

**Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to
Peterhead 400 kV Project
Environmental Impact Assessment Report
Volume 5 | Appendices**

**Appendix 12.1.26: Woodland Report Parcel 13198,
Scaniport**



APPENDIX 12.1.26: Woodland Report Parcel 13198, Scaniport

1	Introduction.....	2
2	Woodland property.....	2
3	Development Requirements.....	2
3.1	400 kV Overhead Line Infrastructure Requirements	2
3.2	Access Track Route Design.....	3
4	Woodland Characteristics	3
4.1	Woodland Composition and Site Conditions	3
4.2	Photo Record – Operational Corridor Assessment.....	4
5	Windblow Risk.....	8
6	Woodland Management Impact	8
7	Mitigation Opportunities	8
7.1	Woodland Mitigation Measures.....	8
7.2	Restocking	8
8	Net Effect / Summary.....	9
9	Compensatory Planting	9

Appendix Figures

Figure 12.1.26a: Parcel 13198 Location Map

Figure 12.1.26b: Parcel 13198 Proposed Felling Requirements

Figure 12.1.26c: Parcel 13198 Proposed Planting Areas

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Appendix presents information relevant to the Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV Overhead Line (OHL) Project (the Proposed Development). It should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report, specifically **Chapter 12: Forestry**, for full details of the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.2 As part of the EIA, it has been identified that construction of the Proposed OHL Alignment and the associated access tracks would cross several woodland areas within private or publicly owned landholdings.
- 1.1.3 This woodland report has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on Woodland, Parcel 13198, Scaniport. It includes the requirements for woodland removal and management recommendations to mitigate the impact of the woodland removal. The report provides an overview of the characteristics of the affected woodland, including woodland composition, site conditions, soil conditions, exposure levels and existing felling approvals. The report also provides details of existing infrastructure, and potential constraints related to forestry operations. It aims to inform decision-making by identifying key environmental and logistical considerations associated with the Proposed Development. Additionally, it evaluates the feasibility of timber extraction and access whilst highlighting necessary mitigation measures to minimise disruption to the woodland ecosystem and surrounding landscape.
- 1.1.4 Field surveys of the woodland areas have been undertaken and have been used to determine the various woodland characteristics, to identify the woodland removal required and recommended. This document also sets out the area quantity hectare (ha) to be compensatory planted to ensure no net loss of woodland is achieved.

2 Woodland property

- 2.1.1 The landholding property boundaries are identified in **Figure 12.1.26a: Parcel 13198 Location Map**. The woodlands lie on either side of the B862 road at Grid Reference NH 634221 402577, and on a steep bank between the B862 road and the River Ness at grid reference NH 632822 404271, approximately 3 km southwest of Inverness.

3 Development Requirements

3.1 400 kV Overhead Line Infrastructure Requirements

- 3.1.1 The Study Area for this assessment initially focussed on a 100 m width either side of the centreline of the Proposed OHL Alignment and ancillary infrastructure, where relevant, prior to the identification of an Operational Corridor (OC). The Applicant defines the OC as the area in which it has rights to remove woodland for the purposes of the safe construction, resilience and continued maintenance of OHLs, or protection of electrical plant as required by the Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations (ESQCR) 2002¹ and The Electricity Act 1989². The OC is defined based on two different factors as follows:
- The first factor in which the OC is determined is with reference to the distance at which a tree could fall and cause damage to the OHL, resulting in a supply outage. As a result, the OC width would be based on the safety distance required to allow for a mature tree falling towards the OHL at the mid-point on an OHL span between two towers, taking account of topography and tree height at maturity. Standard falling distance for a mature conifer tree is considered to be a minimum of 45 m. Where the OC passes through areas of broadleaved woodland, it is noted that the width of woodland removal is likely to be reduced, due to the general lower height and characteristics of the tree species present.

