features that might be found in a chapel or church.

The settlement here survives as remains approximately 14.6 m east-west and 4.72 m north-south. The area is divided into three compartments with a circular rampart to the north and east and the steep stream sides forming the natural protection to the south. The principal threats and issues to the site are regenerating trees, forest road maintenance, public access, and watercourse erosion. The monument management plan discusses monitoring and management of this site. Historic England will be consulted if any operations are planned within the risk zone (20 m) of the monument.

Several non-scheduled sites exist within the plan area indicated on Map 6. These include:

- Boundary and standing stones along the eastern boundary of Uswayford and the north-east boundary of Kidland.
- Drover's route of 'Salters Road' which passes through Uswayford is the name given to part of a route believed to have been used by salt traders during the medieval period.
- Remains of a distillery, from the Napoleonic Wars can be found in Uswayford. Known as Rory's Still the site survives as a ruined rectangular building with the remains of a kiln at the west end.

Although none of these known features are scheduled, the sites are recorded on the Forestry England GIS dataset of historical records. These records and appropriate buffer areas around the features are used to generate constraints maps when forest operations take place to ensure protection.

The ability to survey under dense tree cover is very difficult and whilst every effort is made to identify features of significance during the planning phase features may not be visible until work has commenced. As felling progresses any newly discovered sites are recorded, and notification made to the county archaeologist. To help address these issues, Forestry England have commissioned a LIDAR survey of the forests to be undertaken in 2022. LIDAR data will be valuable in the screening sites for historic interest prior to operations commencing.

Communities and recreation

Forestry England promotes informal recreation such as walking, cycling, picnicking, and studying wildlife in in the Nation's Forests. We also seek to provide opportunities for more specialist users and for events when this is compatible with site conditions and other management objectives; for example, annual downhill mountain biking and running events in Kidland. The only formal provision for recreation use is in Kidland at Milkhope, where the only inhabitable property (within Forestry England ownership) is leased to Astley Community High School for use as an outdoor centre.

Kidland is dedicated under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 as open access, except for a small area. Kidland is regularly used by the local community for walking, cycling and horse riding and has a good system of internal public rights of way linking to the wider countryside. The forest is a unique resource for leisure and recreation, making a significant contribution to public health and well-being.

In contrast Uswayford, although freehold, is not dedicated for open access due to reservations within the original conveyance at the time of acquisition; however, open areas of the forest were classified for open access land under the mountain, moor, or heath mapping. Consequently, access into Uswayford is restricted to public rights of way and the principle of permissive access for pedestrians on the Nation's forest estate.

Pests and diseases

Roe deer are resident in the area and there is potential for damage to both tree crops and other habitat types through browsing and grazing. An annual cull is taken by Forestry England wildlife rangers; however, evidence from areas of broadleaf regeneration suggest that the cull level is not yet sufficient to grow broadleaves without protection in the form of tree shelters or deer fencing.

Sheep incursion is also a contributory factor to the high browsing pressure, particularly in Kidland, and will also limit potential for unprotected broadleaf tree growth.

Grey squirrels are not present in these forests, with the nearest record of a grey squirrel sighting in West Wood, Harbottle, 7 km from Kidland and 12 km from Uswayford. (Coquetdale Squirrel Group 2019).

The Great Spruce Bark Beetle is present in the Kielder Forest main block 15 km from the Cheviots plan area, however it has not yet been detected in these forests.

Rabbits and hares are present in the forests and contribute towards browsing pressure.

Larch is at threat from the disease *Phytophthora Ramorum* and consequently is not being planted as a primary species. The forests are currently located in a low-risk zone where larch will be accepted as a future component where it is regenerating naturally and may be planted as a smaller component during restock operations. Premature felling of larch has not been programmed into the forest plan. Should an outbreak occur, there will be a legal obligation to fell the infected trees through a Statutory Plant Health Notice, issued by the Forestry Commission.

Access and roading

Kidland and Kidland Lee are accessed from the public road network just south of the village of Alwinton, at Clennell, which is on the agreed routes network identified through the Timber Transport Forum and the local authorities. In contrast, Uswayford and Hepden Burn currently have limited access, which, in turn has restricted opportunities for forest management in these blocks to date. Future forest management of Uswayford is dependent on the provision of suitable access into the forest.

The only vehicular access into Uswayford and Hepden Burn follows the minor public road from Alwinton to link with the un-metalled (gravel) access track to Uswayford Farm. The route, 15 km, of which 3.7 km is un-metalled, passes through Trows, Barrowburn, Linbriggs and Alwinton with shared public access through to the MOD Otterburn range. There has been no previous use of this route for significant removal of timber. The un-metalled section requires upgrading and the suitability of the public road in terms of geometry, width and bearing capacity is not ideal considering the volume of timber due to be harvested. Due to the issues presented by upgrading this road, and the impact on the community of Alwinton and the hamlets on the existing route of timber extraction, alternative routes to access Uswayford have been assessed.

At the time of writing this plan four route options for Uswayford remain under appraisal. The route ultimately selected will be approved separately through the normal planning development processes.

Kidland has an extensive internal forest road network which has been used and upgraded since restructuring of the forest began in 2002. Approximately 20,000 tonnes/annum from the Forestry England holding in Kidland has been removed using the forest road network which links with an approved haulage route along the public road from Clennell.

As restructuring continues, new roading requirements have been identified to aid operational delivery (Table 5 & Map 10). This plan identifies four sections of roading required in Kidland to access future harvesting sites and ensure their future management. Three of these roads are to facilitate access to coupes which sustained wind damage during the 2021/22 winter storm season.

Approximately 1300 m of new forest road has also been identified for accessing Hepden Burn, a small plantation to the southwest of Uswayford which currently has no internal road network.

Delivery of any route will be subject to separate applications to the planning authority and Forest Services through Prior Notification and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA).

These roads will be dependent a final assessment of need at the point of operational planning, therefore, the list could change. The indicative route of these roads is shown on Map 10 for reference only. Stone for the roading will sourced from an existing quarry in Kidland forest and third party commercial quarries.

Table 5: Roading proposed in this forest plan

Map 10 Ref	Description	Length (m)	Indicative Build year
A	New road at Hepden Burn	1450	2027-31
C	Forwarder track - Deep Sike	522	2037-41
D1	New road – Cushat Law, Kidland	944	2024-25
D2	New road Cushat Law, Kidland, phase 2	475	2025-26
E1	New road – Wholhop Hill, Kidland, phase 1	944	2027-31
E2	New road – Wholhope Hill, Kidland, phase 2	296+	2037-41
F1	New road – Inner Hill, Kidland	956	2023-24
F2	New road – Inner Hill, Kidland	625	2023-24
G	Forwarder track, Inner Hill East, Kidland	268	2025
H1, H2	Part upgrade & part new road, Horse Close, Kidland	938	2024
H3	New road forwarder route to access Wholhope Burn	599	2024

Part 2 Review of Previous Plan

Table 6: Previous plan objectives

Objective	Has objective been met?	Comments
Optimise economic value of recent clearfelling and existing conifer plantations through implementation of the harvesting and restocking plan.	Yes	Programme followed in Kidland, with some acceleration to make up for lack of timber from Uswayford. No harvesting in Uswayford due to insufficient access. One amendment to substitute timber from Uswayford for a Kidland coupe.
The combined production plan for the forests means that the total volume of timber leaving the forest does not exceed the annual level harvested from the previous plan for Kidland to reduce the impact of timber haulage on local communities and visitors.	Yes	Prior to Storm Arwen, production was at predicted volumes. Additional timber from Kidland offset lack of volume from Uswayford to balance production. Storm Arwen has forced a re-write of the production forecast. It is imperative that Uswayford is opened up for production.
Continue restocking Sitka spruce through at least one more rotation.	Yes	Productive conifers, including Sitka Spruce have been planted for additional rotation in Kidland, this amounts to 143 ha of spruce planted in Kidland during last ten years. Opportunities to diversify species need to be explored.
Seek to thin crops with a DAMs score less than 17. Where access permits thinning to be undertaken with no net forest cost or the net cost is outweighed by the resulting improvement in the timber quality of the final crop.	No	No thinning operations have occurred in either block. While Kidland has a substantial area with a DAMS score under 17, and Uswayford a smaller area, the majority current crop is of an age which is not appropriate to thin and on steep slopes, which inhibit access.
Management of Kidland and Uswayford as a single red squirrel reserve to increase robustness of future populations across the forests.	Yes	Forest Plan has provided suitable forest habitat for red squirrel up until the 2021 storms. Wind damage has compromised squirrel holding capacity. For further detail see 'Cheviots Forest Plan Red Squirrel Strategy 2023'.
Historic environment and archaeological features will be safeguarded during forest operations.	Yes	Historic Environment features highlighted during operational planning procedures and safeguarded during operations.
Protection of freshwater habitats.	Yes	SSSI Units in Kidland and downstream of Uswayford deemed favourable during last condition assessment by Natural England. Water quality monitoring from April 2021 onward shows low levels of nutrient enrichment, and stable soil conditions in four sites across Uswayford and Hepden Burn.
Enhancement of riparian corridors.	Yes	11 ha of broadleaves planted in riparian corridors across Kidland and Kidland Lee since last plan review. No restocking in Uswayford.
Upper forest margin habitat creation.	No	No forest margin planting has taken place during the plan period.
Creation of open mixed broadleaved/native William's Cleugh Pine habitat.	No	No, as felling the existing crop in the areas proposed for this habitat type has not taken place, due lack of access to Uswayford.
Improve the internal and external attractiveness of the woodland through restructuring and species choice.	Partly	Kidland felling has progressed as per Forest Plan, Uswayford felling has been delayed owing to insufficient access.

