

Item: 4

Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee: 2 June 2026.

Orkney Trees and Woodland Strategy.

Report by Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

1. Overview

- 1.1. This report presents an updated Trees and Woodland Strategy, following periods of public consultation, for members approval.
- 1.2. The preparation of a Trees and Woodland Strategy is a requirement of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and National Planning Framework 4.
- 1.3. The draft Trees and Woodland Strategy covering the period 2026 to 2036, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, supports the review of the Orkney Local Development Plan.
- 1.4. The Strategy notes the importance of trees and woodland in Orkney and their benefits to the environment, in the provision of shelter, to our community socially and historically and for tackling the effects of climate change. The Strategy focuses on the protection of existing trees, the encouragement of new tree planting and how this can be achieved through the planning process.
- 1.5. Once approved, the Tree and Woodland Strategy will inform the Spatial Policy of the next Local Development Plan and planning application decision making.
- 1.6. The protection of trees and woodland and the creation of new planted areas contributes to the leading policies in National Planning Framework 4 that of climate change and biodiversity. While Orkney is not expected to have large commercial forests; trees and woodland will assist in carbon management, the provision of shelter, assisting with water management and the creation and enhancement of biodiversity.

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:

- i. Approve the Trees and Woodland Strategy 2026-2036, attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Consultation

- 3.1. When working on the initial drafting of this strategy, Development and Marine Planning held informal consultation sessions with the Orkney Woodland Group, Scottish Forestry, Woodland Trust for Scotland, Orkney Field Club, Orkney Waters Trust, NatureScot and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- 3.2. On 4 December 2024, Elected Members were briefed on the initial consultative draft Strategy. Public consultation was undertaken between 27 January and 24 March 2025, and 15 representations were received. The number and nature of comments led Development and Marine Planning to re-draft the Strategy.
- 3.3. Consultees were broadly supportive of the Strategy but wanted to see a greater clarity of purpose, audience and distinctiveness; increased ambition with clearer objectives and delivery mechanisms; stronger integration of biodiversity protection, particularly for open habitats and bird populations and, flexibility and proportionality in policy application.
- 3.4. On 17 December 2025, Elected Members were briefed on the second consultative draft. A further period of public consultation was then held from 19 January to 28 February 2026. All contributors from the first consultation were invited to comment further and the consultation was promoted through the local media.
- 3.5. In total, 12 representations were received that on the whole were supportive of this Strategy and only minor amendments have been made. Their comments are detailed at Appendix 2 to this report.

For Further Information please contact:

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Implications of Report

1. **Financial:** All resources associated with the draft and consultation have come from the Council in terms of staff time. These costs were contained within existing revenue budgets. In terms of delivery of the actions, it is proposed they will be met from within existing approved budgets or through successful external funding applications.
2. **Legal:** There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations contained in this report.
3. **Corporate Governance:** Not applicable.
4. **Human Resources:** None.
5. **Equalities:** An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 3 to this report.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** This work has been assessed as being unlikely to have an effect on other communities (including other island communities) in Orkney, therefore, a full Island Communities Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - ☐ Growing our Economy.
 - ☒ Strengthening our Communities.
 - ☒ Developing our Infrastructure.
 - ☒ Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - ☒ Cost of Living.
 - ☒ Sustainable Development.
 - ☒ Local Equality.
 - ☒ Improving Population Health.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk:** None. Screening for a Strategic Environmental Assessment was undertaken and it is considered that there are no negative adverse impact of this plan and actions.
10. **Risk:** None.
11. **Procurement:** None.
12. **Health and Safety:** None.
13. **Property and Assets:** None.
14. **Information Technology:** None.
15. **Cost of Living:** None.

List of Background Papers

National Planning Framework 4.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Trees and Woodland Strategy 2026-2036.

Appendix 2 - Consultation Report.

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment.



Trees and Woodland Strategy 2026 - 2036

April 2026



Overview

The purpose of the Orkney Trees and Woodland Strategy is to support and inform the spatial strategy of the new Local Development Plan by setting out the vision, policies and plans for the future of woodland and trees in Orkney. Forest and woodland strategies are a requirement under section A159 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 (the Act) section 53, and Policy 6, Forestry, woodland and trees, of Scotland's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Forest and woodland strategies will contribute to the delivery of Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029.

The statutory and policy contexts means that the main audience are those involved in built development and the planning system. The Strategy is also relevant to anyone who wants to plant trees and will outline planning consideration, planting opportunities, constraints and potential funding opportunities.

As there are no large forests in Orkney, the Strategy has been named the Trees and Woodland Strategy, however it still meets the requirements of the Act. In this Strategy, the terms 'tree' and 'trees' are used as shorthand for 'trees and shrubs' and 'woodland and scrub'. This is because woodland and scrub are important contributors to woodland type habitat in Orkney, often around built development and in urban and rural locations. Trees may also form 'hedges', due to their stunted growth, or small 'woodlands'.

The Trees and Woodland Strategy sets out a clear vision, providing high level encouragement for how planting around Orkney can contribute to mitigating the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, while bringing multiple benefits to people, such as landscape enhancement, amenity and recreational opportunities; small-scale planting is an important aspect of the Orkney context. The three themes in section 3 are based on the core principles of protecting, enhancing and creating resiliency, which are set within the Act.

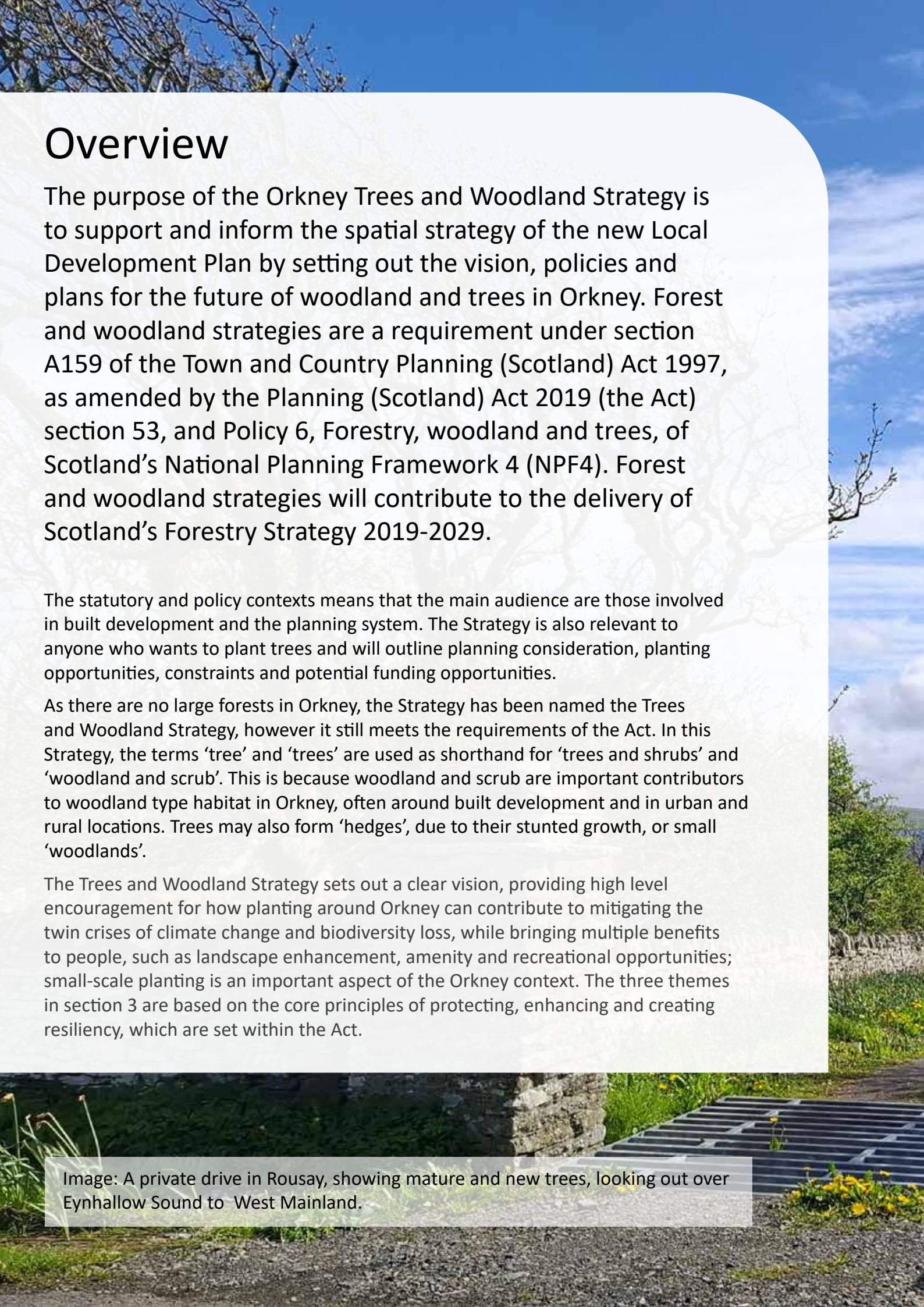
A photograph of a gravel driveway in Rousay, Orkney. The driveway is bordered by a low stone wall on the left and a metal drainage grate on the right. In the background, there are mature trees and a view of Eynhallow Sound and West Mainland under a blue sky with some clouds.

Image: A private drive in Rousay, showing mature and new trees, looking out over Eynhallow Sound to West Mainland.

Vision

To protect, enhance and support new trees, woodlands and hedges in Orkney, that are resilient and contribute to tackling the effects of climate change, provide diverse and functional habitats that support wildlife, complement land uses and are valued and enjoyed by people.



Protect



Enhance



Resilient

The following contexts give an understanding as to how Orkney's small-scale planting is relevant within National and policy contexts and the various ways in which more trees can be realised through the development planning process and from community and private planting schemes.



Image: Core path K14, route along Wideford Burn, showing mixed planting on the riparian corridor.

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1: Context

Image: View from core path H2, to the Old Man of Hoy, the ancient native woodland at Berriedale and other planting can be viewed around Rackwick, in the north-west corner of Hoy, which boasts high hills and dramatic coastal cliffs.

1.1 Statutory Context

1.1.1 Section A159 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by section 53 of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019), places a requirement on planning authorities to prepare a forestry and woodland strategy to:

- Identify woodlands of high conservation value in the planning authority's area and
- Set out the planning authority's policies and proposals in their area to develop woodlands and protect and enhance woodlands.
- Outline the resilience to climate change of woodlands and
- Expand woodlands to provide multiple benefits to people, the environment and the economy.

1.2 National Policy

1.2.1 National Planning Framework 4, Policy 6, Forestry, woodland and trees, lays out the policy intent, policy outcomes and guidance for local development plans and development proposals in relation to ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees of high biodiversity value.

1.2.2 Policy 6 sits within a suite of policies within the sustainable places spatial principle; sustainable places are where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity. This group of policies is driven by the need to tackle the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss; trees and woodlands can contribute to the mitigation of the twin crises through carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancement. Furthermore, trees can form part of solutions for heat and cooling, blue and green infrastructure, flood risk and water management and recreation.

1.2.3 The policy connections for Policy 6 extend beyond natural environments into the built environment because trees contribute to the settings, design and quality of historic, existing and new places. Therefore, Policy 6 connects to policies within the Liveable Places policy family, in NPF4, and outlines the guidelines for supporting development in relation to trees and woodlands.

NPF4 Policy 6 on forestry, woodland and trees

- a. Development proposals that enhance, expand and improve woodland and tree cover will be supported.
- b. Development proposals will not be supported where they will result in:
 - i. Any loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition;
 - ii. Adverse impacts on native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees of high biodiversity value, or identified for protection in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy;
 - iii. Fragmenting or severing woodland habitats, unless appropriate mitigation measures are identified and implemented in line with the mitigation hierarchy;
 - iv. Conflict with Restocking Direction, Remedial Notice or Registered Notice to Comply issued by Scottish Forestry.
- c. Development proposals involving woodland removal will only be supported where they will achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits in accordance with relevant Scottish Government policy on woodland removal. Where woodland is removed, compensatory planting will most likely be expected to be delivered.
- d. Development proposals on sites which include an area of existing woodland or land identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy as being suitable for woodland creation will only be supported where the enhancement and improvement of woodlands and the planting of new trees on the site (in accordance with the Forestry and Woodland Strategy) are integrated into the design.

NPF4 Policy Connections

- Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation – woodland creation contributes to carbon sequestration and climate adaptation options.
- Policy 3: Biodiversity – woodland habitats have high biodiversity value.
- Policy 4: Natural places – woodland habitats support Nature Networks.
- Policy 14: Design, quality and place – trees and woodlands can help address four of the six NPF4 qualities of successful places – Healthy, Pleasant, Distinctive and Sustainable.
- Policy 15: Local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods – trees and woodlands in settlements can support a range of activities, for example, sports, leisure, arts, culture and education.
- Policy 20: Blue and green infrastructure – trees and woodlands are an important component of green infrastructure.
- Policy 21: Play, recreation and sport – trees and woodlands contribute to outdoor play and sports.
- Policy 22: Flood risk and water management – trees and woodlands can help manage flood risk and water quality.

1.3 National Strategy

1.3.1 Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 and Scotland's Third Land Use Strategy 2021-2026, have similar themes and objectives, particularly in relation to safeguarding existing resource, increasing the number of trees and recognition of the public health and well-being benefits of trees and woodlands.

1.3.2 The relevant strategic drivers in Scotland's Forestry Strategy include:

- Climate change mitigation – trees and woodlands are one natural solution that can contribute to CO2 being removed from the atmosphere;
- Adaptation and resilience – trees and woodlands can help us adapt to climate change by, for example, providing natural flood management and shelter for livestock;
- Integrated land use – woodlands do not exist in a vacuum, trees must fit in with other rural activities such as farming, nature conservation and recreation;
- Skills and workforce – address the skills development requirements for tree and woodland planting and management;
- Natural assets, environmental quality and biodiversity – trees and woodlands support the delivery of biodiversity;
- Landscape quality and the historic environment – trees and woodlands can be a positive addition in some areas;
- Health and well-being – trees and woodlands can contribute to people's wellbeing along with other types of green space.

1.3.3 Woodland creation is far from simple, with suitability dependant on a number of social, ecological and economic factors. The social benefits of woodlands, although hard to measure, can include improvements in physical and mental health. Diversity and local distinctiveness are important for maintaining and enhancing the rich range of woodland habitats and species that exist in Scotland and the Islands and recognising that different species will suit different areas.

1.3.4 By encouraging provision of additional habitat, featuring trees, which increases the amount of carbon sinks, the Orkney Trees and Woodland Strategy will also contribute to the delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045, and Scotland’s Climate Change Plan 2026-2040.

