



Invergeldie Estate

Pre-Application Stakeholder Engagement for
Woodland Creation Proposals

February 2024

Introduction: Landscape-scale Habitat Restoration

Oxygen Conservation purchased Invergeldie Estate in 2022 and are currently in the process of exploring the potential for creating landscape-scale native woodland expansion and peatland restoration. TreeStory Ltd are working on behalf of Oxygen Conservation to undertake the planning process following Scottish Forestry published guidance.

At this stage, we are inviting all stakeholders to provide input on any issues which should influence our planning process. This document summarises the aims and objectives of the project as well as work carried out so far.

Please submit all responses to www.admin@treestory.org.uk by **12 April 2024**.

In addition, we will be hosting a drop-in event in the White Church, Comrie 28 March 2024 (details TBC), where members of the TreeStory and Oxygen Conservation teams will be present to share more details – we would love to see you there and welcome both constructive and affirmative feedback!





Invergeldie is an iconic 12,000-acre Scottish Highland estate located in Glen Lednock, to the north-west of Crieff and north of the highland line in the county of Perthshire.

The Estate was previously a traditional sporting estate combining a walked-up grouse moor, deer stalking and extensive upland farming operation. Last sold in 1961, the site has been the much-loved second home for four generations of the same sporting family.

The new owners, Oxygen Conservation, are delighted and privileged that the family have entrusted them with the ongoing custodianship of this spectacular landscape and welcome a new future for the estate on their mission to 'scale conservation.'

Project overview

Invergeldie will be the subject of an ambitious native woodland expansion project across the landscape of Glen Lednock and Ben Chonzie, making it one of the largest projects of its kind in the UK.

The vision is for continuous habitat progressions of native pine, birch and oak woodlands, transitioning to open structured mountain birch woodland at higher altitudes, giving way to mountain willow scrub and open high-altitude habitats.

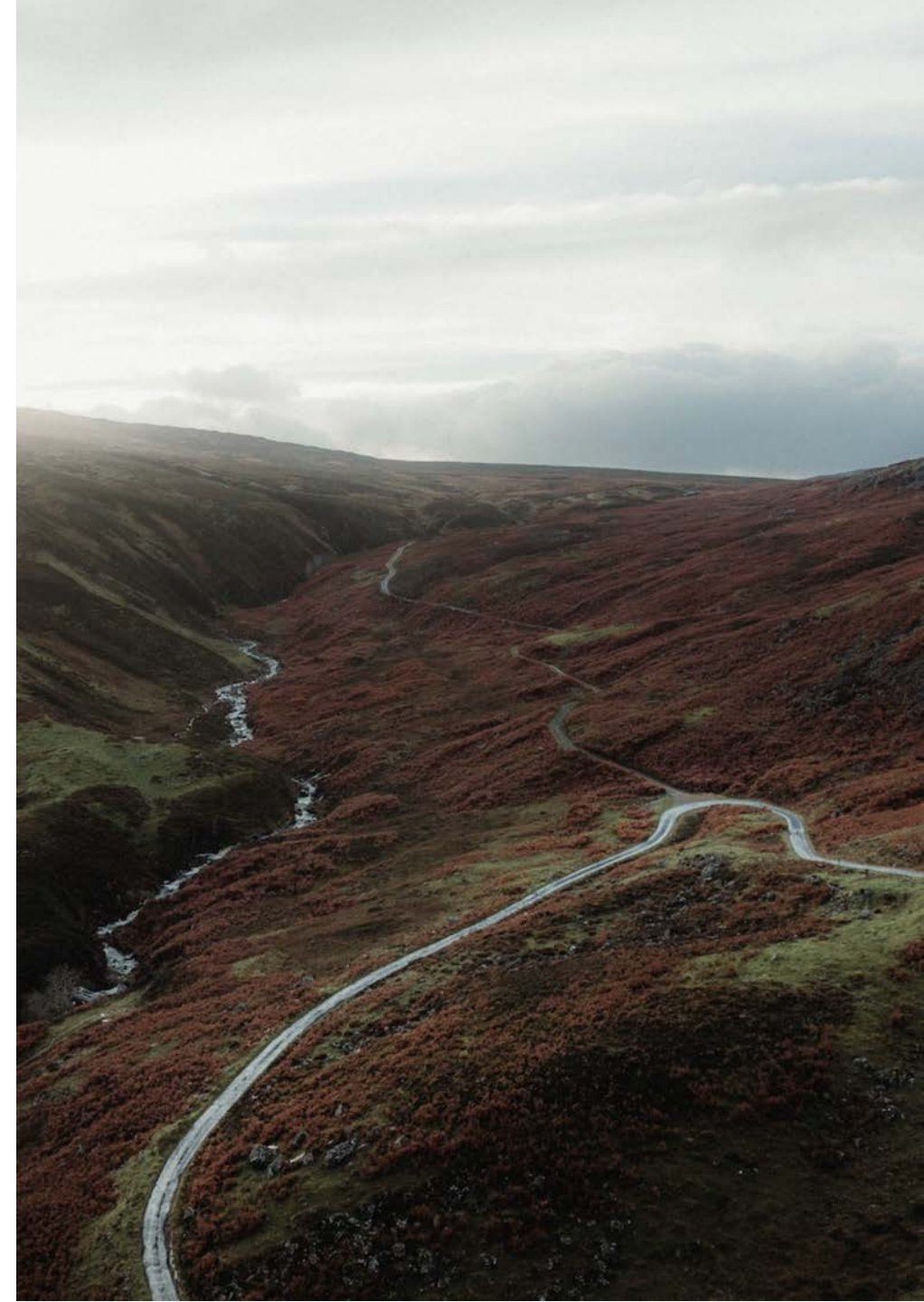
Aside from woodland creation, the project will include extensive areas of peatland restoration, management of species-rich grassland and open heath habitats, and protection of the many cultural heritage features.

