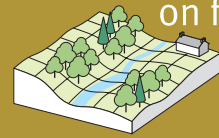




the creation of
small woodlands
on farms



5

Woodland Planning





5 Woodland Planning

This section of the guidance sets out a systematic approach to planning where to site small woodlands on your farm, and how to choose the type of woodland most appropriate for your objectives.

This process for planning new small woodlands allows objectives, opportunities and constraints to be assessed as your woodland plan is developed. Planning a new small woodland requires four key steps; these are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Four Key Steps to Planning Small Woodlands on Farms

	What is Involved	Relevant section of this guidance
Step 1: Identify your objectives for planting new small woodlands	You need to identify your objectives for planting trees and woodlands that reflect specific benefits for your farm and its future management. You should also aim to identify where and how new woodlands might contribute to the wider pattern and potential structure of the landscape, as there will then be cumulative benefits for the landscape and wildlife.	The guidance related to different farmed landscapes in Sections 2,3 and 4 will help. A specific list of opportunities can be found in Section 5.1.
Step 2: Survey your farm to identify potential opportunities for new woodlands, and assess the possible consequences of constraints on those new planting areas	A walk-over survey gives you the opportunity to identify potential sites for new woodland, and any practical problems you think might limit your planting options. Besides physical and environmental constraints, potential sites may also have recognised sensitivities, such as areas of habitat value, archaeological or other cultural interest, where woodland planting should not be established.	Refer to Sections 5.1 and 5.2.
Step 3: Select your required woodland type, plan your layout and make the relevant species choice	The type of woodland planted and the species chosen should reflect both your objectives, and the contribution it can make to the wider countryside. You can get help on species choice and layout, but this guidance offers advice on how to plan woodland that meets your aims, so that you can have an informed discussion with your adviser.	The guidance on woodland types related to different farmed landscapes in Sections 2,3 and 4 will help.
Step 4: Map your proposals	Once Steps 1 to 3 have been completed, your proposals should be drawn on a plan at an appropriate scale, usually 1:10000. Each woodland should be shown, with accompanying notes describing both the type of woodland that will be established, and their objectives.	Refer to Section 5.3.

5.1 Identifying Benefits and Opportunities for Small Woodlands on the Farm

Checklist 1: Benefits and Opportunities of Establishing Small Woodlands

There are many benefits to planting woodlands. With careful planning, species choice and management, woodlands can be multi-purpose and provide benefits to both the farm and the wider countryside.

