



Forestry England

Growing the nation's forests

Restoring habitats in our upland landscapes

Forestry England are planting new woodland to support habitat restoration

We are planning to diversify our woodland and scrub habitats at high altitude locations in Dodd Wood and Whinlatter in the Lake District. We would like your comments on our initial ideas. Your input will help shape our final designs.

Creating new woodland edge and scrub woodland habitats will move our woodlands closer to the biodiverse mountain communities we see in continental Europe, and would have historically seen in this area. This will support a broader range of bird and botanical communities.

We are carefully planning and researching the right mix of species to be resilient in our changing climate.

Our woodlands provide sustainable timber, contributing to a green economy and they have wider environmental benefits including absorbing carbon, improving soil health and air quality, and water management. Our woodlands also have public access so you can explore and enjoy them to support your health and wellbeing.

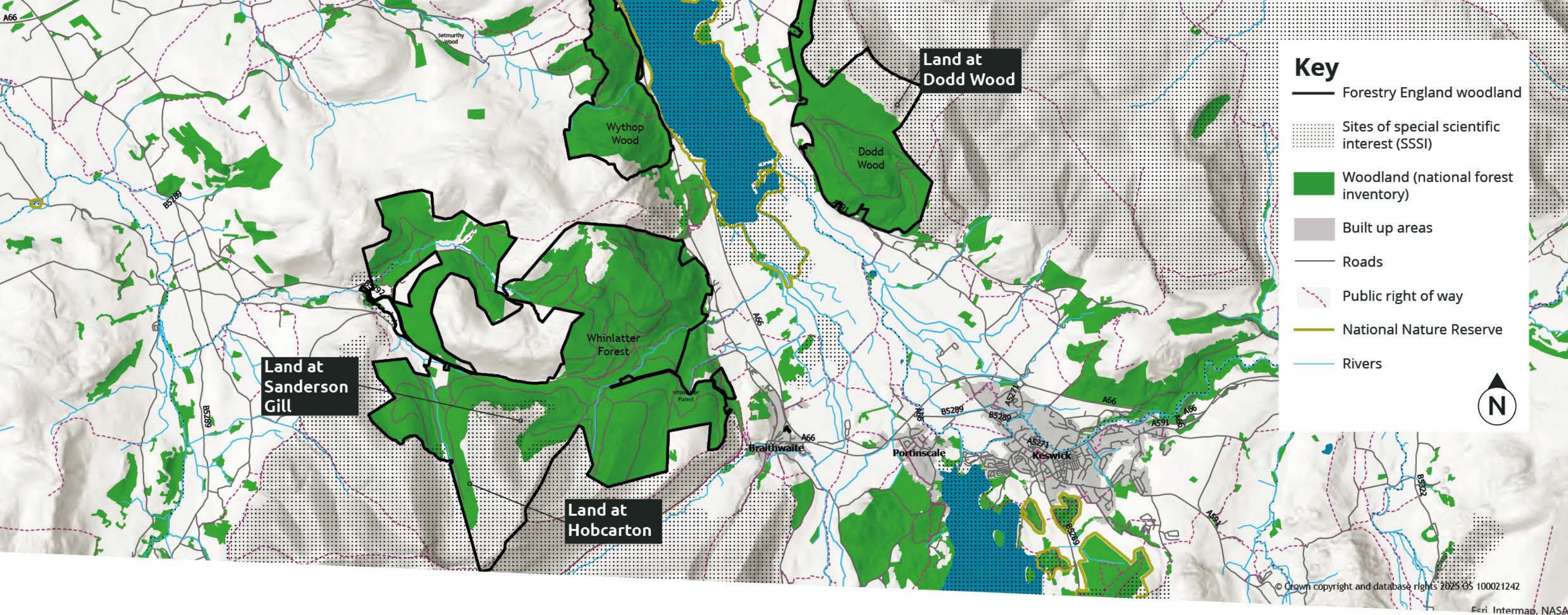
Forestry England is creating these woodlands using the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Nature for Climate Fund.

Image: view northeast from Barf towards Dodd Wood

Scan the QR code
to find out more:

