

Stidriggs Woodland Creation

Analysis of the visual impact of the woodland creation proposals from key viewpoints and the intervisibility of Scheduled Monuments using Map Maker Prospect

Viewpoints

Following on from initial landscape and viewpoint analysis, three viewpoints were identified to be representative of commonly available views onto the site.

The Map Maker Prospect programme has been used to generate various computer images of the proposed woodland as seen from the identified viewpoints.

The views selected were from the following locations. The numbers are as those used as shown on Location Map

- 1. The U316 Road** – this location, on an elevated stretch of the road, is representative of views from the east of Stidriggs
- 2. The U316/Annandale Way** – this provides an intimate view onto the site from the Kinnel valley floor, again to the east of the site
- 3. Crooked Road/Southern Upland Way** – this general location lies to the north of Stidriggs, and provides clear if distant views on the northern face of the site. As the full breadth of the site isn't fully visible from a single location, to slightly separated viewpoints have been considered.

Visibility from the west and south is very limited. The Forest of Ae blocks any views from the west, and hills and woods limit views from lower ground to the south. There is a general absence of visual receptors, most notably to the west.

Similarly, there are few visual receptors to the north, with views from the M 74, the railway, and Beattock being prevented by intervening topography and trees. Limited and long-distance views are available from elevated ground to the east, with the Forest of Ae, Harestanes windfarm and the Lowther Hills dominating any such views.

Images

For each of the three viewpoints, plan and perspective/panoramic images have been generated using digital design information.

A single plan image and two panoramas have been produced for each of the three viewpoints, with two slightly different viewpoints being included for viewpoint 3, in order to capture the full width of the proposed woodland, which is not available from a single viewpoint:-

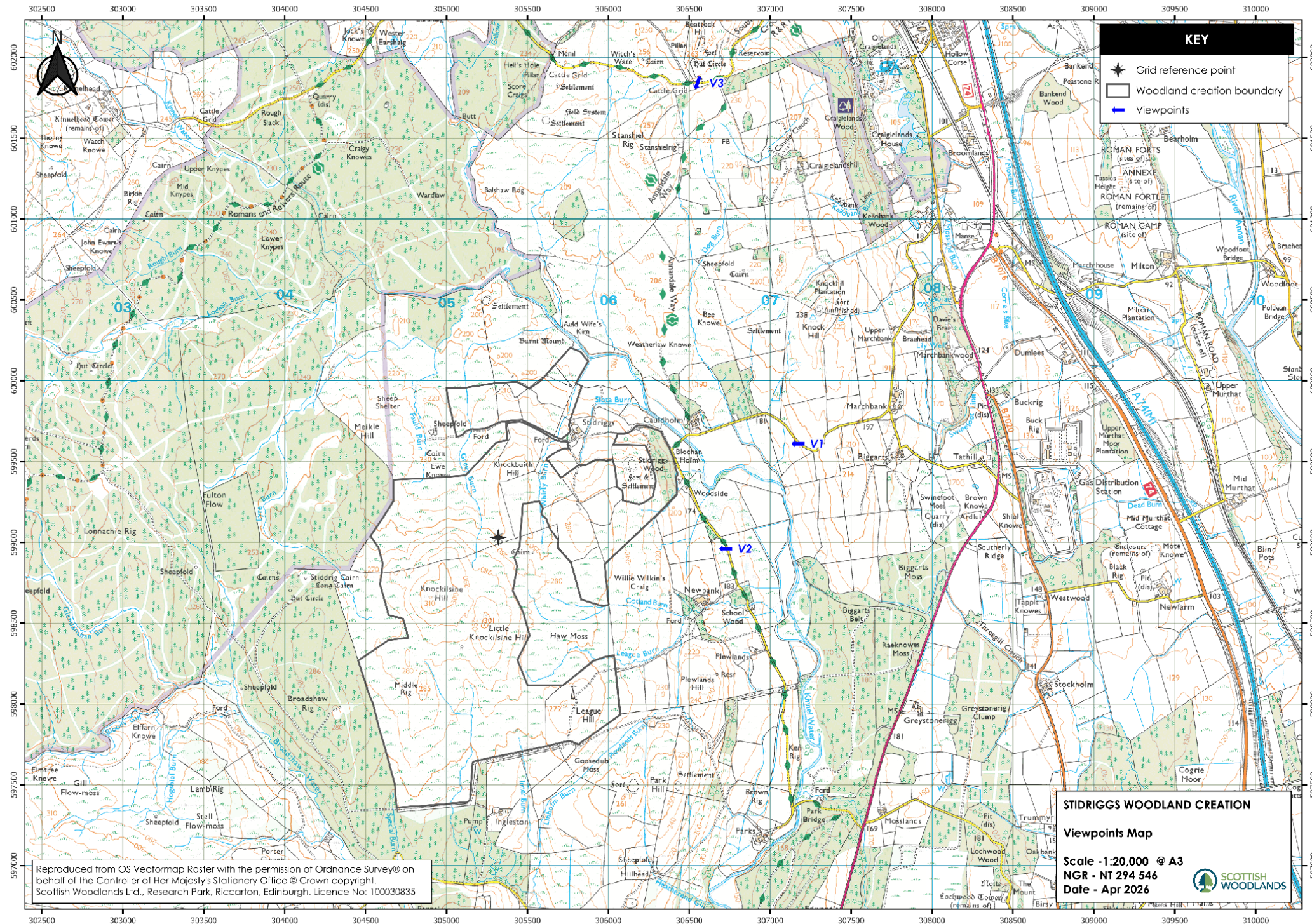
Plan View – The plan images show the location of the viewpoint, the breadth of view used in the perspective, and the footprint of the design of the proposed woodland at Stidriggs, using vibrant colours to represent the various species mixes.

Panorama 2026 – the upper image provides a perspective image for the 2026 Timeline, before any new planting has occurred. Information on existing woodlands is gleaned from the National Forest Inventory, with the woodland being classed/shaded as broadleaved, coniferous, or mixed. Note that small woodlands, trees lines etc. present in the landscape are unlikely to be represented.