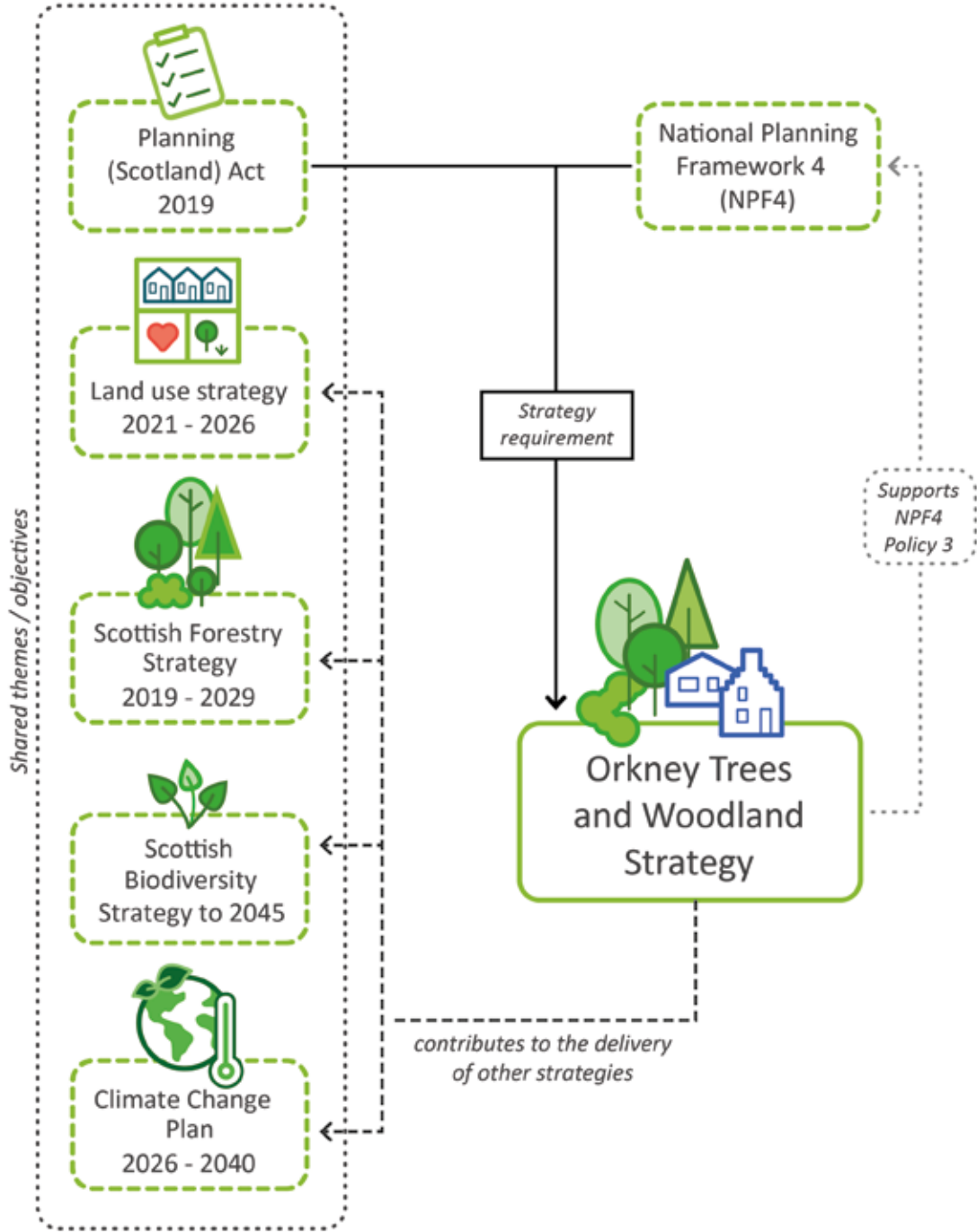


Figure 1: Diagram showing Policy and Strategy Documents.

1.4 Orkney's Climate and Land Use

1.4.1 Orkney's landscape has been shaped by the climatic conditions and the marine environment. The climate is hyper-oceanic, which results in a cool and moist equitable climate, exposed to the severity of the Atlantic weather systems and salt-laden winds. Gales occur, on average, 29 days a year; the windiest months occurring between October and March. Atlantic depressions bring strong winds, which are unimpeded as they cross the sea, so they can reach high velocities and carry salt spray.

1.4.2 Salt carried from the sea means that salt-resistant plants are more likely to survive in Orkney. The amount of salt concentrated in the air should deplete as you move further from the coastal regions where salt spray from wave-action is also present. The effects of the wind are most clearly displayed in the growth habits of many trees and woodlands in Orkney, which can result in woodlands maintaining a scrub habitat in more exposed areas. While in leaf the salt winds often 'burn' the foliage, resulting in foliage turning brown and shrivelling before autumn. Funnelling winds can also bend trees into a characteristic wedge shape. Careful planning of tree planting can mitigate these challenges and have helped trees, shelter belts and smaller woodlands to establish.

1.4.3 Land use in Orkney is predominantly agricultural, with the agricultural land area amounting to 92,932 hectares, equivalent to 94% of land use. Farmland is mainly grassland, mostly enclosed pasture, with beef cattle being the largest livestock group. Farmland overlaps with Orkney's many national and internationally important areas for nature conservation (56 protected areas), locally important nature reserves (250 conservation sites) and the National Scenic Area of Hoy and West Mainland.

1.4.4 In Orkney designated areas for nature conservation include peat soils. Peat is a significant feature in some upland areas in Eday, Hoy and Rousay, and hills in Evie, Rendall and Orphir in the Mainland. There is also basin and valley peat, and when restored or in good condition, peatland can offer important potential as carbon sinks. Any site-specific assessments for tree planting will include consideration of designations and existing landscape and biodiversity value and national guidance regarding tree planting on peatland.

1.4.5 Orkney also has extensive designated cultural and heritage sites (one World Heritage Site, 373 Scheduled Monuments). Also within the built environment are 6 Conservation Areas and 3 Gardens and Designed Landscapes, these sites house woodlands or specimen trees. Settlements, farm steadings, housing groups, single houses and infrastructure, such as roads and harbours, cover a lesser percentage of land in Orkney.



Image: Whitebeam growing in a characteristic shrub shape by Bay of Firth.

1.5 Orkney's Existing Trees and Woodland

1.5.1 Despite the factors noted, trees played a significant role in Orkney in the past and continue to do so today. Archaeological investigations indicate that Neolithic Orkney used to have a significant number of woodlands. Clearance of native woodlands, combined with the introduction of livestock grazing and changing climatic conditions, are likely to have caused the depletion of almost all of the native woodlands in Orkney. Some native woodland remains on the east and north-west of Hoy and areas of native willow carr survive on the West Mainland. Some tree species take longer to grow and are often smaller in height and girth but where trees, hedges and woodlands are present, they can provide important environmental and cultural benefits to Orkney. Commercial forestry is not regarded as currently viable in Orkney due to Orkney's weather, soil types, existing biodiversity and historic features. This context could change in the future.

1.5.2 Orkney's weather, soil types, existing biodiversity and historic features, also mean that in order for trees to thrive it is important to get the right tree in the right location. While recognising the challenges of tree planting, there is a role for new tree planting in Orkney that this Strategy seeks to support.

1.5.3 For some years the Council has been part of the Orkney Woodland Group (OWG), whose members include representatives from NatureScot, RSPB, Orkney Field Club and the Council. This Group works to promote appropriate tree planting schemes and gain funding; this joint working will continue.



Image: Tankerness House - Kirkwall Museum, Kirkwall. The gardens of Tankerness House provide a unique town centre space for locals and visitors to enjoy.

1.5.4 Orkney has a number of native woodlands identified in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland; existing areas of native woodland should be retained and enhanced where appropriate. However, because the native woodlands in Orkney are very small and do not show up very well on an Orkney wide map, it is better to view the data directly via the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland mapping on SE Web <https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/?layers=nativeWoodlandSurveyForScotland>.

1.5.5 Much of the planting of native woodlands in Orkney, from 1998-2025, was facilitated through the Orkney Woodland Project, and grant aided either by Woodland Trust for Scotland or Scottish Forestry (see Appendix 2). Around 300 new small-scale woodlands were planted on private land, amounting to over 150 hectares in total. These small woodlands are not all shown on the Native Woodland Survey for Scotland because they may be too small to be picked up.

1.5.6 There are no specific targets set out, the Strategy seeks to encourage and promote the value of tree and woodland planting in appropriate locations, acknowledging that most of these opportunities are likely to be smaller scale planting proposals that will emerge over time, creating an incremental increase in the number of trees and woodlands.

1.5.7 Although not currently mapped; non-native trees are important for the services they provide to nature, climate change and people. Such trees and woodland should be retained and enhanced where appropriate. Many non-native trees and woodlands are found in other locations throughout Orkney, including in gardens, within open spaces in towns and villages, along path networks and scattered throughout rural areas. It is important to protect what Orkney already has because recreating their value is challenging and takes a long time in the Orkney climate.

1.5.8 Within settlements, trees thrive and contribute positively to the setting and amenity of urban locations. Sycamore, for example, thrives in the more sheltered areas in towns and villages, growing to a significant size. Enhancement of the existing tree and woodland resource can happen through the



Image: Tree planting providing shelter around private residence in Tankerness

development process. The Settlement Statements, that will form part of our next Local Development Plan, will map green infrastructure that will include the location of existing trees and woodland and will look to expand these areas to promote and increase green infrastructure that will include tree planting and contribute to Nature Networks.

1.5.9 Within Orkney there are notable trees and woodland that are culturally and socially important, as well as having a conservation value.

Examples of valued trees in Orkney include:



The large mature trees seen in views in and around settlements such as Kirkwall, Stromness, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope, where they contribute to the character of the settlement.



Veteran trees and woodlands of historic and cultural interest, for example, the Big Tree and Gorie's Oak in Kirkwall, Happy Valley near Stenness, Binscarth policy woodland by Finstown, Trumland policy woodland in Rousay, and woodland at Carrick House in Eday planted in the 1830s by Samuel Laing.



The contribution trees make to the setting of villages such as Norseman and Evie, as well as, patches of woodlands/groups of trees and hedges scattered throughout Orkney that provide shelter to gardens and farmland.



Ancient native woodland of particular species lineage importance at Berriedale on Hoy, the most northerly native woodland in Britain. Other areas of native woodland can be found at Lyrawa and Pegal, also on Hoy and areas of native willow carr, for example, Durkadale carr near Loch of Boardhouse, Caldale carr near Finstown and Loch of Kirbister west of Kirkwall.



Wooded areas and path networks used by the public for recreation, for example, Olav's Wood in South Ronaldsay, Arcadia Community Park, The Willows and Muddisdale, all in Kirkwall, and the playgrounds in St. Margaret's Hope and Stromness, and Happy Valley near Stenness.

1.6 Orkney's Sensitive Designations

1.6.1 Orkney has significant designations for natural heritage, cultural heritage and landscape that could be considered as sensitive locations for significant tree planting. Sensitivities that require consideration include but are not limited to: archaeology, biodiversity (including protected species and areas protected for nature conservation or otherwise important for nature), soils (especially peatland), water environment, landscape character (in particular how proposals fit within the open landscape of Orkney and, if relevant, effects on the special qualities of the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area), the World Heritage Area and its landscape setting and existing and neighbouring land uses. An understanding of exposure and local topographical effects on exposure is also essential. The location of these sensitivities can be viewed through the Local Development Plan. Orkney Islands Council are currently reviewing the Local Development Plan <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/development-planning-land/orkney-local-development-plan/>



Image: Berridale Native Woodland on Hoy, the most northerly native woodland in Britain, sits within the National and Scenic Area of Hoy and West Mainland. Photo by Jenny Taylor



Image: View of the Orphir and Stenness Hills SSSI from Orphir Bay, core path WM2.



2: Benefits

Image: View across Trumland House and policy woodland and newer planting, Rousay. Trumland House and Binscarth House, and their policy woodlands, were designed by David Bryce in the 1870's.

Trees and woodlands provide key landscape features that help connect people to places, in relation to both cultural and natural history. They also provide shelter from the elements for people and habitat for the natural environment; in the countryside, they can provide shelter for livestock and crops. With the changing climate, trees can assist in moderating flooding by slowing water flows and reducing soil erosion. They also remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as they grow and establish. The benefits of trees and woodlands are categorised below; these benefits are interconnected and the services trees provide are multi-layered.

2.1 For People

2.1.1 Trees and green spaces provide opportunities for people to be in nature, which has health and well-being benefits. Trees and hedges added to existing development or incorporated into the layout and design of new development can also enhance the character, setting and amenity of the development, helping to create a sense of place. For example, hedges and trees can be used to define boundaries, and focal points and areas of visual interest can be created using specimen trees and areas of shrub planting. Clusters of trees and hedges can also offer shelter from the elements in exposed open areas used by people.

2.1.2 Trees, shrubs and scrub can be found around many farms and houses, either planted to form wind breaks or making use of buildings as shelter to aid growth. More significant areas of woodlands and clusters of trees can also be found in more sheltered locations and associated with larger historic estate houses, such as Binscarth, Firth and Balfour Castle, Shapinsay. Such Woodland trees and scrub woodland contribute to the landscape character of Orkney, providing features, variety and interest.



Image: Tree-lined route on the Gyre Circular Core Path. Photo by David Mager.



2.2 For Climate Change

2.2.1 Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the air, locking it into their wood. Carbon is stored in the trunk, branches, leaves and roots, and continues to be stored in leaf litter and deadwood, transferring carbon into the soil when they decompose. By removing carbon from the air, trees play an important role in helping tackle emissions that contribute to climate change. Therefore, small-scale planting in Orkney, can provide dispersed carbon sinks. However, it is important to have trees in the right place – planting trees on certain peatlands (especially deep peatland >50cm), for example, would not be appropriate, as it can cause carbon to be released from the peat. See Appendix 2 for more detailed information.

2.2.2 Trees can build resilience to climate change by providing shelter from changing weather patterns. They can do this by providing shade for people, animals and buildings, and their evapotranspiration, which is like sweating, releases water vapour into the atmosphere and cools the air.

2.2.3 Trees also have the potential to moderate flood water and reduce soil erosion. They do this by intercepting rain and slowing its descent to the ground. Tree root systems improve soil, thereby increasing its capacity to absorb water, which reduces surface water runoff and the risk of flooding.



Image: new house retaining existing trees, St. Ola.

2.3 – For Agriculture

2.3.1 Trees and hedges can provide shelter for livestock and crops, acting as windbreaks, trees and hedges can reduce wind speeds by over 50%, therefore reducing the risk of damage. Using trees and hedges as part of farm management options can increase water filtration rates, which helps to reduce soil and water movement.

2.3.2 Trees and hedges can also enhance biodiversity on farms by providing food and protection for wildlife. In conjunction with their carbon capture ability, trees and hedges should contribute positively to farm carbon audits and Whole Farm Plans.

2.3.3 Small-scale tree and shrub planting is supported within the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS), the scheme promotes land management practices which protect and enhance natural heritage, improve water quality, manage flood risk and help to mitigate and adapt to climate change.



Image: beef cattle have shelter and shade from a 1km of hawthorn and downy birch along the old Seatter Path track (core path K10).



2.4 – For Nature

2.4.1 Trees provide for a diverse range of species with food, shelter and places to live, therefore, making a positive contribution to tackling the nature crisis. It is not just the trees themselves that are important, but the associated species that rely on them both within the soil, above ground and over freshwater habitats. For example, fungi and invertebrates such as earthworms that live underground and fungi and larva that live on dead trees and lying dead wood and lichens and mosses that live on the surface of trees. Trees provide further shelter for wildlife, such as breeding and roosting birds, protecting them from the weather. As noted above in the climate change section, when trees shade freshwater water habitats, keeping water temperatures cool, this benefits aquatic species.

