

## New woodland location

The proposed new woodland is in Cumbria near the hamlet of Sleetbeck next to Kershope Forest, approximately 6km from the Scottish border. Forestry England has bought the land from a private landowner.

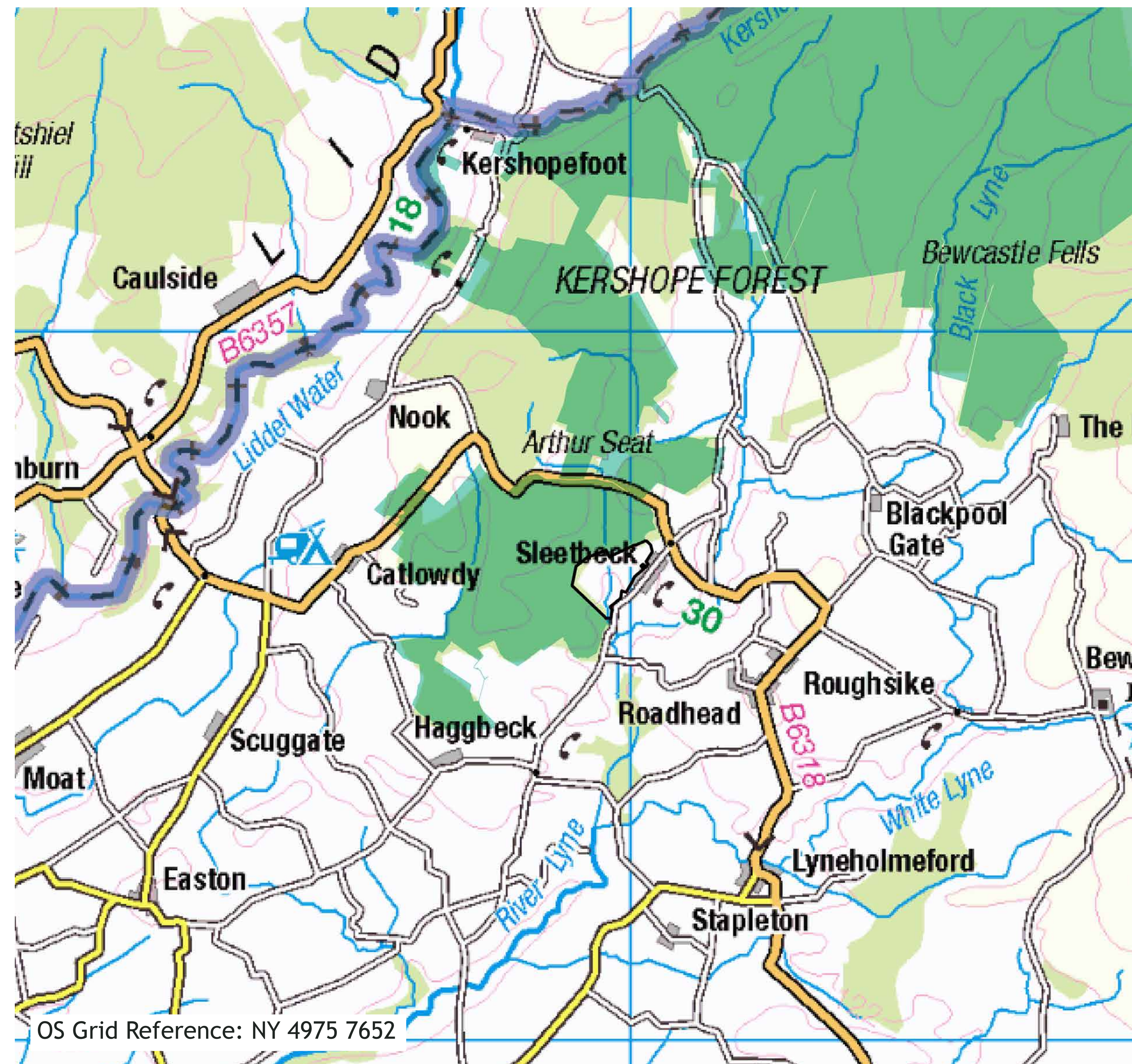
The site lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 05 Border Moors and Forests. This NCA is an upland plateau lying to the south of a natural high ridge of hills that form the border with Scotland.