Part 3 Analysis and Concept

The factors outlined in Part 1 present various opportunities and constraints. These are summarised below:

Table 7: Analysis of opportunities and issues

Factor	Opportunities	Issues
Management type	Clearfell regime is suitable for continued growing of productive conifers. Opportunity after restocking in windfirm areas to create future Low Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS) coupes.	Large areas of windblow require harvesting in the next 12 months in order to maximise recoverable timber and minimise losses to public funds. Windblown edges have opened other areas which may no longer be stable in high wind events, risk of further windblow. Wind hazard rating and steep slopes mean that large areas of these blocks are unsuitable for LISS management.
Natural Environment	Peat guidance published in 2022 provides opportunity to assess areas of conifer on deep peat soils which have restoration potential, without the need for compensatory planting. A peat restoration programme is proposed. Water quality improvements through improved riparian zones, protection of water quality through following forest and water guidelines.	Reduction in forest size at Uswayford will have a negative effect on red squirrel habitat. Areas of fallen trees from the 2021/22 storm season have the potential to increase sediment leaching into watercourses as root plates and timber decay.
Historic Environment	2022 LIDAR Survey will provide additional information on historic features. Opportunity to provide online interpretation for Memmerkirk Chapel on the Forestry England Kidland Forest website.	Natural regeneration of trees colonising sites; maintenance schedules.
Access and Roading	There is good access to majority of coupes in Kidland and a suitable route for onward transport of timber. Opportunity of new road will allow access to Uswayford for the first management interventions since planting.	New roading required to access windblow and coupes in Kidland. New road required to access Uswayford and Hepden Burn. Road upgrade required in Uswayford. Leasehold of Uswayford reduces opportunity for public access.
Pests and disease		Larch threatened by Phytophthora Ramorum, reducing opportunity to plant this species in the future. Due to browsing pressure, deer control is essential to increase species diversity, and may need to be combined with additional fencing. Sheep incursion poses the same risks to increased diversity as do deer.

Current species	Both forests have good productivity and are a valuable source of productive timber with the species currently planted growing well, average yields of 12 across all blocks.	Extensive regeneration of spruce in Kidland requires management to successfully establish alterative species.
Future forest tree species	Opportunity to introduce new species to Uswayford once operation access gained. Continue improving species diversity in Kidland.	Soils and climate limit the number of alternative species suitable for planting in Uswayford.
Landscape & topography	Opportunity to restore peatland habitat in Uswayford, bringing the forest margin back from the eastern slopes, in line with local LCA.	Challenging slopes to work in areas of Kidland which require specialist equipment and skills to harvest timber. Uswayford visible in the landscape from key receptor points such as Pennine Way and Salters Road.

Appraisal of Opportunities and Constraints

1. Access – the highest priority is forest road access into Uswayford to harvest windblown timber, commence the restructuring and proposed habitat restoration programmes. The largest block on this is obtaining agreement to use the county road. Additional internal forest roads are required in Kidland to allow windblown timber to be recovered, but none of these are considered difficult to achieve.
2. Peat – assess sites in line with new peat guidance. Develop the programme to convert c60 ha of forest to peat bog restoration, acknowledging this will reduce productive area of forestry. Assess the economic effect and adjustment required in the forest business plan.
3. Squirrel – need to maintain a suitable forest structure in Kidland for red squirrels and continue to monitor. The plan acknowledges the loss of squirrel habitat in Uswayford owing to peat restoration.
4. Forest structure – Commencing felling in Uswayford will bring forward the restructuring programme which will allow coupes to be designed that make the forest more robust to climate change and storm damage.
5. Forest structure – storm damage. The 2021/22 storm damage in Kidland has had a negative impact on the forest structure, but equally it has opened up opportunities to bring forward change. Once cleared, the Wholhope valley can be restocked to a zone with a high proportion of native broadleaved woodland within the term of this forest plan. Clearing the storm damage in Uswayford is dependent on obtaining a solution to accessing the county road.

Part 4 Objectives and Proposals

The following objectives have been identified based on Forestry England National Policy, 'Growing the future: 2021-2026'.

Table 8: Forestry England goals supported by this plan

Growing the future vision	How this Forest Plan delivers
For Wildlife *'Continuing action to protect, improve and build the resilience of our most special habitats, including ancient woodlands and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.'* *'The rich, diverse and connected habitats in the nation's forests will continue to be improved and enhanced by our sustainable forest and land management.'*	The forests provide habitat for species that find it difficult to thrive in the wider landscape, including red squirrels, goshawk, tree pipit, and pine marten. SSSI River Coquet & Coquet Valley Woodlands; maintain units in favourable condition by increasing the scale of the native wooded riparian zones. Protect water quality by following forest and water guidelines, expansion of riparian zones, restoration of peatland habitats and blocking of drains. Use of internal designations, 90.73 ha of long-term retention, minimum intervention area of 19.22 ha, and 14.63 ha of natural reserves. These categories contribute to species and age diversity. This is an increase of 9 ha of designations to the previous plan.
For People *'We will increase the diversity of visitors to the nation's forests.'* *'we will provide public access to all our forests and woodlands where there are no legal or safety restrictions…'*	Continue to maintain current access provision for low-key recreational use, ensure rights of way are kept clear. Memmerkirk Chapel Scheduled monument in favourable condition. Update of scheduled monument management plan in 2023 provides opportunity for public interpretation of the site on the Forestry England website. Protect historic sites during planning and operations.
For Climate *'We will offer over one million cubic metres of sustainable timber to market each year, maintain world-class forest management practices, externally accredited to international standards.'* *'greater structural and tree species diversity in the nation's forests to support adaptation to climate change and securing a sustainable timber supply for future generations.'* *'Continuing to restore and help our habitats and landscapes to adapt, which will support their role in carbon absorption and biodiversity resilience and tell the story of its place in productive forestry.'*	This plan seeks to harvest windblown timber within the next period, minimising economic and carbon losses. Continued use of productive conifers in appropriate areas to ensure the forest remain financially viable and provide timber to the local markets. Develop native woodland on the slopes and riparian zones where it can increase benefit and replace high input conifer plantation. Ensure we make the best decisions for the land by using the most up to date guidance to determine where to restore peatland habitats and where to maintain forest cover. Sets the objective to commence a 25 year programme of peat restoration in Uswayford.

Part 5 New Forest Plan Outcomes

Natural Capital

Forestry England interprets the natural capital of the forest plan to be the sum of the parts that make up the forest landscape: soil, water, carbon, habitats and biodiversity. These elements provide the ecosystem services that we manage to derive timber, food, water, recreation and all the other benefits we enjoy in our forests and woodlands.

The broad changes to land use composition in this plan changes are:

Land Use	Previous Plan (ha)	New Plan (ha)	Change
Woodland	1427.7	1316.0	-111.7
Managed Open	619.0	260.1	+111.7
Successional open	-	470.6	
Other	1.0	1.0	
Total	2047.7	2047.7	

This change is largely driven by the proposal for peatland restoration in Uswayford and the realignment of coupe boundaries.

The introduction of the classification of successional open habitat recognises that natural processes include the recruitment of trees through natural regeneration. Under this category, the objective is to accept native broadleaved trees, but continue to plan for the removal of non-native conifers through maintenance or standard felling operations, ideally before the trees reach 20 years in age, to reduce seeding capacity and loss of habitat objectives through canopy shading. Managed open habitats would expect to have non-native conifer regeneration removed before it reaches 10 years old.

Nature Conservation - Soils

Peat bogs are a priority habitat in the UK[2]. They are important for the flora and fauna that they support, but also because they store reserves of carbon locked up in anaerobic conditions. As fully functioning entities they can continue to absorb carbon from the atmosphere and contribute to climate regulation. Forests also have a strong role to play in carbon sequestration, but plantations that are growing poorly on peat they are more likely to be a cause of carbon loss rather than gain.

This forest plan identified approximately 60 ha of Sitka spruce plantation that is growing at less than yield class 10, which also has a good restoration potential when assessed against the Forest Research model. This has been allocated to restoration.

Forestry England has identified an additional c127 ha that has potential for future restoration, but this currently sits outside the scope of the national open habitats policy[3] and the European deforestation regulations[4]. Forestry England will retain the aspiration to expand the area of restored peat in future iterations of the forest plan.

The 60 ha targeted for restoration will be felled in the period 2032-36 and restoration will follow straight on after that. A further 48 ha will be managed through this plan as forest-on-bog by working with natural regeneration of Sitka spruce. Another 79 ha will be restocked to mixed conifer/broadleaves and retained as a potential candidate for restoration in the future.

Carbon

The forests store a large amount of carbon in timber and in the soil profiles. The carbon in timber is moved on into the product supply chain where it can continue to be locked up for a period of time, which is determined by the life cycle of the different products it is used to create. The forest restocking programme ensures that by replacing felled timber quickly the carbon capture cycle continues as a positive.

The programme of peat bog restoration will reduce the stock of forest carbon Uswayford. The national peat policy recognises that where high production conifer plantations are not achieving a minimum growth rate of yield class 10[5], then the carbon budget involved in establishing, felling and restocking these will be negative and it is appropriate to return the land to a peat bog, or native woodland on peat. Peat bogs have a very low rate of sequestering peat (typically less than 2 tonnes/ha/year), compared to forests, but the real value of a bog is that it retains carbon already captured over the last few millennia. This plan identifies 60 ha of plantation for peat restoration. The balance of the original restoration area (127 ha) will generate c58,674 tonnes/CO2/e of stored carbon in timber over 50 years.

Nature Conservation – Species

The change in forest structure will impact on other fauna, in particular red squirrels (Sciurus vulgaris).