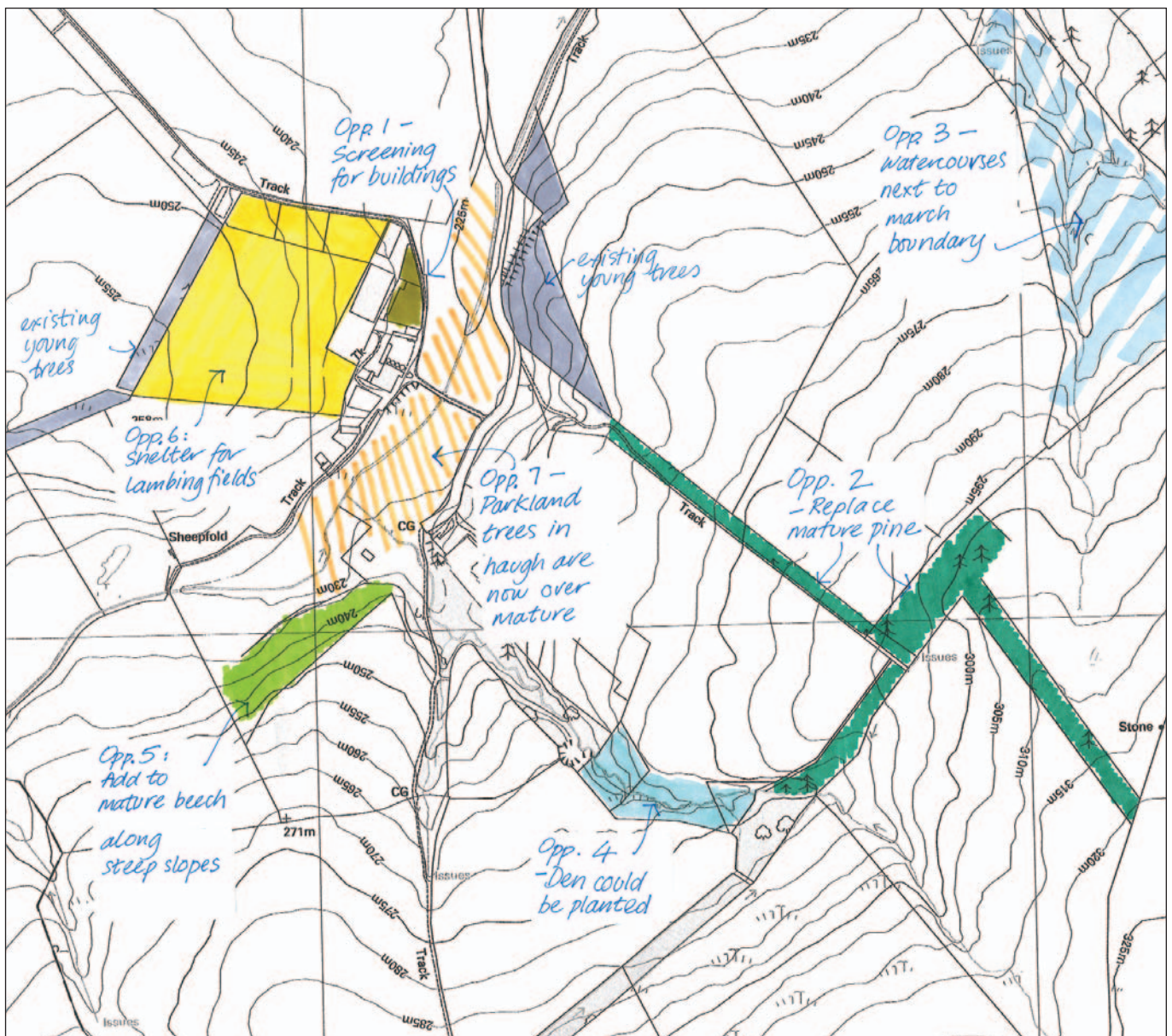
This table below outlines some of the main reasons for planting trees as small woodlands, and can be used to help identify opportunities for your farm.

Benefits	Objectives
Appearance	Screen unsightly buildings and activities Reduce noise and headlight glare from road traffic Introduce autumn colour Create a setting for an existing or new building, road or other infrastructure Frame a view Enhance the value of a property by making it more attractive
Access	Assist in directing public access Provide an attractive environment adjacent to the thoroughfare
Security	Screen buildings or machinery from view Separate publicly accessible activities from farm activities
Biosecurity	Manage parking, public access and movement of stock
Wildlife	Create dappled shade for river fish and pond life Link or extend existing wildlife corridors Create new wildlife habitats
Private Use	Create conditions for edible plants and fungi, such as wild strawberries and brambles Provide a source of fire wood and twiggy pea sticks Create an orchard
Farm Management	Create shelter for free range chickens, ducks and geese Manage stock movements Establish shade and shelter for farm roads Stabilise river banks Reduce wind blown soil erosion Provide shelter for crops or stock Create cover for game

This guidance is aimed at small woodlands that are generally not large enough to provide an economically viable timber crop, although incidental timber harvesting may occur as a result of routine woodland management, such as thinning or as a result of windblow. If however, you are thinking of growing timber, either for softwoods on a commercial scale, or for a high quality hardwood crop, you should seek advice from a forestry consultant.

Example of map with onsite survey notes showing potential benefits and opportunities identified on the walk over survey: photographs of the opportunities identified are shown below.

If you are planning a series of small woodlands on your farm, then it may be helpful to map the areas you are thinking of planting onto a 1: 10 000 scale base plan with contours. This will help you to look at the pattern and arrangement of your proposals as a whole and allows you to make relevant notes on site, starting with the potential benefits and opportunities of planting on your farm when you carry out a walk-over survey.