¹ UK Gov (2002). The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002. Available at: [The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002](#)

² UK Gov (1989). Electricity Act 1989. Available at: [Electricity Act 1989](#)

- The second factor that is considered is the maximum distance that the OHL conductors can blow out from the tower under a 1 in 50-year return period wind condition, plus the required electrical clearance distance. This is to ensure that the OHL conductors do not come into contact with, or come close enough to, any object that could result in an electrical clearance infringement. This conductor blowout distance varies between each tower dependent on span length and must therefore be considered on a span-by-span basis.

- 3.1.2 The typical OC required within areas of commercial conifer forestry for a 400 kV OHL is 90 m (i.e. 45 m either side of the centre line). Where the OC passes through areas of broadleaved woodland, it is proposed that the extent of woodland removal is likely to be reduced due to the lower height of the tree species present. The OC for the Proposed OHL Alignment through areas of broadleaved woodland has been reduced to 70 m (i.e. 35 m either side of the centre line of the OHL). This has been based on the likely height of the woodland at maturity. Where any woodland removal within the OC is proposed to be reduced from the 45 m either side of the line, a site-specific assessment must be carried out to confirm that the conductor blowout does not exceed the OC width. If the conductor blowout exceeds the OC, then the width of the OC must be increased to meet the requirements of the blowout assessment as a minimum. This will ensure compliance with ESQCR requirements and that the required safety clearances are maintained.
- 3.1.3 A resilient OC of 70 m in width is required throughout the woodland area within Woodland Parcel 13138 where native and broadleaved woodland is present, taking into account the requirements of the conductor blowout assessment. The OC is illustrated in **Figure 12.1.26b: Parcel 13198 Proposed Felling Requirement**.

3.2 Access Track Route Design

- 3.2.1 The proposed section of OHL consists of a section of OC between towers CB1-2-1 to CB1-4. The proposed access tracks in this section are temporary tracks to towers CB1-2 and CB1-3 in agricultural fields and do not affect woodland.

4 Woodland Characteristics

4.1 Woodland Composition and Site Conditions

- 4.1.1 The woodland was surveyed in December 2024. The Proposed OHL Alignment passes through an area of mature broadleaved woodland of Sessile oak (SOK). Silver birch (SBI), Ash (AH), Rowan (ROW) and Hazel (HAZ). These native woodlands have been underplanted with Douglas fir (DF) in the past. Specimen DF are now up to 35 m in height and contribute to the landscape setting of these policy woodlands.
- 4.1.2 The Proposed OHL Alignment then passes over the B862 road, flanked by an avenue of mature Beech (BE) to the northwest of the B862 trunk road with a corresponding avenue of SOK, Be, AH, Lime and Sycamore trees on the southeastern verge of the B862. These trees form a larger avenue of trees, extending from closer to the entrance of Scanipoint Estate and extending northeast for approximately 900 m.
- 4.1.3 This area lying between tower CB1-2 and Tower CB1-3 is identified in the Ancient Woodland Inventory³ as Long Established of Plantation Origin (LEPO).
- 4.1.4 The woodlands are not identified in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS)⁴.
- 4.1.5 The Ecological Site Classification⁵ describes the site as having a warm, sheltered and moist climate. The soils have a slightly dry moisture status and are very poor nutrient status.

³ NatureScot (2023). A guide to understanding the Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI). Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/guide-understanding-scottish-ancient-woodland-inventory-awi>

⁴ Scottish Forestry (n.d.). Native Woodland Survey of Scotland. Available at: <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/forests-environment/biodiversity/native-woodlands/native-woodland-survey-of-scotland-nwss>

⁵ Forest Research (n.d.). Ecological Site Classification (Tree Species). Available at: <http://www.forestdss.org.uk/geoforestdss/>

- 4.1.6 The Soil Map of Scotland⁶ identifies the soils as being predominantly are humus iron podsols soils. However, given the site's historical use as agricultural land, there is a high likelihood that the soil structure has been altered over time.
- 4.1.7 The site is sheltered with a maximum Detailed Aspect Method of Scoring (DAMS) score of 9⁷.
- 4.1.8 Timber could be extracted via temporary access tracks onto the B862 trunk road. This is classed as an Agreed Route by the Timber Transport Forum⁸. The existing internal forest and wider estate infrastructure can be utilised for access and extraction purposes. Considering the quality and quantity of the material and the landform, operations can be carried out by motor manual felling.