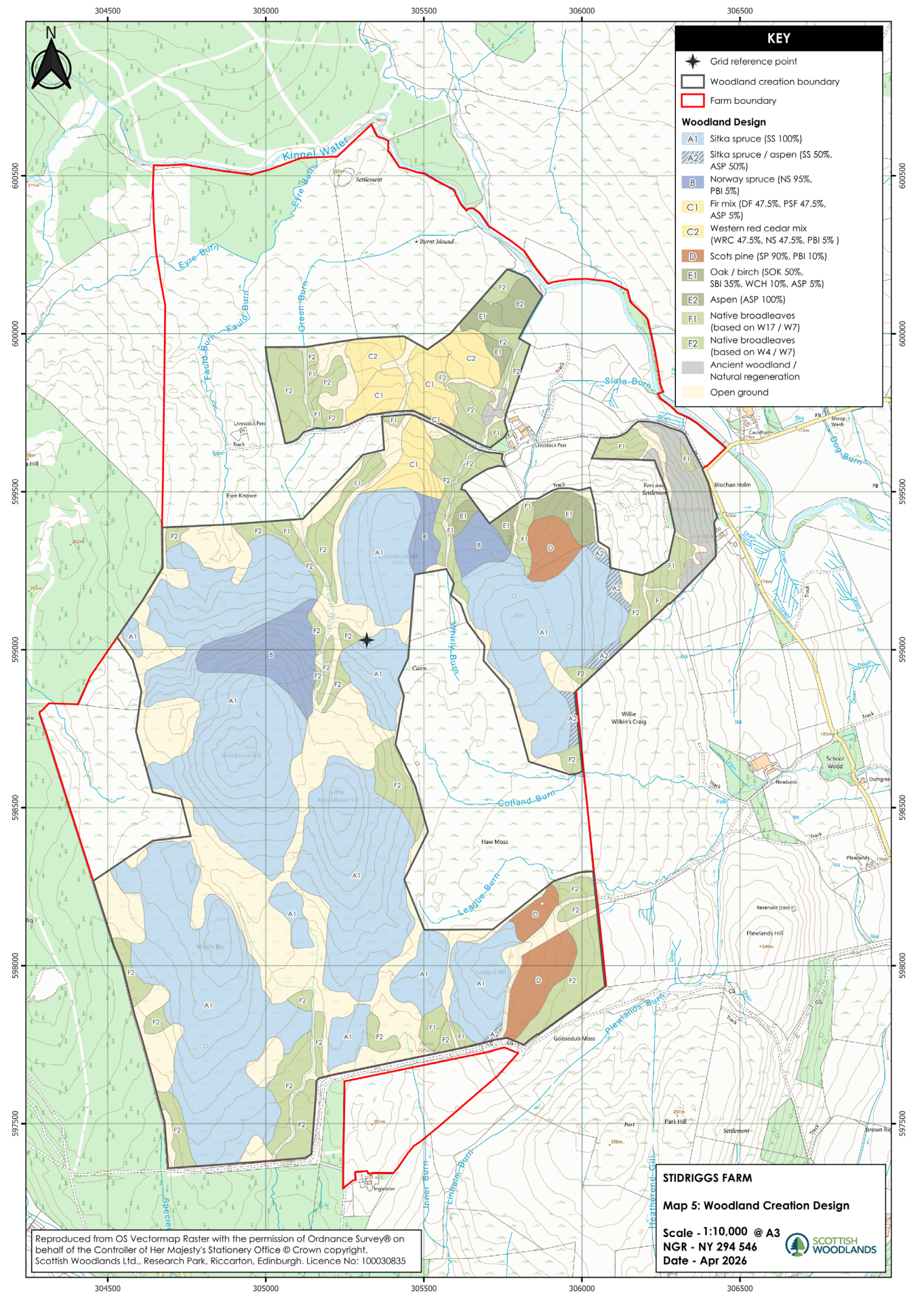
Panorama 2066– the lower image shows the woodland design as it will appear in roughly 40 years time, using yield class predictions to produce tree heights. Existing woodland is shown as it is in 2026 (i.e. not including for any future growth), with the proposed new woodlands being shown in Summer colours.