forestryengland.uk



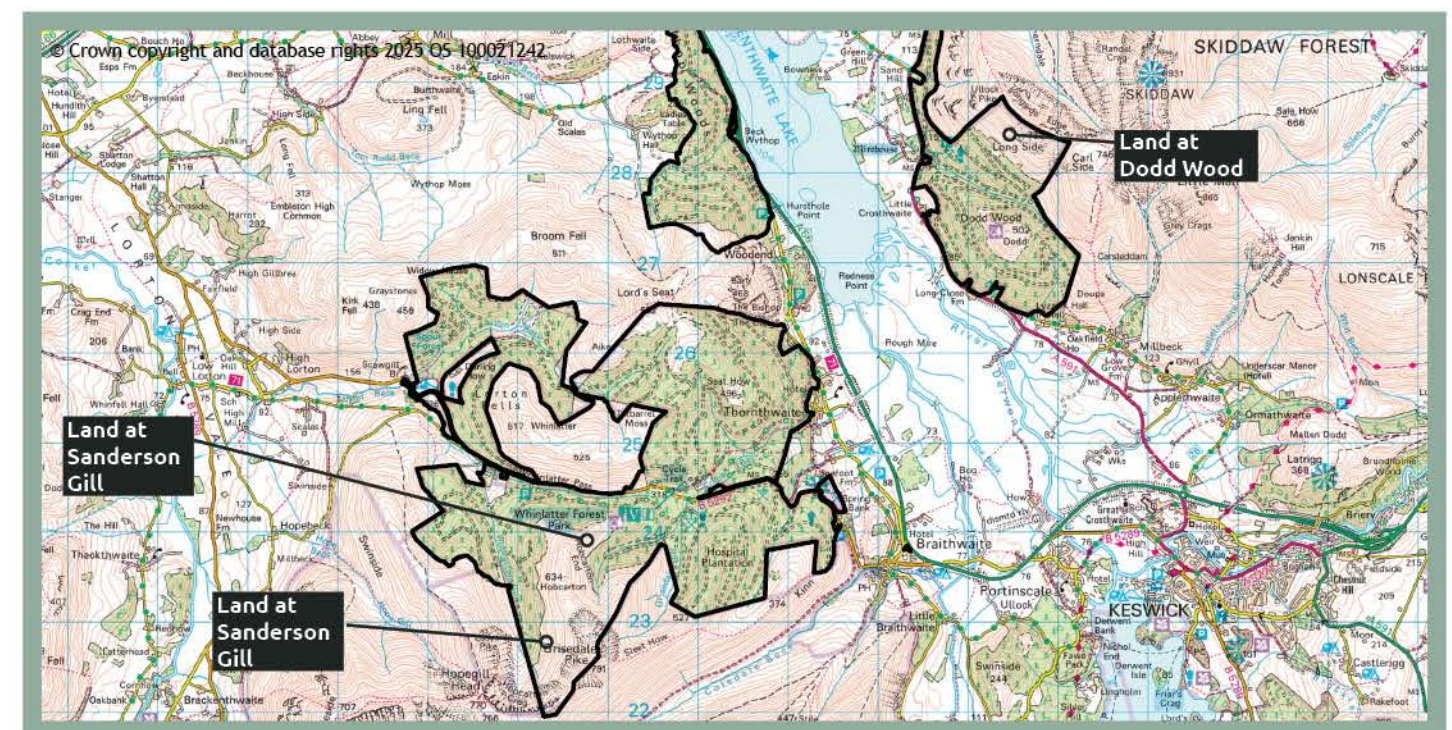


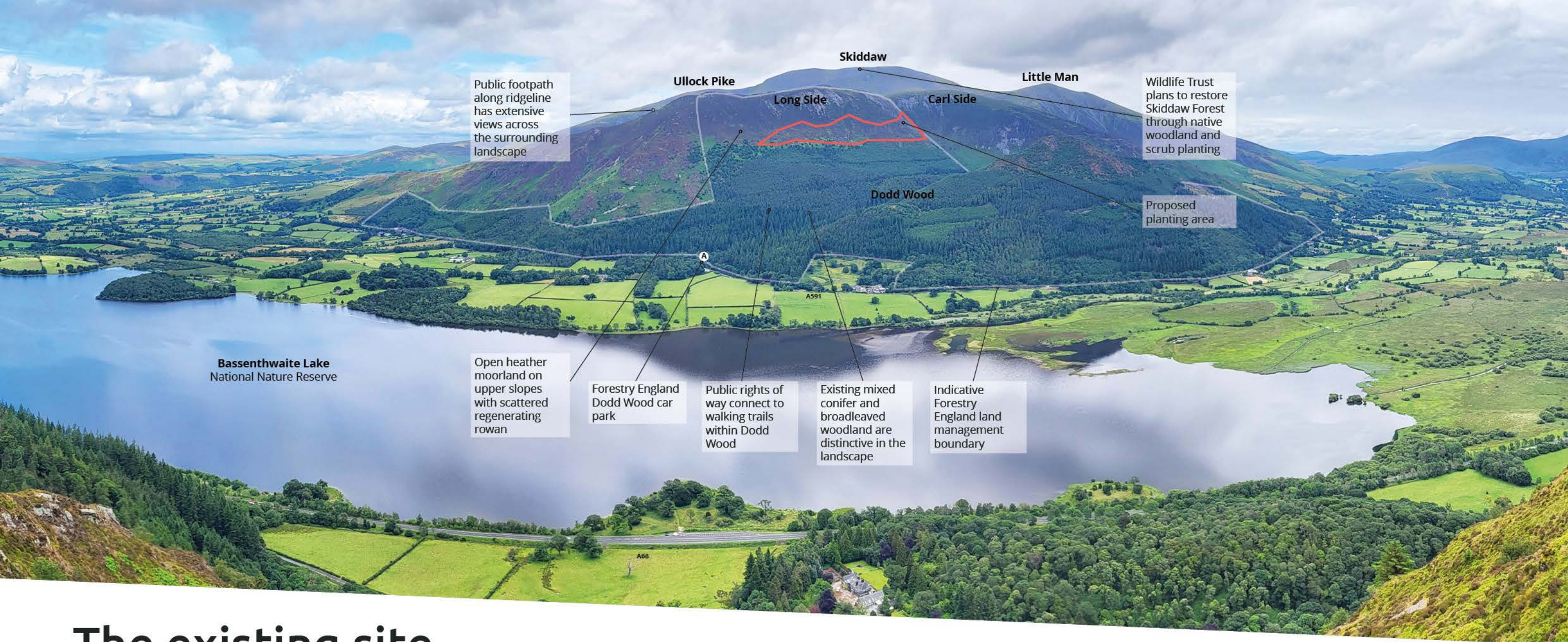
Site locations & landscape context

The sites in the Lake District are within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 8 Cumbria High Fells. The area covers the north and central Lake District and is largely within the National Park and World Heritage Site. A dramatic upland landscape, carved by past glaciations, with rugged peaks, ridges and open fells, separated by U-shaped valleys with a radiating pattern of lakes and rivers.