4.2 Photo Record – Operational Corridor Assessment

- 4.2.1 The following photographs provide a visual record of key locations along the OC. Each image illustrates existing vegetation types, land use, and notable landscape features relevant to the planning and management of the OC. Particular attention has been given to areas of mature woodland, natural regeneration, and locations where proposed works may intersect with ecologically or visually sensitive habitats. The photos are intended to support site assessments and inform mitigation strategies.

Photo 1: View at NH 632831 404981 between towers BC1-2 and BC1-3 looking southeast. Showing mature Sessile oak trees present within the OC, as well as mature native woodland and Douglas fir specimens on a steep bank in policy woodlands.



⁶ Scotland's Soils (n.d.). National Soil Map of Scotland. Available at: <https://soils.environment.gov.scot/maps/soil-maps/national-soil-map-of-scotland/>

⁷ Forest Research (n.d.). Available at: <http://www.forestdss.org.uk/geoforestdss/>

The Detailed Aspect Method of Scoring (DAMS) is a system used to assess wind exposure in forestry and land management. It provides a numerical score that quantifies the level of exposure a site experiences based on factors such as elevation, topography, and aspect (the direction a slope faces). The DAMS score helps foresters predict wind risk, which is crucial for understanding tree stability, growth potential, and the likelihood of windthrow (trees being uprooted or broken by wind). The scoring system ranges from 0 to 24, with higher scores indicating more exposure to wind.

⁸ Timber Transport Forum (n.d.). Introduction to Agreed Routes Map. Available at: <https://timbertransportforum.org.uk/agreed-routes-map/introduction-to-agreed-routes-map/>

Photo 2: View at NH 638221 405327 looking southeast. Showing mature avenue of beech trees to the northwest of B862 trunk road. Part of a longer avenue of mature broadleaved trees on this section of the B862.



Photo 3: View at NH 634133 402441 looking northwest. Showing Mature broadleaved avenue of trees within the OC.



Photo 4: View at NH 633751 401213 looking northeast on the B862. Showing mature broadleaved avenue of trees.



5 Windblow Risk

- 5.1.1 It is acknowledged that the creation of the OC would result in wider potential indirect effects on the surrounding woodland areas. These areas would be subject to potential increased risk of damage (windblow). Each woodland report identifies further areas of felling to a windfirm edge, defined as 'Management Felling' (categorised as an indirect secondary impact), which is covered in more detail in the **Chapter 12: Forestry in Section 12.4**. Management felling would be considered as part of any application for felling permission. This would provide restocking as agreed with Scottish Forestry which would result in balancing the loss of woodland. Any felling undertaken outwith the OC would be solely under the control of the relevant landowner (and not the Applicant). It is the intention of the Applicant to encourage the landowners to follow this good practice in terms of redesign of their current Long-Term Forest Plans, which in-turn would aim to follow UK Forestry Standard (UKFS)⁹ for the implementation of the works required.
- 5.1.2 There is minimal risk of windblow as a result of the proposed felling, as indicated by the DAMS score, the open grown nature of adjacent trees, and the topography of the site.

6 Woodland Management Impact

- 6.1.1 While tree felling within the OC will result in a reduction in the total area of woodland, this loss is marginal and should not significantly affect overall forest management or access at a larger scale.
- 6.1.2 The powerline introduces an electrical hazard, but the constraint associated with the electrical hazard will be reduced by regular maintenance of the OC which will avoid the incidences of "Red Zone" trees (reference FISA 804 "Electricity at Work: Forestry"¹⁰).
- 6.1.3 The total loss of Native Broadleaved woodland resulting from the proposed alignment is 0.73 hectares (ha).