2.4.2 Existing woodlands, trees and hedges contribute to Orkney's nature networks that can, where appropriate, incorporate water bodies and water courses. Nature networks provide links between areas important for biodiversity, to enable wildlife to move between areas for dispersal, migration and recolonisation, using habitat corridors and stepping stone patches of habitat.

2.4.3 It is important to note that some of Orkney's biodiversity and natural heritage features benefit from locations away from trees and woodland such as Orkney's wading birds in wetland and coastal locations, Orkney voles in uncultivated grassland and botanically species rich areas, like heaths and moorlands. This is why this strategy advocates the right tree in the right place.



Image: Small woodland showing lichen and moss on the trees and different field layers below them, offering varying habitats for nature. Core path WM2, Gyre Circular, by Orphir House and Gyre Cottage, Orphir.

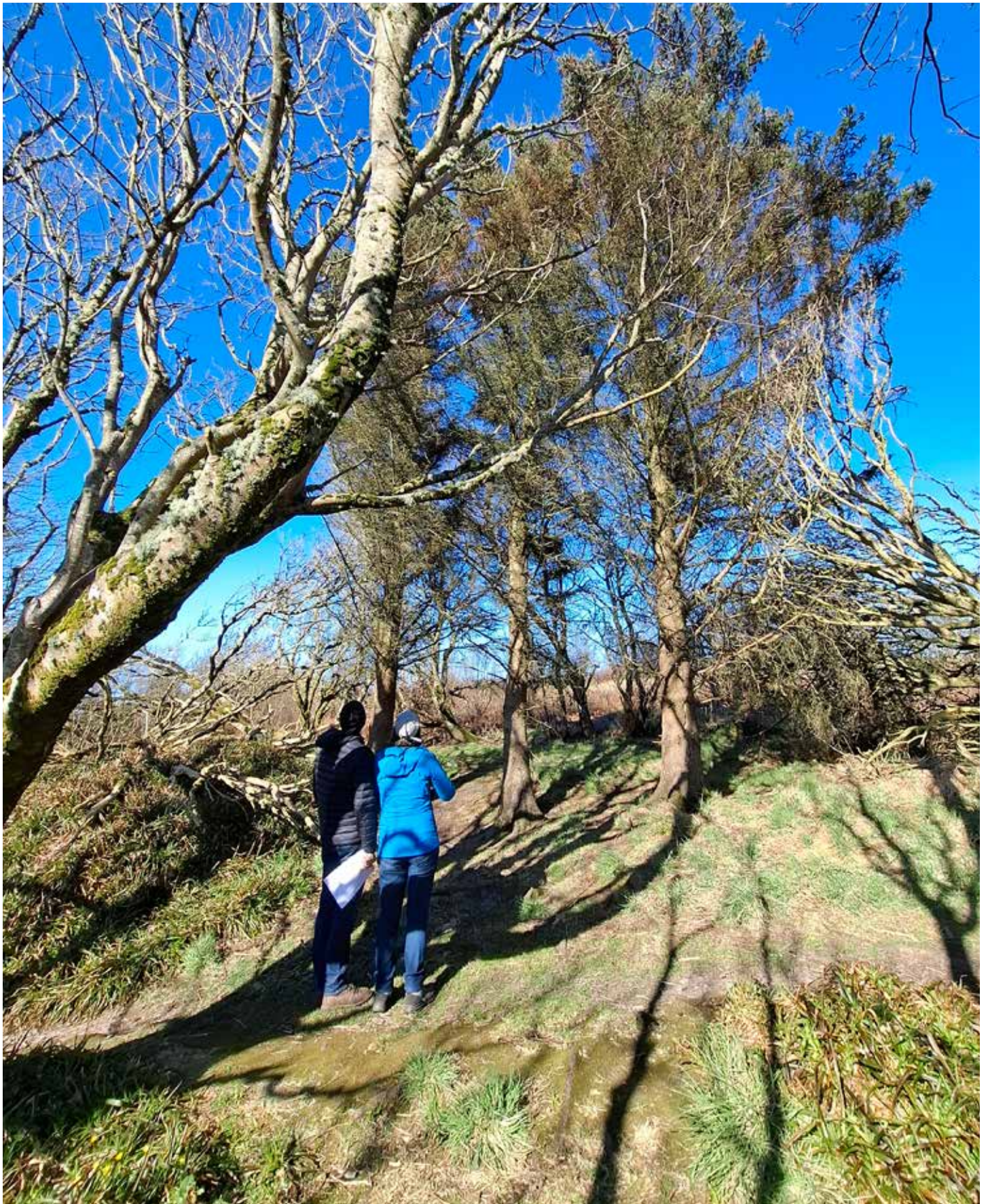


Image: Local Nature Reserve, Happy Valley near Stenness, offers recreational walks in all seasons; a place where people can enjoy nature in mature and newer mixed woodland.



3: Themes: Protecting, Enhancing and Resilient

Image: Vias Moss in Dounby is a tree group of mixed species, including downy birch, elm, aspen, white beam and ash.

3.1 Design led management

3.1.1 The Strategy's three themes are based on the core principles of protecting, enhancing and creating resiliency, which are set within the Act. For each theme there are actions that the Council will work towards alongside partners from interest groups and community groups.

3.1.2 One of the areas that the core principles of protecting, enhancing and creating resiliency can be achieved is through the statutory planning process. All planning applications are expected to take a design-led approach to development in line with NPF4 Policy 6 (see introduction s1.2). The Mitigation Hierarchy must be used in a design-led approach (see below), so that removal and adverse effects on existing trees, woodlands, and hedges are avoided in the first instance.

3.1.3 The design led Mitigation Hierarchy, shown below, is an established environmental planning tool that gives a structured approach to minimise environmental harm during development, for example to trees. It works by avoiding impacts, minimising impacts and lastly restoring or offsetting biodiversity loss.

3.1.5 Through this hierarchy, adverse effects will be minimised, for example, through careful siting of infrastructure and built development and through construction methods that avoid root protection areas, which can vary per species. The first two stages of the mitigation hierarchy should be followed before any residual effects are mitigated, for example, through comparable or better provision of trees or woodlands.

3.1.6 Where mitigation is required, it should be delivered on the proposed development site or, if it is not possible, off-site delivery may be required. Ideally, these matters will be directly addressed through planning conditions for new development proposals. Mitigation measures should be the equivalent to the trees and woodland proposed to be lost. Replacement of lost trees and woodland does not satisfy biodiversity enhancement requirements on development sites, which is a requirement under Policy

3, Biodiversity, in NPF4. Biodiversity enhancements require additional building and strengthening of nature networks and the integration of nature-based solutions.

3.1.7 All new tree and woodland planting and any work to existing trees and woodland should be completed in line with ‘Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations’ (BS 5837:2012). This is a good practice guide for tree retention or new planting in the design and construction phases of development.

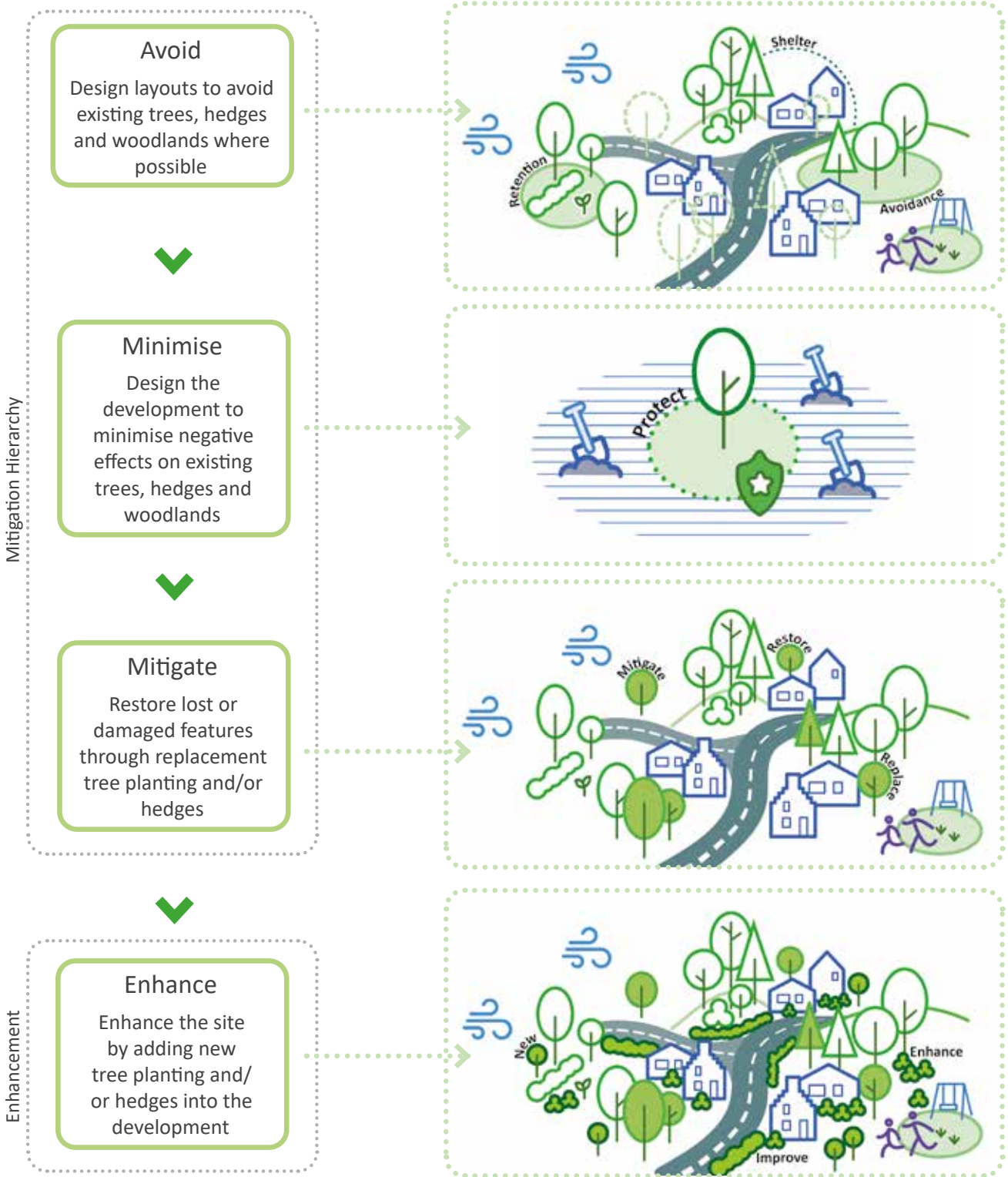


Figure 2: Design led Mitigation Hierarchy, also showing where enhancement fits in the process.

3.2 Protecting: existing trees and woodland



3.2.1 This Strategy aims to protect existing trees and woodlands in Orkney. Some trees in Orkney have specific protection, through Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) that may have groups or individual trees mapped for that specific TPO. Trees are also protected under Scottish planning law if they are within a Conservation Area or by a condition of a previous planning permission. It is the landowner/manager's responsibility to check whether a tree or trees are protected and to gain the necessary permission before undertaking any works.



Conservation Areas

Trees within a Conservation Area are protected where they provide an important contribution to the character and amenity of the area. Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historical interest with a character or appearance that is desirable to preserve or enhance, which trees often contribute to. In Orkney there are six Conservation Areas, four on the mainland (in Kirkwall, Stromness, St Margaret's Hope, Brodgar), Eynhallow (off the south coast of Rousay) and Balfour village in Shapinsay. Information about Conservation Areas in Orkney can be found on the council website. Six weeks prior notice must be given to the Planning Authority OIC of the intention to carry out works affecting a tree or trees within a Conservation Area. The law relating to Conservation Areas and trees within them is Part II of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. Planning circular 1 (2011) provides information on what work requires permission from the Planning Authority OIC.



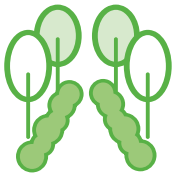
Tree Preservation Orders

TPOs are a means of protecting individual trees, groups of trees or woodlands, where the removal of or damage to those trees could have an adverse effect on the public amenity of an area. TPOs are made by the Planning Authority and form a legal constraint permanently attached to the title of the land where the trees are located. Prior consent is required from the Planning Authority for any works affecting TPO trees. Information about the law for TPOs can be found in the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2010. Further information on TPOs is on the Council website.



Previous Planning Conditions

Some trees may be protected by way of a planning condition of a previous planning permission, for example to safeguard existing trees as part of biodiversity measures to meet the requirements of NPF4 Policy 3. Information on previous planning permissions can be found by searching planning applications by address or using the map function.



Gardens and Designed Landscapes

The Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland does not confer specific statutory protection for trees, however, protection of these landscapes is a material consideration in the Scottish planning system. In line with NPF4, Policy 6 – Forestry, Woodland and Trees; trees and woodland have protection because of their value to climate resilience, natural environment, cultural heritage and for their amenity value that include shelter. Orkney has three sites in the Gardens and Designed Landscapes inventory: Melsetter House in Hoy, Balfour Castle in Shapinsay, and Skaill House in the West Mainland.

3.2.2 When trees or woodland form part of a planning application site, the planning application will require a survey of the trees and woodland and a statement on how they will be protected during the construction phase of the development and incorporated within the final development proposal (see Appendix 1 for more information).

3.2.3 Other trees and woodlands in Orkney are cared for by community groups or individuals, although they do not have a legal status, they are important to people because of the value they bring for health and wellbeing, biodiversity, amenity and shelter.

Action framework for protecting



Promote protection of existing trees and woodlands through the Local Development Plan process by creation of positive and effective policies for design led solutions.



Protect existing trees and woodlands in appropriate urban and rural settings, through relevant statutory duties, including reviewing existing TPOs and conservation areas as resources allow.



Increase understanding of the extent of existing woodlands through digitisation of known tree groups and woodlands in partnership with WTS.

3.3 Enhancing: Increasing and expanding trees and woodland



3.3.1 Trees, woodlands and hedges provide many benefits to people and the environment therefore, increasing the amount of trees, woodlands and hedges is beneficial to Orkney.

3.3.2 Through the review of the Local Development Plan, Settlement Statements will map existing green infrastructure; that includes existing trees and woodland groups. This mapping will also indicate locations where new tree and woodland planting will thrive and be encouraged.

3.3.3 For all appropriate planning applications, as part of Biodiversity Enhancement requirements, applicants will be encouraged to incorporate tree and hedge planting to enhance new development as noted in this Strategy. For some developments trees and hedge planting will be dependant on locational and climatic conditions and the type of development proposed, such as the change of use of a building with little or no outside space provision. Trees can be planted as part of biodiversity enhancement requirements; these are found in NPF4 Policy 3. The main focus is to strengthen nature networks and integrate nature-based solutions.

3.3.4 Enhancement of woodlands can be achieved by individuals through community planting schemes, and private planting on their own land, working with relevant partners in the Orkney Woodland Group, Woodland Trust for Scotland and Scottish Forestry.

3.3.5 For the majority of tree and woodland enhancement proposals a site-specific assessment will be required to identify the most suitable areas for planting and the species most appropriate. This will be required for planning permission and for funding applications. Sensitivities are noted in the earlier sections of this Strategy and summarised in section 1. Optimum sites for planting have deep, rich soil as well as good shelter from strong salt winds. Useful sources of information to help with site specific assessment are provided at the end of the Strategy. Detailed formal assessment through an Environmental Impact Assessment may also be required for proposals meeting the criteria set out in the Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.