This working, pastoral landscape, with its network of drystone walls, has developed from a hill farming heritage dating from medieval times, with common grazing on the open fells (the largest area of common land in England), small enclosed valley fields and rougher intakes/allotments on valley sides. The Cumbria High Fells contain the most biologically diverse range of upland habitats in England, with internationally important fell habitats, rare Arctic Alpine plants, lakes, rivers, woodlands and a few species-rich meadows/pastures.

Native broadleaf woodland and conifer forests are extensive on the valley sides and bottoms, while the fells support pockets of scattered trees and scrub, plus a few small, high level and gill woodlands. Woodlands and peatlands, including blanket bog, are important carbon stores, requiring appropriate management to prevent carbon loss to the atmosphere and through water run-off. (Natural England, 2013).



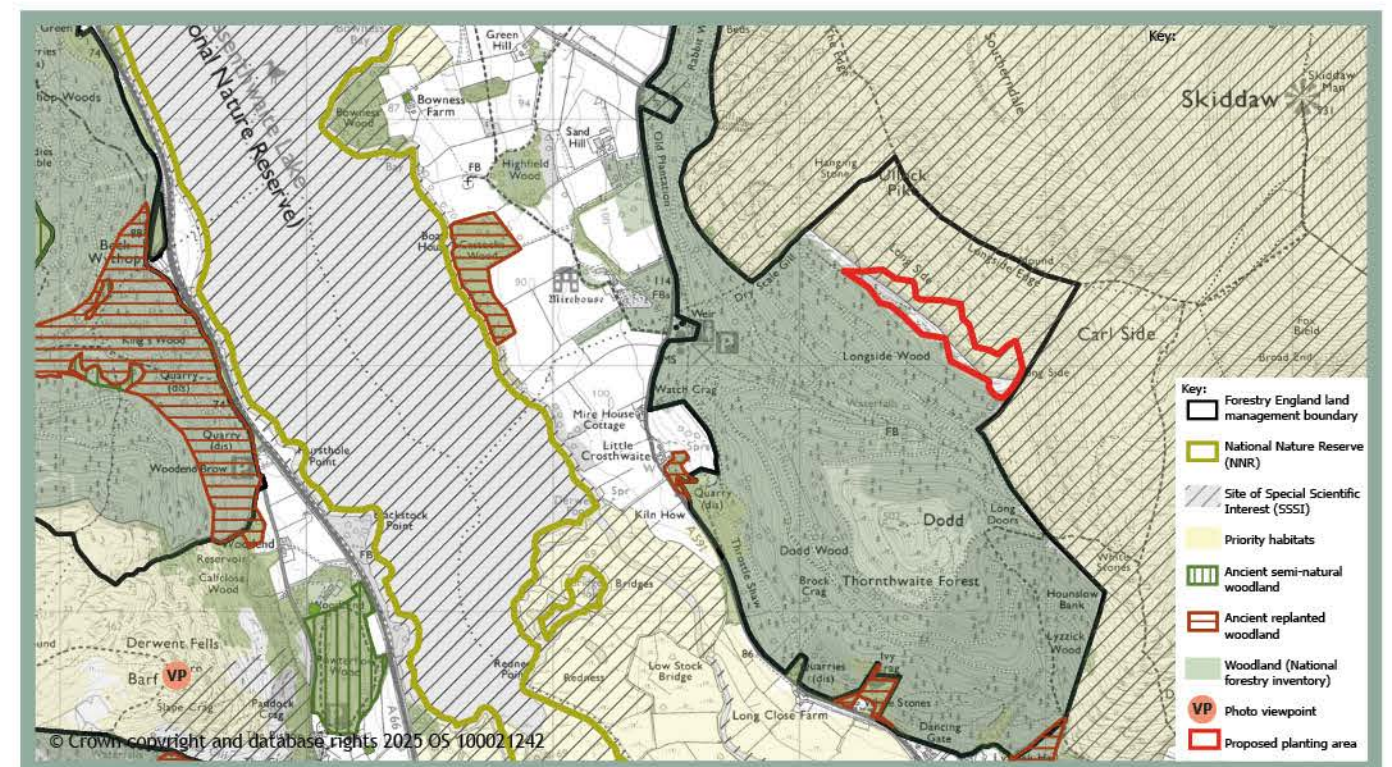


The existing site at Dodd Wood

Dodd Wood is adjacent to the southeast corner of Bassenthwaite lake, it consists of mixed broadleaved and conifer woodland on the lower slopes, with heather moorland on the unenclosed upper slopes which are grazed by sheep from adjoining land. The proposed site for planting is within the upper slopes.