View northwest towards Kershope Forest from the Kinkry Hill to Clattering Forge public right of way



View from edge of Kershope Forest towards Sleetbeck



Proposed new woodland site boundary next to Kershope Forest

A large-scale upland landscape of sweeping moorlands and coniferous forests, with extensive views, sparsely populated, with dark night skies and a strong feeling of remoteness and tranquillity. The surrounding upland landscape features scattered farms with semi-improved and improved pasture in the larger valleys, with small copses of broadleaved woodland.

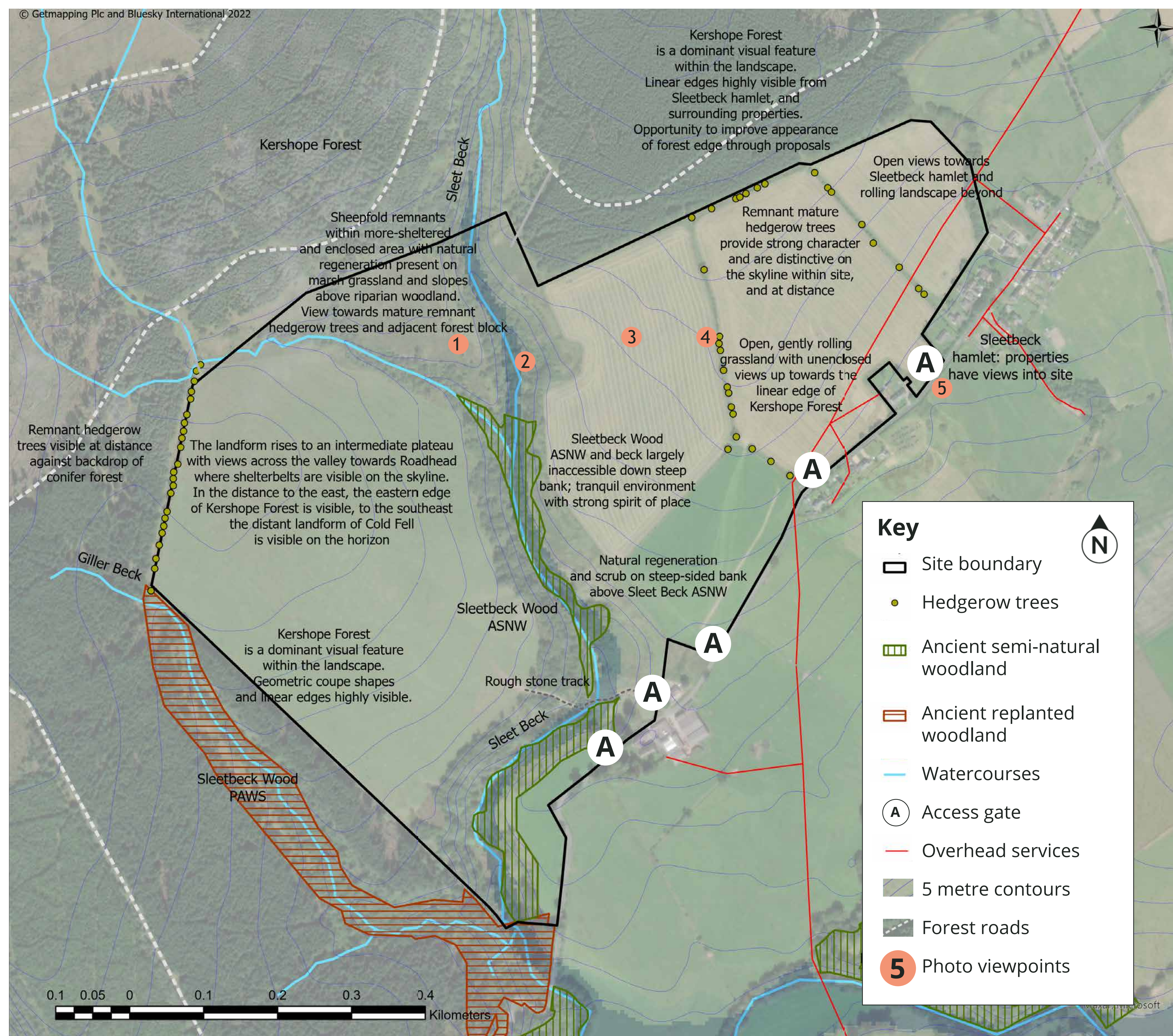
Kershope Forest is part of Kielder Forest Plan area, an area of more than 60,000 hectares in Northumberland and Cumbria. Most of the forest is planted with conifers, primarily managed as a timber resource, although there are smaller areas of ancient woodland among the plantations.