Stidriggs Woodland Creation

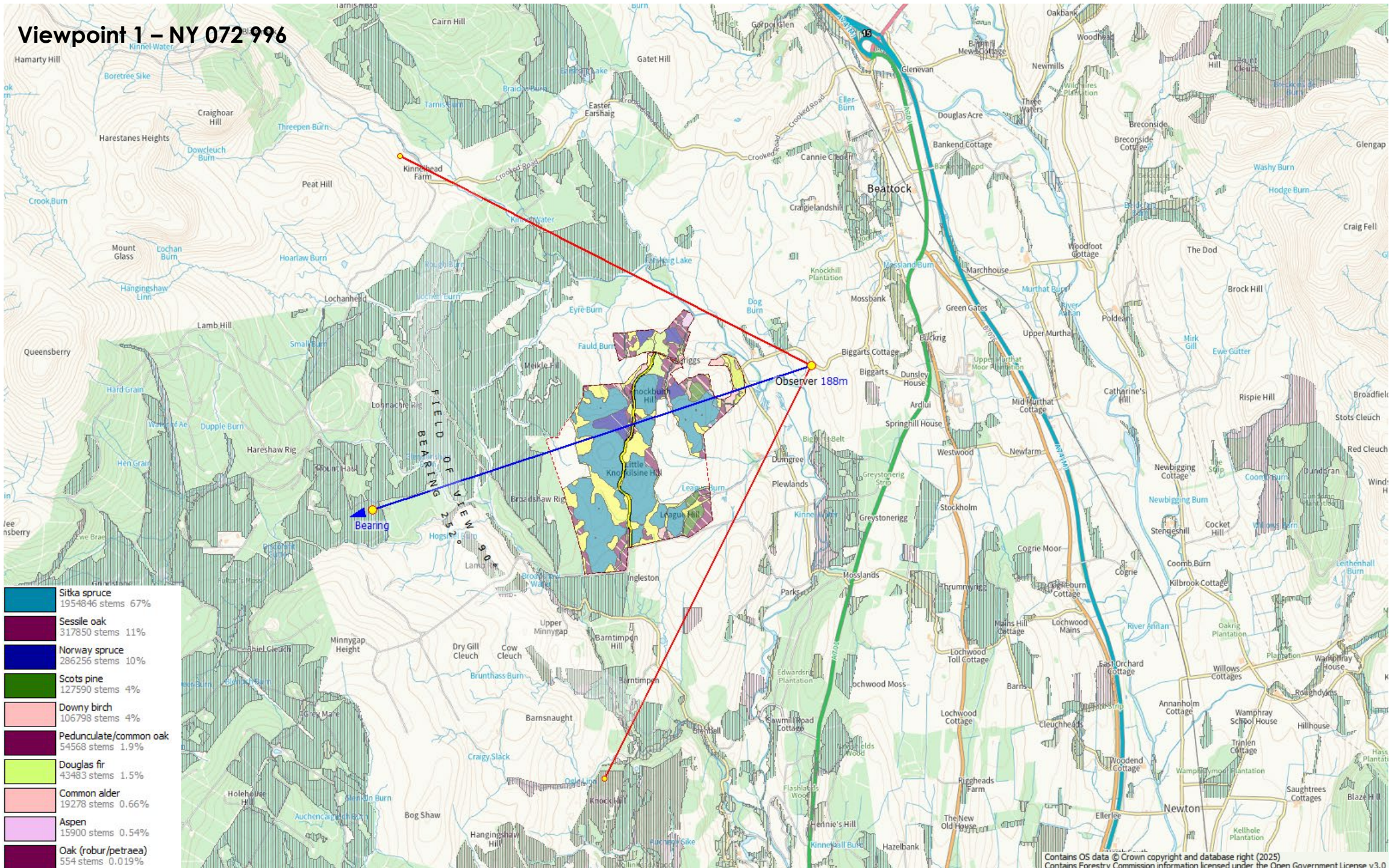
Location of Viewpoints



Stidriggs Woodland Creation Woodland Design



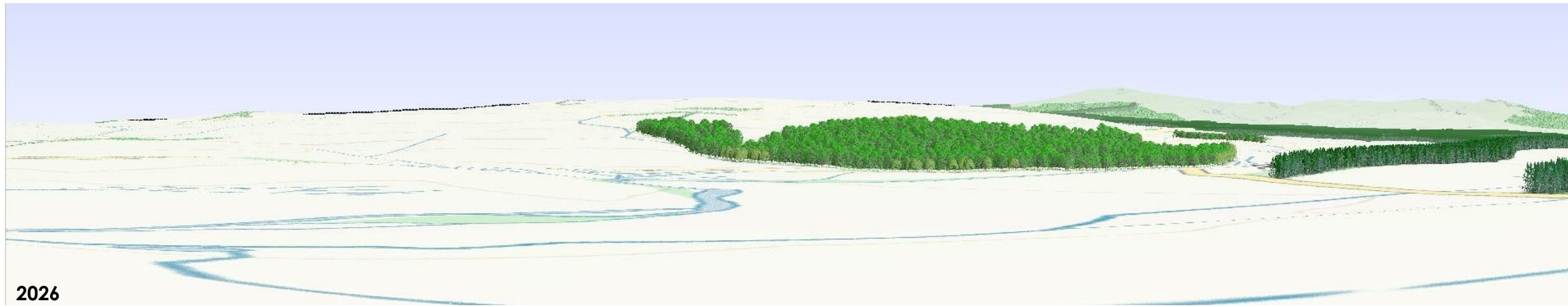
Viewpoint 1 – NY 072 996



	Sitka spruce	1954846 stems	67%
	Sessile oak	317850 stems	11%
	Norway spruce	286256 stems	10%
	Scots pine	127590 stems	4%
	Downy birch	106798 stems	4%
	Pedunculate/common oak	54568 stems	1.9%
	Douglas fir	43483 stems	1.5%
	Common alder	19278 stems	0.66%
	Aspen	15900 stems	0.54%
	Oak (robur/petraea)	554 stems	0.019%

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Viewpoint 1 – NY 072 996



2026

Clear views over the eastern parts of the site are available from the U 316 road as it descends towards the Kinnel Water. The central skyline is formed by League Hill and Knockilsine Hill, topped by turbines on Harestanes windfarm, with the more distant and higher Lowther Hills just visible to the north. Stidriggs Wood, which clothes the slopes below the hill fort, is visually prominent, as is the mast on League Hill, but most of the site appears to be relatively uniform and open.