7 Mitigation Opportunities

7.1 Woodland Mitigation Measures

- 7.1.1 To mitigate the landscape impact on this section of the Proposed Development, a replanting has been set out in **Appendix 7.6 Forestry Landscape Mitigation Principles** as demonstrated in **Figure 12.1.26c: Parcel 13198 Proposed Planting Areas**.
- 7.1.2 Given the side in elevation from the field to the top of the bank between CB1-2 and CB1-3, it may be possible to carry out selective crown reduction, focused on the mature SOK trees with higher ecological value, ensuring that reduction is carried out in a manner that retains structural diversity.
- 7.1.3 Retention of Deadwood and Pruned Material – Where possible, pruned branches and deadwood should be left on-site to enhance biodiversity, providing habitat for insects, fungi, and small mammals.
- 7.1.4 Monitoring and Adaptive Management – Regular assessment of tree health and habitat response to inform future management decisions.

7.2 Restocking

- 7.2.1 As set out in the Landscape chapter under the 'Landscape Replanting Proposals', restocking can potentially take place within the OC to mitigate the visual impact of the OC. Restocking within the OC will be carried out by the applicant. Detail shown in **Figure 12.1.26c: 13198 Parcel Proposed Planting Areas**.

⁹ Scottish Forestry (2024). UK Forestry Standard (UKFS). Available at: <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/publications/sustainable-forestry/uk-forestry-standard-ukfs> (Accessed 15 August 2025).

¹⁰ Forest Industry Safety Accord (2025). FISA Safety Guide 804 – Electricity at Work: Forestry. Available at: <https://ukfisa.com/Safety/Safety-Guides/fisa-804> (Accessed: 15 August 2025).

- 7.2.2 It is anticipated that native broadleaved regeneration is likely to occur within the OC on the steep bank at NH 632822 404271, as a result of its proximity to existing seed sources.

8 Net Effect / Summary

- 8.1.1 **Tables 8.1 to 8.4** outline the operational requirements for forestry management within the OC between towers BC1-2 to BC1-4. They detail the areas designated for clear felling, within the OC and forest design considerations.

Table 8.1: Woodland removal for Infrastructure, within OC.

Item	Woodland Type	Area (ha)
OC felling	Native Broadleaved Woodland (70 m)	0.73
Total area		0.73

Table 8.2: Compensatory Planting

Item	Woodland Type	Area (ha)
Compensatory Planting Area	Native Broadleaved Woodland	0.73
Total area		0.73

Table 8.3: Woodland Removal Impact of Infrastructure

Item	Area (ha)
Total Loss of Woodland Area	0.73
Total Compensatory Planting Area	0.73
Total Net Loss of Woodland Area	0.00

