



Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy

APPENDIX C: Mapping Methodology

Mapping Methodology

Existing woodland

C1. The definition of woodland is areas of trees on land of over 0.25 hectare. The National Forest Inventory covers land over 2 hectares, and any area included there has been included in the mapping. In addition, the Broadleaf and Yew habitat identified by the CSGN has been included. Consideration was given to including information from OS topographical mapping (which includes areas of coniferous, broadleaf, mixed trees and scrub).

Urban

C2. Urban areas are not expected to have significant potential for continuous new areas of woodland over 0.25 ha, although this is not precluded by the strategy. The nature of tree and woodland expansion here is generally different from rural areas and is likely to involve single or small groups of trees. The mapping uses informal settlement boundaries drawn up taking a view on whether a use is rural or urban, on an OS Mastermap base. This mapping has been produced only for the purposes of this Strategy; the 'settlement boundaries' (at the time of writing) have no other development planning policy purpose or status.

Unsuitable

C3. Some soils are not suitable for tree planting because trees don't grow well there. The James Hutton Institute has classified land by how capable it is for successful tree growth. There are few parts of East Lothian which are unsuitable; this is land which is peat or potential peatland in the Lammermuirs. This is identified as class 7 agricultural land.

C4. Some parts of the upland area are considered to have limited flexibility for forestry, and it is likely that only certain species of tree, mainly conifers, would be successful there. This may change with climate change and therefore only the areas classified as 'unsuitable' have been mapped.

C5. Trees will also not grow in the intertidal or foreshore area. These areas are not mapped as their unsuitability for tree planting is widely known. Waterbodies are mapped using an OS base, so that they don't appear as 'Preferred' areas.

Reason for unsuitability	Mapped
Land classified by the John Hutton Institute as unsuitable for trees	Class 7 agricultural land
Water bodies	Derived from OS Mastermap
Intertidal area and foreshore	Not mapped

Sensitive

C6. Some areas of land are best suited to purposes other than woodland. This includes land that is valued for cultural or natural heritage reasons where tree planting would damage the interest. Some of these areas, such as peat land and salt marsh, also have considerable value for greenhouse gas sequestration.

C7. Recommendation from ['The Right Tree in the Right Place'](#) (Forestry Commission Scotland, 2010) is that:

“Sensitive areas will be those where a combination of sensitivities means there is limited scope to accommodate further woodland expansion. Limited woodland expansion is only likely to be possible within sensitive areas where it is of a scale and character which can be accommodated without significant negative impacts and/or where it would positively enhance the features of interest locally. In some areas cumulative impact may be a relevant consideration.”

C8. We considered that requiring more than one constraint to describe an area as ‘sensitive’ is misleading. Some designations in our area are sufficiently incompatible with woodland that where the land is covered by them alone, it is unlikely that woodland creation would be possible, and these sites should not be shown as ‘Potential’. We do not want to encourage pressure for tree planting in areas where it should not occur, as this wastes effort all round.

C9. There may be some very limited scope for small scale woodland expansion in a few of these areas, in particular those SSSIs designated for their woodland interest. However, these are likely to be under management agreement already, and even where they are not, further woodland creation would be tightly controlled as to type and location; they are not therefore suitable for general woodland expansion. The areas considered sensitive, alone, were:

- Special Protection Areas – the only SPA in East Lothian where trees would grow is Forth Islands, the Firth of Forth and Outer Firth of Forth and St Andrews Bay Complex consisting of intertidal areas. SPAs are sensitive as maintenance of appropriate habitat is required for protection of their internationally recognised bird interest.
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Consent is needed from Historic Environment Scotland for any planting on these monuments. Planting is likely to cause damage to the monument, and is unlikely to be possible in these areas.
- SSSI’s. These sites were designated to represent the best of the UKs biological and geological interest. As such, woodland planting is likely to conflict with the maintenance of other habitat or geological interest. The SSSIs designated wholly or partly for woodland interest have also been included as sensitive as proposals or management would require consent from NatureScot.
- Local Geodiversity Sites. These sites are generally not extensive and are in any case often areas trees would not grow, many having been chosen for the interest and visibility of their geology or geomorphology. They are considered sensitive due to their geological interest, which in some cases is nationally important, and which tree planting is likely to affect.
- CSGN Grassland, Bog Heath and Wetland Habitat. This data is available on Scottish Environment Web by adding layers CSGN IHN – Neutral
- East Lothian Priority Habitat – Non-woodland. This information is from a Phase 1 Habitat Survey carried out in 1997. Although this information is now old, it remains the best data on habitat that the Council holds.

Potential

C10. [‘The Right Tree in the Right Place’](#) (Forestry Commission Scotland, 2010) recommendations for land which should be categorised as Potential is:

“Land ... which offers considerable potential to accommodate future expansion of a range of woodland types, but where at least one significant sensitivity exists. The extent to which specific proposals in potential areas will be permissible will depend on how well sensitivities can be

addressed within the proposals. The design of schemes in such areas will require careful consideration.”

C11. In our area, much of the land is covered by more than one constraint. This is difficult to avoid in East Lothian, a scenic area with large amounts of prime agricultural land and a long history of human habitation. We have therefore tried to follow the methodology in spirit rather than to the letter. If areas with more than one sensitivity were included as ‘sensitive’ there would be little land shown as ‘Potential’. This would not be helpful in trying to guide woodland creation to the best places. We have therefore mapped farmland and other constraints separately. Both constraints are considered to have potential which can be worked with, and this is equally the case where more than one constraint applies.