It is difficult to score the relative values of the species, but some such as tree nesting birds, will be affected by the reduction in tree cover. Equally, they could benefit from the development of a more diverse structure created though the development of a greater proportion of native broadleaved woodland. The bird species recorded in Uswayford in 2022 were all typical of forests. Birds such as goshawk (Accipiter gentilis) depend on forests for breeding territories. The Cheviots forests do hold at least one breeding pair in Kidland and, the forest structure to be retained in Uswayford will be sufficient to provide one other territory. Crossbills were recorded in the forests, but these are a highly mobile species that will cover a large range. So, the reduction in the conifer component in Uswayford is unlikely to cause a significant impact.

The impact on red squirrels will be significant. The carrying capacity of the combined forests in this landscape unit is already low, albeit significant in regional terms given the status of the species. The population was already disadvantaged by the winter 2021 storms that reduced the carrying capacity down to around under 180 animals through the loss of the most mature

[2] 2021, England Peat Action Plan, UK Government.
[3] 2010, When to convert woods & forests to open habitat in England, Forestry Commission.
[4] Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 on deforestation free products.
[5] Yield class expresses timber growth as a number of cubic metres/hectare/year: thus YC10 equates to 10m3/ha/yr of timber accumulated.

conifer stands. The proposals for peat restoration in Uswayford reduce the forest habitat by c60 ha which will mean that this forest will sustain a very small number of animals.

The use of natural reserves and minimum intervention areas were part of the strategy to provide older forest habitat for wildlife, but these were heavily damaged by the 2021 storms. It will take another 20 years or more to recreate a similar range of habitat opportunities as trees move back up through the age classes.

The overall increase in open and transitional (native woodland/scrub edges) habitats coupled with the intent to increase the proportion of broadleaved forest will provide a greater diversity of habitats for birds such as the tree pipits, and insects.

Water

The proposals in this plan increase the quantity of native woodland, with particular emphasis on the riparian zones will provide benefits to the river systems. Riparian woodland contributes to an increase in biodiversity and habitat improvement in the insect populations and the shade that controls water temperatures during peak summer heat, both of which benefit fish populations. These woods also act as a buffer to sediment and other potential river pollutants from storm flows and run-off. Once established, these woodlands are likely to be classified for minimal intervention which add to the protection the watercourses from more intensive plantation management.

Long term, the peat restoration proposals will improve the water holding capacity of those soils. Properly functioning peat bogs do contribute well to storing and regulating water flows and can also reduce the amount of sediment and dissolved carbon reaching the river system. Restored peat bogs can also contribute to improved water quality by reducing the quantity of dissolved organic carbon and other particulates that enter the water catchments. In the short term, during the first 5 years of the peat bog restoration, there is scope for increased levels of sediment and nutrient run-off whilst the surface vegetation established, and old drainage systems are re-engineered to disconnect them from the riparian system. A programme of water sampling was implemented in 2021 and will continue for the foreseeable future.

Forests also contribute strongly to water catchment quality. Inappropriate drainage techniques that were applied in the 1970s during the establishment of the first rotation are probably contributing to sediment flows. Water testing in Uswayford has reported whilst water quality is relatively good, there are indicators associated with mobile sediment; although the positioning of the test stations makes it difficult to separate out the influence of the forest from the wider, heavily grazed landscape. Nonetheless, additional project work will be commissioned during the restocking cycles for the second rotation, to re-engineer drainage systems and disconnect them from the rivers.

Timber Production

Timber production is a key objective of the Cheviots Forest plan, with Uswayford and Kidland both being managed as productive forests. In the immediate term the recovery of windblown timber from the winter 2021/22 storm events will comprise most of the timber recovered from these blocks.

Production forecasting software estimates a harvest of 105,510 m^3 over the next ten years. This represents 20 felling coupes, with an average size of 26 ha, of mostly Sitka Spruce. This figure represents an additional 26,150 m^3 over the usual harvesting programme, which is largely accounted for by the 2021/22 storm damage.

As trees lay on the ground they degrade, reducing the amount of usable product and the financial viability of harvesting. To reduce potential losses of public funds and harvestable product, this plan includes this short-term increase in production. It is not possible to offset this increase in production by delaying other coupes, as the majority of both blocks are overmature and require harvesting.

The ten-year period 2031-2041 will see a reduced harvest of 61,610 m^3 as felling returns to a more balanced production cycle. This forest plan continues the work of previous plans to restructure the first rotation forestry in both blocks, however this process won't be completed until 2041 in Kidland and 2046 in Uswayford.

The timber from Uswayford will be extracted and transported using the existing forest road and public road network. This will be subject to a timber transport plan to be agreed with Northumberland County Council, Highway team.

This forest plan does set a change in process for the management of Uswayford, which will impact on longer term timber production. This forest plan sees c500 ha of previously conifer crops moving into productive broadleaves, transitional habitats and peat restoration.

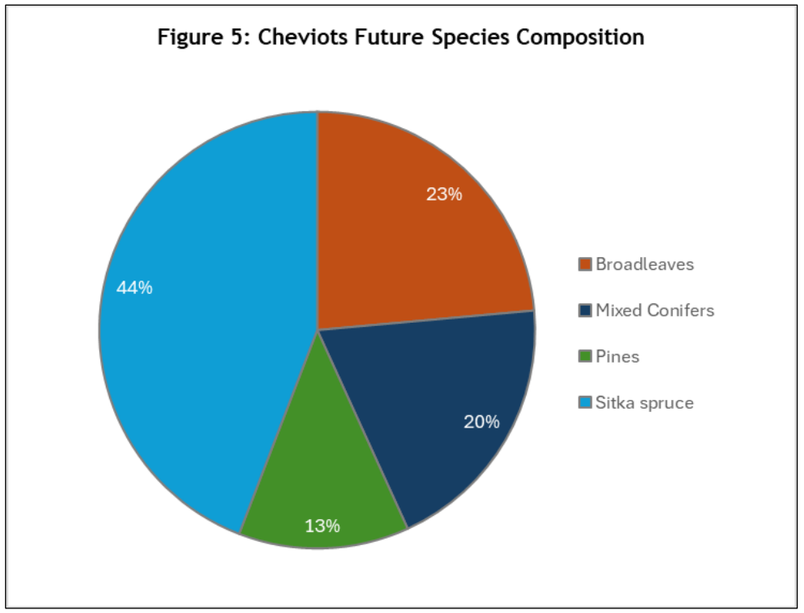
Future Species and Management

The felling proposals in this forest plan provide opportunity to diversify species, age class structure, and the adoption of more varied forest management types. This will be a gradual process, and it will be 25 years before the last of the first rotation crops are felled in Uswayford, and 20 years in Kidland.

The future species composition of the forested area based on the restock proposals contained in this plan is illustrated in Figure 5. The species composition shown below exceeds the requirements relating to dominant species in the UK Forestry Standard, with the proportion of pure Sitka spruce stands reducing from 78% to 45%.

Although soil types, ground conditions, topography and exposure all limit opportunities for species diversification in the Cheviots, this plan has identified areas where suitable for alternative species to complement the existing spruce crops (Map 12).

Forest Development Types (FDTs) are a new way of describing forest management, with a particular focus on the long-term vision for a forest stand. They encourage the greater use of mixtures and complex structures and are particularly useful in transitioning to more resilient woodlands. Forestry England have recently started integrating FDTs into planning and operations, and the species mixtures in this forest plan can be selected using the relevant development type.



Prescriptions for other conifer options encourage the use intimate mixtures of species ranging from Lodgepole pine/Sitka spruce to Norway spruce/Scots pine and suitable Firs. The increase in broadleaved planting encourages the use of mixtures of birch, alder and aspen to encourage development of a crop with productive potential as well as developing a longer-term seed source to increase natural regeneration.

The current dominance of Sitka Spruce in all blocks means there will be a legacy of regeneration of this species on many sites. This is a particular concern peat restoration or establishing transitional habitat is proposed and will require commitment to periodic interventions to remove spruce regeneration in these areas.

Land allocated to open habitats have all been given an objective for successional development, which means that it is acceptable for native woodland regeneration to establish. Sitka spruce regeneration is not part of that objective, and it is expected that this will be removed by including this habitat type in adjacent felling operations, or by running standalone biomass recovery operations. Removing small saplings and trees from open habitats is very expensive and will only be considered on the highest priority habitats.

In areas of different species, including broadleaves, Sitka regeneration will be tolerated as a minor component of the future crop and removed only where economically viable to do so, or where spruce regeneration is threatening the success of the stands' objective.

Successful establishment of alternative species in former Sitka Spruce areas will also be dependent on effective deer management to reduce browsing pressure and some use of supplementary deer fencing may be necessary. This will be further complemented by maintenance of boundary fencing to limit sheep incursion.

Since the first rotation forest was planted, improved Sitka Spruce varieties have been developed with more desirable timber characteristics. As such we would expect to see higher yields where we have chosen to replant with Sitka Spruce as the primary species.

The high wind hazard class of these forests, and the steep slopes of Kidland in particular, limit opportunity for thinning operations and the adoption of low impact silvicultural systems (LISS), meaning that management will still be primarily by a non-thin clearfell system.

As Uswayford is felled for the first time, opportunities for adoption of LISS management will be assessed, and potential areas evaluated in the 2034 revision of the Cheviots Forest Plan.

Wildfire Assessment

Awareness of the risks from wildfire has improved in recent years. Predominantly fires in the UK are started through human activity; directly and indirectly by land management operations (moor burning, hot machine engines) and through other activity from people through the careless use of fire for camping, cigarettes, tipped waste (glass) and deliberate arson. Fire can also start naturally from lightning strikes.

The nature and condition of the ground vegetation and the season of the year influence whether fire can take hold and travel over significant distance. The risk increases in the presence of dead dry vegetation and dry weather (Spring & early Winter, and hot, droughty summers). In this assessment the highest risk rating is ascribed to the upland open habitat and the adjacent forest that is felled and holding young restock under 15 years of age.