On average more than a third of the planted area is younger second rotation stands. Future restocking will introduce greater species diversity into timber crops, as well as increasing the area of native broadleaved woodland. Several public rights of way run through Kershope forest and horse riding is welcomed using the forest road network and natural green trails.

The site has open agricultural pasture, classified as grade 4 or 5 (1 being the most productive), and established riparian woodland, some of which is Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW); We anticipate that around 40 hectares would provide for new woodland planting. The site would become part of the area we manage as part of the Forestry England's Kershope Forest Plan.



1. Panoramic view east to west from marsh grassland over site overlooking riparian woodland, ASNW sheepfold remains



2. View south into ASNW



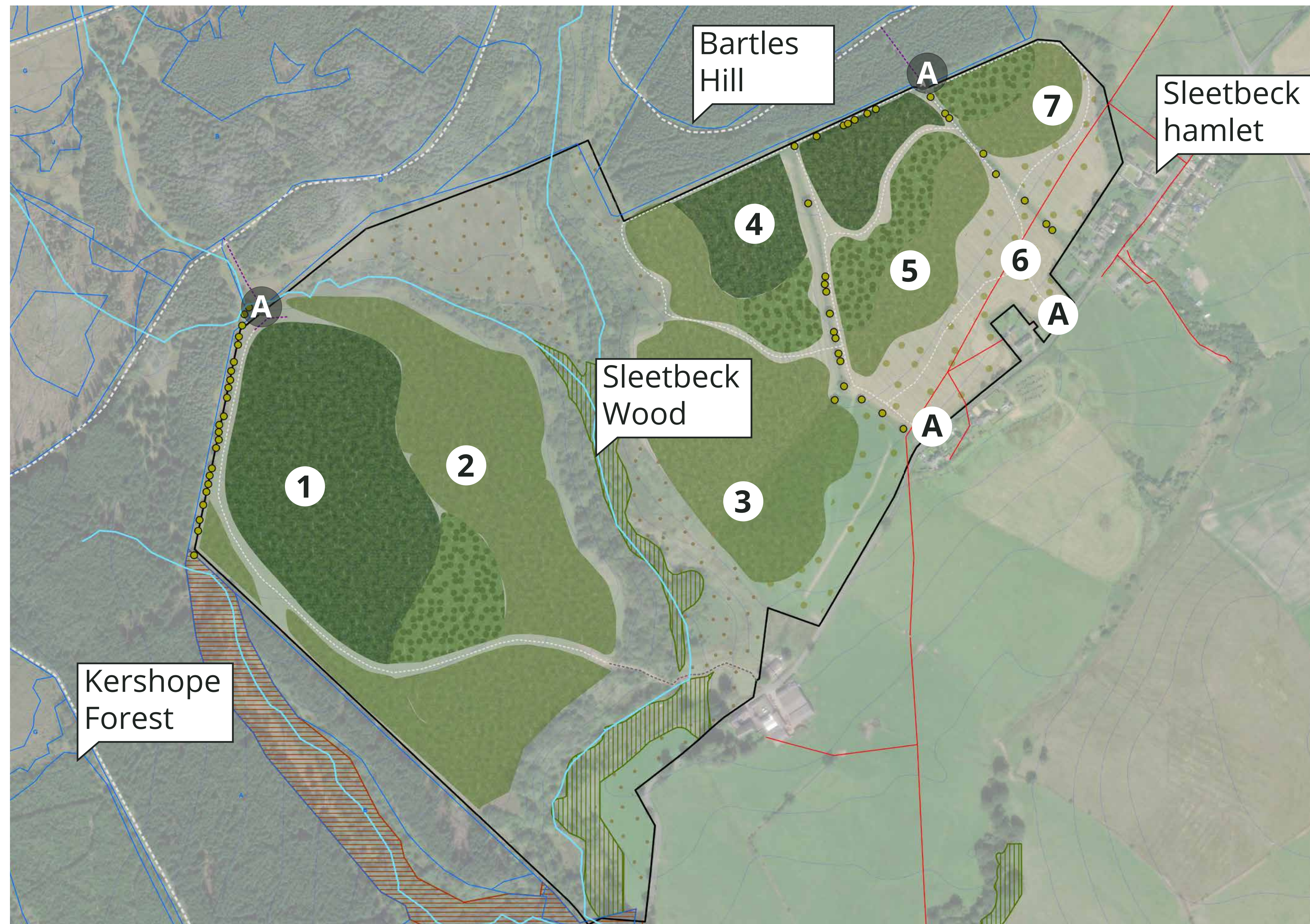
3. View east over conifer edge of Kershope Forest and hedgerow field boundary