Left: Opportunity 1: screen buildings and farm equipment by planting in this field in front of the shed

Right: Opportunity 2: plan replacement for mature Scots pine shelterbelts



Left: Opportunity 3: establish riparian woodland along this watercourse and ungrazed land next to march boundary

Right: Opportunity 4: establish riparian woodland along this watercourse and den linking into existing mature woodland

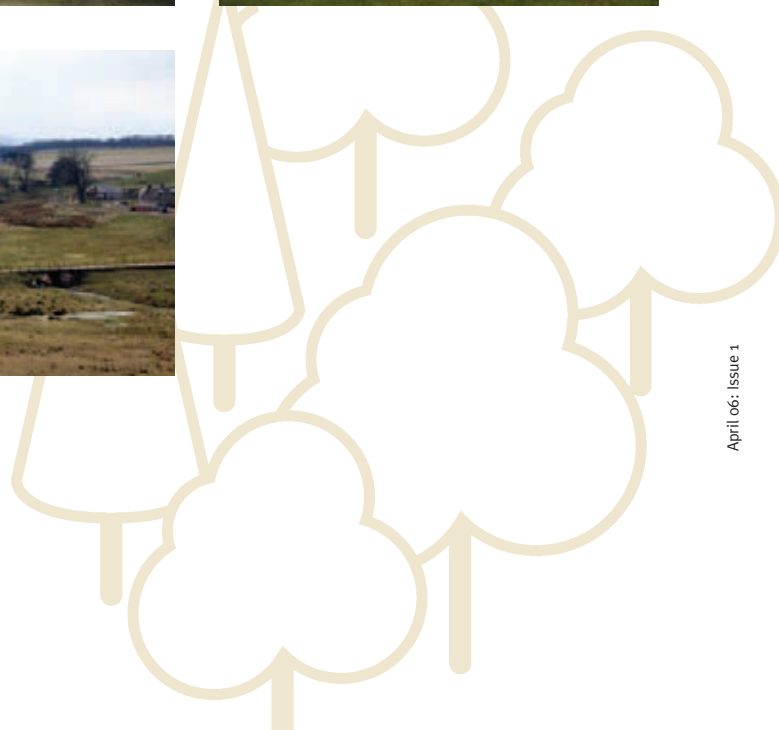


Left: Opportunity 5: extend planting along this steep, north facing bank linking into the mature beech to the left

Right: Opportunity 6: create shelter around these small paddocks used as lambing fields



Left: Opportunity 7: these parkland trees are now mature, and replacements could be established in this haugh



5.2 Identifying Constraints

Trees are not appropriate everywhere and sometimes there are practical and land use limitations on where and what you can plant. There are two broad types of constraint.