The open, upper slopes are part of the Skiddaw group SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) which supports the largest areas of both heather moorland and blanket bog in the Lake District. Other habitats of special interest include tarns, montane moss heath and juniper scrub. Native woodland and scrub are particularly scarce and fragmented habitats within the SSSI and this area provides an important opportunity to create diverse woodland edge and scrub woodland habitats.

Image: view northeast from Barf towards Dodd Wood





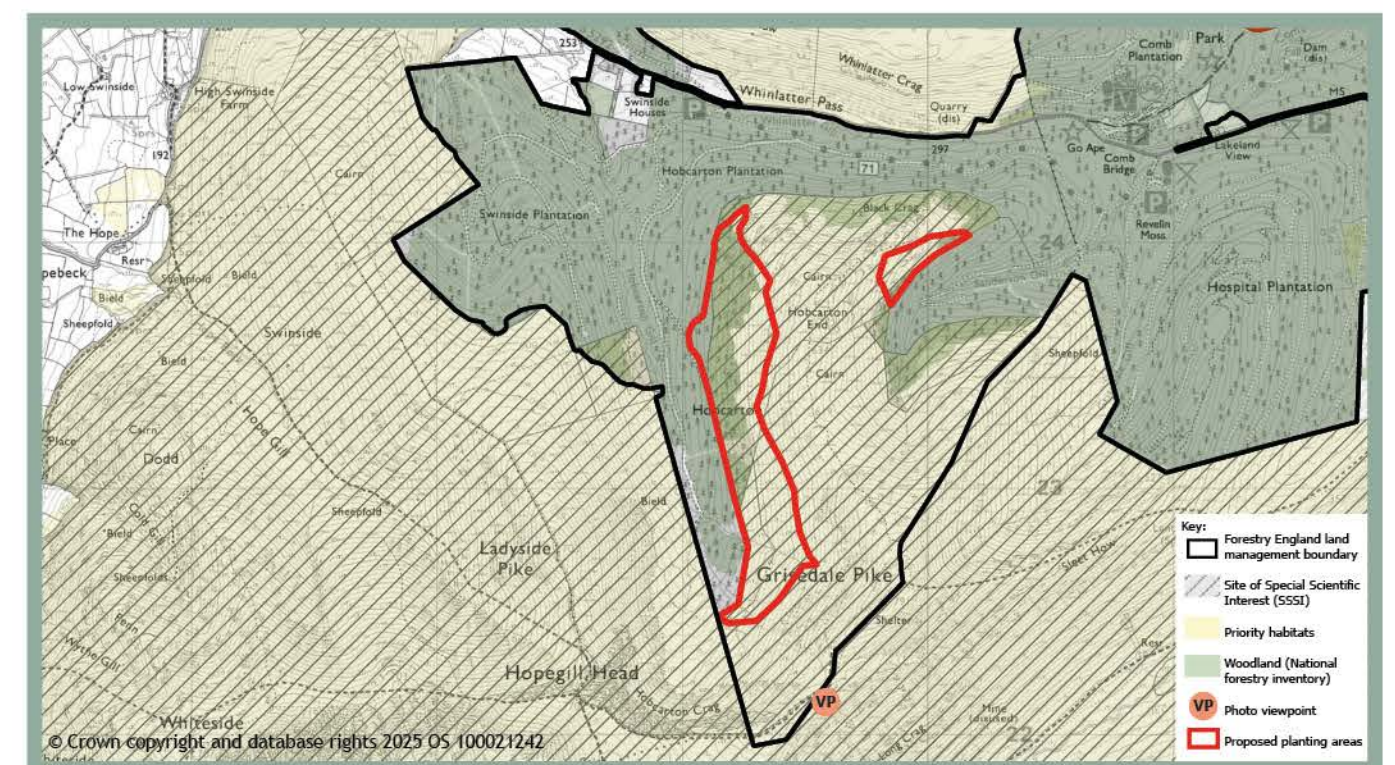
The existing site at Hobcarton

The land at Hobcarton is south of Whinlatter Pass and stretches up the valley towards the summits of Grisedale Pike and Hobcarton End to the eastern side of the valley. The open land is part of Buttermere Fells SSSI, which is important due to its range of well-developed Atlantic dwarf shrub heath habitats.

The lower valley slopes consist of conifer forest, of Sitka spruce and Scots pine, established in the 1960's and 1970's.

High altitude native woodland is particularly rare and fragmented within the SSSI and this area provides an important opportunity to create diverse woodland edge and scrub woodland habitats, which will increase the habitat available for birds and invertebrates.