4. View southeast over Sleetbeck and surrounding landscape



5. View northwest from Sleetbeck hamlet towards Kershope Forest edge



## Design Process

We are designing the new woodland with a natural capital approach, with benefits to people, wildlife and the wider landscape. We design in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard, which takes into account the following elements: people, soils, biodiversity, climate change, water, landscape, and historic environment.

Detailed surveys and analysis, as well as feedback from our local communities and stakeholders, will help to shape how the new woodland could look. Our surveys include:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Breeding Bird Survey
- Historic Environment Records
- Local Environmental Record Centre
- Landscape appraisal
- Soil mapping
- Ecological Site Classification
- Climate Matching tools
- Utilities searches

## Objectives for Woodland Creation

-  **Public access for health and wellbeing:** create low-key public recreation opportunities with new areas for people to walk in the woodland.
-  **Provide landscape improvements:** to the existing Kershope Forest.
-  **Thriving habitats for wildlife:** enhance existing wet woodland habitats and create new wildlife habitats connecting into Kershope Forest.
-  **Benefits for the wider landscape:** capture carbon, help to reduce soil erosion and flooding, and improve the soil and air quality.
-  **Future forest resources and resilience:** plant a mix of trees for a lasting supply of sustainable timber.

## Choosing the right trees for Sleetbeck

Tree species have been chosen to reflect future climate changes, to make sure that the proposed woodland would continue to survive in the warmer and drier climate, with greater resilience against new pests and diseases.

Red squirrels are still present in Kershope forest and will benefit from the increase in habitat. We will make less use of the larger seeded broadleaves such as oak and beech, as a means to keeping the woods less attractive to the more competitive grey squirrel. We will choose trees that will be tolerant of our changing climate and those that will provide a sustainable supply of timber. We will bolster the area of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland along the Sleet Beck by expanding the broadleaved woodland either side of it which will increase the value of the habitat.

Key	
	Site boundary
	Hedgerow trees
	Ancient semi-natural woodland
	Ancient replanted woodland
	Watercourses
	Public access gate
	Overhead services
	5 metre contours
	Forest roads
	Types of woodland
	Broadleaved woodland planting
	Evenly mixed conifer and broadleaved woodland planting
	Conifer woodland planting with some mixed broadleaves
	Naturally regenerating broadleaved trees
	Wood pasture
	Operational forestry access point
	Operational forestry access track
	Grass path

## Types of woodland we could plant



1 Douglas fir with western red cedar, western hemlock, silver birch



2 Alder with hornbeam, rowan, silver birch, hawthorn, aspen



3 Silver birch with rowan, aspen, juniper, hawthorn



4 Scots pine with silver birch, rowan, juniper



5 Sycamore with hornbeam, beech, crab apple, blackthorn, elder



6 Sycamore with hawthorn, birch, crab apple, guelder rose, elder



7 Aspen with rowan, hawthorn, silver birch, blackthorn

## Design Principles

Our initial draft designs include mixed broadleaf and conifer planting, wood pasture, shrub planting, and areas of open space with natural regeneration and wide rides. This will provide a rich mosaic of habitat types, supporting a range of wildlife including birds, insects, and amphibians. Valuable habitats such as riparian woodland, marshy grassland, areas of semi-improved grassland and hedgerow networks would be retained.

The draft designs take into consideration the unique sense of place, of the site. The scale of woodland blocks is appropriate for the scale of the landscape and would improve the existing view of the edge of Kershope Forest, with low density broadleaved planting.