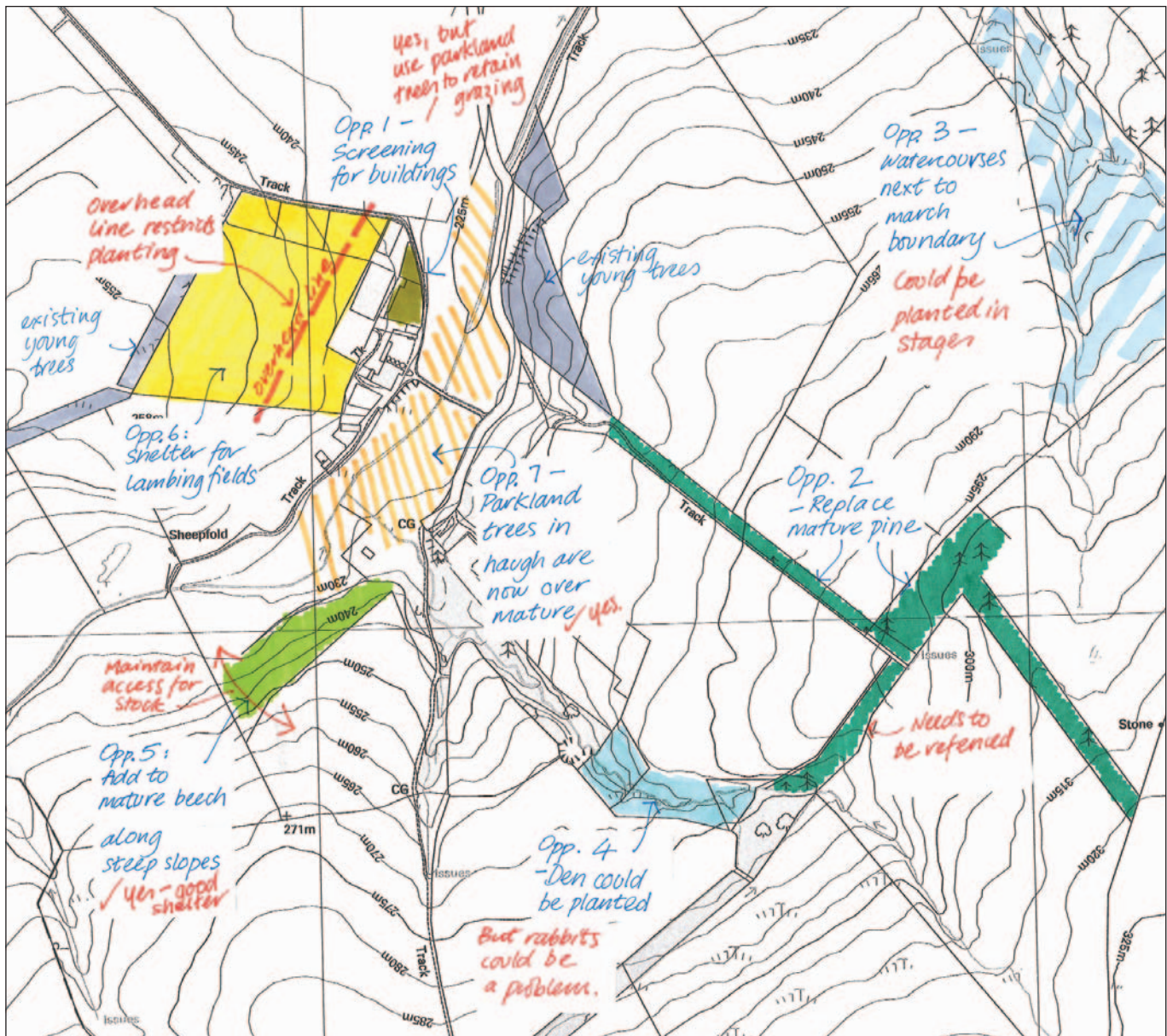
- Firstly, there may be practical and physical limitations to planting trees on your farm. These constraints are summarised in Checklist 2.
- Secondly, there are constraints related to the existing recognised land and landscape sensitivities that may require you to get consent from an agency before you plant. These constraints are summarised in Checklist 3.

Checklist 2: Identifying Practical and Physical Constraints

Issue	Possible Constraint	Action
Appearance	Planting may obscure views	Avoid planting in front of scenic or panoramic views from the public road, access tracks used for recreation, and historic or other viewpoints that are visited by the public.
Conservation	Existing habitats, such as wetlands and herb rich grassland, may already be of high biodiversity value	Avoid planting on areas of wetland and grassland that is herb rich or important for nesting birds. Also, proposed planting areas that are adjacent to an existing ancient or native woodland needs sensitive species selection. Avoid invasive non-native species and preferably establish locally native species. If you are in doubt, you can ask advice from a forestry consultant or ecological adviser.
Cultural	Areas of non-designated archaeological or industrial and farming interest. Also, areas of historic land-use importance, e.g. fields of rig and furrow pattern, historic designed landscapes, parkland or areas associated with local folk lore	Avoid planting on any identified areas of cultural value or local interest. Consider the opportunity to develop planting layouts that avoid direct impacts on such features, and also preserve and enhance their setting.
Buildings and other structures	Private water supplies	Avoid planting adjacent to private water supplies, or where establishing a woodland may intercept runoff to a water supply.
	Sightlines from access roads	Avoid planting up field corners next to a road junction.
	Overhead transmission lines	Do not plant trees near to an overhead line, in case when they are mature they fall onto the line if uprooted. You should instead plan open space within the woodland either side of an overhead line. There may be particular restrictions placed on you in relation to the proximity of planting adjacent to high and low voltage lines, which you should check.
	Underground pipes and services	You should plan open space within woodland either side of domestic pipes and services, but you will need to leave a marked wayleave. There may be particular restrictions placed on you in relation to the proximity of planting adjacent to national and regional pipelines which you should check.
	Accessibility	Whilst you may not need access to manage the woodland very often, you may need access to cut hedges, thin out trees as they grow or manage coppice.
Physical	Poor, thin soils and a harsh environment will limit species choice and growth	Try to choose sites and species that will give the trees the best chance of thriving. Discuss appropriate tree species for the growing conditions you have with your plant supplier or a forestry consultant.