The assessment for the Cheviots forests (presented in Map 12) is advisory for the fire service and neighbouring landowners. The assessment highlights the areas of the forest that have the potential to hold a fire and indicate the scope for extent. In reading this information it is important to stress that the fine detail of landform, the presence of water courses, changes in habitat types and the weather on the day all play an important part in limiting the actual progress of a fire incident.

The assessment in this plan is only relevant to 2024 and will be updated by the forest team annually to reflect changes in forest structure.

The presence of windblow in this plan is of concern. In Kidland forest windblown stands are being cleared at the time of writing this plan. The clearance of the windblow in Uswayford is dependent on final agreement of the timber transport route with stakeholders. The risk rating for this habitat type will increase as the trees degrade and ground vegetation begins to establish.

Part 6 Monitoring Plan

The objectives identified in section 3 will be monitored using the processes summarised in Table 9.

Table 9: Monitoring plan		
Objective	**Criteria for success**	**Assessment**
For wildlife		
Red squirrels	Impact on squirrels is minimised. Retention of good squirrel habitat in Kidland is maintained through the prompt restocking of the storm damaged coupes.	Monitor the transition from windblow to restock. Review squirrel monitoring options.
Peat restoration	76 ha of peat under restoration in Uswayford prior to next plan in 2032, and 187 ha of peat restoration in long term Forest Plan ambition.	Progression of felling proposals and land use coding to open habitat recorded in Sub-Compartment Database.
Increased forest diversity	Increased proportion of tree species by area in sub-compartment database (SCDB).	Changes recorded in Sub-Compartment Database.
SSSIs	No negative impact on SSSIs from forestry operations.	Monitor site planning & operations. Monitor favourable condition status reported by Natural England.
Water quality	No negative impact on water quality from forestry operations, improved riparian zones through broadleaf planting.	Water quality monitoring. Record planting in Sub-Compartment Database.
For people		
Visual enhancement	Restructuring of forest to increase diversity and provide shapes more fitting to the landscape.	Changes recorded in Sub-Compartment Database.
Access for visitors	Public rights of way kept open.	Five-year Forest Plan review.
Scheduled Monument	Scheduled monument in good condition with agreed management plan with Historic England.	Scheduled monument management plan up to date, site not on heritage at risk register.
Historic features	Ensure historic features are routinely protected during operations.	Monitor site planning & operations.
For climate		
Timber production	Harvesting programme followed with 105,510m³ of timber produced over the plan period.	Harvesting and marketing records.
Windblow	Remove windblow timber where cost effective to do so.	Changes recorded in Sub-Compartment Database.
Sustainable economic regeneration	Continued restocking of productive conifer species to ensure a continued economic return and contribute towards management costs.	Five-year Forest Plan review.
Restructuring	Increased diversity in age class and species, increased use of mixtures.	Changes recorded in Sub-Compartment Database.

Part 7 UKWAS Compliance

The contribution of this Forest Plan to the key requirements of the Forest District's (forest management unit) compliance against the UK Woodland Assurance Standard at the date of submission for approval is summarised in Table 10.

Table 10: UKWAS Figures				
	Forest Plan Area (ha)	**Forest Plan Percentage**	**Forest District Area (ha)**	**Forest District Percentage**
Total area	2,047.1	100%	85,907	100%
Total wooded area	1,507.9	73.8%	59,109	68.8%
Area of conservation value*	125.9	6.2%	21,073	24.5%
Long-term Retentions and Low Impact Silvicultural Systems	119.6	5.9%	11,410	13.3%
Open space	792.1	38.7%	32,559	37.9%
Natural Reserves	14.7	1.7%	881	1.03%

*Area of conservation value is the sum of designated areas including any Ancient Woodland, Long-Term Retentions, Low Impact Silvicultural Systems, and areas of Natural Reserve.

The United Kingdom Forestry Standard (UKFS)

The UKFS is the reference standard for sustainable forest management in the UK. The UKFS is supported by a series of guidelines which outline the context for forestry in the UK and provides a basis for regulation and monitoring.

The Cheviots Forest Plan can demonstrate that the stated objectives in Part 4 are compatible with sustainable forest management. The plan provides a clear means to communicate the proposals and to engage with interested parties and serves as an agreed statement of intent against which implementation can be checked and monitored.

In addition to conforming to sustainable forest management principles UKFS is demonstrated in the following key areas:

Productivity	Productive potential is optimised through the delivery of the clearfell programme of existing conifer crops, and long-term thinning programme of broadleaf species, ecosystem services and other non-market benefits included in biodiversity, climate change mitigation, water, people, and landscape.
Structure	Long term future species composition: 45% single species, >26% native species and 38.7% open ground meets UKFS requirements. Long term structure will improve through expansion and linking of permanent broadleaved and open habitats.
Silvicultural	Low Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS) principles will be adopted where exposure values permit. This will improve species and age class diversity over time.

Biodiversity	Ecological connectivity achieved by extending and linking areas of native broadleaved woodland and open space will be enhanced ensuring that the area is managed with conservation and biodiversity as a major objective.
Climate change	Maintaining forest cover, increasing tree species diversity and introducing the peatland restoration programme will benefit forest resilience and carbon.
Landscape	The planning process refers to the Local Landscape Character Assessment to inform the appropriate woodland management and design.
Historic	Historic features are recognised and will be safeguarded in operational management.
People	The forest plan is consulted with individuals, the local community and organisations with an interest in the management of the area.
Water	Quality will be protected through adherence to Forest and Water guidelines as a minimum during any harvesting and forest management operations.

Longer term management proposals

The proposals in this plan set the vision and objectives for the forests over the next 25 years. Securing approval for this plan enables these management objectives to be put in to action. Progress of this plan will be checked in a mid-term review in 2029 and fully revised again in 2034.

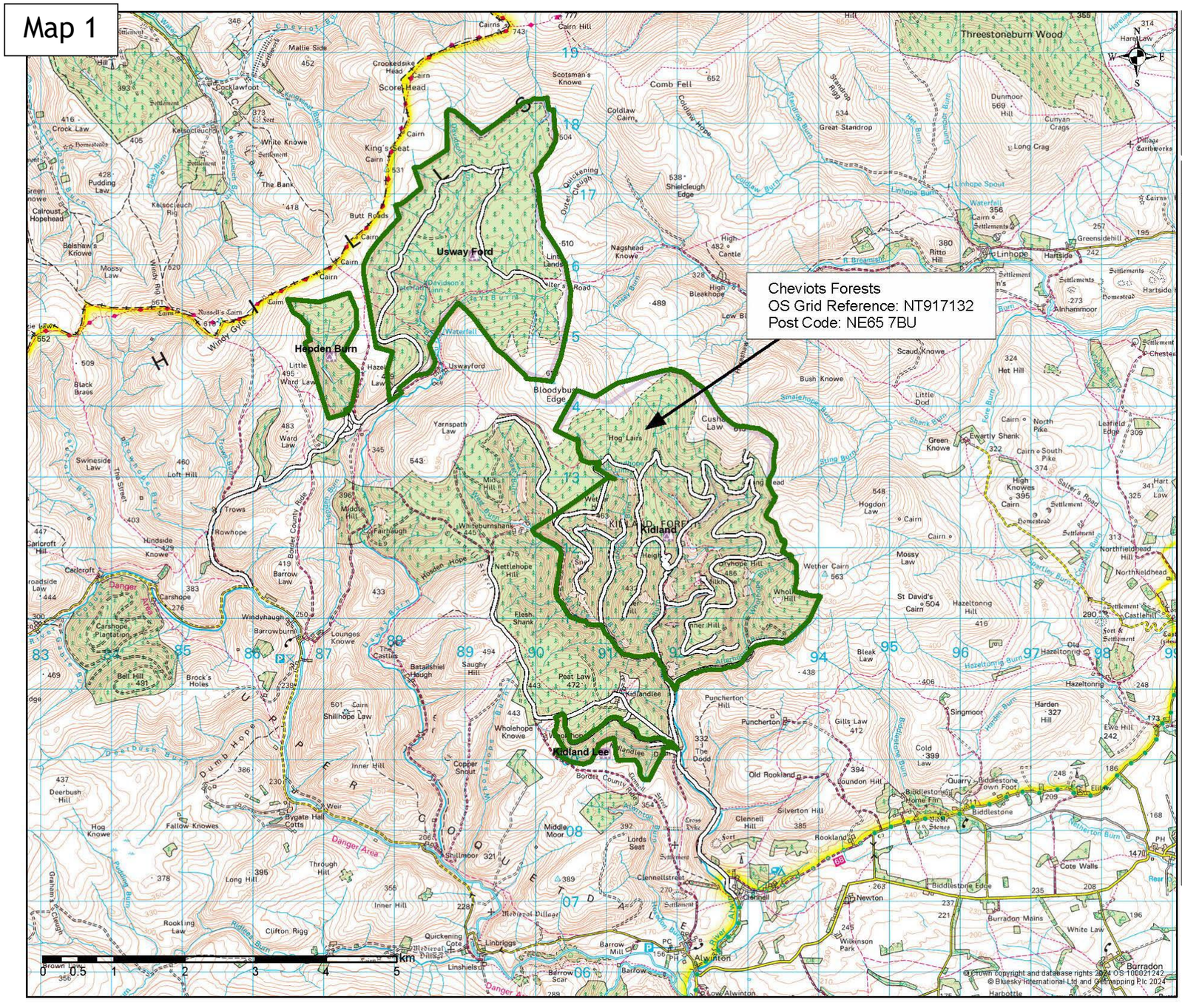
Part 8 Forest Plan Maps for the Cheviots

The map series presents the information used to advise the decisions in the plan.