Table 8.4: Woodland removal for Management Felling, outwith OC

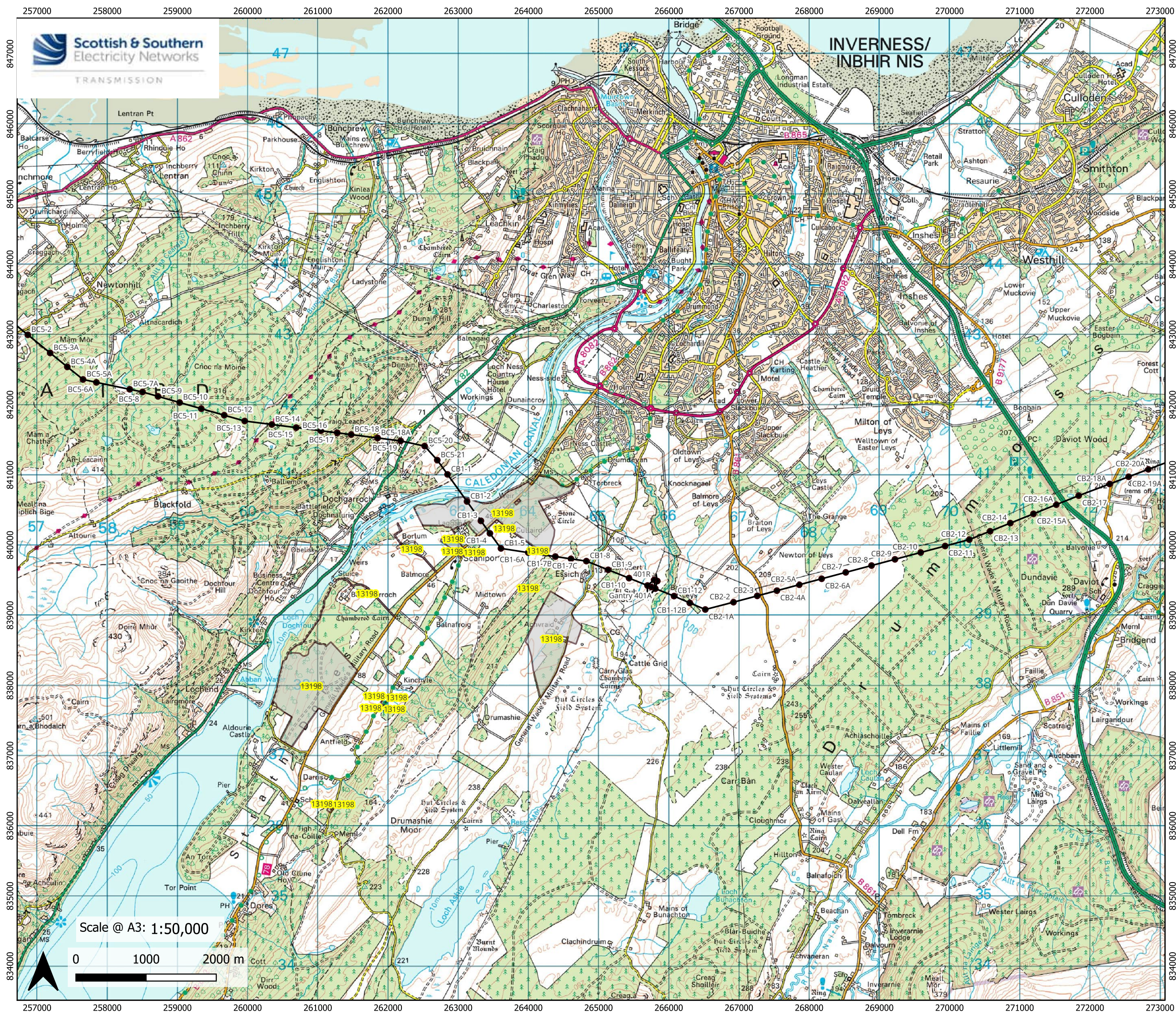
Item	Woodland Type	Area (ha)
Management Felling		0.00
Replanting / Restocking Opportunities		0.00
Net Loss of Woodland Area		0.00

9 Compensatory Planting

- 9.1.1 Only areas directly impacted by the OC will be included in the compensatory planting total, in accordance with the Control of Woodland Removal Policy (CoWRP)¹¹. This policy ensures that woodland loss due to development is mitigated by appropriate replanting or regeneration efforts, but it specifically applies to areas where tree removal is necessary for the Proposed Development. See **Appendix 12.3 Compensatory Planting Management Strategy**.
- 9.1.2 Any additional felling outside the OC, such as areas cleared for windthrow management or forest design improvements, falls under the responsibility of the landowner and is not included in the compensatory planting requirements. Instead, these areas may be replanted under a forest plan revision or felling license at the landowner's discretion. This approach aligns with national forestry guidelines, balancing infrastructure development with sustainable woodland management.

