

## **TREES, WOODLAND AND FORESTRY**

Draft NPF 4 supports the protection of existing woodland and the expansion of woodland cover.

### **Local Development Plans should:**

- identify and protect existing woodland and potential for its enhancement or expansion.

### **Development proposals:**

- should not be supported where they would result in;
  - any loss of ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, or give rise to an adverse impact on their ecological condition;
  - adverse impacts on native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees of high biodiversity value;
  - the fragmenting or severing of woodland habitats;
  - conflict with a Restocking Direction, Remedial Notice or Registered Notice to Comply issued by Scottish Forestry.
- involving woodland removal should only be supported where they would achieve significant and clearly defined public benefits, and should be accompanied by proposals for compensatory planting.
- in an area of existing woodland, or land identified for woodland creation under the Forestry and Woodland Strategy, should consider opportunities to create new woodlands, or enhance and expand woodland onsite and integrate it into design.
- should be supported where they enhance, expand and improve woodland to deliver benefits, such as carbon sequestration, improving air quality; enhancing energy efficiency and providing shelter and shade, providing opportunities for woodland play and recreation; improving biodiversity; helping prevent flooding; and other ecosystem services

### **Responses to the Position Statement**

There was support for the safeguarding and promotion of forestry, for the creation and protection of woodlands and, specifically, for the protection of ancient woodlands. Specific suggestions included woodland creation taking precedent over other habitats, and greater clarity about when woodland removal requires compensatory planting.

## **Policy changes**

The proposals in NPF4 build on the objective expressed in SPP to protect and enhance ancient woodland, other native or long-established woods, hedgerows and individual trees with high landscape value. The more detailed, specific guidance contained in Draft NPF4 reflects the importance of tree planting as part of Scotland's climate change targets.