Example of initial proposals with constraints noted on site in red ink

Use your 1:10000 scale base plan to map constraints that might limit planting on your farm.

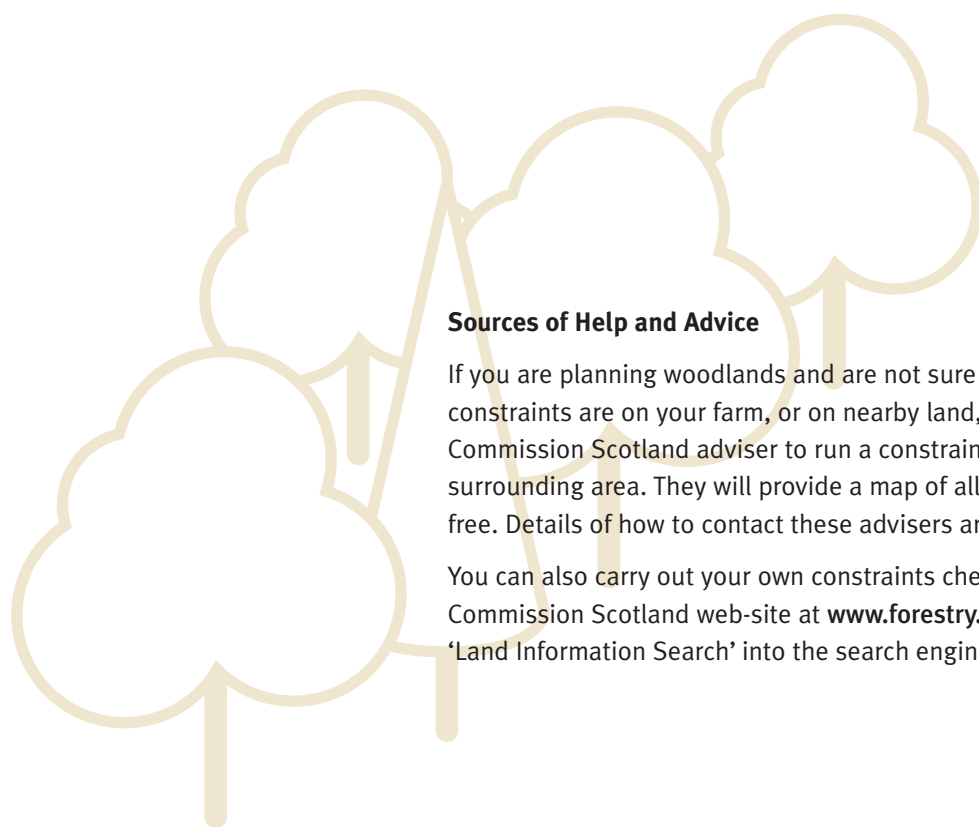


Designations and Other Land Use Constraints

Checklist 3: Identifying Constraints That Require Expert Advice

Most farmers and land managers will not be affected by any of the constraints listed in Checklist 3 below, although if your land is affected by any of them, this may severely limit your planting options.