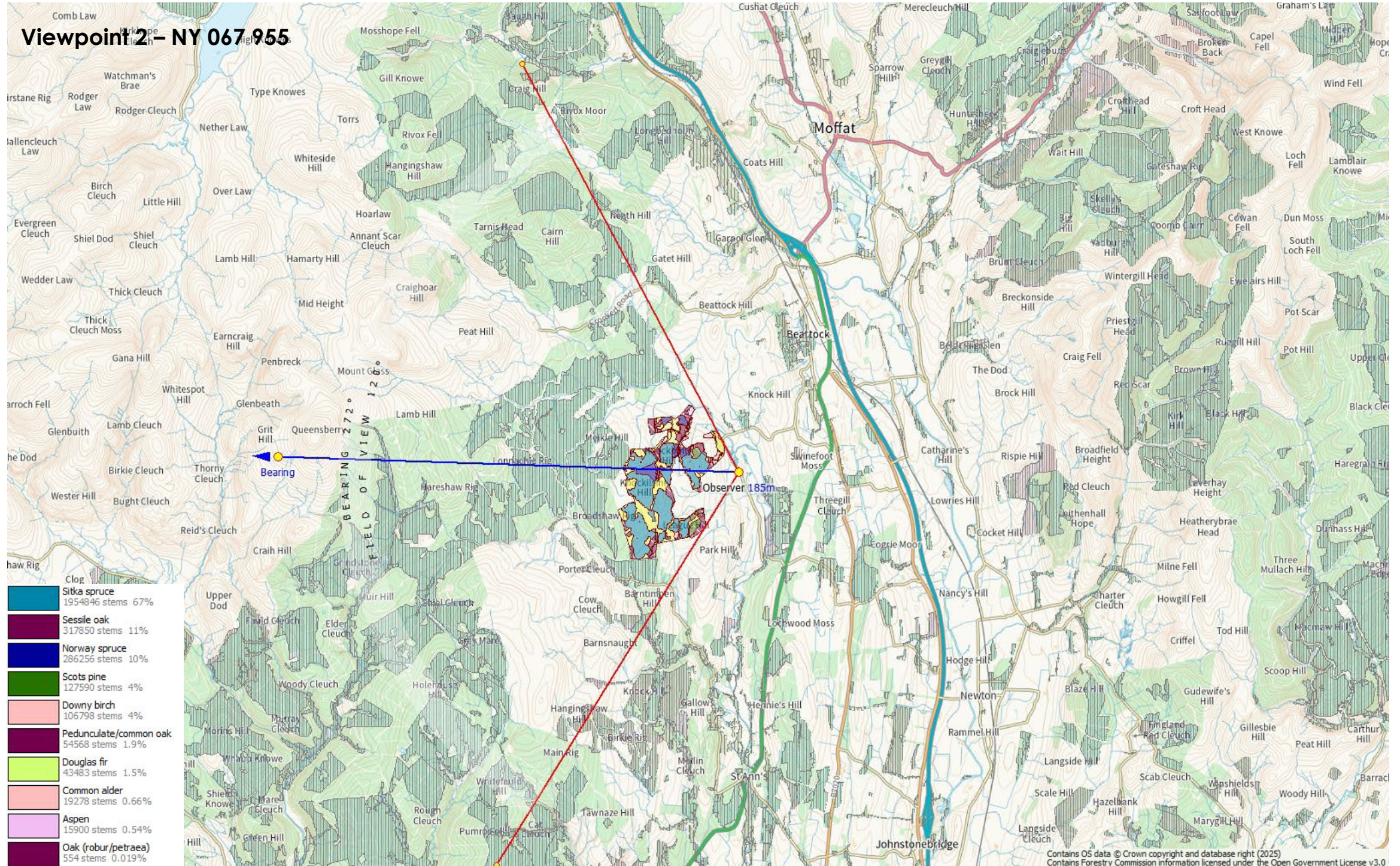
2066

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Broadleaved woodland will strengthen and expand on the existing woodland on Stidriggs Hill, while a large open area will be maintained around the hill fort, allowing views in and out.

Broadleaved woodland on the lower ground will soften the appearance of the Forest of Ae. The new woodland will appear on the skyline to the south, including Scots pine on League Hill, while the exclusion of Haw Moss will prevent the woodland edge from appearing as a linear feature.

Viewpoint 2 - NY 067 955



	Sitka spruce	1954846 stems 67%
	Sessile oak	317850 stems 11%
	Norway spruce	286256 stems 10%
	Scots pine	127590 stems 4%
	Downy birch	106798 stems 4%
	Pedunculate/common oak	54568 stems 1.9%
	Douglas fir	43483 stems 1.5%
	Common alder	19278 stems 0.66%
	Aspen	15900 stems 0.54%
	Oak (robur/petraea)	554 stems 0.019%

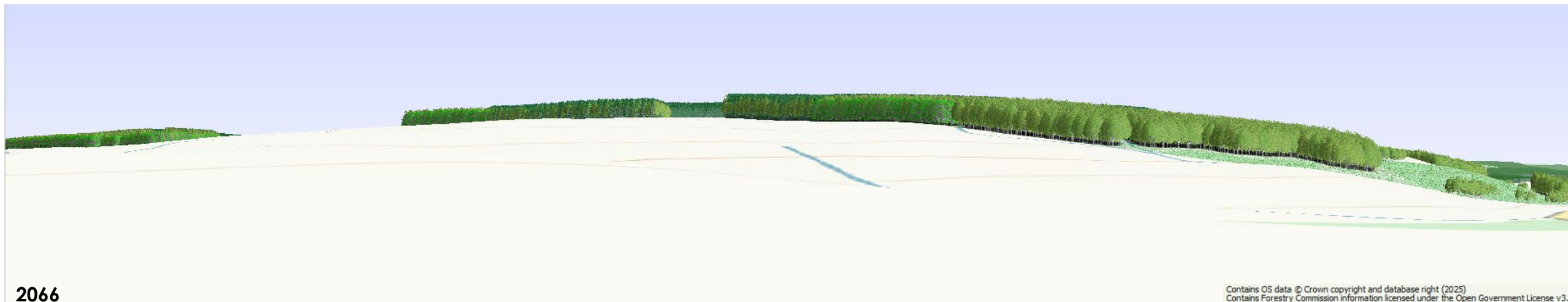
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Viewpoint 2 – NY 067 988



2026

The south-eastern part of the site is visible from the road, which forms part of the Annandale Way, with League Hill and the slopes of Willie Wilkin's Craig forming the skyline, with no longer distance views being available. The boundary of the site lies just below the skyline. The site, and the land in the foreground, is dominated by open fields of improved and unimproved grasslands, with very limited enclosure, aside from a network of dykes. The margins of Stidriggs Wood are visible to the north.