Image: view north from head of Hobcarton Gill valley



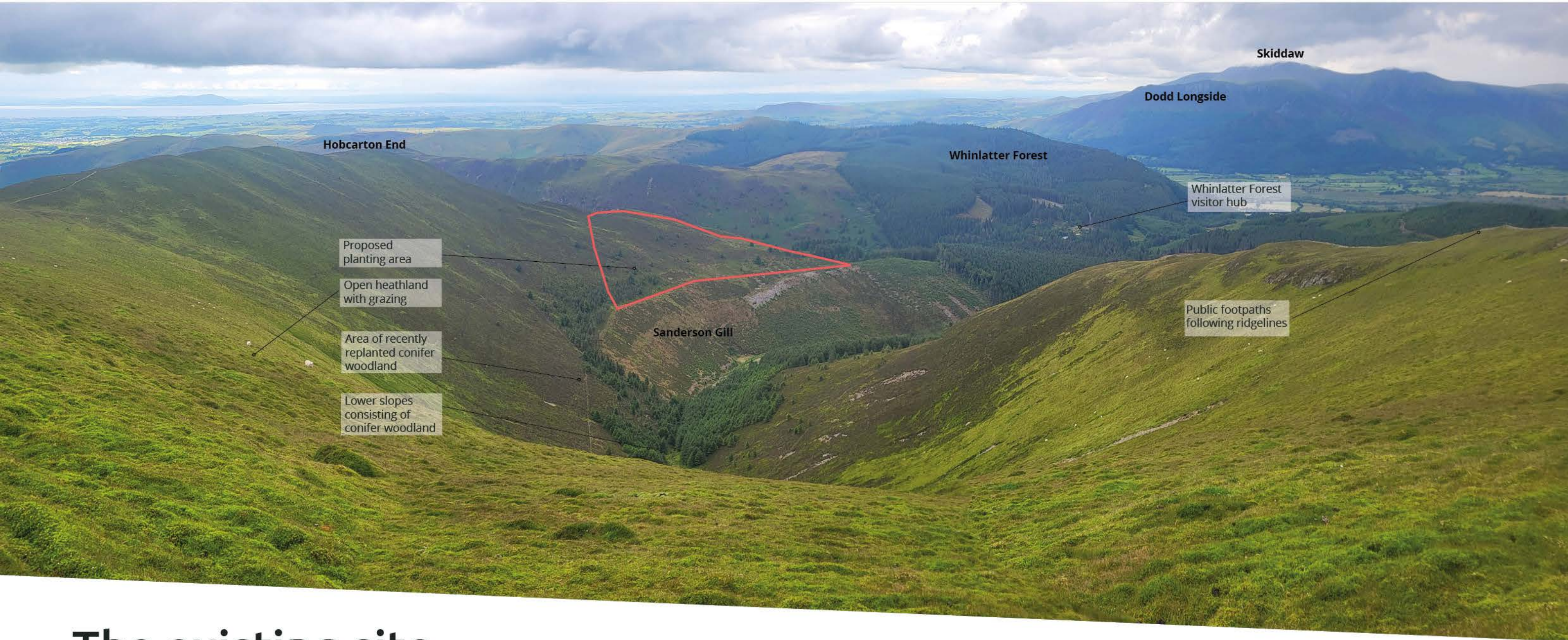


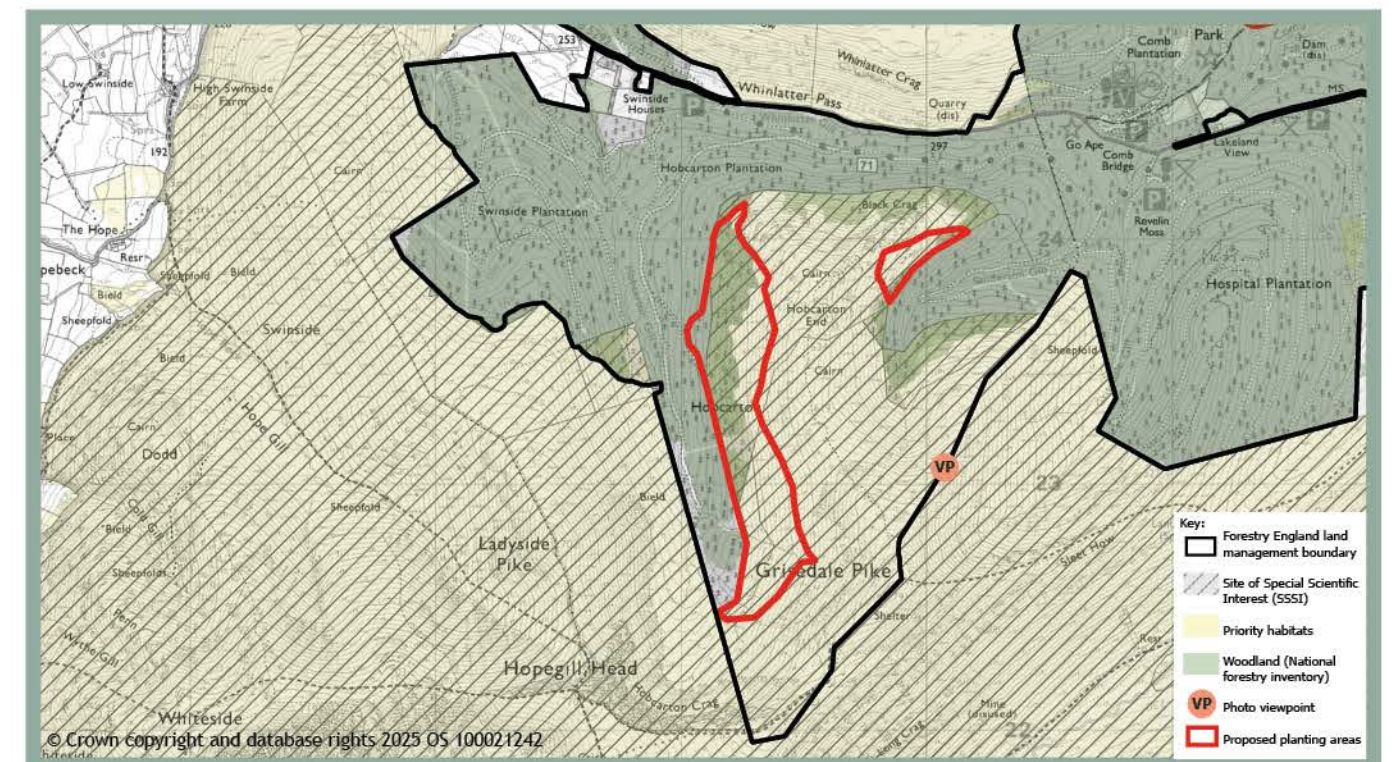
Image: view north from head of Sanderson Gill valley