3.3.6 Some sites may be suitable for native species for new and replacement (compensatory) planting, as native species are considered to have evolved with and adapted alongside native wildlife, providing greater benefits compared with non-native tree species. However, it is recognised that in some locations and circumstances, non-native species may be better able to achieve the desired outcome. For example, within settlements that require a specimen tree as a landscaping feature, or evergreen shrubs for year-round privacy and screening purposes. In such situations, the non-native species must be known to survive Orkney conditions.

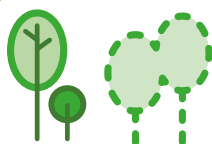
Image: Trees within the Finstown TPO, providing benefit to the settlement setting.

3.3.7 The Orkney Woodland Project A Woodland Design Guide contains information about native and other species known to survive Orkney conditions; as well as guidance on integrating woodland into the Orkney landscape. In all situations, invasive non-native species listed in Annex B of the NatureScot guidance on Developing with nature must not be planted. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/p5jfazi4/woodland-design-guide.pdf>

Action framework for enhancing



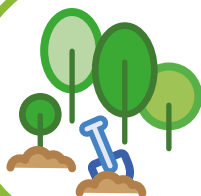
Continue to promote enhancement of trees and woodlands through the planning processes of the Local Development Plan by way of positive and effective policy and the determination of planning applications.



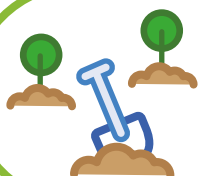
Outline potential areas for tree planting by enhancing existing tree groups or new planting in settlement statements.



Continue to enhance trees and woodlands through the development planning process by ensuring the designed mechanism is put into action for any development having the potential for planting more trees to enhance biodiversity and/or add to the setting of a building or building group.

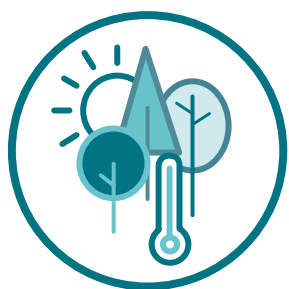


Support individuals and community groups to plant trees and small-scale woodlands in appropriate places through the Orkney Woodland Group, contributing to outdoor and nature education.



Where appropriate through the planning system, establish requirements for tree and woodland planting through Biodiversity Enhancement statements.

3.4 Resilient: right tree, right place



3.4.1 Orkney's specific and distinct climatic conditions and topography mean that planting the right species of tree and in the right location are key to supporting and building resilience in trees to ensure effective establishment in the Orkney environment, and to mitigate the effects of climate change, pests and diseases.

3.4.2 While there is limited scope for natural regeneration in Orkney due to the limited extent of seed producing woodlands and suitability of adjoining habitat,

allowing natural regeneration of existing trees or collecting and growing on seed from existing trees for use to expand an existing woodland should result in the strongest seedlings most able to withstand climate and other pressures. This should help build natural resilience to local conditions, as well as contributing to woodland expansion.

3.4.3 When planting new trees, there are different views on provenance. The provenance of tree seed refers to its geographical origins. Generally, choosing the appropriate tree species and provenance for site characteristics and local climate harbours greater resilience. Therefore, local provenance is a good first choice because trees will be best adapted to local conditions and weather patterns. However, greater genetic diversity can increase resilience to the future effects of climate change. It is recognised that it may not always be possible to source Orkney provenance trees due to limited stock. In such situations, the next choice would be trees with provenance within the same seed source region (Caithness and Sutherland seed zone 102), preferably also with similar exposed northern coastal conditions. Provenance for choosing non-native species usually looks to the north of Scotland area, again, for similar climatic conditions.

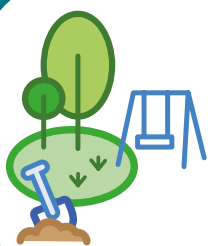
3.4.4 The Scottish Forestry Seed Sources for Planting Native Trees and Shrubs in Scotland guidance provides information on seed zones and the species native to them, which may be helpful in identifying alternative tree supplies.

3.4.5 For all planting of more than one tree, species diversity is essential. Different species have different strengths and weaknesses, therefore a mix of species should ensure that the trees, or hedging, are better able to withstand adverse effects caused by climate change, pests and diseases and so remain functional. Shrub or hedge planting can be used to protect new trees until they are established in more exposed areas.



Image: Muddisdale, Kirkwall - woodland showing diversity of species which encourages greater resiliency.

Action framework for resiliency



Support tree planting on the public land and where appropriate across Orkney to bring benefits to people and nature such as landscape enhancement, biodiversity, amenity and recreational opportunities as well as benefits in tackling climate change and its impacts.



Identify, through the statutory planning and flood management provisions, potential opportunities where trees can provide natural solutions for flood and water management as well as other benefits.



Support tree planting that will deliver multiple benefits such as shelter for people, places, livestock and crops in conjunction with partners such as development trusts and supporting the carbon neutral islands initiative.



Continue to work in partnership with UHI, supporting arboreal culture schemes like the tree nursery at Orkney College, to ensure a bank of native trees and others that can survive the Orkney Climate.



Identify opportunities where trees can contribute to water and biodiversity enhancement on riparian corridors, contributing to Nature Networks, in the spatial strategy in the Local Development Plan.



Support tree planting alongside path networks in conjunction with partners such as Hitrans, Walk, Wheel and Cycle Trust, community groups and schools.



Appendix 1: Works on protected trees and protecting trees before and during development

Image: New house and mature trees by Bignold Park, Kirkwall.

A1.1 Permission for works on a protected tree

If you are applying to fell or carry out pruning works on a protected tree, the Planning Authority would expect you to include the following information with your application:

- ✓ Description of proposed works and reasons why these works are required
- ✓ Tree Survey – a tree survey should provide these details for each tree, using the reference numbers from the site plan:
 - Species
 - Stem Diameter (cm)
 - Branch spread
 - Crown height
 - Age class
 - Structural condition
 - Visible defects
 - Management recommendations
 - Tree constraints
- ✓ Site Plan - reference the trees by number.
- ✓ Annotated photos of the trees showing the proposed works.

A1.2 Protection of trees and woodland within or adjacent to a proposed development

If there are trees within or near your proposed development site, the Planning Authority require the following to accompany your application:

- ✓ Description of proposed works and reasons why these works are required.
- ✓ Tree Survey with Site Plan (as above).
- ✓ Tree Constraints Plan – show how retained trees will be maintained in the proposed site layout, including Root Protection Area Calculation.
- ✓ Proposed Site Layout Plan – should consider how works below and above ground may affect the trees. The document should show the development area, location of building/s, tree positions, proposed access routes and proposed service routes.
- ✓ Tree Protection Plan – show measures to protect retained trees, for example, barriers round the RPA.

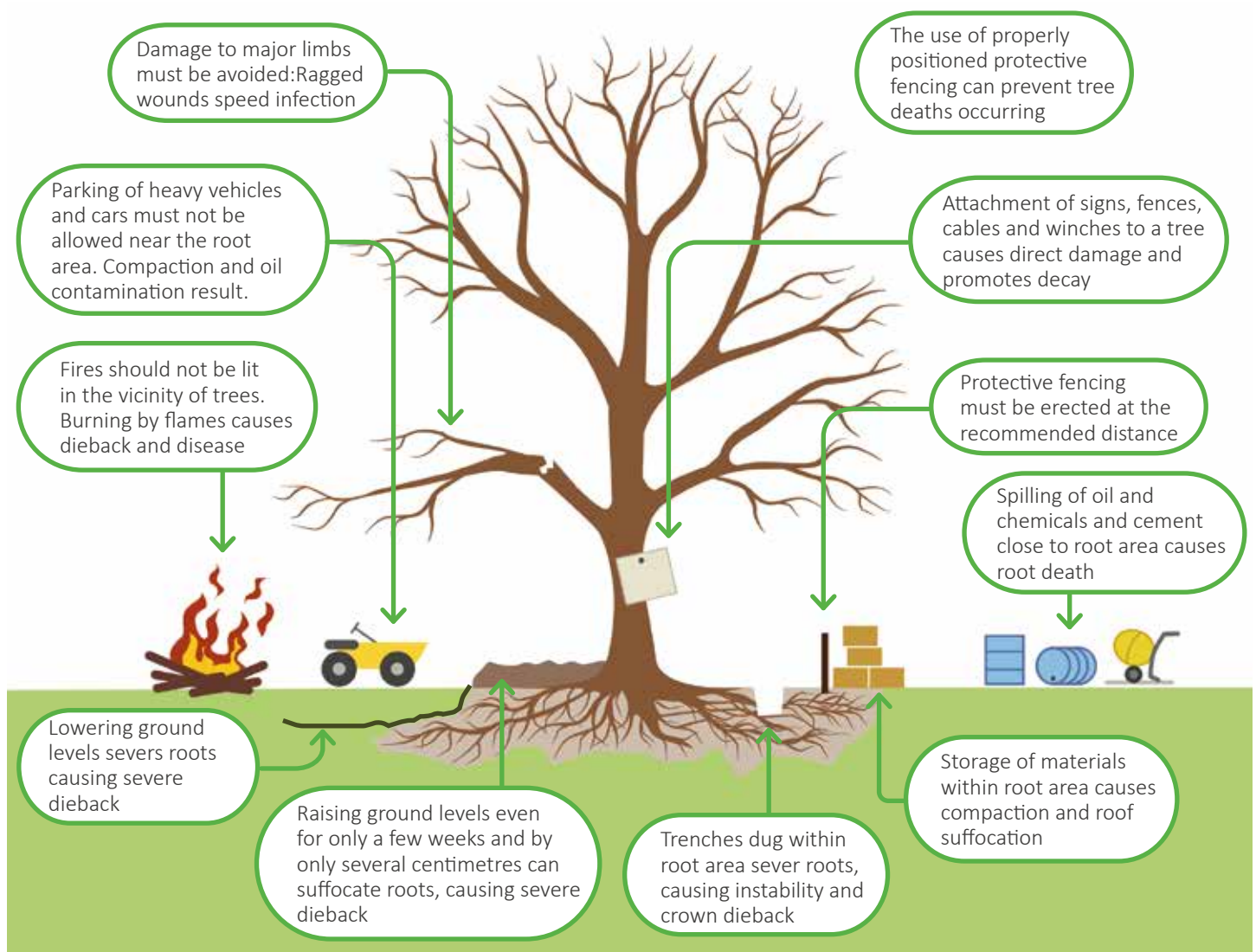


Figure 3: Common causes of Tree Death diagram

A1.3 Replacement Planting, Landscape Plans and Woodland Management Plans

Where trees have to be felled the Planning Authority may request that replacement trees are planted on or near the site. However, planting new trees or woodlands does not always compensate for the loss of valued, mature trees.

Where compensatory planting is made a condition of an approved planning application, it is important, to seek professional advice on the species and location of replacement trees. The opportunity to plant replacement trees should be viewed as a chance to improve the environment.

Where appropriate, the planting of native trees is encouraged. The Forestry Commission have produced guidance “The Right Tree the Right Place” that is a useful reference when considering replacement planting. Please see Further Information in Appendix 2.

You should provide the Planning Authority with a:

- ✓ Landscape Plan - shows how new trees will help integrate the new development into the existing green network and avoid any negative impact in its surroundings.
- ✓ Management Plan - to ensure that woodland areas are healthy and sustainable resources. Different management strategies would apply dependant on the desired long-term outcome for the woodland, for example for wildlife, landscaping, or shelter.



Image: new planting by new commercial building in St. Ola.

A1.4 Carrying out approved works

- ✓ When - Pruning should be undertaken in mid-summer or winter and protected species should not be disturbed, for example, bats.
- ✓ Who – tree surgery and felling should only be done by a qualified arborist, they should be able to show evidence of required certificates.
- ✓ What – in some cases a Felling License may be required if you intend to fell 5 cubic metres of timber outwith a garden, public park, orchard or graveyard in any calendar quarter, contact Scottish Forestry, see Appendix 2.

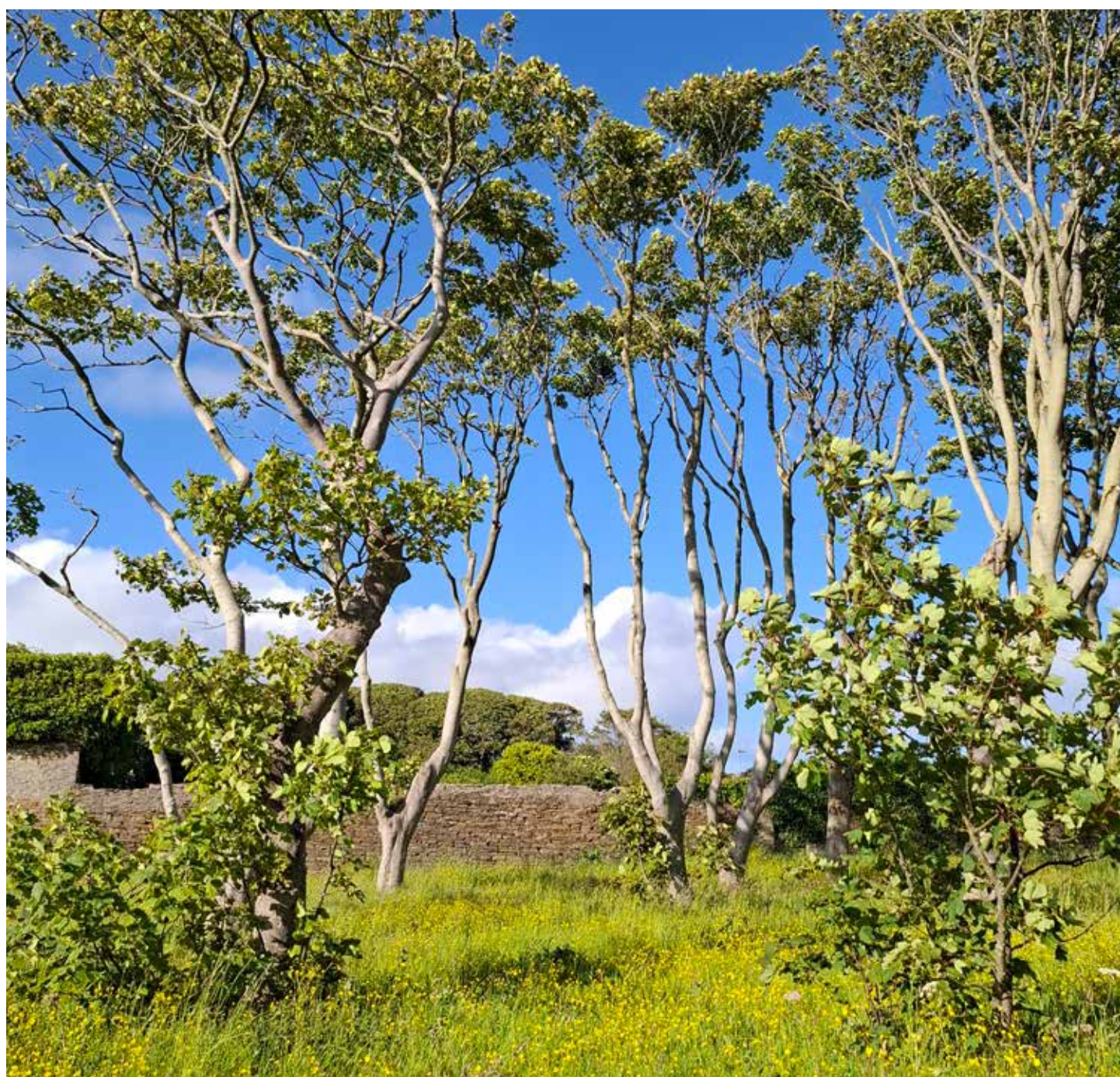


Image: View of mature Sycamores within Kirkwall.