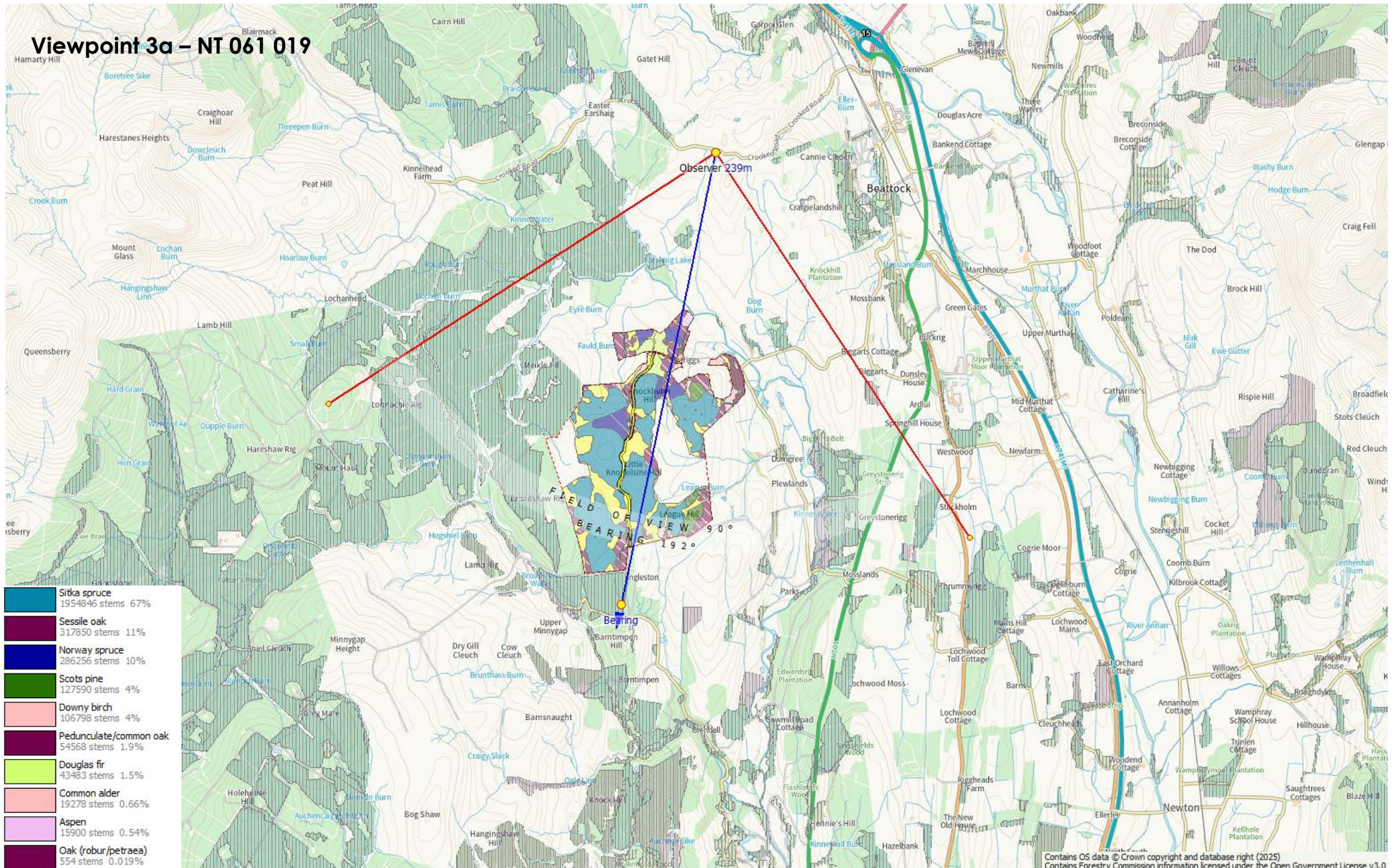
2066

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Broadleaved planting above Stidriggs Wood will reinforce its structure, while broadleaved, and Scots pine planting on the visible face of League Hill will emphasise its presence in the landscape. While the eastern edge of the woodland will occupy a position on the skyline, the exclusion of Haw Moss will reduce its linearity, as well as obscuring some of the wind turbines in the distance.

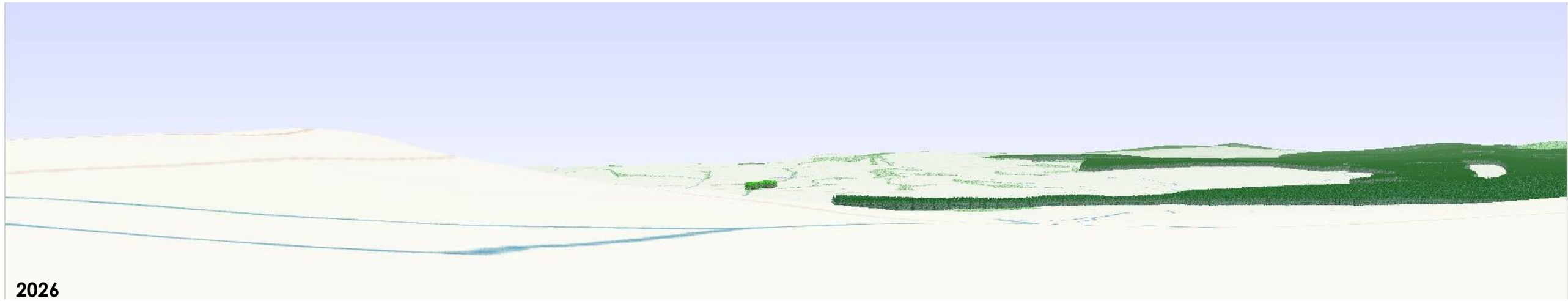
The use of small groups of broadleaves on the visible margins of the Sitka spruce will have a softening effect on the woodlands appearance towards the skyline.