Current Woodland Area	<1% of the estate (42 hectares) of isolated fragments of native woodland and conifer plantations
Indicative Regeneration Area	940 hectares of new native woodland – 20% of estate area 550 hectares of peatland restoration
Planting Range	210 to 600 meters asl



Proposed Planting and Establishment Methods

- Soils compacted through the centuries will be prepared for planting by an excavator to mimic natural patterns of regeneration, minimising visual impact and ground disturbance.
- Oxygen Conservation are committed to organic establishment methods of bracken control through a programme of mechanical and manual techniques. Any fertiliser inputs will use organic products.
- Planting will be protected by large-scale strategic fencing enclosures and an associated compensatory cull of deer to reduce pressure on the fences.
- The soils have been extensively analysed and all areas of peat <50 cms will be buffered and left as open heathland / mire habitat.
- Planted trees may be protected with a biodegradable vole guard and cane to aid establishment – but we are investigating alternative methods.
- A range of species will be planted including oak, aspen, birch, Scots pine, alder, rowan and hazel, as well as shrub species hawthorn, willows, bird cherry and holly. As altitude increases, specialist willow and birch species will be planted.





Nicky Hume, TreeStory – recording woodland fragments at 550 metres asl high above Loch Lednock

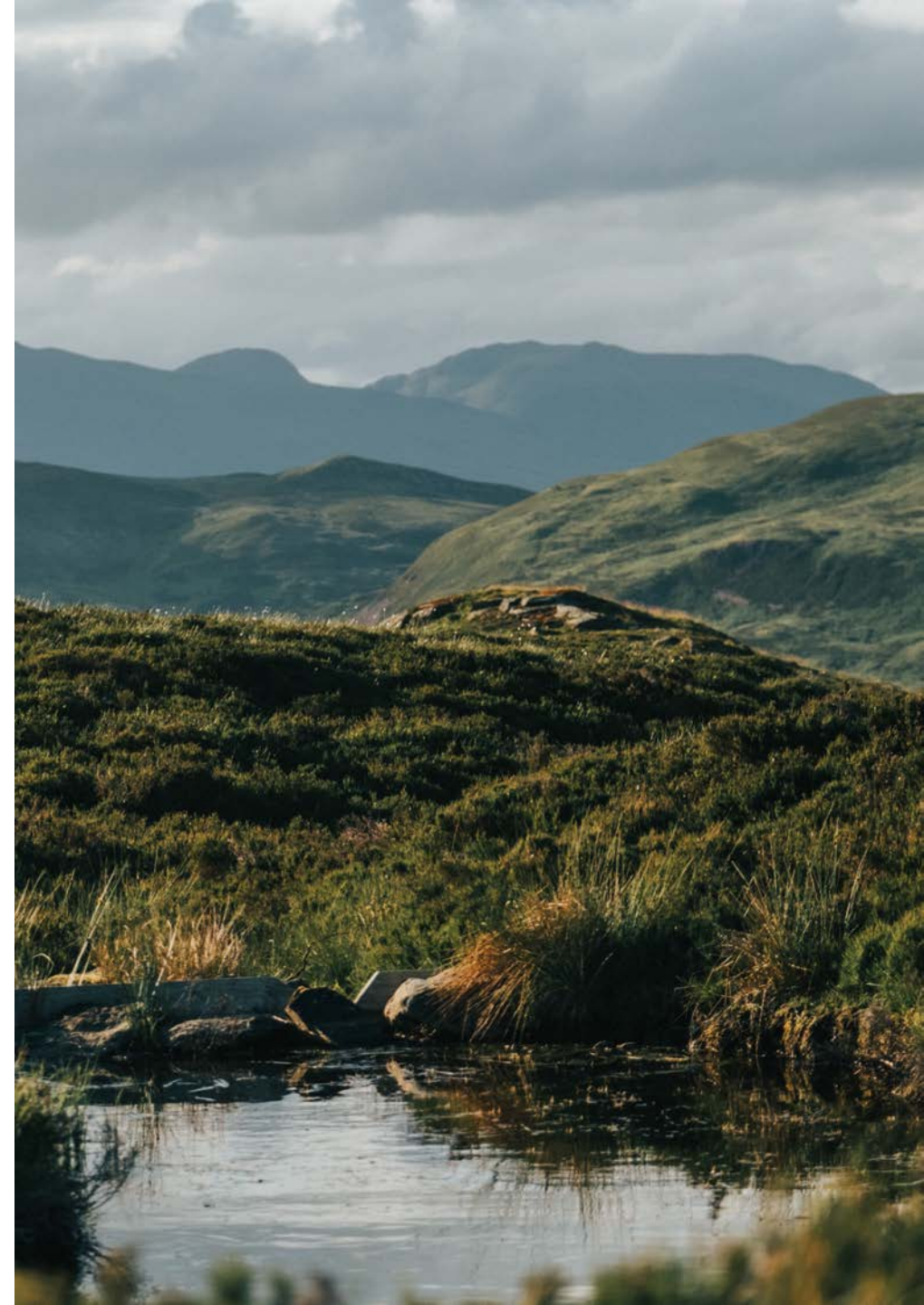
Known issues and constraints

The 'issues log' is a tool used by Scottish Forestry during the approval process. Each 'issue' raised by a stakeholder is entered onto the log until we work through the concern with stakeholders and Scottish Forestry. Once the Log is complete, you will be able to see how we have worked through the issue you have raised.

Over the last 12 months we have completed extensive desk based and site level surveys, but to ensure we don't miss anything, we invite comments and information from all consultees and neighbours.

The surveys are listed within the issue log and all completed reports are available for review upon request. Due to the size of the documents, we will send these via file transfer when requested. Not every comment or issue raised will require mitigation and where issues are repeated or there are themes in comments, we will gather these together under thematic headings.

Please note, that some of our survey information is sensitive and can only be shared with the relevant statutory consultees.