The existing site at Sanderson

The land at Sanderson Gill is south of Whinlatter Pass and on the eastern slope of Hobcarton End. The open land is part of Buttermere Fells SSSI, which is important due to its range of well-developed Atlantic dwarf shrub heath habitats.

The lower slopes of Sanderson Gill consist of mixed broadleaved and conifer forest, of Sitka spruce, Western hemlock, Scots pine and silver birch established in the 1980's and 2010s.

High altitude native woodland is particularly rare and fragmented within the SSSI and this area provides an important opportunity to create diverse woodland edge and scrub woodland habitats, which will increase the habitat available for birds and invertebrates.





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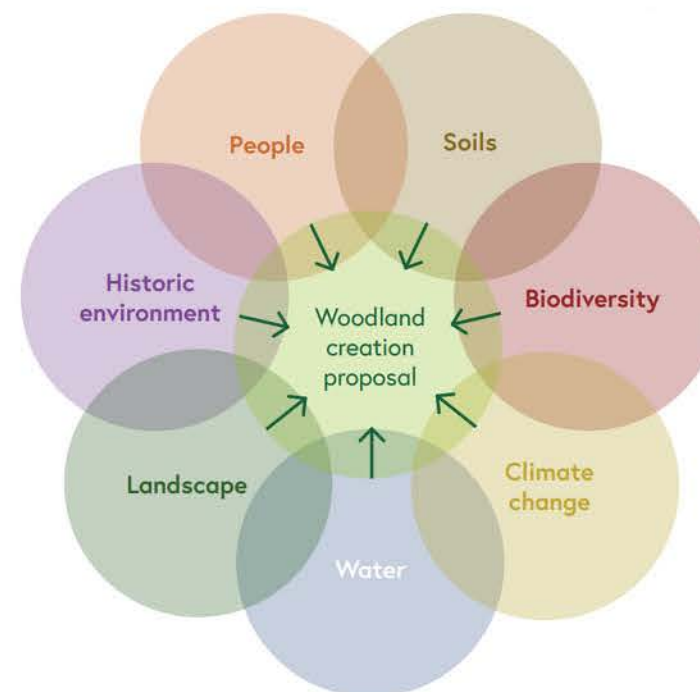
Image: view north over Hobcarton Gill

Steps towards planting

Before any planting happens, there's a lot of groundwork to do that will inform our designs.

We'll be carrying out detailed surveys and studies to make sure everything is done right. This includes:

- Checking local wildlife records and doing ecological assessments.
 - Mapping peat and soils.
 - Reviewing historical and cultural features.
 - Looking at how the landscape might change visually.
 - Making sure utilities and infrastructure are considered.
- And of course, listening to feedback from the local community.





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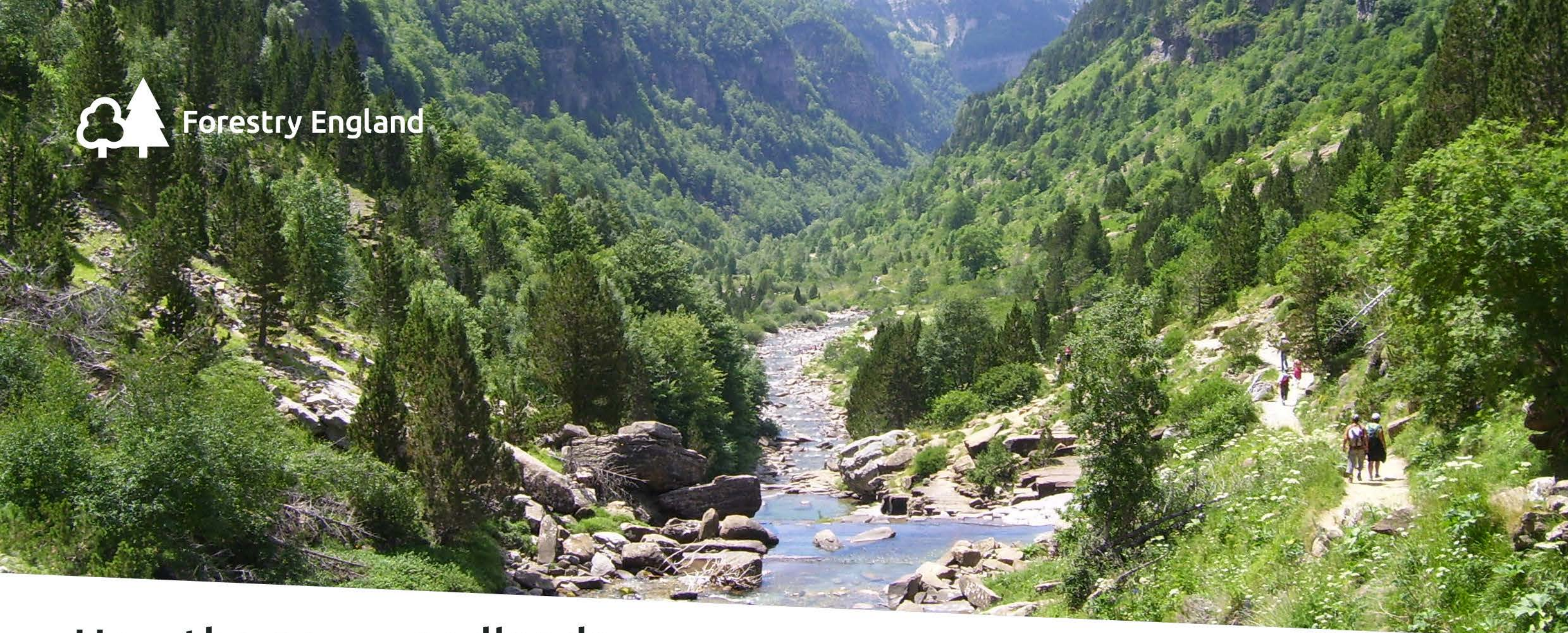