Viewpoint 3a – NT 061 019



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Viewpoint 3a – NT 061 019



2026

The elevated position of the Crooked Road/Southern Upland Way allows middle distance views onto the northern part of the site, although intervening topography and trees often restricts visibility of the site. The improved grass fields in the lower parts of the farm contrast with the rough moorland vegetation on the rounded hills above. The hard linear edge of the Forest of Ae frames the site to the west, and numerous wind turbines are visible on the skyline above. Views down the Kinnel Water valley are framed by woodlands, including the remaining fragments of Stidriggs Wood, but generally there is limited enclosure. **This image shows the view towards the western end of the visibility corridor.**



2066

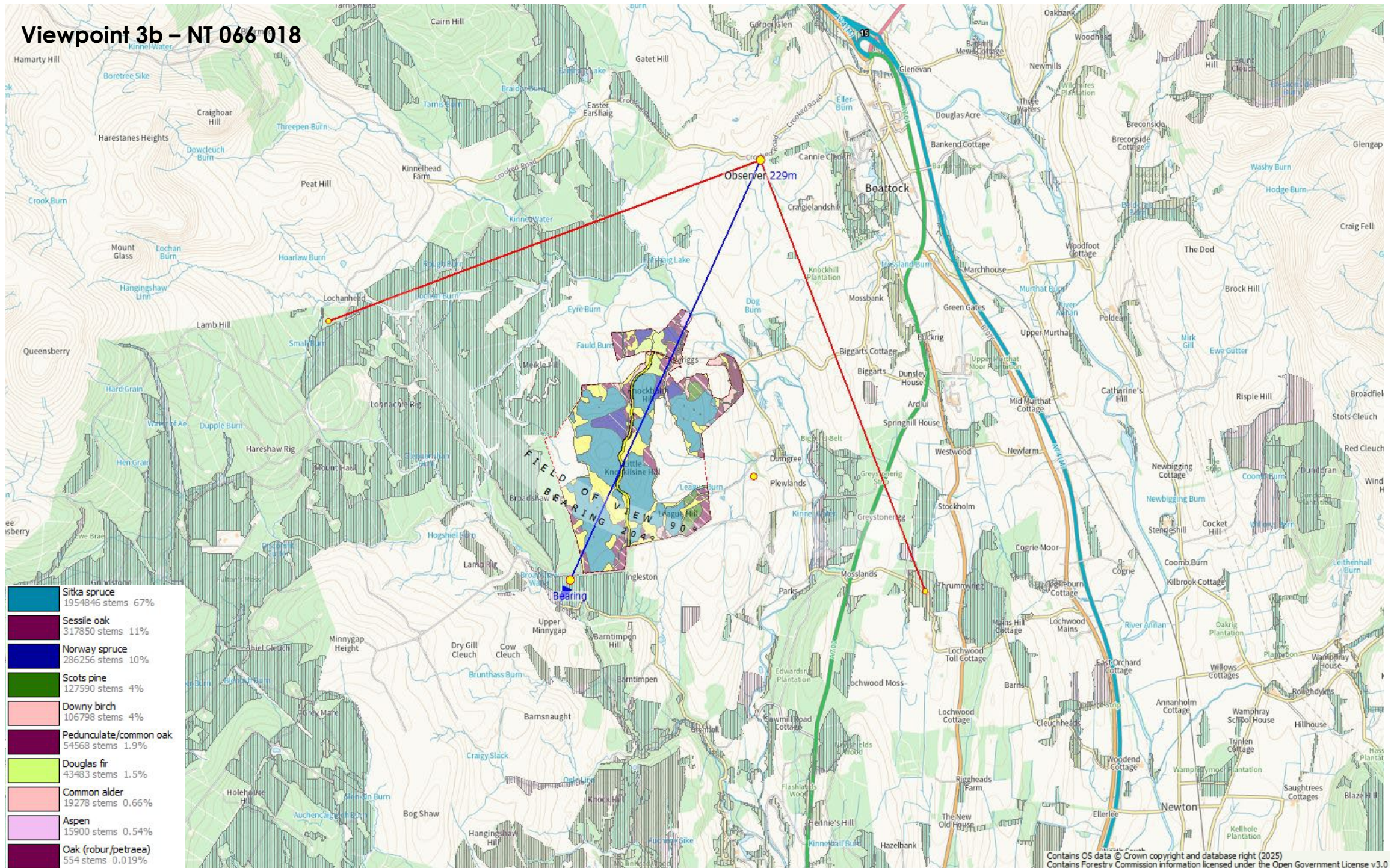
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The woodland will clothe the higher ground within the site, merging with the adjacent Forest of Ae. Sitka spruce will be the dominant species, but much of it will be hidden from view

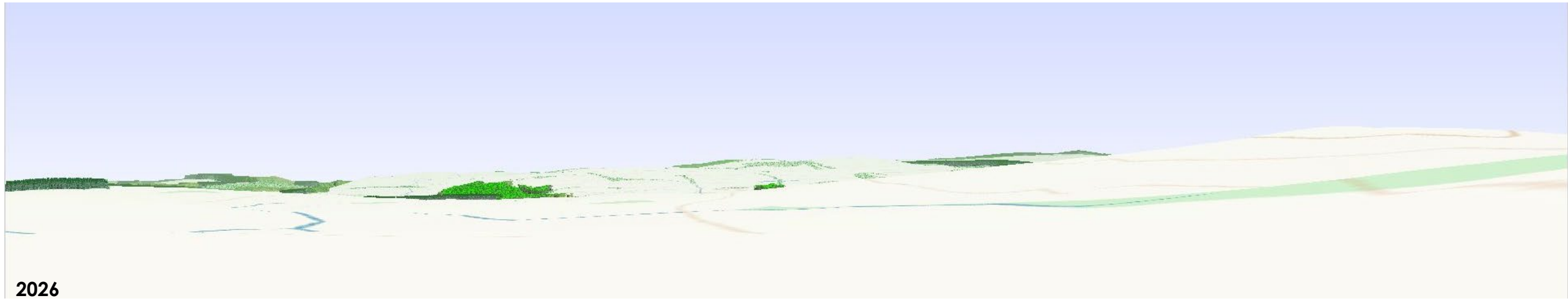
Open ground retained above the farm steading, by the Kennel Burn, and around Stidriggs Hill Fort will break up the woodland mass, while the use of a range of broadleaved and coniferous mixes will create a high level of visual diversity on the most visible lower slopes.

Broadleaves will also be used to reinforce Stidriggs Wood as an attractive feature, and to emphasise the presence of shallow gulleys dissecting the hill slopes.