Issues Log: 1 of 3

Issue	Action Completed / Comments	Surveys Complete / Next Steps
Loss of breeding and foraging habitat for bird species	Presence/absence breeding bird surveys undertaken in spring 2023 which will include waders, black grouse and raptors. The Tayside Raptor Study Group will be engaged to provide data they have on species such as Golden Eagle and Hen Harrier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breeding Bird Surveys, including raptors and black grouse • Golden Eagle GET modelling
Open priority habitats	Surveys have been on-going throughout spring / summer 2023 to identify priority habitats, and value of each habitat with recommendation for mitigation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase one habitat survey • National Vegetation Classification survey • Ground Water Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystems • UK HAB Survey
Archaeology and Heritage Features	An archaeological desk-based and walkover survey has been undertaken by a qualified consultant. The report recommendations will be incorporated into the design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological survey and reporting
Landscape Impact	The landscape impact of the woodland design and deer fences will be considered through an assessment in plan and perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape assessment and project perspective to be completed
Impact on deer welfare and local population / dynamics through loss of ground (fenced enclosures)	Deer count assess impacts of large deer fenced enclosures on deer population across the landscape. Engage with DMG and neighbours. A high compensatory cull will be required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drone-aided Deer Count in 2023 • On going engagement with neighbours and DMG to assess deer across the landscape and impacts of cull, so cull level can be set and fencing design informed.
Ben Chonzie SSSI	Additional compensatory cull likely to be required to reduce impact on the designated site through the displacement effect of deer fenced enclosures. Notified features include upland habitats, upland assemblages, vascular plant assemblages and breeding bird assemblages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with NatureScot to discuss the impact of proposals on the designated features.

Issues Log: 2 of 3

Issue	Action Completed / Comments	Next Step / Update
SSE Hydro scheme infrastructure and water yield	Remove all infrastructure from planting area and agree buffers to ensure trees do not impact scheme function. Discuss with SSE impacts of water yield.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going discussion with SSE to understand the technical reasons behind required buffers.
Protected mammals	Site survey to be undertaken in August 23 to assess presence of protected mammals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protected Mammal Survey
Fintulich SSSI	Discuss with NatureScot to investigate integration of woodland creation proposals and protection of the designated site. Notified features geological igneous petrology and Caledonian igneous.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with NatureScot Consider grazing management to maintain notified features
Private Water supplies	One PWS is currently known: Invergeldie Burn. We will identify intake and ensure ground disturbance within 50m of intake is minimised and works are compliant with UKFS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through community consultation, we will check if there are any other PWS on the estate and agree mitigation with Scottish Forestry
Fenced marches restricting neighbour's sheep into estate	Through the neighbour consultation, we will discuss potential new fences and impacts on stock management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with all neighbours to discuss estate management objectives and inform design.
Public access and recreation	Low levels of public access of differing types are recorded across most of the estate. These include walking, cycling and bouldering. There are high levels of public access on the hill path to Ben Chonzie up the Invergeldie burn out onto the open hill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community consultation and Strava heat map will be used along with site surveys to identify key internal viewpoints and hilltops to be retained in open ground.
Mountain Hares	Mountain hares could have devastated effect on tree establishment if not controlled or prevented from browsing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the effectiveness of hare fencing such large enclosures. Speak to neighbours about local experiences

Issues Log: 2 of 3

Issue	Action Completed / Comments	Next Step / Update
Loss of carbon from cultivation of deep peat soils	We are undertaking a full assessment of the site to identify any deep peat and exclude these areas from planting. Low impact cultivation techniques will be used – inverse-turf mounding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil Survey with Ecological Site Classification • Peat Survey to identify peat depth
Continued local employment	SGRPID will assess the impact of the loss of land suitable for agriculture and impact on local farming community,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options to engage local businesses in land management options. • OC are developing a business plan which includes the creation of local employment and continued jobs on the estate
Cumulative impact of woodland creation in the district	Fordie estate are undertaking woodland creation and consideration of this along with any other schemes is required to assess potential impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of cumulative impact to be undertaken



Integration of farmland with woodland creation and peatland restoration around Funtlich

Stakeholders and Neighbours

The following stakeholders have been identified to contribute to the scoping process –
please identify other interest groups or stakeholders who should be included:

Stakeholders

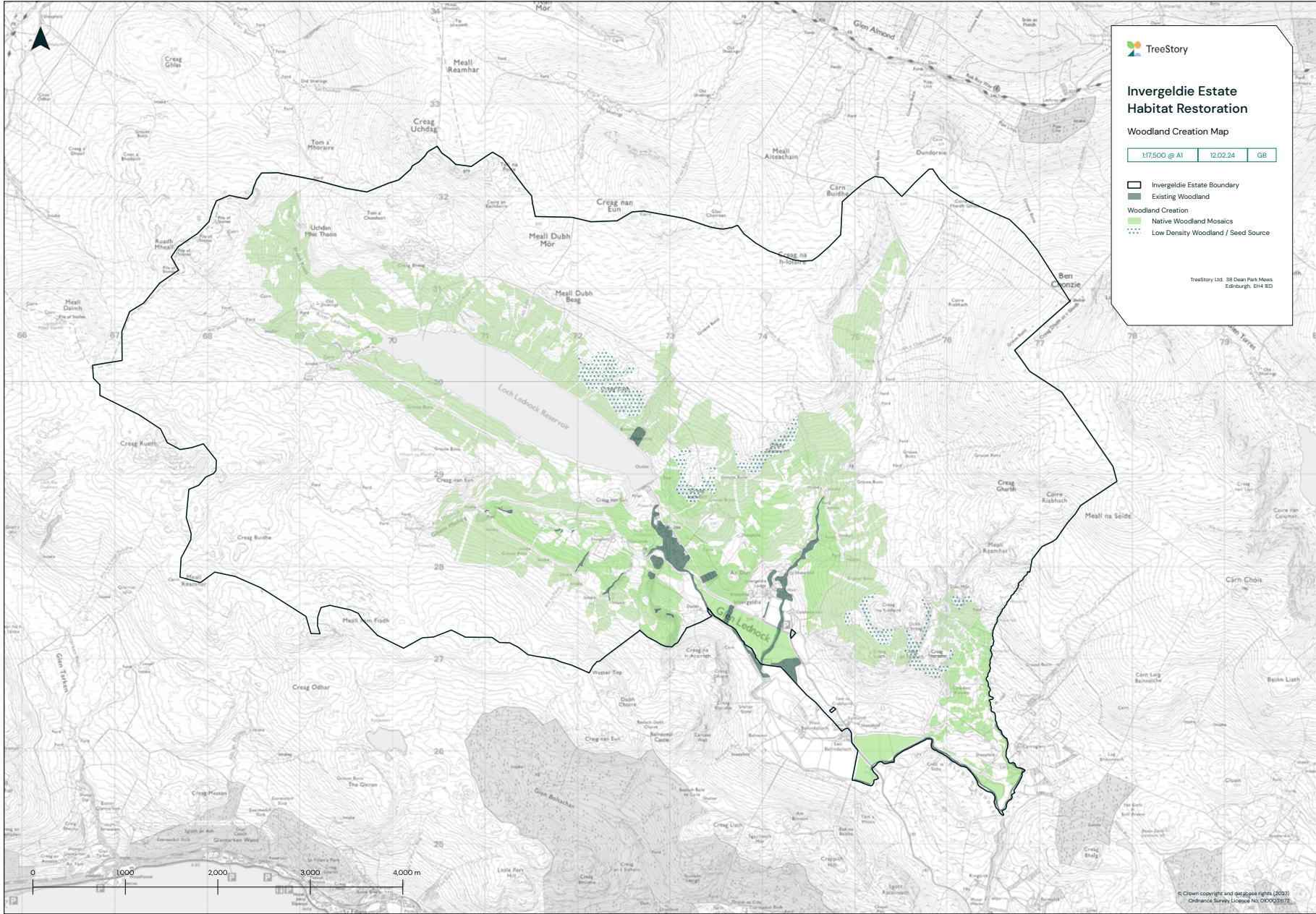
- Scottish Forestry
- NatureScot
- Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Perth & Kinross Council
- South Perthshire Deer Management Group
- Tayside Raptor Study Group
- Comrie & District CC
- Scottish Water
- SSE / Hydro
- Perth & Kinross Access Forum
- Mountaineering Scotland
- Local Access Groups
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Scottish Government Agricultural and Rural Economy

Neighbours

- Drummond Estate
- Dunira Estate
- Carrowglen
- Fordie Estate
- Auchnafree
- Ardtalnaig Estate
- Dall Farm
- Braes of Ardeonaig
- All residents who live in and around the estate.