Image: Ordesa y Monte Perdido, Spanish Pyrenees
Credit T. Dearnley

How the new woodlands could look in 25 years

Fast forward a few decades, and these new woodlands could be a thriving mix of trees and shrubs and a space that works for both nature and people.



Our designs focus on:

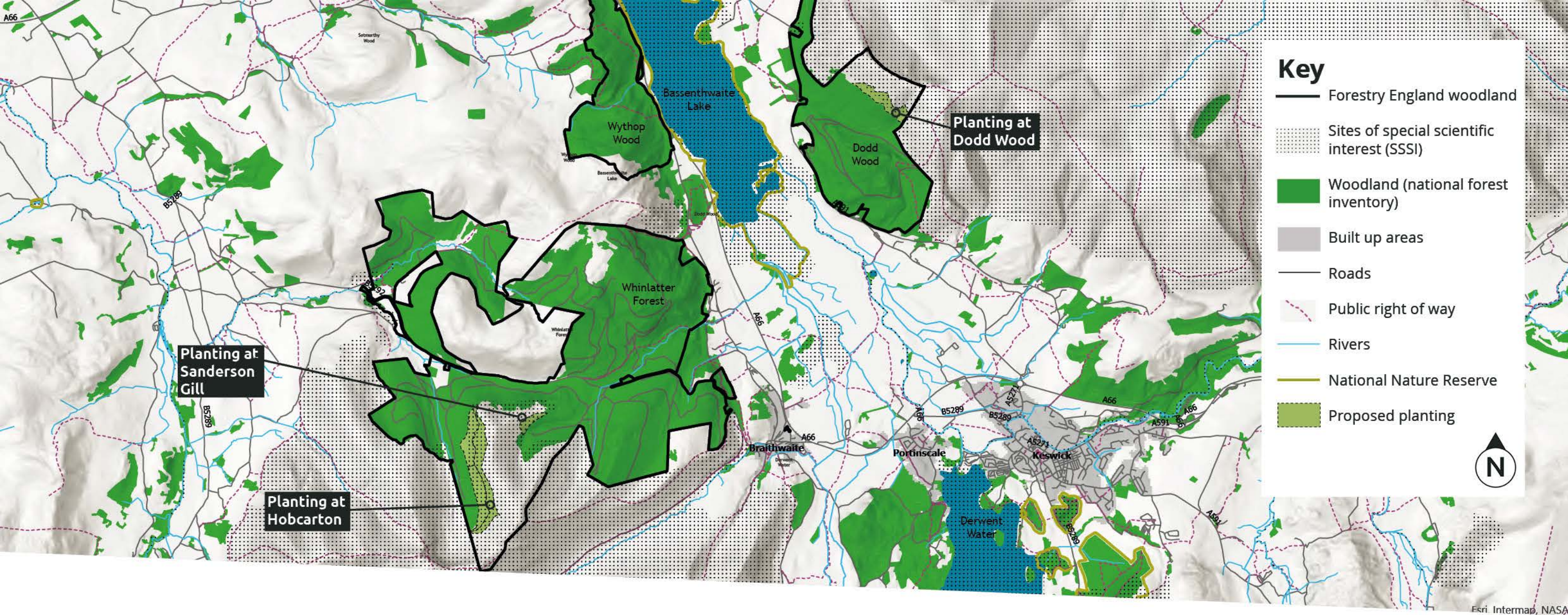
Thriving habitats for wildlife: support an improvement in the condition status of the Forestry England managed SSSI by increasing opportunities for enhancing biodiversity such as providing food and shelter for mountain species such as ring ouzel.



Benefits for the wider landscape: support opportunities for nature recovery beyond priority habitats to create bigger, better, more connected habitats, such as the creation of woodland scrub, as identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cumbria.