Issue	Potential Constraint	Action
Your farm includes land designated for its nature conservation interest	The existing nature conservation interest could be damaged by planting trees	Contact SNH to check whether the land you want to plant or adjacent land is designated for its national or international nature conservation value (SSSI, NNR, SAC, SPA, RAMSAR). Contact the Local Authority Planning department if you want to plant on or near a local nature reserve.
Your farm lies within an area designated for its scenic or landscape quality	You may find that there are restrictions on the type of woodland and species that you can plant	Contact SNH if your farm lies within a National Scenic Area (NSA). Contact the Park Authority if your land lies within a National Park. Contact the Local Authority Planning Department if you think that there may be a local landscape designation (Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) or equivalent) on your farm.
There are areas designated for their archaeological or historic significance on your farm	The existing archaeological or historic interest could be damaged by planting trees	You cannot plant trees on or near a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). Contact Historic Scotland or the Local Authority Archaeologist if you think you may have an archaeological feature on the land you want to plant.
Your farm includes land that lies within a Designed Landscape	Land within a Designed Landscape listed in the national inventory should not be planted without prior approval from Historic Scotland	Contact Historic Scotland if your farmland contributes to a designated landscape recorded in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes. Other unlisted designed landscapes may be of local or regional importance; guidance on their conservation and management should be sought from your Local Planning Authority.
Some remnant woodland on your farm has an interesting ground flora and may be a long established woodland site	The woodland may be an ancient woodland site or area of semi-natural woodland where species choice could be restricted to native trees	Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and areas of sparse semi-natural woodland should not be planted without prior approval of SNH and FCS, who will help advise on the appropriate management.
There are non-designated archaeological sites, field patterns or land use patterns on the land you propose to plant	Establishing woodland will probably damage the historic interest	Contact your Local Authority Archaeologist, who may be able to advise you of the local significance of these features and whether your proposed planting will be appropriate.



Sources of Help and Advice

If you are planning woodlands and are not sure what land use designations or constraints are on your farm, or on nearby land, you can ask your local Forestry Commission Scotland adviser to run a constraints check on your farm and the surrounding area. They will provide a map of all current land-use designations for free. Details of how to contact these advisers are to be found in the Annexes.

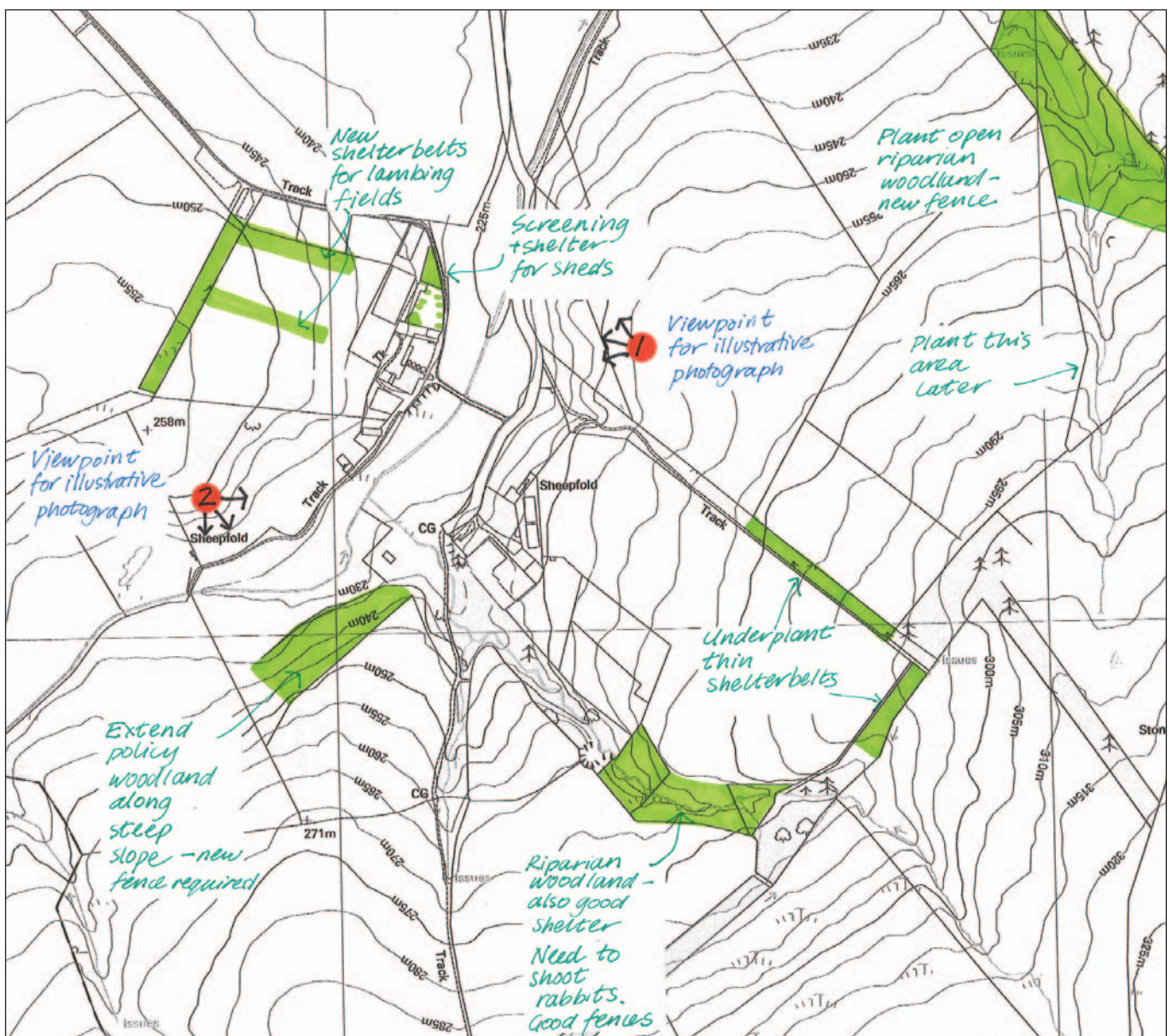
You can also carry out your own constraints check by accessing the Forestry Commission Scotland web-site at www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland and entering 'Land Information Search' into the search engine.