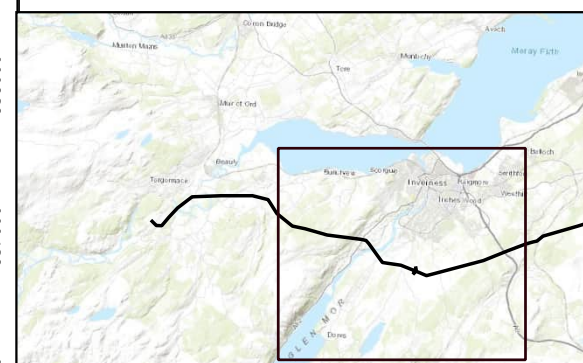
¹¹ Forestry Commission Scotland (2009). Control of Woodland Removal Policy. Available at: <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/publications/285-the-scottish-government-s-policy-on-control-of-woodland-removal/viewdocument/285>

- 9.1.3 The total amount of net felling requiring compensation under the CoWRP is 0.73 ha.
- 9.1.4 In order to provide a greater balance limiting long-term impacts on forestry interests it is proposed that the majority of this woodland loss is compensated via off-site compensatory planting within the same local authority area. It is proposed that full details of the areas subject to this off-site compensatory planting is notified to Scottish Forestry prior to energising the OHL.



Legend

- Proposed Tower - 400 kV
- Proposed OHL Alignment - 400 kV
- ▭ Landownership Boundary/Parcel