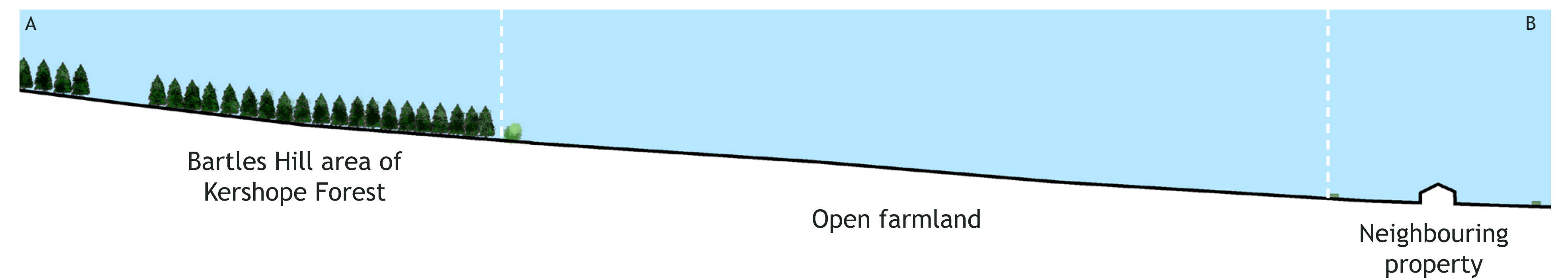
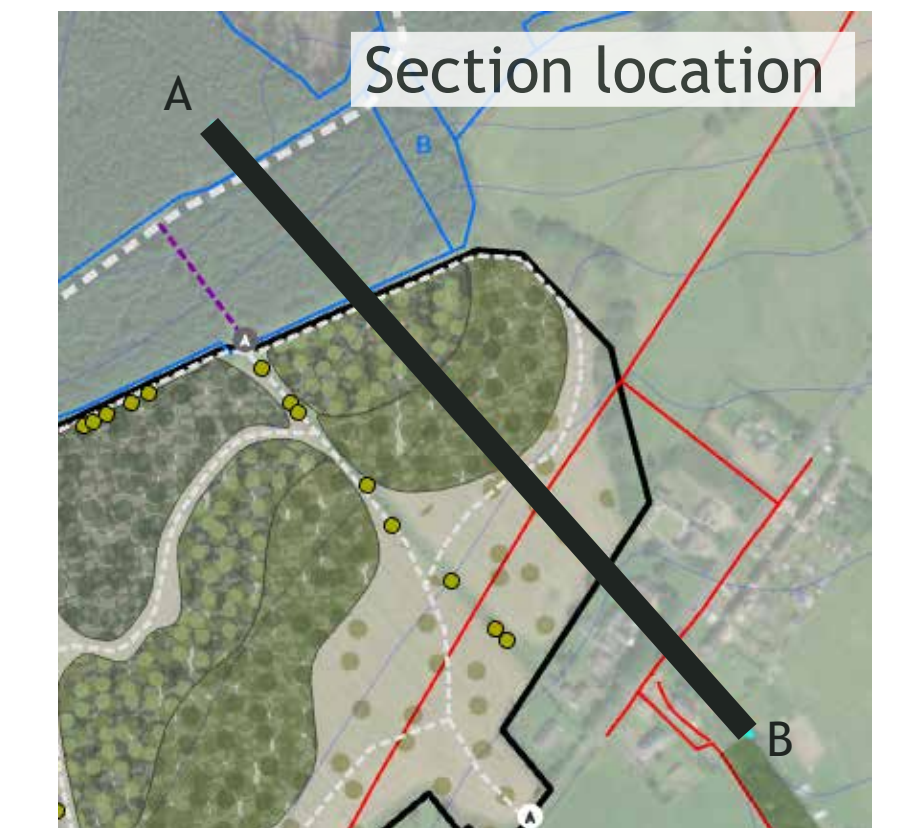
The grass ride network would connect to Sleetbeck allowing people to walk in the new woodland.