C12. There is limited ‘Preferred’ land in East Lothian. It is inevitable that to achieve targets, woodland creation will have to take place on ‘Potential’ land. It is useful to distinguish between land where the main issue is complimenting agricultural production from those where the constraints may be less flexible.

C13. Areas which are mapped into ‘Potential’ are:

- Areas on Historic Environment Scotland’s Inventory of Battlefields; the battles of Prestonpans, Pinkie and Dunbar 1 and 2 took place on East Lothian soil. The landscape has changed considerably since the battles took place, especially at Pinkie and Prestonpans. Tree planting may in some cases improve the understanding of the battlefield, in others be acceptable. However in parts it may significantly affect the ability to understand the battlefield landscape and be unacceptable.
- Areas on the Inventory of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes. These areas have historical, horticultural and artistic value. Tree planting is often an integral part of the design. There may opportunities within these areas for restoration of woodland, or planting which accords with their design. However, planting should respect the features for which the areas were designated, and sometimes the addition of further trees may not be possible.
- Geological Conservation Review Sites (outwith SSSIs). The Geological Conservation Review was a substantial piece of work that identified a network of sites sufficient to recognise all of the UKs main geological interest. The intention was that these sites be designated as SSSIs however this has not yet been completed. Although these sites do not have the formal protection that designation as SSSI would bring, it would be undesirable to harm their geological interest, which could occur through poor designed tree planting schemes.

C14. Areas mapped as ‘Potential – Farmland (prime)’ are prime agricultural land in classes 1 – 3.1. Areas mapped as ‘Potential – Farmland (mixed)’ are agricultural land in classes 3.2 – 4.2. These mixed areas cannot grow such a wide range of crops but may become more productive with climate changes.

Table of Land Capability for Agriculture

Class	Potential suitability
1 – 3.1	Arable: prime land, capable of supporting arable agriculture used to produce a wide range of crops and high yields
3.2 – 4.2	Mixed: narrower range of crops and average to low yields
5.1 -5.3	Improved grassland: pasture of varying quality with one or more limitations which make it unsuitable for even occasional cultivation
6.1 – 6.3	Rough grazing
7	Land of very limited agricultural value

C15. The following map shows all the main classes of agricultural land and urban areas, together with the James Hutton Institute assessment of the suitability of land for forestry.

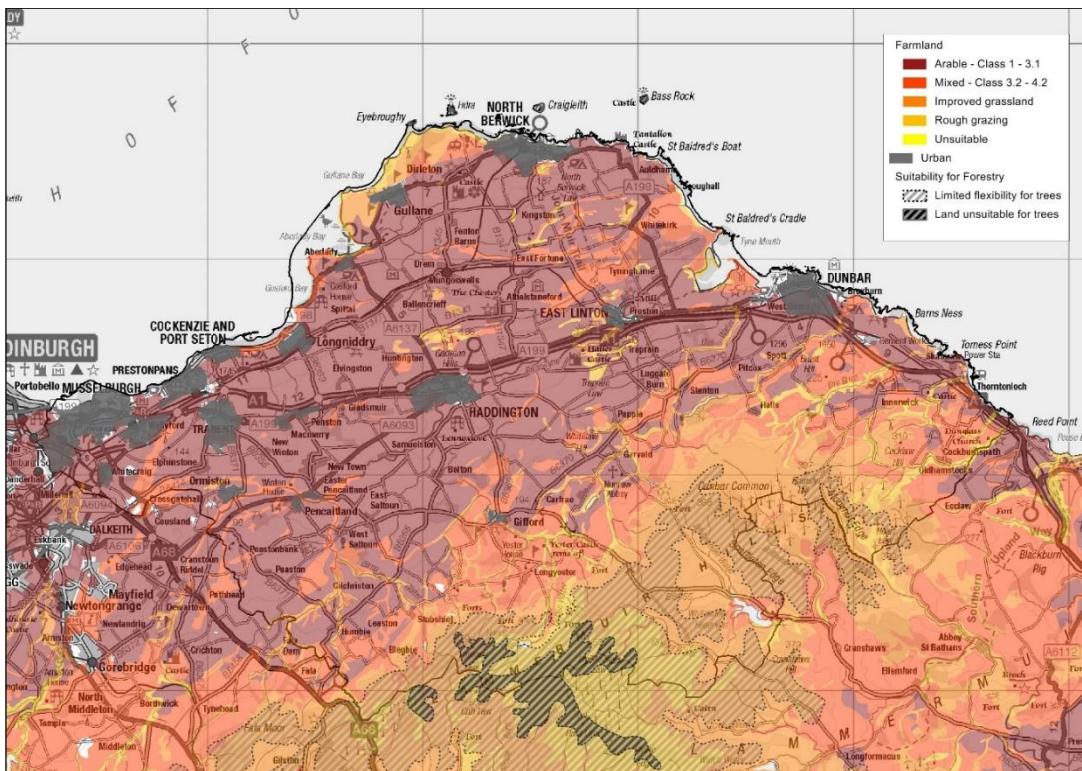


Figure 1 Land capability for agriculture and suitability for forestry

Preferred

C16. [‘The Right Tree in the Right Place’](#) (Forestry Commission Scotland, 2010) guidance advises that Preferred land is that which offers the greatest scope to accommodate future expansion of a range of woodland types, and hence, to deliver on a very wide range of objectives. Within Preferred areas sensitivities are, in general, likely to be limited, and it should be possible to address any particular site specific issues with well-designed proposals that meet the UK Forestry Standard and associated guidelines. Future woodland expansion is therefore likely to be focused on preferred areas. In East Lothian the Preferred Areas are limited.

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