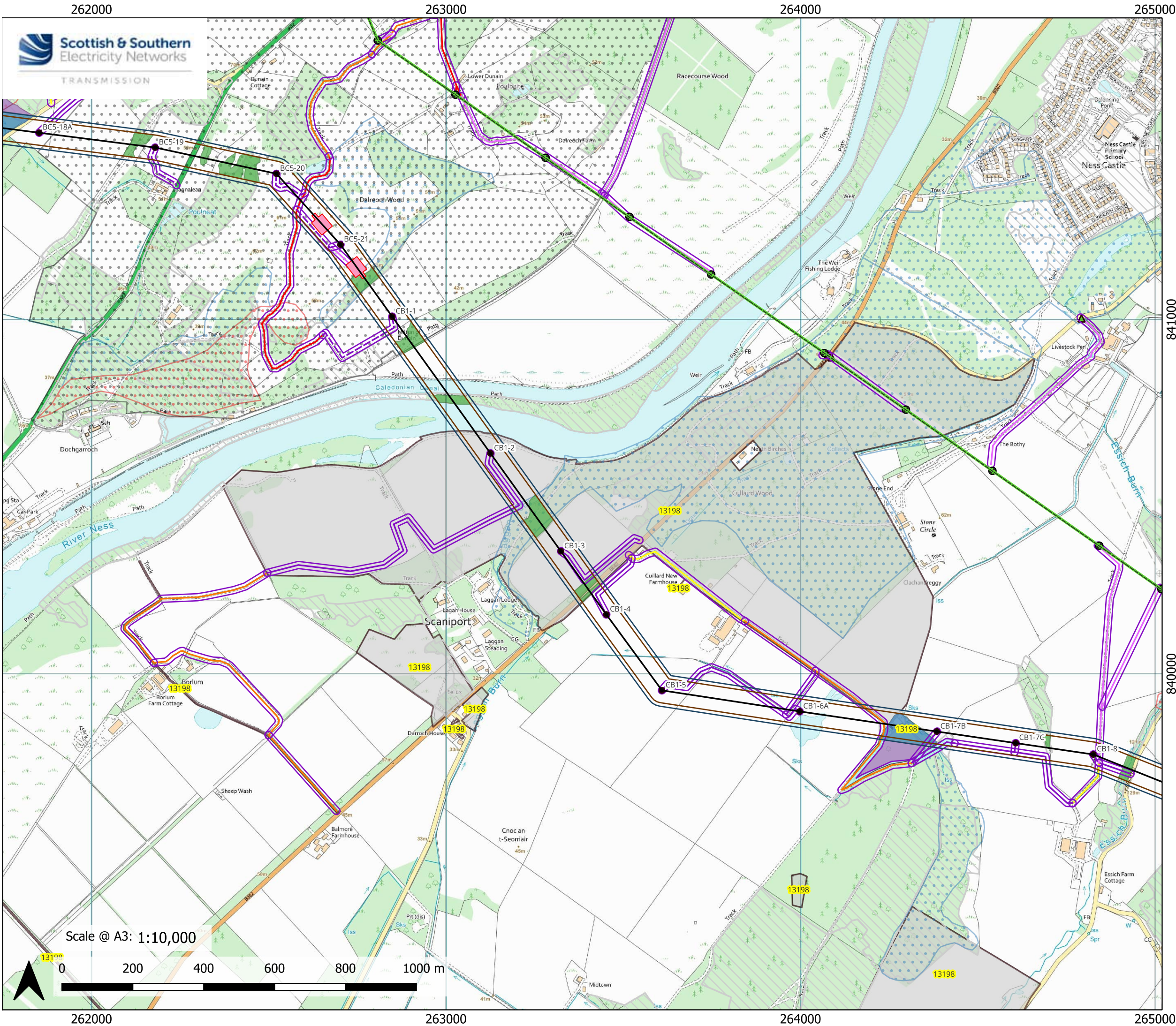


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Project:
Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV
OHL Project

Title:
Figure 12.1.26a Parcel 13198 Location Map

Drawn by: LA



Legend

- Proposed Tower - 400 kV
- Proposed OHL Alignment - 400 kV
- Proposed Conductor Pulling Area (EPZ)
- Tower to be Removed
- OHL to be Removed
- 70m Operational Corridor - Broadleaved Woodland
- 90m Operational Corridor - Commercial Woodland
- Access Track 20m Buffer

Proposed Bellmouth

- Proposed Bellmouth - Access Only/ ATV

Proposed Access Tracks

- Existing Access – Upgrade – Good/Fair Condition
- Existing Access – Upgrade – Poor Condition
- Existing Access – Upgrade – Very Poor Condition
- Proposed Access – ATV or Temporary Trackway
- Proposed Access – Temporary
- Proposed Access – Temporary Floated

Proposed Felling Requirements

- Native Woodland Operational Corridor Felling
- Mixed Conifer Operational Corridor Felling
- Mixed Conifer Management Felling
- Mixed Conifer Access Track Felling
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Native Woodland Survey Scotland (NWSS)