- Map 1 Location – 1:50,000 scale showing location in context of the local area.
- Map 2 Current Species – Tree species composition in 2023.
- Map 3 Yield Class – Productivity of the current tree stands.
- Map 4 Wind Hazard Class – The windiness for forest stability.
- Map 5 Conservation and Heritage – Statutory and non-statutory conservation and heritage features.
- Map 6 Access and recreation - Public rights of way, Forestry England access and local services.
- Map 7 Hazards & Constraints - Operational hazards and constraints.
- Map 8 Design Concept – Broad management zoning of the forests.
- Map 9 Future Roading – Proposed roads for the future management of the forests.
- Map 10 Operations Map – Felling proposals and areas managed under Low Impact Silvicultural Systems or Continuous Cover Forestry.
- Map 11 Future Habitats – The future restocking proposals with tree species composition and areas of peat restoration.
- Map 12 Wildfire Hazard Assessment – Assessment of vegetation fire risk at August 2024. Presented for illustration only. From 2025 consult forest district for updated assessments.

The maps contained in this plan are scaled at A3 size. Accuracy may vary depending on printer used.

Map 1



Forestry England

Title: **Cheviots Forests - Location**

Date: 21 August 2024

Author: Giles Brockman

Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

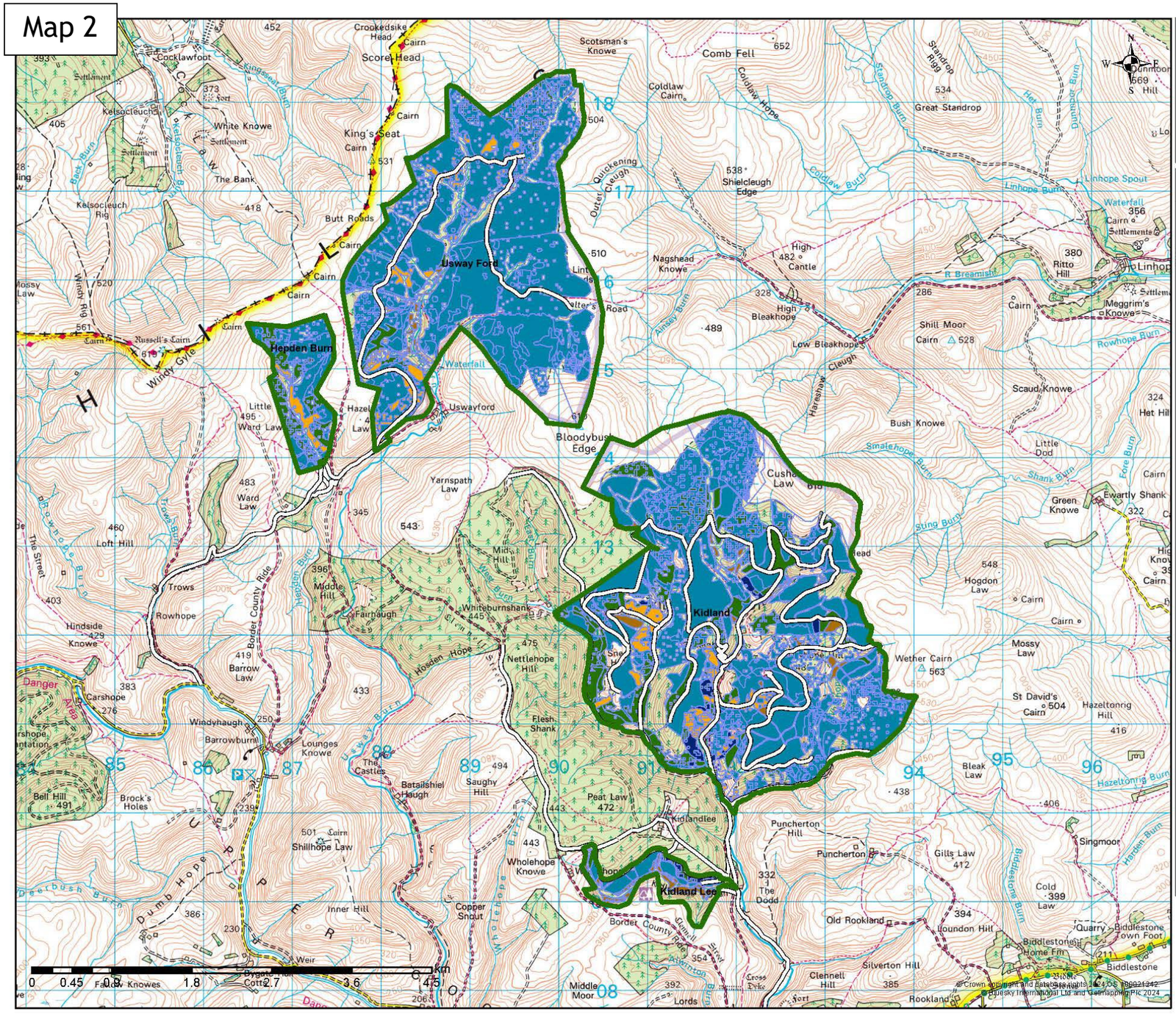
Blocks

Forest Roads

Forest Roads

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Map 2



Forestry England

Title: **Cheviots - Current Species**

Date: 21 August 2024

Author: Giles Brockman

Scale @ A3: 1:40,000

Blocks

Forest Roads

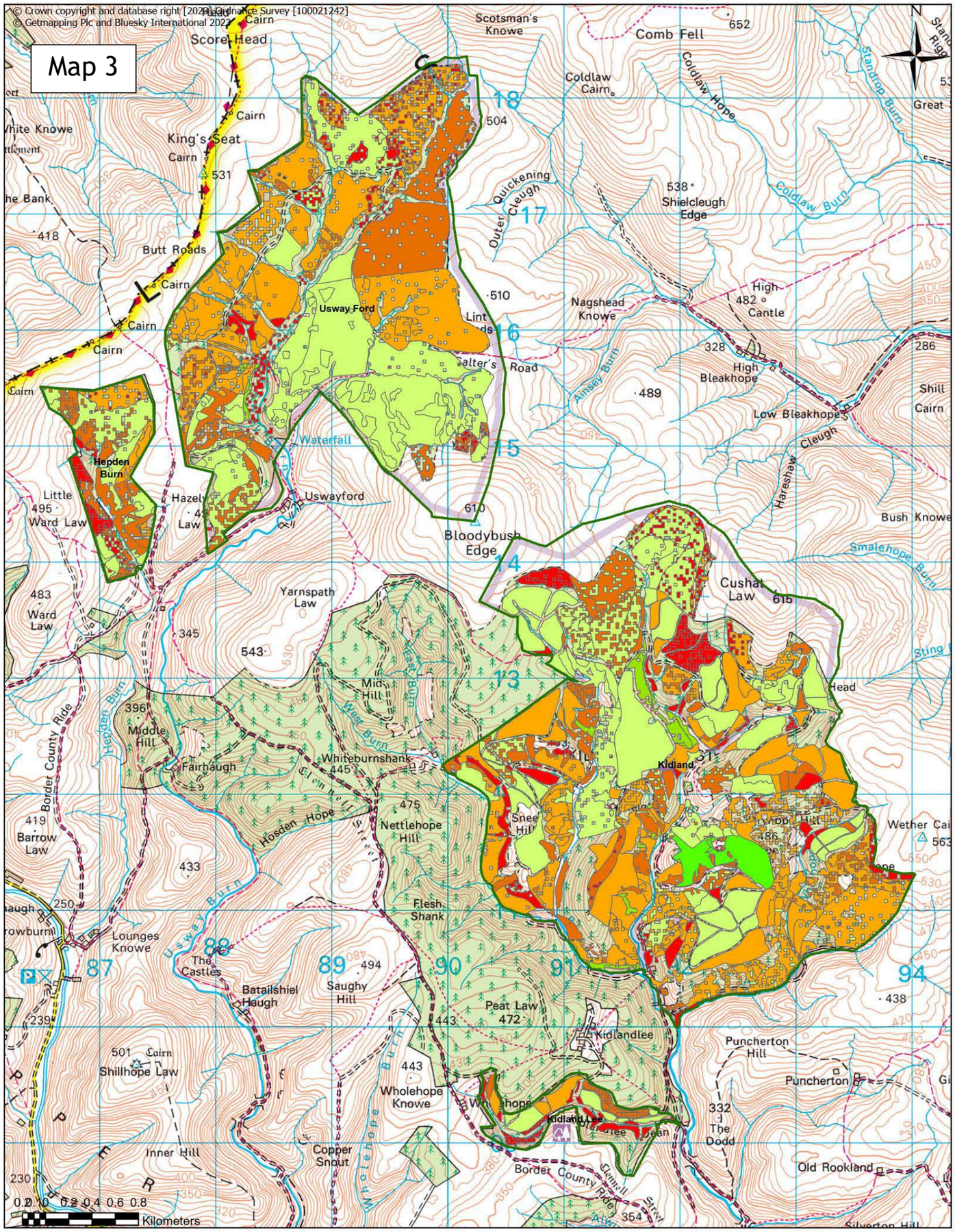
Forest Roads

Component Visualisation (Species)

- Beeches
- Larches
- Oaks
- Other Broadleaves
- Other Conifers
- Pines
- Spruces
- No Species