Appendix 2: Further information and funding opportunities

Image: View of Stromness from the Hamnavoe ferry showing the crowns of mature trees.

This section is divided up into topic areas to help navigate the various information and funding streams in relation to protecting and planting trees and woodlands; the topics include agriculture, funding, protecting trees, historic environment, natural environment and water environment.

It should be noted that funding streams can change annually, and this section is not inclusive of all funding opportunities. This section is there to assist.

A2.1 Agriculture advice & funding

Farmers can benefit from some of the same grant funding streams that are available for community planting, including MOREwoods and MOREhedges from the Woodland Trust.

The Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme offers financial support for the creation of new woodland and the sustainable management of existing woodland. The scheme includes options that cover planting, integrating farming with forestry, woodland protection and harvesting.

Creating woodland within a farm has recognised benefits and a specific, Sheep and Trees Forestry grant package is available from Scottish Forestry.

- <https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/agri-environment-climate-scheme/management-options-and-capital-items/small-scale-tree-and-shrub-planting/guidance-for-small-scale-tree-and-shrub-planting/>
- <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/forestry-grants>
- <https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/>
- <https://www.fas.scot/article/grants-for-small-scale-tree-planting-fwn37-autumn-2021/>
- <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/trees-for-landowners-and-farmers/morehedges/>
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/code-practice-sustainable-regenerative-agriculture/documents/>
- <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/agroforestry-benefits/shelterbelt/>
- Agri environment schemes- the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) promotes land management practices which protect and enhance Scotland's magnificent natural heritage, improve water quality, manage flood risk and mitigate and adapt to climate change.
<https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/agri-environment-climate-scheme/>



Image: Woodland Trust Scotland offer grants and advice for new woodland planting

A2.2 General funding opportunities

Communities may be able to benefit from free trees and funding opportunities. Some charities such as the Woodland Trust run initiatives to give away free trees to community led projects on a range of scales, including small groups of trees or short hedges, as well as woodlands.

Where communities have ownership or access to land that they wish to create a community woodland within, there is potential for communities to fund tree or hedge planting by partnering with developers that need to deliver biodiversity measures through NPF4 Policy 3, but are unable to do that within the development site.

The smallest area that can be grant funded under the Woodland Trust's MOREwoods grant is 0.1 hectare. The tree species are specified as downy birch, rowan, aspen and willow (grey and tea-leaved), all of Orkney native provenance and Scottish natives from the Highland region.

The Forestry Grant Scheme specifies up to 80% downy birch, rowan, aspen and willow (grey and tea-leaved), all of Orkney native provenance and 20% mixed broadleaves or conifers. Scottish Forestry grant funding, also, encourages smaller scale proposals of 0.25 to 1ha in Orkney in recognition of the climatic, nature conservation and land use sensitivities here because these conditions reduce opportunities for large scale planting.

Woodland Trust - advice, guidelines & funding

WTS provides an advisory service for native woodland design, project delivery and funding, including grants for small woodlands and hedges.

- Funding for community and other woodland creation projects under the 'Plant trees' heading.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

- The Highlands & Islands Woodland Handbook (pages 179- 181) available via the bottom of the The Croft Woodland Project webpage.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/scotland/croft-woodlands/>

Scottish Forestry & government – guidelines & funding

Scottish Forestry are the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulations.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/>

- Scottish Forestry Seed sources for planting of native trees and shrubs- Scottish Forestry policy and information about selecting suitable origins and provenances of native plants and seeds.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/forests-environment/biodiversity/native-woodlands/seed-sources>

- Scottish Forestry grants and funding- information and support for tree planting.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/woodland-creation>

- UK Forest Standard- sets out the UK Government approach to sustainable forestry. Although written for commercial forestry, it contains information on topics including biodiversity, historic environment, soils and people that will be useful for non-commercial woodland creation and tree planting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard>



Image: Grant funded native woodland showing enhanced biodiversity and setting in Holm. Photo by Anne Bignall

A2.3 Useful Websites

Protecting trees

Orkney Islands Council & Tree Protection

- Tree Preservation Orders – Orkney Islands Council

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/tree-conservation/>

- Conservation areas in Orkney, trees are also protected if they fall within a conservation area:

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/built-heritage/>

- Orkney A Woodland Design Guide gives direction for selecting and establishing trees for woodland projects and lists native and other tree species known to grow in Orkney.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/tree-conservation/orkney-woodland-group/>

- Tree root protection zone calculations- Woodland Trust information providing an explanation of root protection areas and their importance in safeguarding the health of existing trees.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2021/04/root-protection-areas/>

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Historic environment

Historic Environment & designated sites

Archaeology and historic environment - Orkney is exceptionally rich in heritage assets and is internationally famous for its prehistoric archaeology. While some archaeological assets may be obvious and well known (and in some places, given legal protection through a designation), much may remain unknown, concealed underground. Tree planting could affect heritage assets by having a direct physical effect (such as damage caused by intruding tree roots), affecting the setting of a heritage asset (for example by changing the landscape context), or through indirect effects (for example by increasing erosion caused by increased visitor numbers). All known historic environment assets, designated or not, must be taken into consideration during a site assessment.

- Orkney Islands Council, Islands Archaeologist may be able to provide advice on the potential for unknown and undesignated archaeology.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/built-heritage/kirkwall-thi/kirkwall-thi-latest-news/archaeology/>

- Trove.Scot and Pastmap provide information about known archaeological sites, buildings and industrial heritage.

<https://www.trove.scot/search/map>

- Historic Environment Scotland provide information about scheduled monuments and other known historic environment designations, for example, Gardens and Designed Landscapes.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/scheduled-monuments/>

Natural environment

- Nature Networks are a system of corridors which allow species to move between landscapes, ecosystems and habitats, natural or modified. These corridors ensure the maintenance of biodiversity and mitigate the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/nature-networks-framework>

- National soil map- map showing the different soil types found across Scotland, with more detailed mapping available for Orkney by selecting the partial cover map. This can be used to identify areas of carbon rich and peaty soils, which are important stores of carbon unlikely to be suitable for tree planting.

<https://soils.environment.gov.scot/maps/soil-maps/national-soil-map-of-scotland/>

- Native Woodland Survey of Scotland- information and a map for the Scotland wide surveys carried out from 2006-2013 to identify native woodlands.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/forests-environment/biodiversity/native-woodlands/native-woodland-survey-of-scotland-nwss>

- Ecological site classification tool- a tool provided by Forest Research to suggest what tree species are suited to a particular site based on climate background data. However it should be noted that the tool does not take account of localised topographical exposure/shelter, so the results may not be accurate for Orkney conditions and do not replace the need for local advice and site specific assessment.

<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/ecological-site-classification/>

- Scotland's environment web- provides a range of environmental datasets that can be viewed on a map or downloaded, including on areas protected for nature conservation.

<https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/>

- Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS)- list of LNCS in Orkney. LNCS are identified by the Council as part of the Local Development Plan process.

https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/fjwaijxk/appendix_b_2_local_nature_conservation_sites.pdf

Water environment

Scottish Water & SEPA - guides for planting by water & public water infrastructure

- Scottish Forestry and Scottish Water have teamed up to offer guidance on tree works beside or near water supplies.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/private-and-public-water-supplies>

- The Farm Advisory Service gives a comprehensive guide to planting in the region of water bodies.

<https://www.fas.scot/environment/water-management/water-margins-2/riparian-planting/>

Spatial data sources

Scottish Forestry Open Data resource

- The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland undertook a baseline survey of all native woodlands, nearly native woodlands and PAWS (plantations on ancient woodland sites) to create a woodland map linked to a dataset showing type, extent and condition of those woodlands. The parameters for the survey are explained in the View Full Details section and you can also select woodlands on the map to show its status.

https://open-data-scottishforestry.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/6d27b064fcba471da50c8772ad0162d7_0/explore

- Scottish Forestry has an open data portal which allows you to search for various information relating to the management of trees and woodlands. This portal includes the Scottish Forestry Map Viewer, which you will find by scrolling down the page on the link below. There is spatial data for Forestry Grant Scheme target and eligibility areas and current and legacy grant application schemes.

<https://open-data-scottishforestry.hub.arcgis.com>

- The National Forest Inventory (NFI) woodland map covers all forest and woodland areas over 0.5 hectare with a minimum of 20% canopy cover, or the potential to achieve it, and a minimum width of 20 metres. Both this spatial data and the NWS will not include many of Orkney's small woodlands that are less than 0.5ha.

https://data-forestry.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/dec82458381246f98bbcdc2eb76a80b_0/explore



Image: Papdale House in Kirkwall maintains many of the trees that were planted within the grounds, although these are now part of open space within the towns bounds giving access to the school halls of residence and general active travel to the primary and secondary schools and further on into the town centre. Sir Walter Scott visited his friend at Papdale House (built in 1807) and is rumoured to have influenced the planting schemes.



Image: Looking down Church Road in St. Margaret's Hope out to the Sound of Hoxa. St Margaret's Hope, in South Ronaldsay, is one of only two towns in Orkney covered by a Tree Preservation Order, consisting predominantly of individual trees. The trees enhance the setting of this attractive coastal settlement.

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Back Cover Image: Olav's Wood on South Ronaldsay has been established over many years; the first plantings took place in the mid 1970s, with major planting beginning in the 1980s. The woodland is approx. 4.5 acres (1.8 hectares) in area and comprises trees and shrubs from around the world. The woodland now has areas of dense growth and open grassland and heath. (All photos by Erica Hume Niven, except where credited to another person)



Trees and Woodland Strategy - Public Consultation Comments					
Code	Responder/ Ref.	Contributor Type	Comment	Comment re-change or retain	Action
	KA5	Scottish Water Key Agency	Scottish Water understands the need to preserve Woodlands and Trees as highlighted in Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4. While we recognise the role that trees and woodland plays in moderating and reducing surface water runoff and flooding, protecting and enhancing the status of water bodies is also of the upmost importance. While forests can protect water, soil and air resources, they can also have a negative impact on water and soil resources if they do not meet current Forest and Water Guidelines and forestry activities are not undertaken appropriately. To this end we support the inclusion of the collaborated articles which reference the guidance outlined by our Sustainable Land Management Team.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change required.
	KA5	Scottish Water Key Agency	Scottish Water welcomes early consultation with our Sustainable Land Management Team to determine the location of Drinking Water Protected Areas as well as water and/or waste water infrastructure within the area of forestry activities. If Scottish Water drinking water source catchments or assets are located within the area of forestry activities, then adequate protection is required. Scottish Water would request that all activities are in accordance with the Forests and Water UK Forestry Standard Guidelines. Further advice and the list of precautions that should be taken to protect assets are available on the Scottish Water website here: Activities within Our Catchments - Scottish Water. The Sustainable Land Management team can be contacted at protectdwsources@scottishwater.co.uk www.siteinvest.co.uk Tel: 0844 800 9957 Email: swplans@national-one-call.co.uk	Noted, thank you for the information.	No change required.
	KA5	Scottish Water Key Agency	Any risk of tree root intrusion to water or drainage pipes should be addressed by adhering to the guidelines set out in Water for Scotland 4th Edition and Sewers for Scotland 4th Edition. Copies of water or waste water network drawings can be ordered from the undernoted Asset Plan Providers:- Site Investigation Services (UK) Ltd. Tel: 0333 123 1223 Email: plans@siteinvest.co.uk National One-Call Tel: 0844 800 9957 Email: swplans@national-one-call.co.uk www.national-one-call.co.uk/swplans Cornerstone Projects Ltd Tel: 0151 632 5142 Email: enquiries@cornerstoneprojects.co.uk http://www.cornerstoneprojects.co.uk/index.php/scottishwaterplans Alternatively, plans can be viewed at Scottish Water's area offices, for which no charge applies.	Noted, thank you for the information.	No change required.
	KA5	Scottish Water Key Agency	Scottish Water welcomes measures which protect and, where possible, enhance organic rich soils. We would welcome the requirement for site specific surveys, plans and mitigations where there is no alternative but to disturb organic rich soil during the construction phase.	Noted, site specific assessment is a component of the Strategy.	No change required.
	IP8	Interested Person	I don't think there is currently any reference in the draft documents to deadwood or to standing deadwood. I know that ecologists emphasise the importance of <u>deadwood and standing deadwood to ecosystems</u> , and I wonder whether the strategy could be updated to reflect this by emphasising that deadwood ought to be left in situ.	Noted, thank you for your comment.	p20, para 2.4.1, additional phrase to include dead wood.
	KA3	Scottish Forestry Key Agency	We remain very supportive of the strategy and its key themes.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change
	KA3	Scottish Forestry Key Agency	Section 1.55 identifies areas of new woodlands planted since 1998. Although great work has been done this figure seems high. Since 2016 under the Forestry Grant Scheme, we have only funded 5 applications covering 3.5 ha. This is the lowest level of activity I can recall. In the past grant aided activity peaked at almost 10 ha a year.	Noted, this figure will be sense checked.	p12, para 1.5.5, updated hectare total.