Viewpoint 3b – NT 066 018



Viewpoint 3b – NT 066 018



2026

The elevated position of the Crooked Road/Southern Upland Way allows middle distance views onto the northern part of the site, although intervening topography and trees often restricts visibility of the site. The improved grass fields in the lower parts of the farm contrast with the rough moorland vegetation on the rounded hills above. Forest of Ae is not greatly visible from this location. Views down the Kinnel Water valley are framed by woodlands, including the remaining fragments of Stidriggs Wood, but generally there is limited enclosure. **This image shows the view towards the eastern end of the visibility corridor.**



2066

The woodland will clothe the higher ground within the site, with Sitka spruce being the dominant species on the highest ground, but much of it will be hidden from view

Open ground retained above the farm steading, by the Kennel Burn, and around Stidriggs Hill Fort will break up the woodland mass, while the use of a range of broadleaved and coniferous mixes will create a high level of visual diversity on the most visible lower slopes.

Broadleaves will also be used to reinforce Stidriggs Wood as an attractive feature, and to emphasise the presence of shallow gulleys dissecting the hill slopes.

Intervisibility from Stidriggs Hill Fort

An analysis of the impact of the proposals on key views out from Stidriggs Hill Fort towards four similar features in the wider landscape has been undertaken. The potential impact on the intervisibility has been raised as a concern by Historic Environment Scotland and Dumfries and Galloway Council's Archaeologist.

A map showing the location of these four features (all Scheduled Ancient Monuments) and an enlarged detail of woodland design on Stidriggs Hill are included.

The four features are:-

1. Beattock Hill Fort

2. Knock Hill Fort

3. Eyre Burn Settlement

4. Park Hill Fort

For each of the views towards the four features, plan and perspective/panoramic images have been generated using digital design information, taken from the draft design, and informed by yield class information. In this case a 60-year growth period has been selected, as most of the proposed woodland around Stidriggs Hill Fort is of broadleaved character.

All views are from OS grid. ref. NY 061 996

Additionally photographs taken from Stidriggs Hill Fort towards the four features are included, with the location of the features being pinpointed, using a red dot.

A single plan image and three panoramas have been produced for each of the four viewpoints. In each panorama a red dot has been placed on the target feature:

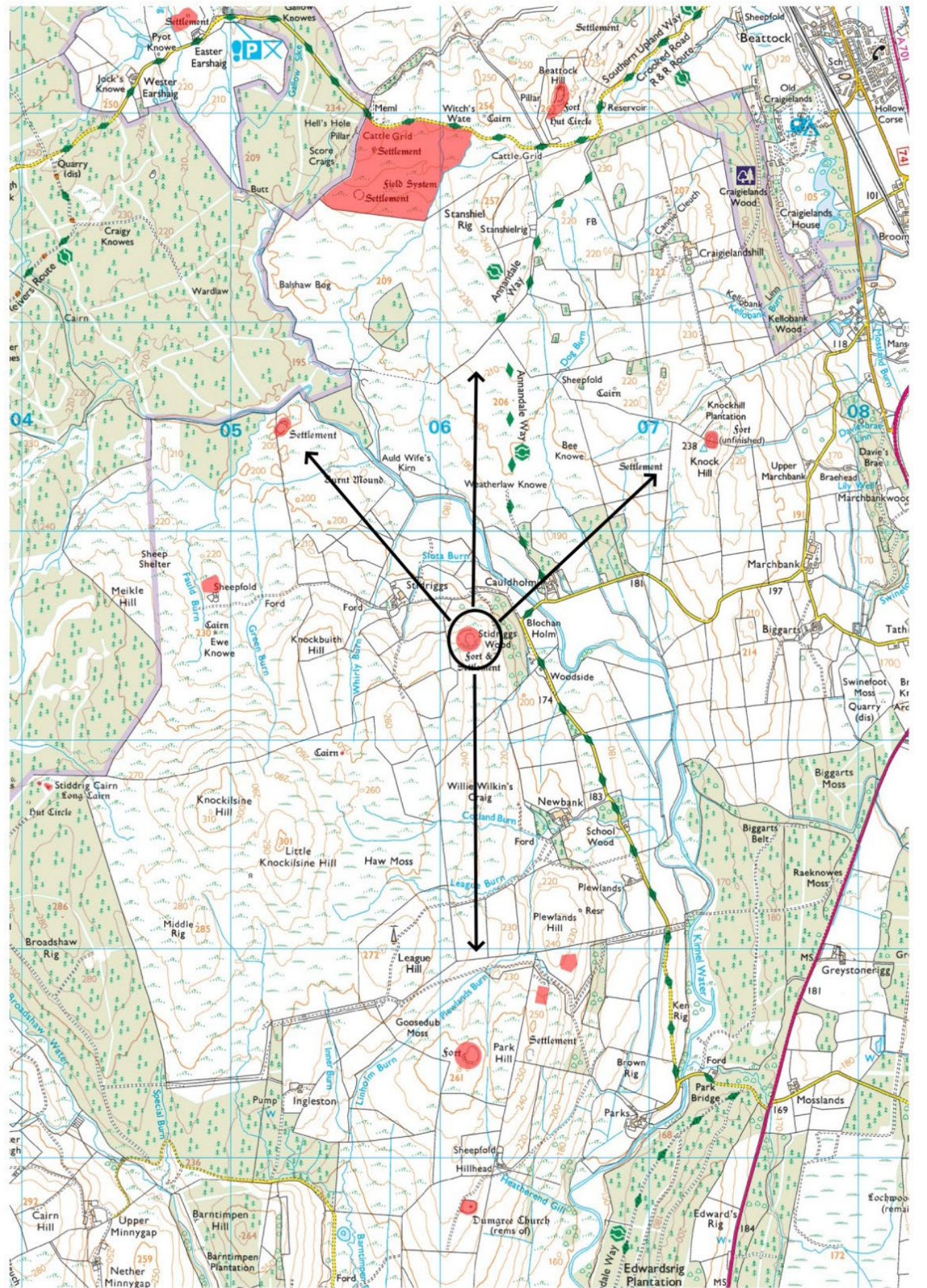
Plan View – The plan images show the location of the viewpoint, the breadth of view used in the perspective, and the footprint of the design of the proposed woodland at Stidriggs, using vibrant colours to represent the various species mixes.