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Map 3



Forestry England

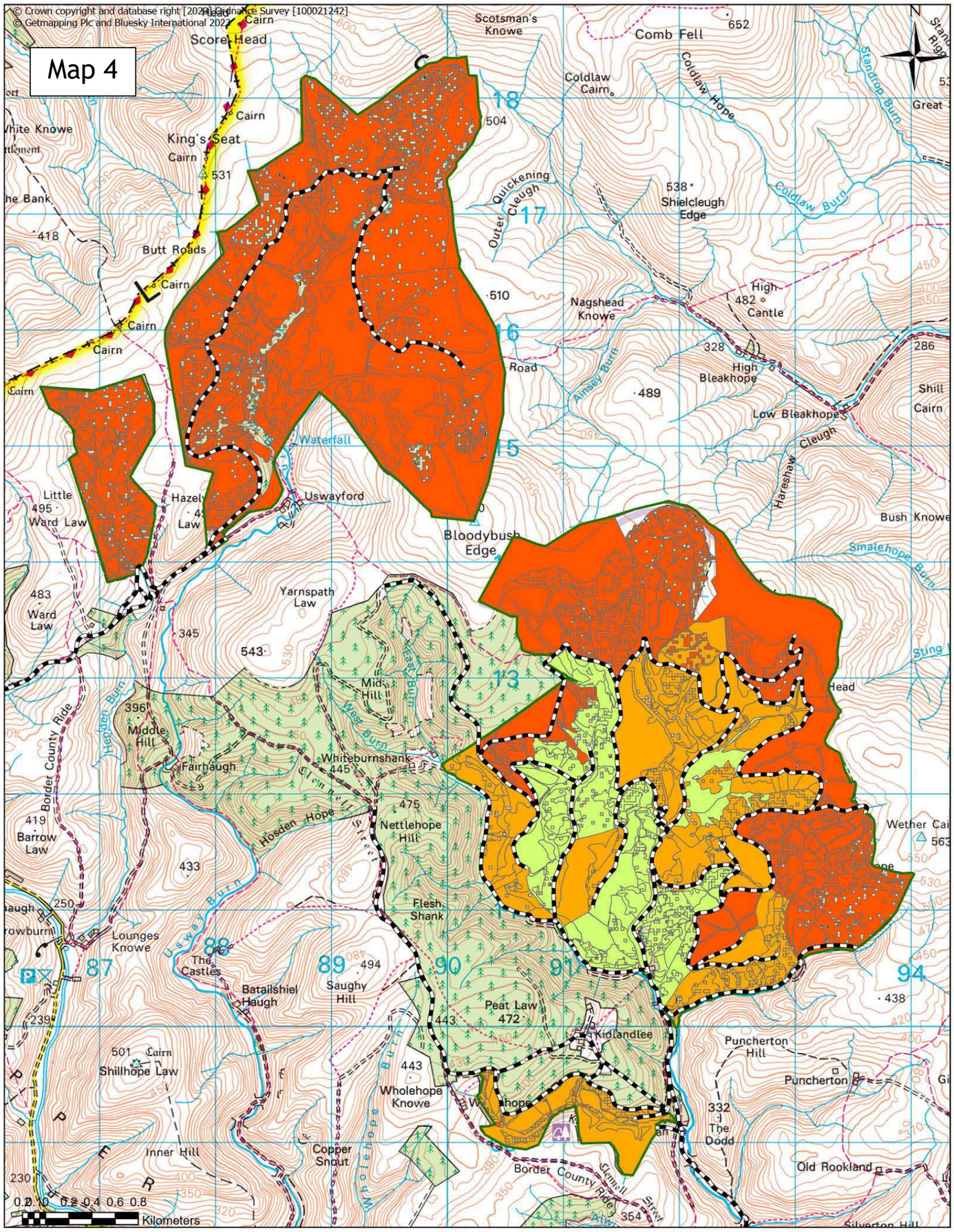
Title: Yield Class Distribution
Print Date: 22/08/2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:30,000
Scale at A3

Legend

Blocks
Cheviots
Yield Class
0-4
6-8
10-12
14-16
18-22
24+

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Map 4



Forestry England

Title: Wind Hazard Class
Print Date: 22/08/2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:30,000
Scale at A3

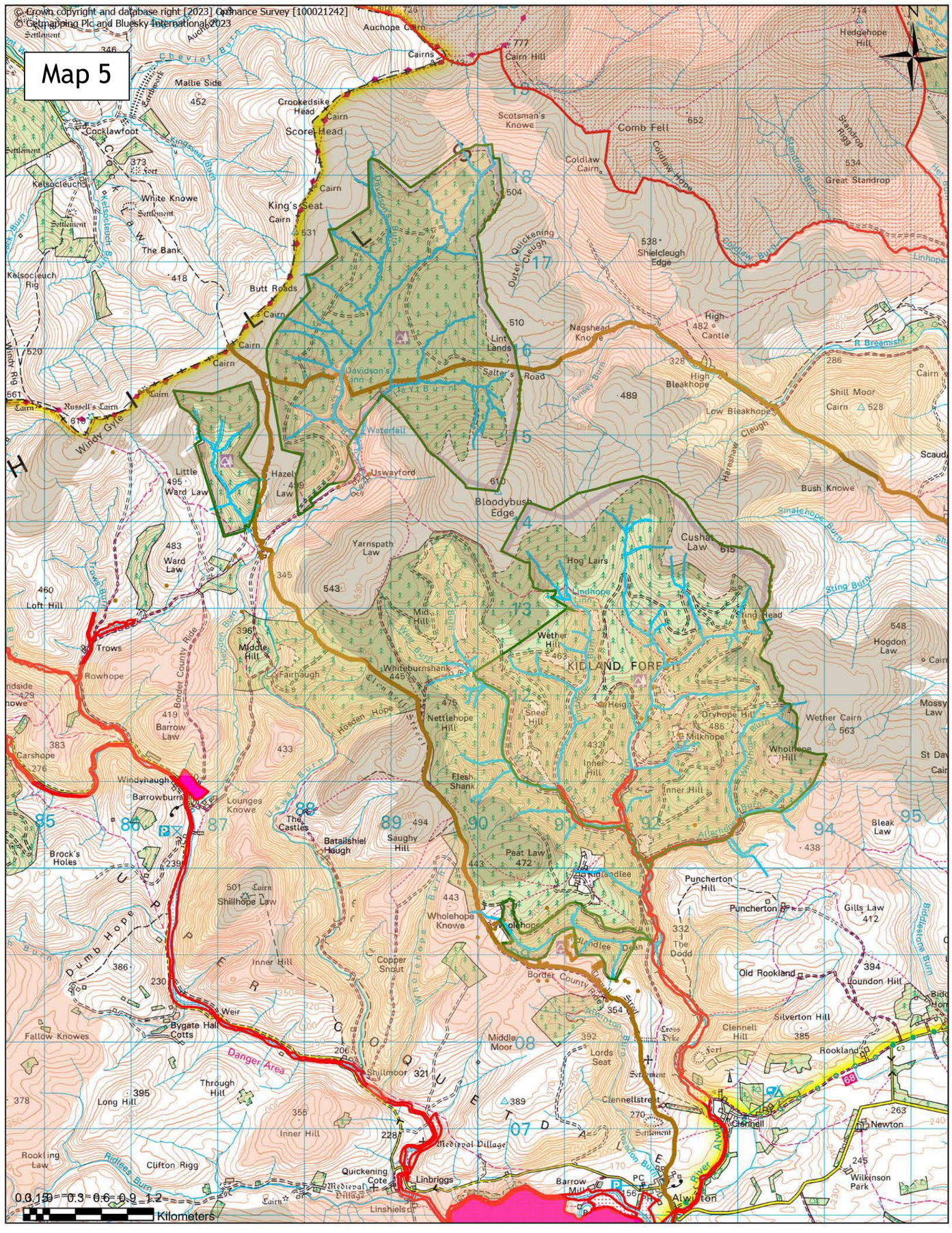
Legend

- Forest Roads
- Cheviots Forests

Wind Hazard Class
1
2
3
4
5
6

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Map 5



Forestry England

Title: Conservation & Heritage
Print Date: 22/08/2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:40,000
Scale at A3