5.3 Mapping Proposals

Use your 1:10000 scale base plan to map your proposals, with each proposed woodland clearly shown and annotated. Describe the objective for each woodland proposed for planting, and any key issues that need to be considered, such as fencing requirements or species limitations.

The main benefit of drawing up your scheme is that if you are applying for financial support, you will have a clear, mapped record of your planting proposals that can be made available for discussion with an adviser and for future inspections.

Proposals map for discussion with adviser, showing preferred planting locations and reasons for planting. For the purposes of this guidance, sketches illustrating the proposals from viewpoints 1 and 2 are shown below.

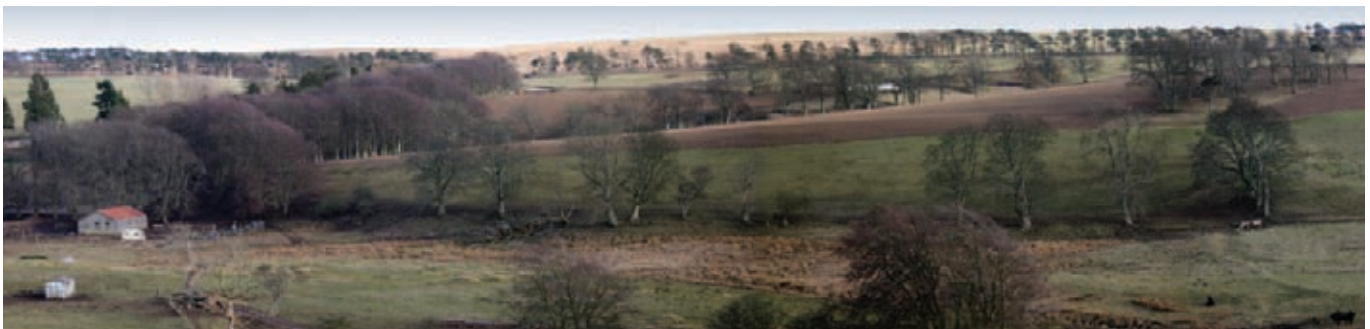




Viewpoint 1, showing the farm buildings with lambing fields in the background, and young planting already established along the ridgeline to replace the pine shelterbelt



The same view, illustrating the proposed screening in front of the farm buildings, and the proposed shelterbelts linked into existing young planting along the ridge



Viewpoint 2, showing policy woodland on the left and over mature shelterbelts in the distance



The same view, illustrating the proposed planting extending new policy woodland along the steeper slopes, riparian woodland in the middle distance, and some under planting of the distant shelterbelts