# How the new woodland could look



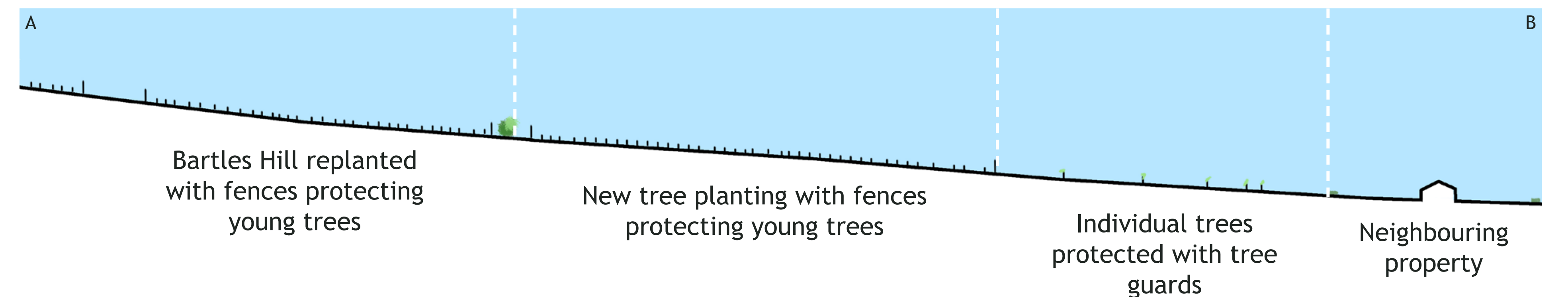
## How it looks now from Sleetbeck

View over open farmland and with Kershope Forest edge dominant on the horizon with old hedgerows.



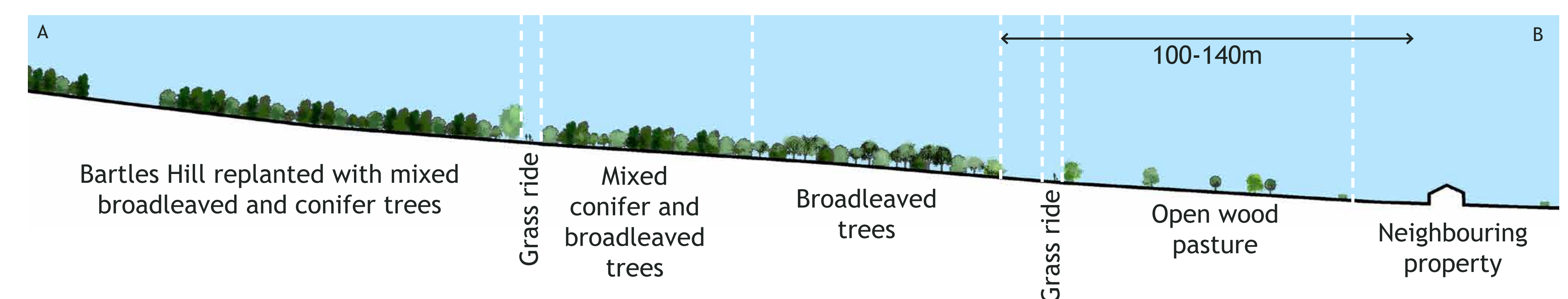
## How it could look after planting

We would plan to keep open space closest to Sleetbeck with planting fewer trees as wood pasture. In other areas, the open character of the woodland would change over a long time. As part of our current plan, the Bartles Hill area of Kershope Forest will be felled for the timber and replanted with a wide range of conifer and broadleaved species. This would reflect the new planting at Sleetbeck.



## How it could look in 20 years

We would replace farm gates at two entrances to allow people to walk in the new woodland. The view would be improved by planting a mixture of broadleaved trees in the middle-distance, with mixed conifer and broadleaf planting beyond on Bartles Hill within Kershope. This will increase the variety of species and add colour and texture.