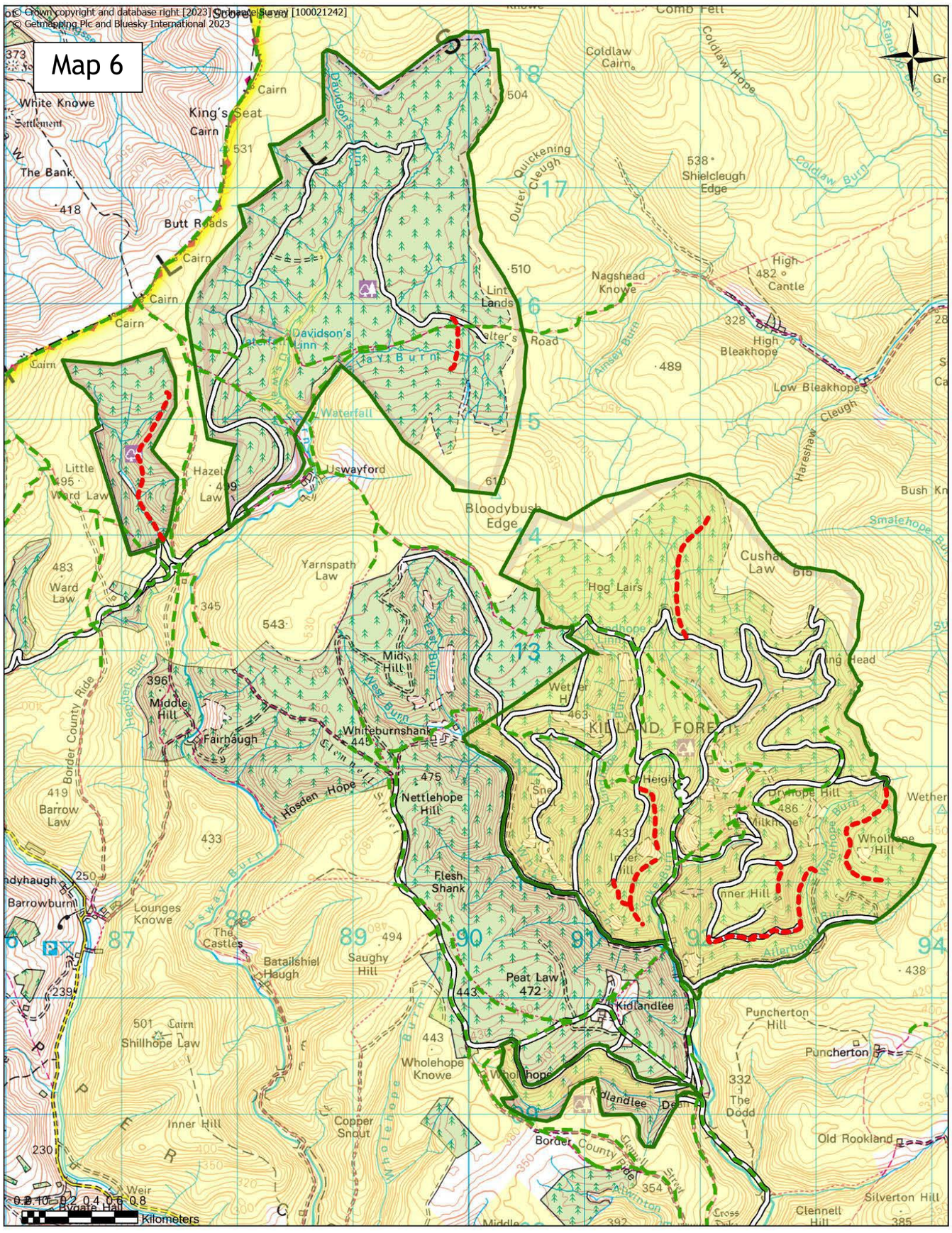
Legend

- Cheviots Forests
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Watercourses
- Special Areas of Conservation
- Heritage Feature

Natural England Peat Map

- Deep Peaty Soils
- Shallow Peaty Soils
- Soils with Peaty Pockets

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)


© Crown copyright and database right [2023] Ordnance Survey [100021242]
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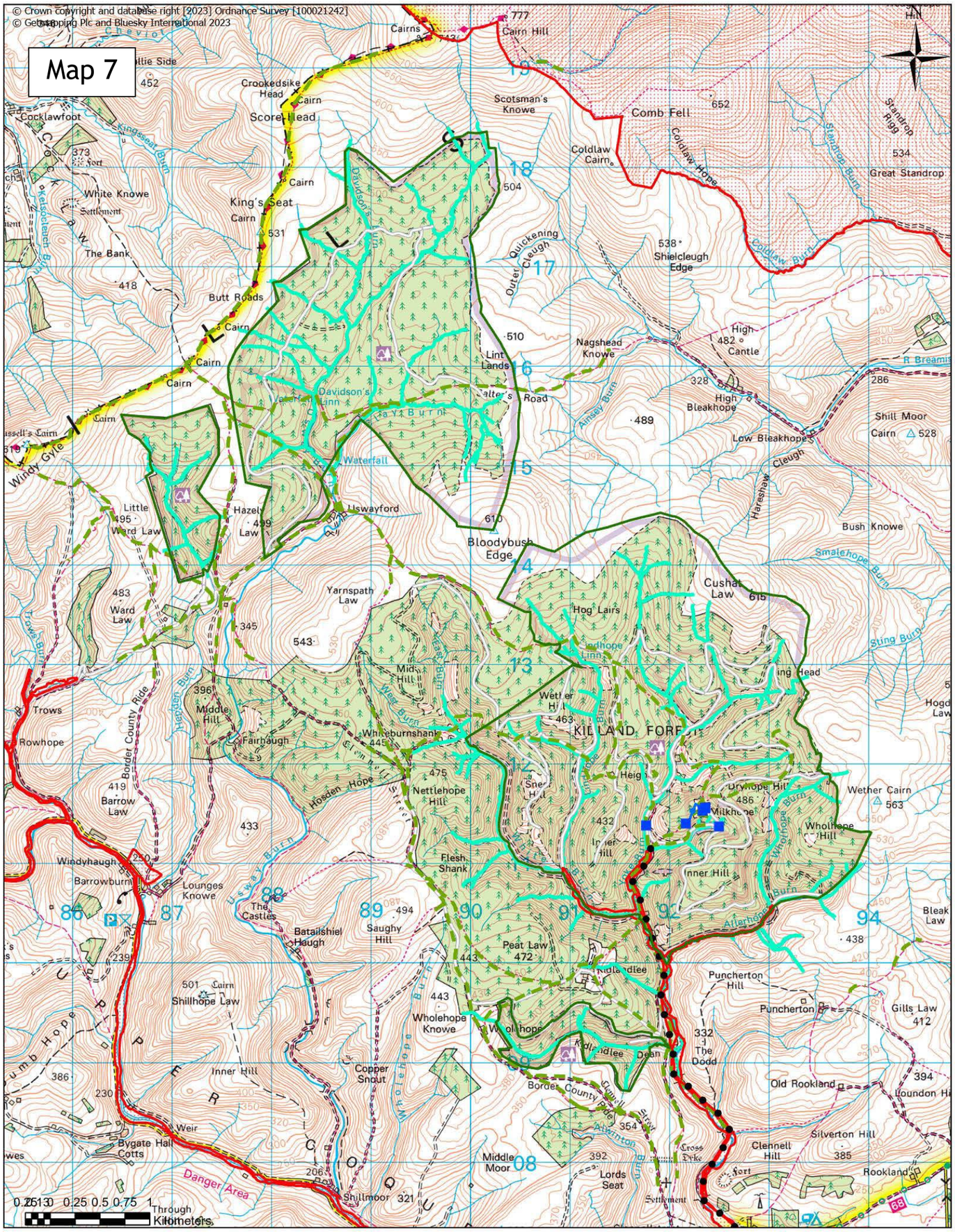
Map 6
N
White Knowe
Settlement
King's Seat
Cairn
531
The Bank
418
Butt Roads
Davidson's Linn
Waterfall
Hay Burn
Coldlaw Cairn
Comb Fell
Coldlaw Hope
Coldlaw Burn
Outer Quickening Cleugh
538
Shielcleugh Edge
Nagshead Knowe
High 482
Cantle
Lint Lands
Road
Ainsey Burn
489
High Bleakhope
Low Bleakhope
Harestaw Cleugh
Bush Kn
Smalehope Burn
Little Ward Law
495
Hazel Law
499
Uswayford
Bloodybush Edge
615
Cushat Law
Hog Lairs
483
Ward Law
Yarnspath Law
345
543
Mid Hill
Middle Hill
396
Fairhaugh
Whiteburnshank
445
Nettlehope Hill
475
Hosden Hope
Border County Ride
419
Barrow Law
433
Flesh Shank
Barrowburn
Lounges Knowe
The Castles
Batailshiel Haugh
Saughy Hill
494
Peat Law
472
443
Kidlandlee
Puncherton Hill
Puncherton
332
The Dodd
Old Rookland
Silverton Hill
Clennell Hill
385
438
239
501
Cairn
Shillhope Law
Wholehope Knowe
Inner Hill
230
Copper Snout
Weir
Byrnate Hall
KIELDER FOREST
Wholehope Hill
Inner Hill
Kilometers
0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8
Forestry England
Title: Access & Recreation
Print Date: 22/08/2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:30,000
Scale at A3
Legend
Proposed Forest Roads/ Tracks
Cheviots Forests
Public Rights of Way
Forest Roads
CRoW 2000 Open Access Land
Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Map 7



Forestry England

Title: Hazards & Constraints
Print Date: 22/08/2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:35,000
Scale at A3

Legend

- Cheviots
- Water Supply Points
- Masts/Aerials
- Third Party Access
- Overhead telephone or fibreoptic
- Overhead powerline
- Underground powerline
- Water Pipelines
- Public Rights of Way
- A Road
- Minor Road
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Forest Road
- Watercourses

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Map 8

Species Diversification Zone (yellow).

Productive forest based on Birch, Aspen, Alder and pine. Consider Norway spruce as part of the structure for red squirrels.

Peat Restoration Zone (purple).

Low yield class trees and peat soils with good restoration potential. develop peat edge native woodland.

Habitat Zone (aqua).

Upland open habitats and plantation natural reserves.

Production Zone (blue).

Focusing on high yield conifers. Increasing species diversity for resilience. Increase use of conifer/ broadleaved mixtures.

Kidland West Zone (green).

Develop pine woodland as part of a long term Red Squirrel zone.

Riparian Zone (brown).

Focus on water quality and link to SSSI. Combine open habitat with broadleaved native woodland. Pull production back from main water courses and the steeper slopes.