Future forest resources and resilience: create new resilient woodland to improve species and structural diversity, to capture carbon, supporting net zero emissions targets, and reduce impact of high rainfall events.



Our initial plans

We are carefully designing areas to plant a mix of shrubs and trees at the three locations shown above. Over time this will create diverse woodland edge and scrub woodland habitats which will blend into the surrounding landscape.



Aspen



Birch



Hawthorn



Scots pine



Rowan



Juniper



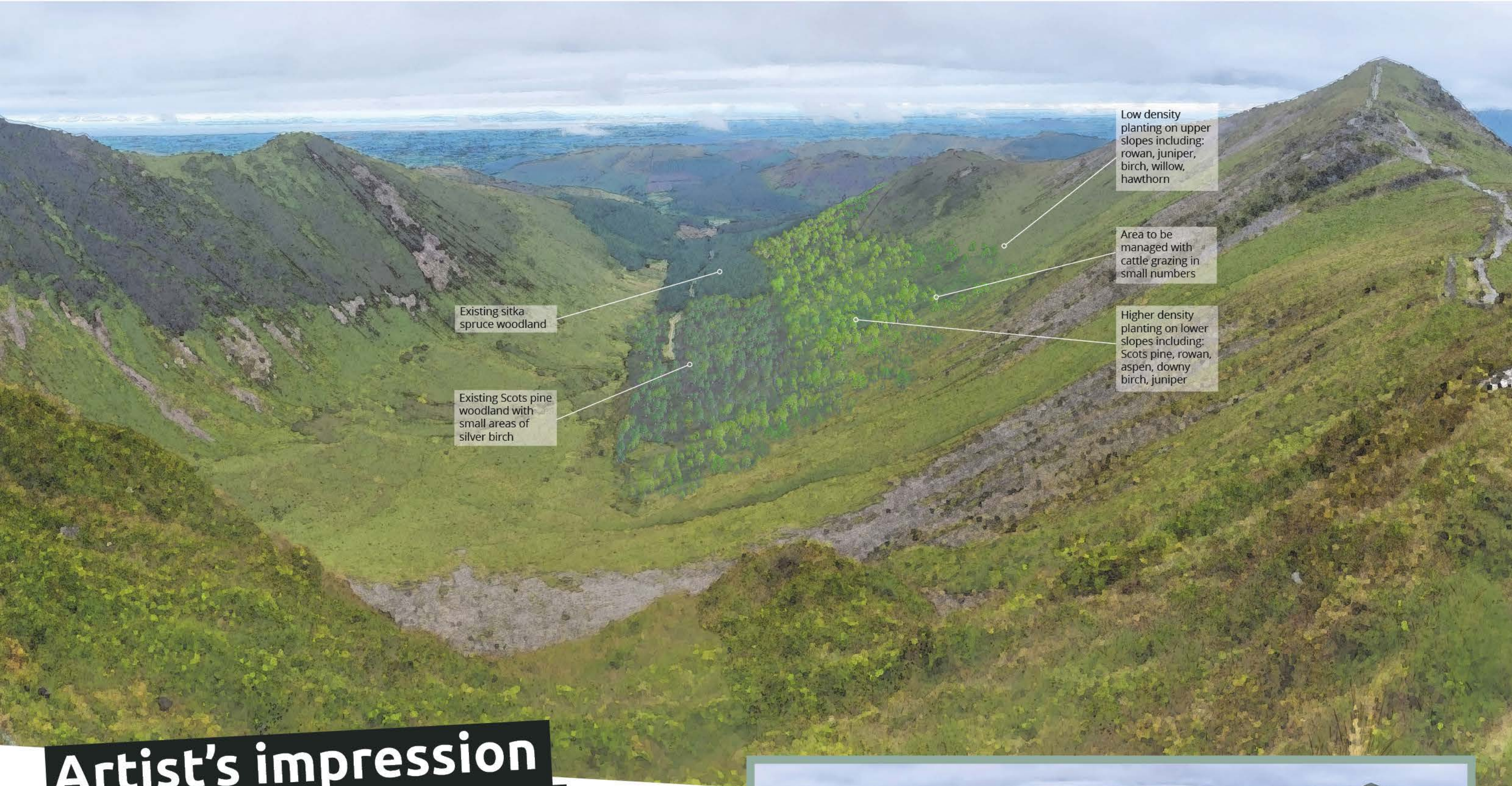
Low density
planting
including:
rowan, juniper,
birch, willow,
hawthorn

Existing mixed
conifer and
broadleaved
woodland are
distinctive in the
landscape

Artist's impression
How Dodd Wood could look
in 25 years



How it looks now



Artist's impression
How Hobcarton could look
in 25 years



How it looks now



Low density
planting on upper
slopes including:
rowan, juniper,
birch, willow,
hawthorn

Existing
sitka spruce
woodland

Artist's impression
How Sanderson Gill could look
in 25 years



How it looks now



Forestry England

Responding to this consultation

We encourage you to submit your response online. You can view our plans and submit your views by completing the online feedback form at:

- bit.ly/consultwh
- If you are unable to do this, you can respond via email at woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk

All views should be received by 11.59pm on Sunday 6th July 2025

What's next ?

- Review of consultation feedback
- Further design work to refine our proposals
- Application to the Forestry Commission for permission to create the new woodland
- Planting (Winter 2025/26)

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