Project maps



 TreeStory

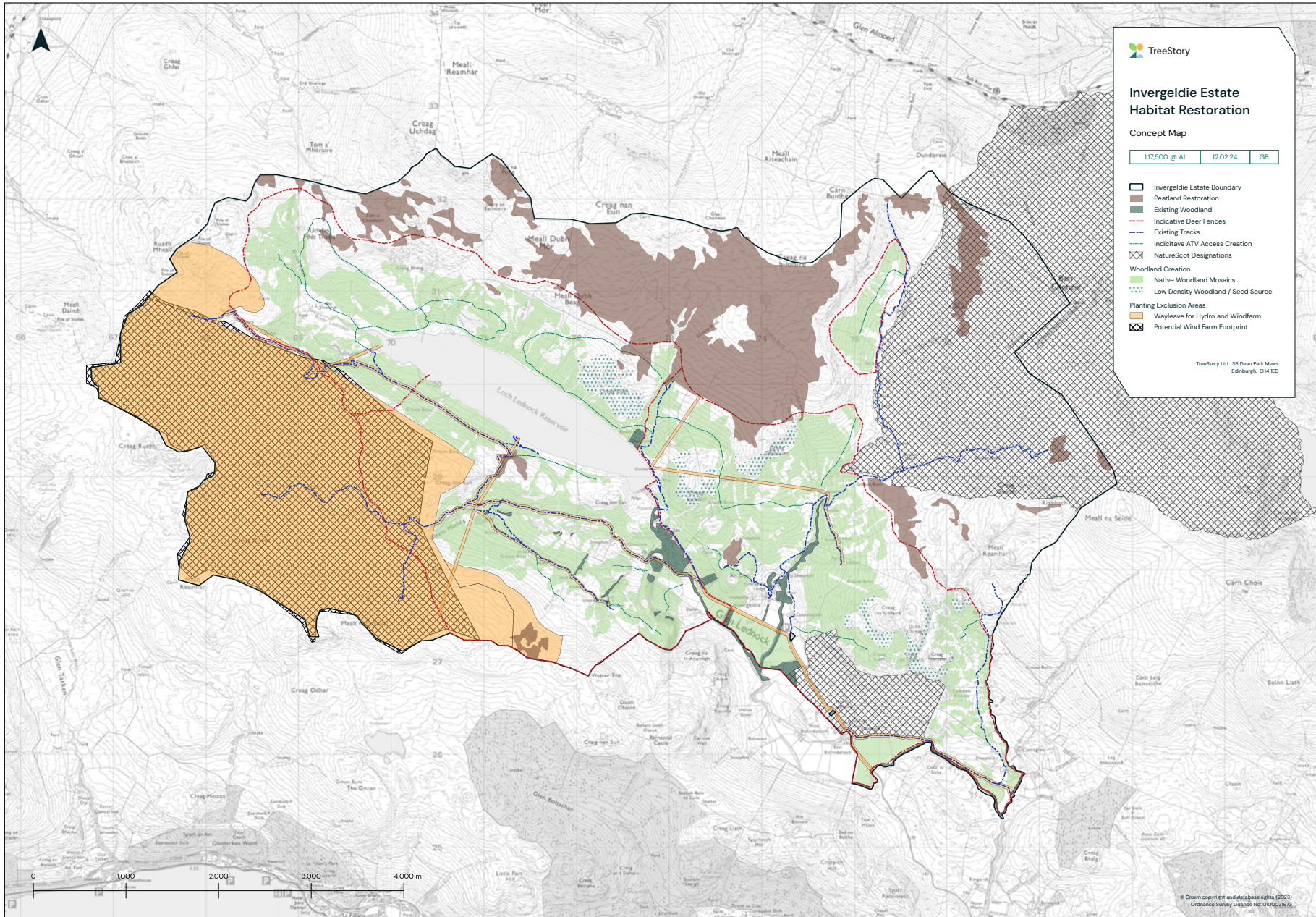
Invergeldie Estate Habitat Restoration

Woodland Creation Map

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-  Invergeldie Estate Boundary
-  Existing Woodland
- Woodland Creation**
-  Native Woodland Mosaics
-  Low Density Woodland / Seed Source

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Learn more about Oxygen Conservation and their commitment to scaling conservation oxygenconservation.com

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With thanks to Oxygen Conservation for supplying the fantastic images of Invergeldie Estate