	KA3	Scottish Forestry - Key Agency	Section 3.3.4, 3.3.5, 3.36 ad 3.3.7. We welcome these sections and the action framework to support individuals and community groups to plant trees and small scale woodlands. You could add Scottish Forestry as supporting partners in 3.3.4. as we are keen to encourage the planting of trees and shrubs by landowners and communities. As recognised in the strategy it is important that only suitable sites are encouraged for planting, our experience over many years of support has led us to believe that small new predominately native woodlands on locally sheltered, better ground are the best fit and most likely to successfully establish. As stated above we have some concerns about the decline in activity and would welcome the opportunity to explore this further with the Council and Orkney Woodland Group to understand the barriers and how these could be overcome.	Noted, thank you for your comment.	p26, para 3.3.4, added Scottish Forestry.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 2 - Overview section Para 2 - 'Shrubs' have not been an important contributor to new or old woodland habitats, only if you call willows shrubs and I am dubious about mentioning shrubs as part of the strategy.	Noted, shrubs, scrub and hedgerow are considered to contribute to habitat type across Orkney, as identified by NatureScot.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 3 - Vision suggest says 'to protect, enhance and support new and existing trees and providing rather than provide. Bottom para needs an 'and' between planning process and from community	Noted, the wording in the vision is relevant to the spirit of the Strategy.	p3, added 'and' to last paragraph.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 6 Statutory Context mentions the strategy is 'to identify woodlands of high conservation value' but this strategy doesn't identify them?	Noted, we have made additions in line with your comment.	p13, additions to para 1.5.9 and graphic.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 7 NPF4 bio should it mention TPOs and Conservation areas here? c proposal involving tree or woodland removal	Noted, this is the exact wording of policy 6 in NPF4.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 8 Policy connections Policy 3 : biodiversity needs to mention that tree planting can also have adverse affects on biodiversity Policy 4 - Nature Networks mentioned but not explained anywhere?	Noted, these policy connections are there to reference other relevant policies to trees and woodlands only; see addition in reference to nature networks.	See p20 para2.4.2 for addition of a short definition of nature networks.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 9 1.3.3 suitability also depends on soils, exposure, drainage - this seems to be a bit out of place?	Noted, these matters are expanded in the document, this paragraph summarises the thrust of national strategy while accepting local differences.	No change
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 10 - section 1.4 Para 2 Careful planning of tree planting on fertile soil can mitigate these challenges and has 1.4.4. Orkney has abundant fertile soil so sites can be found that avoid the need to plant on peatland where trees will struggle to establish, likely higher losses and require fertiliser	Noted, this section covers the idea of planting in the right place.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 11 1.5.1 Para 1 There are remaining natural native woodlands at <u>Berriedale, Pegal, Segal, Lyrawa, Quoys</u> in Hoy, good areas of native willow carr in Mainland Orkney. Maybe remove sentence starting 'Therefore' as these woods are all good examples of valued habitat in Orkney (and the source of local provenance seed/plants for hundreds of new woodlands) Commercial forestry not regarded as currently viable ... due to weather, soil types (very good soil so not a limiting factor), and poor growth as found in FC's Hoy experiments in 1950s. What evidence is there to say it may change? After para 1 needs to continue with description of existing woods first, policy woods, new mainly native woodlands, importance of trees in towns, etc etc as 1.5 is about Existing Trees and Woodlands, so some re-ordering of paras? then going on to how been encouraged OWP/OWG etc etc	Noted, thank you for this information.	See pp11-13 for additional text relating to other native woodlands.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 13 circle 1 should <u>mention the Hope</u> too where TPOs, ? mention Conservation Areas Circle 5 and numerous areas of willow carr - unclear what 'species lineage importance' means - it could be said that these have evolved and adapted through thousands of years and periods of climate change to suit our island climate and environment Circle 6 - should include Happy Valley - not sure where there are woods in playgrounds at Hope and Stromness? Should all the young developing woods not be regarded as valuable too?	Noted, thank you for this information.	p13, added St. Margaret's Hope to first paragraph in graphic. 4th para in graphic changed text re Berriedale. Happy Valley added to the 5th paragraph in the graphic.

	IP7	Interested Person	w	Noted, thank you for your comment, we have made some changes in line with this.	p14, para 1.6.1 add LDP review page link.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 17 section 2.1.2 ‘Scrub’ not a good word here - maybe ‘small groups of trees’ instead? 2.1.2. Good place to mention all the OIC owned sites much used by folk - Muddisdale, Peedie Sea, Happy Valley, Papdale East etc	Noted, NatureScot support the addition of scrub as a woodland cover type.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 18 2.2.1 - worth saying here that tree establishment on peat would be poor with greater losses and need for fertiliser.	Noted, thank you for the information.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 19 2.3.1 - maybe use ‘trees and shelter belts’ rather than hedges in agricultural context. not sure about the 50% figure and it depends how close etc etc. Needs punctuation in that sentence 2.3.3, Grants from Scottish Forestry and the Woodland Trust are also available to farmers	Noted, hedges are specifically mentioned in Nationally Planning Framework 4.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 20 Para 1 - Existing woodlands, trees and hedges can contribute to Orkney’s nature networks (but not if they adversely affect others valued habitats (Para 2 - nature networks mentioned but no map or link? Also worth stressing that even when potential site is outwith a designated area, it may still contain habitat / species that may negate the biodiversity benefits of tree planting 2.4.3 <u>could add mention of voles, botanically species rich areas, heaths and moorlands, maritime grassland and heaths etc</u>	Noted, site-specific assessments liaising with the Orkney Woodland Group looks at existing habitats, as well as archaeological concerns.. Additions made re-para2.4.3.	p20 para 2.4.3 phrases added to cover voles and botanically rich areas.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 24 3.2.1 - <u>permission needed from OIC ?</u> link to application / relevant section Conservation areas and TPOs - is there a timescale within which OIC have to respond? ? <u>link to TPOs on OIC website</u>	Noted, we have made an additions in line with your comment.	p24, added OIC after Planning Authority.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 25 Balfour Castle I think only one in Gardens / Designed landscapes 3.2.3 this sentence seems to be in wrong place as this bit is more about planning process/restrictions Last bubble - WT and SF and OWP	Noted, there are three Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Orkney. Para 3.2.3 is concerned with informal community protection.	p25, all three Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Orkney added.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 26 3.3.1 increasing the amount of trees in the right places 3.3.2 Interested to see how this works with private land etc 3.3.3 Again nature networks mentioned but not explained 3.3.4. needs to make clear that doesn’t normally need planning permission 3.3.5 - 3rd line should be planning permission or funding applications; 7th line for very large proposals 3.3.6 Think all 3.3.6 confusing and maybe just needs to say that appropriate species choice will differ according to individual site characteristics.	Noted, we are satisfied that this section gives an overview of how enhancement may be achieved within the spirit of the Strategy.	p39, Nature Networks summarised and link to more information added.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 27 3.3.7 Orkney Woodland Project produced a booklet ‘ <u>A Woodland Design Guide - Selecting and establishing trees for woodland projects in Orkney</u> ’ giving local advice on species choice /planting etc https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/p5jfazi4/woodland-design-guide.pdf - though maybe this should maybe go under the final ‘Advice’ section as ‘local advice’? 3rd bubble - is this not the same as the first bubble 4th bubble - think last clause doesn’t really cover it	Noted, an amendment has been made.	p27, link added.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 28 This is really about resilience and not right tree/right place 3.4.2. from existing native trees there is in fact plenty of seed, natural regen more limited due to unsuitable adjacent habitats, 3.4.3 This whole para is confusing and misleading and unless the full reasoning for local provenance is explained all is better omitted - views on provenance are well established and adhered to here, - will add separate info at end of document. 3.4.4 As above - also needs explanation that need for local prov is about out native species not others - all could confuse everyone. 3.4.5 - ? delete first clause and start with species diversity, age diversity also important. We haven’t used any shrubs (except willows) to protect new trees - most shrubs less hardy than appropriate tree species. Dense planting = mutual shelter helps.	Noted, the concept of right tree, right place and resiliency are linked and appropriate to mention in this section. Para3.4.3 was altered to give a clearer definition of provenance after the 1st consultative draft and is in line with current practices.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 29 seems to be OIC aspirations not necessarily framework for resiliency? Bubble 3 <u>Sadly OWP no longer exists</u> so no local advice Bubble 4 - propagation of local provenance trees like the tree nursery rather than ‘arboreal culture schemes’ Bubble 6 - again no nature network link or info bubble 7 - again no OWP	Noted, amendment made.	p29, Orkney Woodland Project removed.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 30 A1.1. suggest pruning or felling on tree protected by TPO or in Conservation Area	Noted, thank you for your comment, links to TPOs and Conservation Areas are included in Appendix 2.	No change.

	IP7	Interested Person	Page 32 A1.3 Is this on development sites or private land? There seems to be a bit of confusion between what's aimed at planning applications and wider advice? para 2 should say The choice of species should be appropriate to the site, adjacent sensitivities, landscape fit etc. Last sentence better removed - local advice and context always better for replacement planting	Noted, the title of this section refers the reader to 'before and during development'. Development may happen on private or public land, the distinction is not relevant here. We are confident that Appendix 1 gives a comprehensive checklist.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 33 Pruning or tree surgery, also mentioned nesting birds arborist/tree surgeon certificates for the type of work involved.	Noted, we are satisfied that this checklist covers the best seasons to do work, therefore, outwith nesting season, and refers readers to use a qualified arborist.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 35 Main grant available is https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/woodland-creation/native-broadleaves-northern-western-isles/ which is available to farmers as is some WT funding - irrelevant to Orkney ones should be removed All links badly needed checking and only ones relevant to Orkney remaining - these will also be repeated in section A2.2 and best all amalgamated Best remove the Sheep and Trees one! A number not working and inappropriate Caption and Scottish Forestry - we should not forget them as grants are often better especially for farmers	Noted, thank you for the information.	pp36-39, links are checked regularly and any changes required are made.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 36 Check and prune all links making the main ones needed clear and others as supplementary First sentence - Local request for packs should go through WT officer who deals with Orkney, otherwise folk get unsuitable species /provenances 4th para - FGS woodland-creation/native-broadleaves-northern-western-isles/ ` this is the same as mentioned in end of para - all one scheme not 'also' Woodland Trust - 'project delivery' probably misleading as WT don't actually plant woods for people pages 179-182 for Orkney specific info Scottish Forestry - advice , guidelines and grants etc 1st and 2nd link not Orkney relevant 3rd link - climate change needs to be looked at from the perspective of an island group where more extreme weather events may occur - trees need resilience perhaps in different ways from many places 4th link - this is the relevant link https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/woodland-creation/native-broadleaves-northern-western-isles/ 5th link - mainly about commercial forests so not really relevant NB SF also give grants for woodland management - Woodland Improvement Grants which we've had a few of in Orkney - important to mention that. OIC may be eligible	Noted, thank you for the information.	As above.
	IP7	Interested	Page 38 1st three links not working when I tried them	Noted, thank you for the information.	As above.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 39 national soil map - should also say 'but only site visit will give full info. supplementary guidance link not working	Noted, thank you for the information.	No change.
	IP7	Interested Person	Page 40 - not sure if all needed Attached below explanation on why local provenance of our native trees is important, particularly on islands where trees have evolved separately and adapted through thousands of year of climate change	Noted, this information is included due to the difficulty of showing little woodland cover on maps within the document.	No change.
	IP9	Interested person	I was interested to read your new Trees and Woodland Strategy. What I can't find in it - and perhaps I read the strategy too fast - are any proposals to help those of us who are custodians of Orkney plantations and are keen to maintain and enhance them. I am the owner of Carrick House and Farm in Eday. The <u>woodland at Carrick was first planted by Samuel Laing in the 1830s</u> , we believe, before my family bought the estate around the mid-19th century. The plantations there have been carefully nurtured by my family over the past 175 years, with a lot of new planting in the 1980s and 1990s particularly. I am surprised to find no mention of these woodlands, as they are among the oldest in Orkney.	Noted, thank you for this information, an addition has been made in line with your second comment.	Please note Appendix 2 includes information on where to get funding for creating and managing woodland. p13, Carrick woodlands added to graphic, para 2
	IP9	Interested person	More importantly, I would like to see schemes made available for responsible landowners who want to do the right thing in remote environments where obtaining funding is a growing challenge.	Noted, thank you for your comment.	As above.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	In our view, the revised draft is well presented and it benefits from the reformatting and restructuring since the first draft. While the first draft was also well presented, the changes in our opinion lead to a more readable and accessible document.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change.

	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	In our opinion, the sentence ‘trees may also form ‘hedges’, due to their stunted growth, or small ‘woodlands’ in the overview lacks some clarity. It may merit revision or removal.	Noted, we are satisfied with this reference in the Overview.	No change.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	Scrub can be habitat in its own right. Mention of scrub is limited in the draft, limited only to s2.1.2. We recommend adding scrub into the Overview section, expanding the short hand definition from ‘trees and shrubs’ to <u>‘trees and shrubs, and woodland and scrub’</u> on the second page. Scrub is a woodland habitat in its own right, referring to low-growing woody species usually under 5m tall. Scrub may be a transitional habitat leading to woodland, or – as might be in many cases in Orkney – a woodland habitat that is low-growing due to a harsh climatic conditions (such as wind or salt spray) where maximum growth achieved elsewhere in Scotland may not be realised or possible. Scrub may comprise shrub species (eg hazel, blackthorn, hawthorn) or tree species (such as birch, oak, pine), or both. ‘Scrub’ is also referred to in SRDP rural payments options as a capital item for removal. This may be desirable on sensitive sites where the underlying open habitat (like wetlands, bogs, species-rich grassland) is being compromised. The Orkney Trees and Woodland Strategy advocates for the right trees and woodlands in the right place, and this includes the removal of trees and scrub if absolutely necessary for wider ecological benefits.	Noted, thank you for your comments and we have made two additions in line with it.	p2 para 3 & p10 para 1.4.2 note addition of scrub.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	We recommended inclusion of more detail on ‘valued trees in Orkney’. We welcome the expansion of examples in the box on p13. We still think there is space for contemporary stories and personal connections to help build ownership around current and future trees and shrub.	Noted, thank you for your comment and we have made an addition in line with it. We think that the images and captions capture history and contemporary use relating to woodlands.	p13, see additions of some willow carr sites and other native woodland sites.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	We previously recommended inclusion of a clear statement <u>how trees can affect water temperatures and keep water cool, as well as the benefits of this including maintaining habitat for freshwater species</u> . We repeat this recommendation for the Benefits (s2) section of the document.	Noted, thank you for your comment.	p20, para 2.4.1, additional phrase added.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	The Benefits (s2) section generally does a good job in showing the diverse benefits that can be had from trees and woodlands and hedges. There may still be room to <u>note how the sub-sections are not contradictory to each other and can be connected</u> . E.g. when planning shelter for stock via hedges (s2.3.1) this can have a secondary benefit of shelter for wildlife or people.	Noted, we have made an addition in line with your comment.	p16, sentence covering interconnectedness of benefits added.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	S2.2.1 makes reference of avoiding trees in deep peat, a statement we agree with. This may present an opportunity to <u>reference the soils map you link in the ‘Natural environment’ section of the appendix</u> , from which the ‘carbon and peatland 2016 map’ can be accessed.	Noted, see the addition in line with your comment.	p18, para 2.2.1, reference to Appendix 2 added.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	We welcome the addition of the AECS scheme to the body of the text in s2.3.3. However, we suggest an addition that applicants should pay careful attention to the options they are considering, as <u>some options with a different focus may introduce or recommend limitations on distance to hedgerows, trees or woodland</u> .	Noted, we think that prospectus applicants to the AECS scheme would be advised on these matters that are outwith the remit of this Strategy.	No change.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	In our past response we suggested consideration of ground effects of trees and the benefit on multiple scale, with emphasis on consideration at the design stage for future trees and woodland proposals. S2.4.1 does a good job providing some examples especially on scale, but there is still room for more detail with regards to planning specific locations.	Noted, there are some additions regarding these comments. The spirit of the document is focused on site-specific assessment and not front-loaded with woodland design.	p20 para2.4.1 gives a greater range of the layers in a woodland and examples of the biodiversity found in these tiers as well as what may live on dead wood.
	KA2	NatureScot - Key Agency	S2.4.3 makes reference to the need for sensible consideration of location in context of other biodiversity and natural heritage features. We appreciate this inclusion, but suggest expanding it from merely waders to a broader scope. For instance, small coastal plants that rely on exposure and would not benefit from tree cover could also be included as an example. We suggest extending the last sentence of s2.4.3 to account for the long-term strategy for the location, alongside the ‘right tree in the right place’ sentiment.	Noted, there are some additions regarding these comments.	p20, para 2.4.3 has other examples added of biodiversity that may be adversely affected by tree planting.