Ancient Woodland Inventory

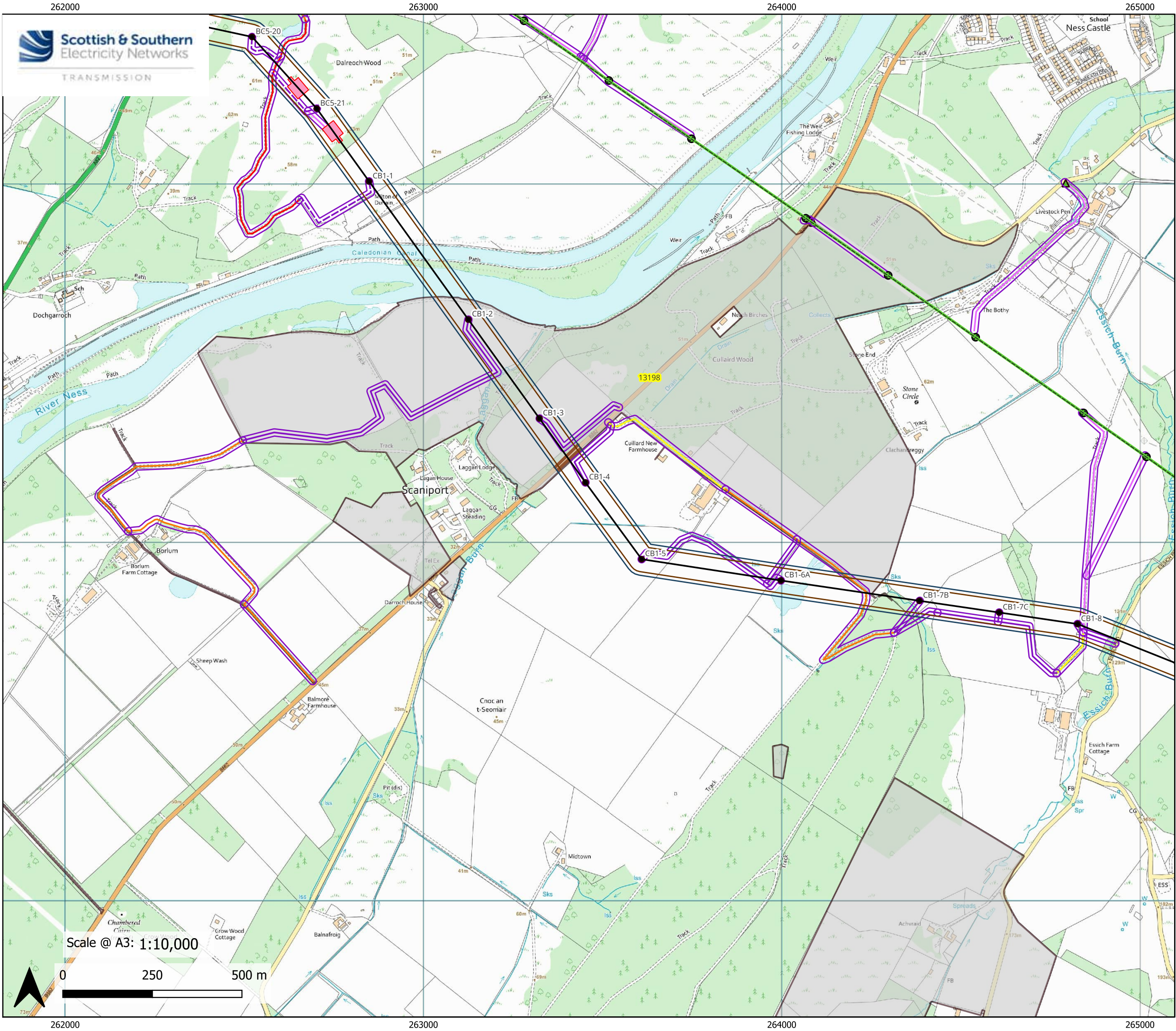
- Ancient (of semi-natural origin)
- Long-Established (of plantation origin)
- Landownership Boundary/Parcel
(Landownership boundary extends beyond map extent – relevant area shown)

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Project:
Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV OHL Project

Title: **Figure 12.1.26b** Parcel 13198 Proposed Felling Requirements

Drawn by: LA



Legend

- Proposed Tower - 400 kV
- Proposed OHL Alignment - 400 kV
- Proposed Conductor Pulling Area (EPZ)
- Tower to be Removed
- OHL to be Removed
- 70m Operational Corridor - Broadleaved Woodland
- 90m Operational Corridor - Commercial Woodland
- Access Track 20m Buffer

Proposed Bellmouth

- ▲ Proposed Bellmouth - Access Only/ ATV

Proposed Access Tracks

- Existing Access – Upgrade – Good/Fair Condition
- Existing Access – Upgrade – Poor Condition
- Existing Access – Upgrade – Very Poor Condition
- Proposed Access – ATV or Temporary Trackway
- Proposed Access – Temporary
- Proposed Access – Temporary Floated
- Landownership Boundary/Parcel
(Landownership boundary extends beyond map extent – relevant area shown)
- Roadside Mitigation Planting Locations

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Project:
Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400kV OHL Project

Title:
Figure 12.1.26c Parcel 13198 Proposed Planting Areas

Drawn by: LA