Forestry England

Title: Cheviots Design Concept
Print Date: 22/08/2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:35,000
Scale at A3

Legend

Sites of Special Scientific Interest
Cheviots
Forest Roads

Design Concept Zone

Habitat Zone
Kidland West Zone
Peat Zone
Production Zone
Riparian Zone
Species Diversification Zone

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Map 9

Ref No	Description	Road Type	Road length (m)
A	New road - Hepden Burn	Forest Road	1450
C	Deep Sike, Uswayford.	Forwarder Track	522
D1	New road - Cushat Law phase 1	Forest Road	652
D2	New road - Cushat Law phase 2	Forwarder Track	475
E1	New road - Wholhope Hill phase 1	Forest Road	944
E2	New road - Wholhope Hill phase 2	Forest Road	296
F1	New road - Inner Hill West phase 1	Forest Road	956
F2	New road - Inner Hill West phase 2	Forest Road	625
G	Forwarder Track - Inner Hill East	Forwarder Track	268
H1	Upgrade to forest road, Horse Close	Forest Road	453
H2	New forest road, Horse Close	Forest Road	485
H3	Forwarder Track - Wholhope Burn	Forwarder Track	599

Forestry England

Title: Proposed New Forest Roads
Print Date: 28 August 2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:30,000
Scale at A3

Legend

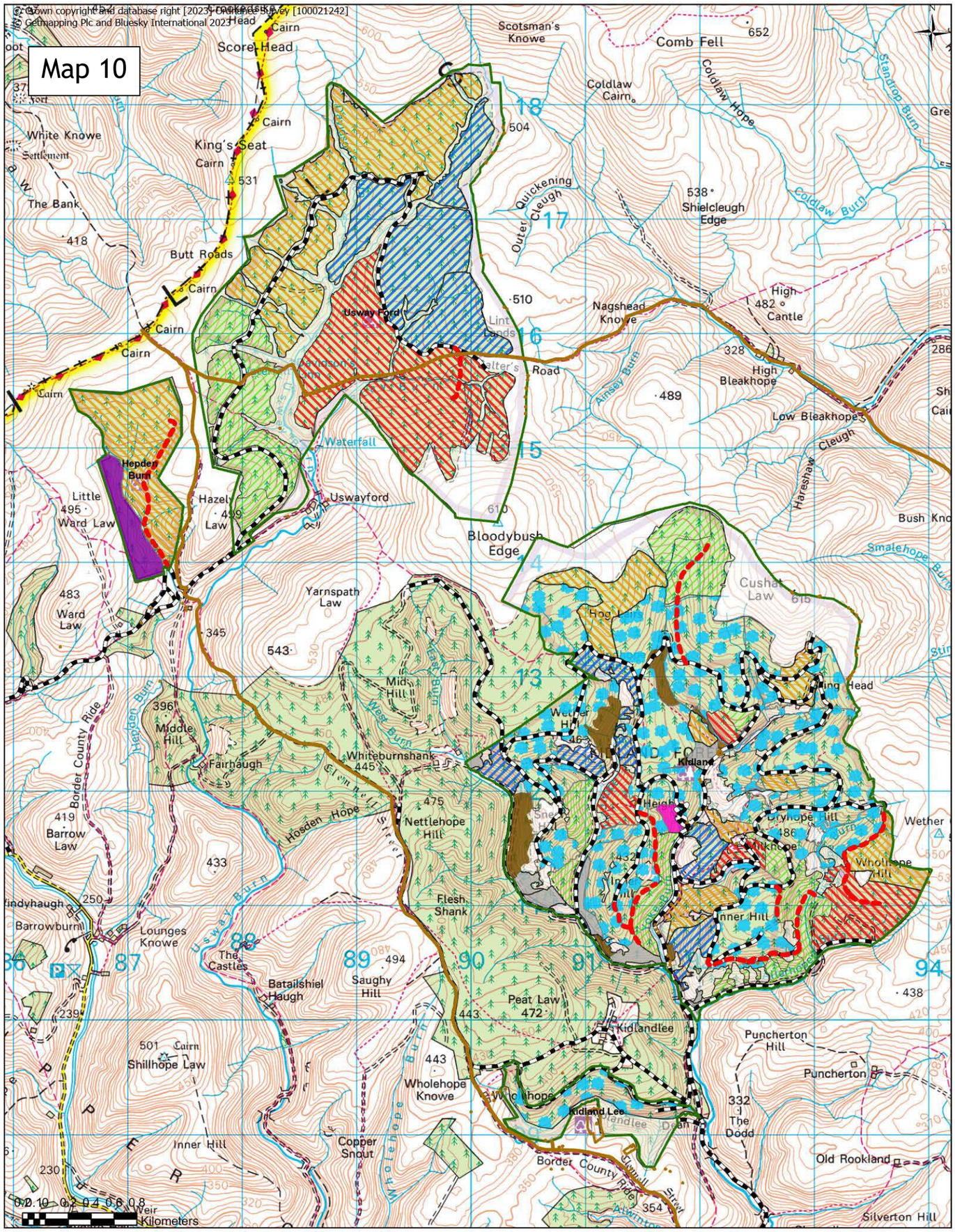
- Cheviots Forest Plan
- Proposed Roads/Tracks
- Forest Roads

Management Coupes

- 2022-2026
- 2027-2031
- 2032-2036
- 2037-2041
- 2046+
- CCF
- LTR
- Min Int
- Nat Reserve
- Open

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Map 10



Forestry England

Title: Operations Map
Print Date: 23/08/2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:30,430
Scale at A3

Legend

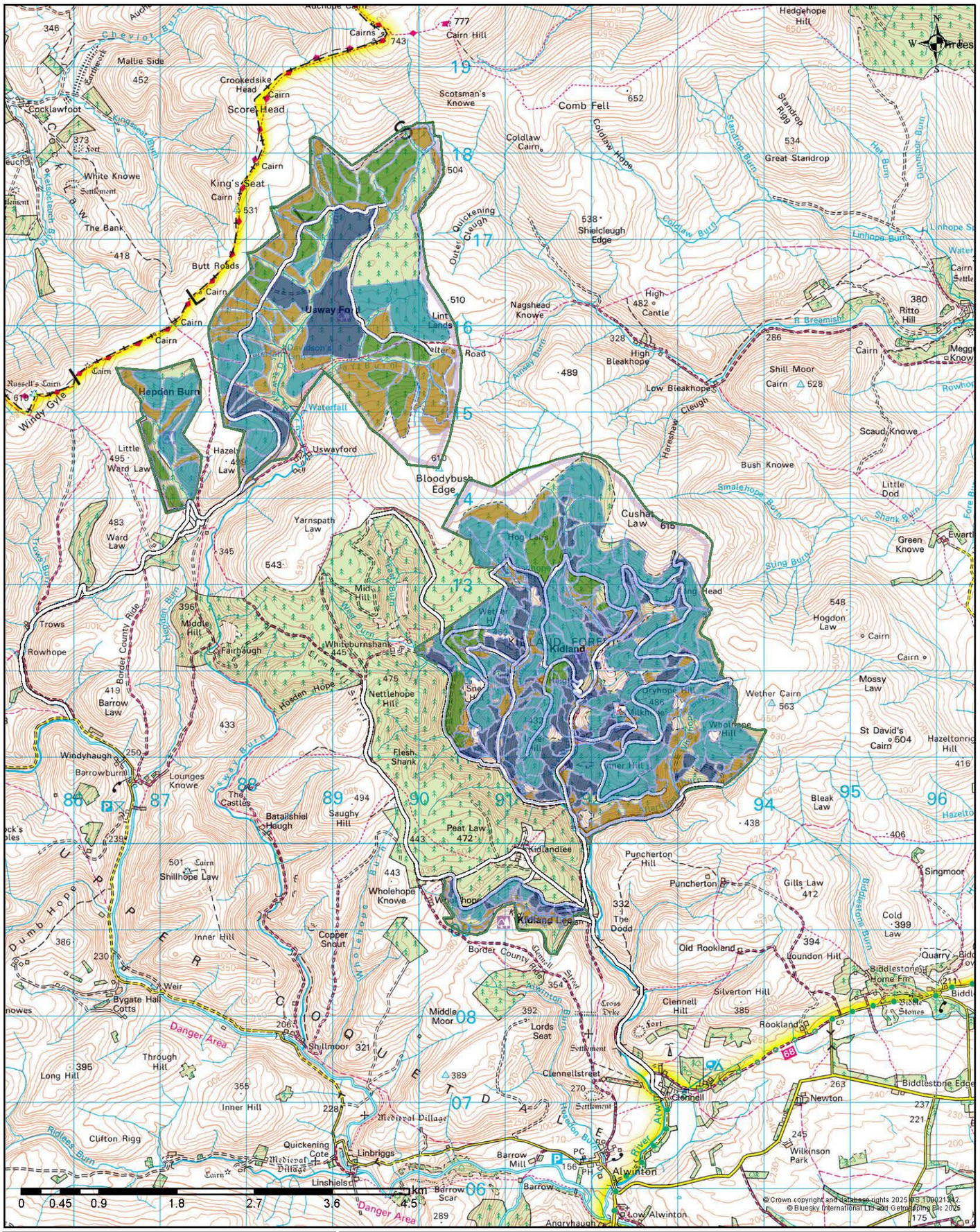
- Heritage
- Cheviots Forest Plan
- Proposed Roads/Tracks
- Forest Roads

Management Coupes

- 2022-2026
- 2027-2031
- 2032-2036
- 2037-2041
- 2046+
- CCF

- LTR
- Min Int
- Nat Reserve
- Open

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)


Forestry England
Title: Cheviots Future Habitats
Date: 14 January 2025
Author: Giles Brockman
Scale @ A3: 1:40,000
Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)
Scenario Restock Areas
Beeches
Larches
Oaks
Other Broadleaves
Other Conifers
Pines
Spruces
No Species
Forest Roads
Forest Roads
Blocks
Blocks
0 0.45 0.9 1.8 2.7 3.6 4.5 km
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Map 12

High Risk Forest. (orange)
Mature, open forest. Well developed ground vegetation. Poor access.

Medium Risk Forest (yellow).
Open forest, <15 years old, with ground vegetation.
Older windblown stands, with drying wood and ground vegetation developing.

High Risk Habitat (purple).
Upland moorland; heather & grass. Bordering private upland moorland with poor access.

Low Risk Forest (blue).
Closed canopy forest with limited ground vegetation.

Residence in forest.
Occasional use.

High Risk Forest. (orange)
Young forest, less that 10 yrs old. Well developed ground vegetation.

Forestry England

Title: Wild Fire Assessment
Print Date: 23/08/2024
User: Giles Brockman
Scale: 1:30,000
Scale at A3

Cheviots
Forest Roads
Watercourses

Fire Hazard Assessment

Zone
- High Risk Forest
- High Risk Habitat
- Low Risk Forest
- Medium Risk Forest
- Residential

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)