	IP2	Interested person	1. On page 12 and in Section 2.4, p.20. 'For Nature' and elsewhere the Strategy section takes a neutral view of the benefits of native as against non-native trees. The area of native habitat including native trees has decreased over centuries and decades and continues to face threats. It has a value for biodiversity beyond any that may be created using non-native species and hence should be the priority where possible. This is not to say that non-native trees are not very valuable too, for the benefits they bring to biodiversity, people and places. To state, as the Strategy does, 'the right tree in the right place' misses the importance of setting a priority in this respect. The strategy should include a clear statement of the principle of planting native trees. Secondly, 'the right tree in the right place' should be much clearer on what are the wrong and right places for different kinds of trees: native trees having the highest priority in rural settings and none but native should be planted in the most sensitive areas such as Hoy.	Noted, the principle of planting native trees is highlighted throughout the document and the reader is consistently directed towards native species (in p12 para1.5.4, p24 para3.3.6, p27 para3.3.7, p28 para3.4.4, p29 graphic, p32 A1.3, p36 A2.2, p37, p38, p39, p40.)	No change.
	IP2	Interested person	On page 13 the sentence "Remnant native woodland of particular species lineage importance at Berriedale on Hoy, the most northerly native woodland in Britain." The word 'remnant' sounds disparaging and could be omitted, or better still replaced with the word 'Ancient' or perhaps 'Original' since 'Ancient' has a specific meaning the context of woodland. Secondly, other, smaller, areas of native woodland in Hoy, are important as parts of a greater total area of native woodland which is feature of Hoy. Add 'and elsewhere' after 'Berriedale'. Native willow	Noted, note additions made in line with your comments.	p13, 4th point in graphic, replaced 'remnant' with 'ancient'. Other areas of native woodland have been added.
	IP2	Interested person	2. Plant trees only where they do not displace or degrade existing natural habitats. Except with regard to peatland, there is no guidance on this. It is a common assumption that tree planting is always desirable and beneficial. However, many other habitats have greater or equal value for nature than planted trees (native or not). Often, unfortunately, the sites preferred by landowners for tree planting are areas of natural habitat, which are seen as less valuable or even wasteland. There are examples of this happening. . Such inclinations have to be dispelled!	Noted, thank you for your comments, see relevant additions.	See additions at p14 para1.6.1 and p20 para2.4.3.
	IP2	Interested person	There needs to be a clear statement in the Strategy of the value and importance of natural habitats such as heathland and wetlands for their wildlife, including plants, insects plants and so much more, which planted trees cannot replace. Caveats in the strategy e.g. Section 2.4.3, with regard to birds, do not cover this point. There are ample potential sites for tree planting that do not impinge on existing natural habitats. The strategy should make this point, coupled with that on the value of natural habitats.	Noted, thank you for your comments, see relevant additions.	p20, para 2.4.3, other examples added.
	IP2	Interested person	In practice, an assessment with this as primary consideration before approval of a site for planting trees, should avoid losses of this sort, but both points should be made in the document: the principle and the process. Setting criteria for decision making is a little more difficult. Reference to the Scottish Biodiversity List habitats is a good start. I note sources on guidance on page 39 but they do not drill down to the level of habitat type and importance at the local level; besides it is not enough to rely on supplementary information for get across a key message. A very useful local source would be the last edition of the Orkney LBAP, not for its action planning but for its comprehensive listing of SBL species and habitats occurring in Orkney.	Noted, thank you for your comments.	No change.

	IP2	Interested person	3. Provenance, section 3.4.3 p28. In the paragraph on local provenance a major argument is missed, that for the conserving the genetic diversity of species across their geographic range. Long-isolated populations are genetically distinct to some degree, Sometimes species are visibly different a result of their adaptation to local conditions. Orkney certainly has its examples. Import the same species from elsewhere and with interbreeding the differences are diluted and ultimately lost. Biodiversity is genetic. island groups are unique because of isolation. This is cultural as well as scientific: Orkney is Orkney, not merely, as the provenance argument is currently stated, a part of the north Scotland region. The second sentence statement in this section that " local provenance is a good first choice because trees will be best adapted to local conditions and weather patterns. However, greater genetic diversity can increase resilience to the future effects of climate change" is not justified. It sounds persuasive but is true only where genetic diversity is severely reduced, of which there is no evidence in the Orkney native trees. Nor has there more generally been actual evidence that native trees or other plants in Britain are not able to withstand climate change because of genetic poverty. Hence I would like to see a change in the text here, emphasising the importance of the essentially character of Orkney biodiversity including its trees, and the need to use native trees of Orkney provenance in order to help to conserve this. In Hoy, only trees of Orkney native provenance should ever be used.	Noted, thank you for your comments, the provenance section is in line with current practice.	No change.
	IP2	Interested person	4. Of course there must be enough native trees to make this possible. The Action Framework for Resiliency on page 29 includes the point "Continue to work in partnership with UHI supporting arboreal culture schemes like the tree nursery at Orkney College, to ensure a bank of trees for planting schemes that can survive in Orkney's climate." Let's change this to a "bank of native trees and others that can survive in Orkney' climate".	Noted, see addition in relation to your comment.	p29, changed to reflect comment made.
	KA1	Historic Environment Scotland - Key Agency	Thank you for consulting us on this Strategy. We received the consultation on 19 January 2026. We have reviewed the documents in relation to our main area of interest for the historic environment. We welcome the way in which the Strategy supports protection and enhancement of the historic environment. We have no detailed comments to offer on the Strategy.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change
	IP6	Interested person	pg 10 Para 1.4.3 Sheep are the largest livestock group, the Mart will vouch for how many more sales of sheep go through their doors per annum than cows. Admittedly, though Orkney is known for its high quality beef.	Noted, this is not factually correct, cattle are the largest livestock group in Orkney.	No change.
	IP6	Interested person	pg 10 Para 1.4.4 Birsay Moors to be included?	Noted, the places included give an overview of the regions where peat is present.	No change.
	IP6	Interested person	pg 18 Para 2.2.1 Low survival rates of trees, as many species do not thrive in acidic soil.	Noted, thank you for your comment, the document highlights site-specific assessment.	No change.
	IP6	Interested person	pg 18 Para 2.2.2 Maybe delete "which is like sweating"?	Noted, this is a good analogy to help the reader understand this process.	No change.

	IP6	Interested person	pg 18 Para 2.2.3 Tree roots, through their structure, lessens soil erosion and builds resilience and stability against landslides and helps to shore up banks.	Noted, thank you for your comments this is true in some occasions but not in every scenario, especially extreme quarrying along river banks and coastal regions, which is more frequent due to changing weather patterns.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	While Woodlands and forests are not traditionally seen as an important part of the Orkney landscape the RSPB Scotland acknowledges the importance of trees and woodlands in parts of Orkney and the previously wooded nature of much of Orkney prior to human habitation. While we believe that any expansion of woodlands and forestry in Orkney has the potential to provide a range of benefits to communities and biodiversity it is essential that they continue to be appropriately located in order to also avoid or minimise any detrimental impacts on biodiversity.	Noted, thank you for your comments and the potential to adversely affect some habitats is noted within the Strategy.	No change
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	The Orkney Islands hosts some internationally important bird populations which would be impacted by any significant change of land use. The impact of any proposed planting on protected bird populations of waders and other bird species populations should be factored into any woodland planting.	Noted, we are confident that this will be managed through appropriate site-specific assessment.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	As well as mitigating the global climate emergency, the strategy should recognise that there is also currently a nature emergency. As well as reversing biodiversity loss the actions within the strategy should aim to restore and regenerate biodiversity.	Noted, the themes of protect, enhance and resilient intend to manage restoration and regeneration in relation to trees. The restoration and regeneration of other habitat types is outwith the remit of this Strategy.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	We do not believe that there is merit in creating any commercial plantation forestry in Orkney and believe there are many more suitable places in Scotland for such commercial plantation forestry.	Noted, thank you, your view is noted.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	We support a right tree, right place approach (as highlighted in section 3.4 in the plan) in which land that already has high carbon, conservation or community value, or highly productive farmland, is avoided (although integrating trees into these landscapes, for example via agroforestry, may be in some circumstances be appropriate).	Thank you your support for the spirit of the document is noted.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	The location of any new planting and species selection should be carefully considered, with climate change projections taken into account to ensure that the right trees are in the right place and that they form part of a coherent ecological network now, and in the future.	Noted, this refers to the proposal of the nature networks, which is referred to on a number of occasions in the Strategy.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	The need to ensure woodland expansion will not have negative impacts upon species or habitats and to take action to restore those already degraded by previous woodland planting, including the issue of non-native, commercial conifer trees seeding onto neighbouring land, such as designated areas, peatland and ancient woodlands. Riparian planting has been highlighted as important in other areas of Scotland but could have significant negative impact on wader species populations in Orkney.	Noted, thank you for your comments, the Strategy covers issues of sensitive designations and other habitats that would be degraded by tree planting.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	The need to manage new and existing forests to benefit declining woodland bird species. Native woodlands often require protection and/or bringing under management to help to improve the woodland condition. It is important to establish and maintain diversity of species within these new and existing forests.	Noted, thank you for your comment, tree packages from funding parties and plugging gaps in woodlands is being considered in practice as woodlands mature.	No change.

	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	The creation of strategic woodland habitat networks and linkages suitable for range expansion for priority forest species. This expansion should not however have a negative impact on open ground of high value for biodiversity (such as important wading bird habitats).	Noted, this is the consideration of nature networks.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	Responsible access which avoids disturbance to sensitive species and habitats needs to be incorporated into the promotion of Orkney's woodlands for recreation and tourism.	Noted, responsible access is promoted on relevant OIC web pages.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	1.5.2 <i>'While recognising the challenges of tree planting, there is a role for new tree planting in Orkney that this strategy seeks to support.</i> RSPB Scotland agrees with this point but would highlight that much of Orkney remains unsuitable for tree planting for climate and conservation reasons and tree planting is only suitable in limited areas.	Noted, this is why small-scale planting is advocated.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	1.5.6 <i>'There are no specific targets set out, the strategy seeks to encourage and promote the value of tree and woodland planting in appropriate locations, acknowledging that most of these opportunities are likely to be smaller scale planting proposals that will emerge over time, creating an incremental increase in the number of trees and woodlands.'</i> RSPB Scotland supports this approach and believes that arbitrary targets are not suitable for Orkney and RSPB Scotland commits to working through the Orkney Woodland Group to ensure that the planting locations are appropriate for biodiversity.	Noted, thank you for your support in this aspect of the Strategy.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	1.5.8 <i>'The Settlement Statements, that will form part of our next Local Development Plan, will map green infrastructure that will include the location of existing trees and woodland and will look to expand these areas to promote and increase green infrastructure that will include tree planting and contribute to Nature Networks.'</i> RSPB Scotland supports the proposals to map green infrastructure in the next Local Development Plan, and we would reiterate that any increase in woodland would need to carefully assess the impact of any plans on wildlife and especially wader species and breeding bird populations. RSPB Scotland would be willing to support this mapping exercise within the development of the Local Development Plan. RSPB Scotland would recommend a minimum of 200 meters buffer for any planting near breeding wader species. There is evidence that there is extra sensitivity of some species – such as curlew - to the impact of woodland creation and the buffer recommend for these species should be up to 500 or 1000 meters. RSPB Scotland recommends mapping areas of wader habitats across Orkney highlighting where forestry planting would not be appropriate and should not be encouraged. We recommend the latest research is incorporated within any mapping exercise.	Noted, thank you for your comments, which will be considered within the LDP process.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	2.2.1 <i>'Therefore, small-scale planting in Orkney, can provide dispersed carbon sinks. However, it is important to have trees in the right place – planting trees on certain peatlands (especially deep peatland), for example, would not be appropriate, as it can cause carbon to be released from the peat.'</i> RSPB Scotland strongly endorses this point – especially as peatland restoration is being undertaken by RSPB and other organisations in Orkney. We believe it is important to define deep peat depth according to the best available evidence. This is defined as >30 cm in England, but >50 cm in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for afforestation and restocking decisions. RSPB would encourage adopting the precautionary principle and would oppose any planting on land with peat over 30cm in Orkney.	Noted, we are of the opinion that in the absence of evidence to the contrary, Scottish definitions are deemed appropriate.	p18, para 2.2.1, added >50cm.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	2.4.3 <i>'It is important to note that some of Orkney's biodiversity and natural heritage features benefit from locations away from trees and woodland such as Orkney's wading birds in wetland and coastal locations. This is why this strategy advocates the right tree in the right place.'</i> RSPB Scotland strongly support this point and would reiterate the point about in terms of ensuring that there are buffers in place for breeding waders and other bird species as we have highlighted above. RSPB Scotland would oppose any arbitrary planting targets in Orkney. RSPB Scotland recognise the importance of planting around towns, settlements and some farms in Orkney and notes the strategy still does not highlight any specific spatial plans or quantitative planting recommendations in this area which we support.	Noted, thank you for your support in this aspect of the Strategy. Appendix 2 includes to relevant maps showing designations, soil map and spatial data held by SF.	No change.

	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	3.3.6 <i>'Some sites may be suitable for native species for new and replacement (compensatory) planting, as native species are considered to have evolved with and adapted alongside native wildlife, providing greater benefits compared with non-native tree species. However, it is recognised that in some locations and circumstances, non-native species may be better able to achieve the desired outcome.'</i> RSPB Scotland would recommend that the impact of non-native invasive species be highlighted further here as some non-native trees can have considerable impact. Some species such as sycamore and horse chestnut are already notable trees in Orkney – and are lower impact - but other species such as lodgepole pine can create more management work to avoid seedling expansion - albeit over a longer timescale. A range of other species - such as salmonberry - should not be encouraged due to the negative impacts on native habitats and we would encourage clarifying and expanding on the list of non-native species that should not be encouraged in this plan. Further editions of the plan could potentially list of non-native species that shouldn't be favoured in Orkney to be included.	Noted, advice on what not to plant locally is done through planning consultations on biodiversity enhancement statements.	No change.
	IG2	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - Interest group	'Action framework for resiliency (page 29) <i>Identify opportunities where trees can contribute to water and biodiversity enhancement on riparian corridors, contributing to Nature Networks, in the spatial strategy in the local development plan. Support tree planting alongside path networks in conjunction with partners such as the Orkney Woodland Project, Hitrans, Walk, Wheel and Cycle Trust, community groups and schools.'</i> RSPB believes that any riparian planting and planting around waterbodies or along path networks in Orkney should be undertaken with caution due to the potential longer-term negative impacts on waders and wildfowl – especially during the breeding season - from any such planting. Choosing the right species as well as the right place to be planted in these circumstances will be important in any wider proposals. RSPB Orkney would recommend that the council runs a project to highlight and map areas which are unsuitable for tree planting across Orkney and would we willing to support and such project.	Noted, thank you for your advice.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	This revised version is clearer, better illustrated and more accessible. The statutory context is now thoroughly explained, and the document demonstrates improved alignment with current Scottish Forestry guidance. The Trees &Woodland Strategy (T&WS) presents a strong and compelling case for the value of trees and woodlands in addressing the biodiversity crisis and climate change, and it clearly recognises their importance for amenity, agriculture and cultural heritage.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	The document provides a helpful description of the extent and value of existing native and amenity trees and woodlands. However, the lack of spatial information is still a major issue. The inclusion of mapping would significantly strengthen the T&WS by illustrating the distribution of existing woodland and supporting future monitoring and evaluation.	Noted, this is addressed through two additions, there is an action framework to undertake mapping of existing woodland and a section in Appendix 2 with links to existing map of some woodlands in Orkney. We are unable for legal reasons to attain maps from some organisations.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	The Strategy encourages additional tree planting in appropriate locations and outlines a range of potential delivery mechanisms. However, it does not establish woodland creation or restoration targets, nor does it identify or map preferred, potential or sensitive areas for woodland expansion. This falls short of what is expected from a woodland strategy. Effective application of NPF4 Policy 6(d) requires that land suitability for woodland creation is clearly identified.	Noted, the issues of mapping locations in Orkney is difficult due to the large swathes of designated areas, prime agricultural land, wetlands and peatland, this fact highlights the spirit of the Strategy for small-scale planting. Despite expectations for forest and woodland strategies, in a national context, Orkney, like other islands, is unique and requires a distinctive Strategy.	No change.