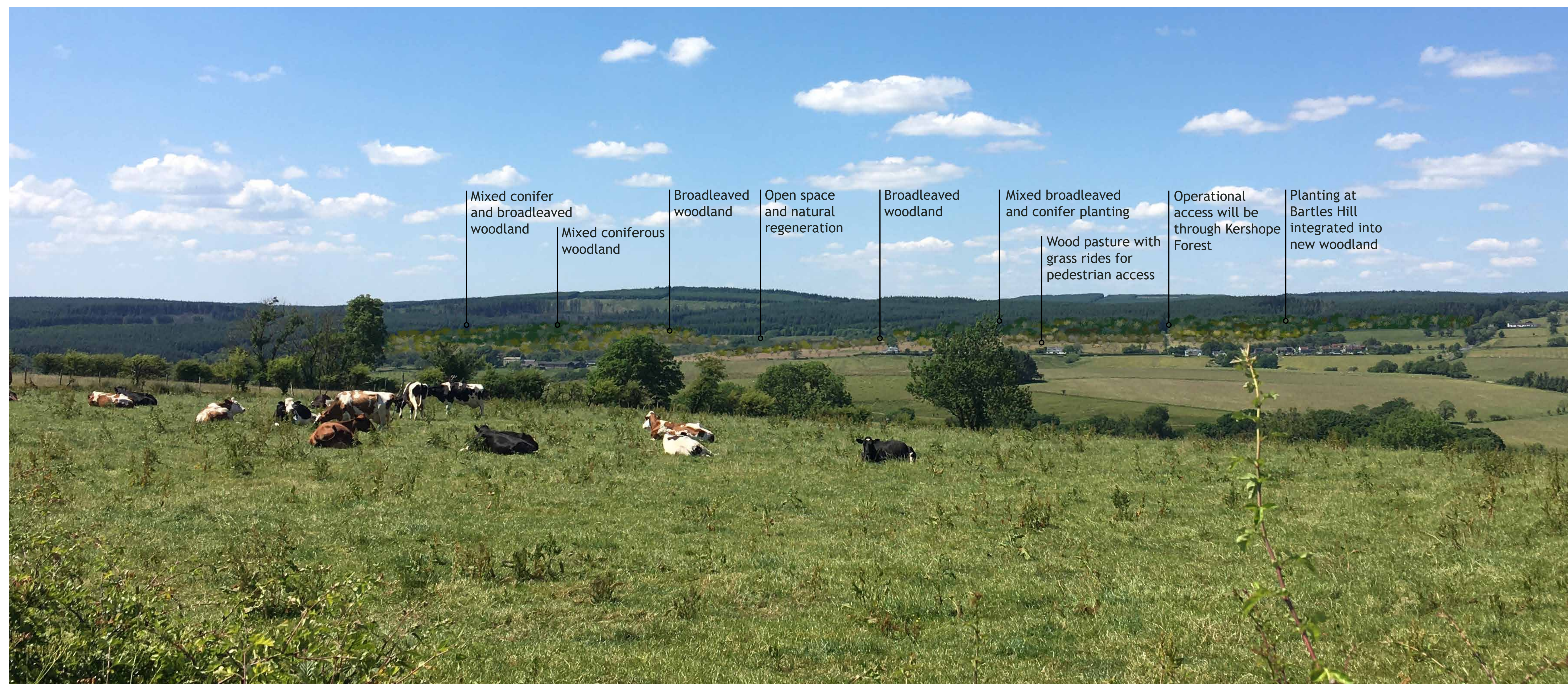
# How the new woodland could look



## Existing Landscape

The view northwest towards Kershope Forest from the public right of way: Kinkry Hill to Clattering Forge.

You can see rolling pasture farmland in the foreground with Sleetbeck hamlet in the middle-distance. You can also see the deciduous Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland in the proposed site, along with remaining hedgerow boundaries. Kershope Forest dominates on the horizon.



## How the new woodland could look

This panoramic view gives an indication of the form of proposed woodland planting. To the southwestern edge are broadleaf trees next to the existing woodland and Sleetbeck ASNW. Beyond the broadleaf trees, we would plan to plant a mixture of conifers up to the boundary with Kershope Forest.

To the southeastern boundary, next to the road and Sleetbeck hamlet, we propose to have wood pasture, planting fewer trees to keep the open character. Beyond this is a mixture of broadleaved woodland, evenly mixed conifer and broadleaved woodland, ending with conifer-dominant woodland.

The Bartles Hill area of Kershope Forest will be felled for its timber and redesigned, with a wider variety of species and an increase in broadleaved trees. The design also includes areas of open space, wide rides, shrubs, and keeps existing streams and wet areas to provide a rich mosaic of habitats, supporting a range of wildlife including birds, insects, and amphibians.