	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	While this draft demonstrates stronger justification for woodlands than the previous version, the absence of quantified or spatially defined objectives remains a concern. This version of the T&WS does at least acknowledge the current limitations in mapping and sets an objective to address these gaps. This is welcomed, and WTS would be keen to support Orkney Islands Council (OIC) in progressing this work.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	The Strategy appropriately recognises woodland creation constraints relating to landscape character, archaeology, peatlands and biodiversity. However, it often refers readers to national guidance rather than interpreting that guidance within an Orkney-specific context. Given the particular importance of open landscapes, archaeological sensitivity and climatic extremes in Orkney, the Strategy would benefit from clearer, locally tailored guidance explaining how competing priorities will be balanced in practice. For example, the obligation to protect ground-nesting waders may, in some areas, conflict with ambitions for woodland expansion to enhance biodiversity and carbon capture. This is a particularly complex issue in Orkney and would benefit from a clear local policy position.	Noted, the local policy position is given within the Strategy in reference to site-specific assessment and reference to the sensitivities this comment lists.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	Page 19 – Benefits of Trees for Agriculture Under the agricultural benefits section, recommend including reference to the potential use of tree fodder. Tree fodder can provide valuable nutritional and animal health benefits and may serve as a useful supplement to traditional forage systems.	Noted, we considered that the length of time it takes for trees to grow in Orkney would render such schemes problematic.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	Page 24 – Conservation Areas The text suggests that Eynhallow is located on Orkney Mainland. This is incorrect.	Noted., see correction.	p24, corrected.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	Page 25 – Tree Protection Although addressed in Appendix 1.4, it would be helpful to state within the main text that a felling licence may be required from Scottish Forestry.	Noted, thank you for your comment.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	Page 27 – Role of the Orkney Woodland Group The T&WS indicates that small-scale woodland creation will be supported “through the Orkney Woodland Group”. If the Group accepts this delivery role, further clarification would be appropriate, including contact details. The Orkney Woodland Group has played a highly important and effective role in expanding high quality native woodland in Orkney, and WTS is grateful for the efforts of its members. It is our understanding that the Group currently operates on an informal and unfunded basis. The T&WS assigns OWG a potentially substantial delivery role over the ten-year lifespan of the document. Is it likely that additional support or funding may be made available to the OWG?	Noted, this matter is outwith the remit of the Strategy.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	In conclusion, Woodland Trust Scotland welcomes the progress made in this revised draft and supports the overarching ambition to protect and enhance Orkney’s trees and woodlands. Strengthening the spatial framework, introducing measurable objectives and providing clearer localised guidance would significantly improve the Strategy’s effectiveness and deliverability.	Noted, thank you for your summary comments.	No change.
	IG4	Woodland Trust Scotland - Interest Group	We would be pleased to continue working constructively with Orkney Islands Council to support the development and implementation of the final Strategy.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	We are pleased that the Council has published its draft Orkney Trees & Woodland Strategy and we support the general direction that the strategy takes:	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change.

	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	We agree with the general link between biodiversity and climate change but think more could be made of this, and with more reference to Scotland's Climate Change Plan. We note that there is only a single reference to this important national plan (and also that the plan reference is not up to date (the new national plan just being finalised). For example, the plan explains: o Scotland's forests currently absorb roughly 7.5 million tonnes of CO ₂ annually, which is about 14% of the country's total emissions. o Native woodlands are home to 172 priority species, including the pine marten, black grouse, and Scottish crossbill. o Trees also create "wildlife corridors" that allow species to move and adapt as the climate changes. o Trees help the environment withstand extreme weather by slowing down rainfall run-off to reduce flooding.	Noted, thank you for your comments, unfortunately , the data referencing CO2 absorption rate in Scotland is not relevant to the Orkney context. Also, there are no pine martens or black grouse in Orkney and crossbills are considered irregular visitors. The nature networks, mentioned throughout the Strategy are the equivalent of 'wildlife corridors'. Your final comment is captured at p18 para2.2.3.	p9, dates changed to reflect recently adopted Climate Change Plan.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Noting that the Council has recently approved an independent report's recommendations which includes the role of nature-based solutions in tackling carbon emissions, this important contribution of trees and small woods should we feel be more directly referenced. We note that the report stresses the need for early action in plantings (see also targets below).	Noted, see p23 para 3.1.6 and p26 para3.3.3. Also note policy connections in NPF4 to policy 2 Climate mitigation and adaptation, policy 20 Blue and green infrastructure and policy 22 Flood risk and water management.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	We also welcome the recognition that tree planting must be sensitive to Orkney's unique environment, particularly peatlands. However, we do believe that consideration should be given to species that are not generally widespread in Orkney because of the changes to the environment: a species that may not have done so well previously may now thrive and made a positive contribution.	Noted, non-native species are noted has having a valuable contribution to Orkney, see p12 par1.5.7 and p26 para3.3.6.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	We welcome the right tree, right place approach, as described in the strategy. Given Orkney's climate, soils, and land use patterns, small woodlands, hedgerows, and shelter belts are likely to deliver the greatest benefits. The strategy's focus on these forms of planting is appropriate and realistic.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	We welcome the strong alignment with NPF4 Policy 6.	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change.

	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	We believe the strategy could more explicitly recognise the role of trees and shrubs in strengthening Orkney’s food resilience, both for agriculture and for communities. The draft already acknowledges that: “Trees and hedges can provide shelter for livestock and crops, acting as windbreaks...” and this point should be built upon: - Given Orkney’s exposure, these functions are essential for long term agricultural resilience. Shelter belts and hedgerows: improve animal welfare; reduce feed demand during harsh weather; protect crops from wind damage; reduce soil erosion and nutrient loss; and create microclimates that extend growing seasons. Tree planting can support farm productivity by reducing runoff; hedgerows that support pollinators; combining grazing with tree cover and shelter that reduces lamb and calf mortality. Trees can help buffer food systems against climate impacts by reducing flood risk; stabilising soils; moderating microclimates; supporting pollinator networks; and providing shade and shelter for market gardens and polytunnels. In drifting snow conditions, hedgerows planted at the boundary between fields and roads will catch snow drifting across fields, reducing build-ups on roads. Given the abandonment of stone dykes in favour of post and wire fencing in recent years (although understandable, snow blows straight through post and wire fencing), a programme of hedgerow planting along road/field boundaries would reduce the depth of snow on roads during snowy weather and reduce disruption and the amount of ploughing needed to get roads open. Hedgerows across the landscape, both land being farmed and land that is not used, will provide greater shelter and wind brakes for wild and animals and livestock. Integrating these benefits into the strategy would strengthen Orkney’s long term food security. There are multiple benefits here that support communities directly (for example the role of trees and ‘green infrastructure’ in helping to reduce surface flood risks. Those flood related benefits are well referenced in the strategy (e.g. at 2.2.3). We welcome this and suggest that more can be integrated on wider benefits of trees as outlined for example in relation to our food security. The strategy could go further by explicitly supporting productive community planting, not only ornamental or shelter focused planting. Community orchards, edible hedgerows, and small fruit-tree clusters can: increase local food production; support pollinators; provide community gathering spaces; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce reliance on imported fruit. Greener Orkney are particularly keen to explore the development of pocket orchards, and there is plenty of small plots of land in Orkney that would be suitable. The attached article provides a useful summary.	Noted, thank you for your comments. We are satisfied that agriculture and trees, in the Orkney context is sufficiently covered. Food growing and food security is outwith the remit of this Strategy and orchards, for example, are difficult to create in Orkney without traditional stone walled gardens, replicating these would incur unbalanced costs in relation to the growing season and ability to yield sensible fruit crops.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	The strategy currently states: “There are no specific targets set out...” We understand the need for flexibility, but even modest, achievable targets would improve clarity and accountability. These could include: • kilometres of hedgerow restored. • number of new shelter belts. • number of community orchards supported. • woodland expansion in clearly identified suitable zones. If it is too soon to set targets at this stage, we suggest that the strategy should outline an intent for this, including a statement along the lines of: “Although the strategy does not set targets at the outset, these will be developed in coming years in interim reviews and potentially in wider programmes, plans, and strategies. It will be important to quantitatively monitor the increase in trees and woodland cover in Orkney in order to support the objective and vision.”	Noted, with majority of land in Orkney falling within private ownership, prime agricultural land and national and international designations creating targets would be extremely problematic. The action frameworks were added in the 2nd consultative draft to address this matter.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Local measurements and a clear monitoring framework would help understand Orkney specific aspects and ensure longer-term success, including elements such as: • tree survival rates and species (national research and local experience) • simple yield carbon measurement for successful examples locally • biodiversity indicators. • soil health improvements. • agricultural benefits (e.g., reduced wind damage.)	Noted, thank you for your comments, such studies, normally research based, are outwith the remit of this strategy.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Trees exist as part of the environment. The strategy should explicitly refer to: • peatland restoration. • wetland enhancement. • coastal and marine blue-carbon habitats.	Noted, thank you for your comments, general biodiversity restoration is outwith the remit of this Strategy.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Natural regeneration can produce more resilient, diverse woodland than planting, especially near existing native fragments.	Noted, natural regeneration is limited in Orkney.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Farm-scale planting should be a central pillar of the strategy, not a secondary consideration.	Noted, farm-scale planting is outwith the remit of this Strategy.	No change.

	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	We commend Orkney Islands Council for producing draft strategy. In addition, we recommend that the final strategy:	Noted, thank you for your support.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Introduces measurable targets for hedgerows, shelter belts, community orchards, and small woodlands, and recognises the importance (need) for planting woodlands early given their order to contribute towards climate change objectives)	Noted, targets are difficult without baseline information, the spirit of the Strategy is small-scale planting.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Include interim reviews and a monitoring and adaptive management framework to ensure long-term success.	Noted, thank you for your comments, reviews of TPOs are included in the action framework.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Positions peatland restoration and open-habitat protection as co-equal priorities alongside tree planting.	Noted, peatland restoration is outwith the remit of this Strategy.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Explicitly supports food resilience, including livestock shelter, crop protection, and community food-growing initiatives.	Noted, thank you for your comments advice for agricultural planting is given and community food-growing is outwith the remit of this Strategy.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Strengthens the role of agroforestry and farm-scale planting as key climate and biodiversity tools (understanding this as trees on farms, not trees instead of farms).	Noted, as above.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Incorporates natural regeneration where conditions allow.	Noted, natural regeneration is limited in Orkney.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Expands the strategy to include blue-green infrastructure and marine nature-based solutions, especially in settlements and coastal areas.	Noted, the Strategy does include blue-green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	Support community-led planting and part of the OIC growing Strategy.	Noted, we are satisfied that the Strategy supports community planting.	No change.
	IG3	Greener Orkney - Interest Group	We would welcome continued involvement in the development and delivery of many aspects of this work. In particular, Greener Orkney is exploring ways in which to encourage the development of pocket orchards locally.	Noted, thank you for this information advice on funding is included in Appendix 2.	No change.



Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a proposal or changes by anticipating the consequences and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

Should you have any questions or wish for your draft EqIA to be reviewed by our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Adviser, please contact OD@orkney.gov.uk.

1. Identification of the Proposal or Change

Name of proposal or change being assessed.	The Orkney Tree & Woodland Strategy 2026-2036
Responsible Service and Directorate.	Development and Marine Planning
Date of assessment.	2/6/26
Is the proposal or change existing? (Please indicate if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly).	The Orkney Trees and Woodland Strategy is a new strategy. Preparation of a Trees and Woodland Strategy is a requirement of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and National Planning Framework 4.

2. Primary Information

What are the intended outcomes of the proposal or change?	This strategy supports the review of the Orkney Local Development Plan.
Is the proposal or change strategically important?	No
State who is or may be affected by this proposal or change, and how?	Any person undertaking developments where trees are present, or trees are required as part of biodiversity enhancement. Planning stakeholders when considering trees as part of landscaping schemes or nature-based solutions to manage water. Any person or persons in the community who plan to plant trees on public or privately owned land or undertake works on trees that are in a conservation area or subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this proposal or change?	Stakeholders have been involved in the three consultations that have greatly assisted in the production of the Strategy.
Is there any existing data and / or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic / consultants' reports, benchmarking.	Trees and access to trees (tree equity) is a global issue (see United Nations Sustainability Goal 15, Forest and trees topic) and generates discussion at governmental level stimulates charity work and is discussed in the media, see below. https://sdgs.un.org/topics/forests https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5yv7gyeqiqo https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-equality-monitoring-report-1-april-2024-to-31-march-2025/annual-equality-monitoring-report-1-april-2024-to-31-march-2025 https://www.treesforcities.org/about-us/our-history
Is there any existing evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. For people living in poverty or for people of low income. See The Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance for Public Bodies for further information.	There is global evidence and national evidence that shows people living in the most deprived areas are furthest from open spaces and are less likely to visit outdoor spaces; these may include woodlands.
Could the proposal or change have a differential impact on any of the following equality areas?	Please provide any evidence – positive impacts / benefits, negative impacts and reasons:
1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality.	Positive impact. Outdoor Green Spaces have been shown to improve people's health and well-being; The Balfour was highlighted as providing green space, with trees, for the benefit of staff, patients and the wider community. This case study is relevant to all the equality areas.
2. Sex: a man or a woman.	Positive impact.

3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.	Positive impact.
4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another.	Positive impact.
5. Pregnancy and maternity.	Positive impact.
6. Age: people of different ages.	Positive impact.
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists).	Positive impact.
8. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not).	Positive impact.
9. Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	Positive impact.
10. Caring responsibilities	Positive impact.
11. Socio-economic disadvantage.	Positive impact.
12. Care experienced	Positive impact.

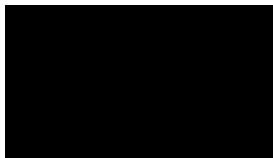
3. Impact Assessment	
Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	No differential impacts to be addressed.
Does the analysis above identify any potential negative impacts?	No
Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?	Yes

4. Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please complete the following action plan where you have identified any differential impacts or potential negative impacts in Section 3 of the Equality Impact Assessment.

Impact Identified	Action to be taken	Owner	How will it be monitored	Date Action to be completed
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

5. Sign and Date

Signature:	
Name:	Erica Hume Niven
Date:	24/4/26