Panorama 2026 – the upper image provides a perspective image for the 2026 timeline, before any new planting has occurred. Information on existing woodlands is gleaned from the National Forest Inventory, with the woodland being classed/shaded as broadleaved, coniferous, or mixed. Note that small woodlands, trees lines etc. present in the landscape are unlikely to be represented.

Panorama 2086 – the middle image shows the woodland design as it will appear in roughly 60 years time, using yield class predictions to produce tree heights. Existing woodland is shown as it is in 2026 (i.e. not including for any future growth), with the proposed new woodlands being shown in summer colours.

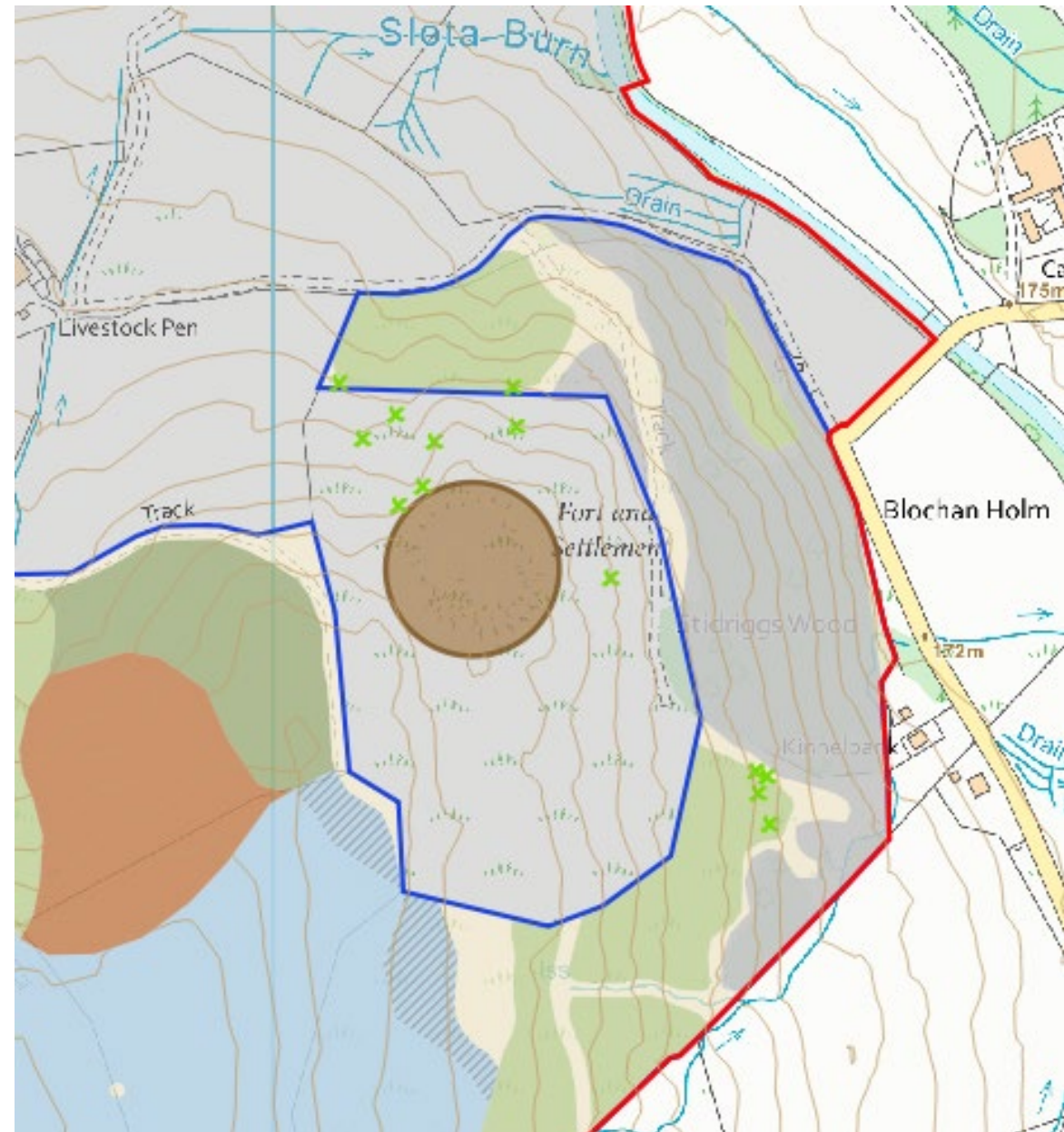
Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility

Location of Viewpoints



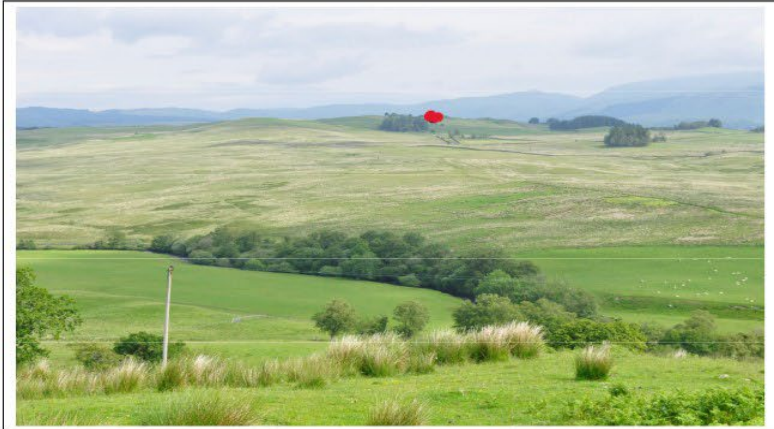
Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility

Design Detail



Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility

Photographs from Fort



The view northwards from Stidriggs Fort, over the Kinnel Water to Beattock Hill in the middle distance.



The view looking to the north west, towards the Eyre Burn Settlement, on the banks of the Kinnel Water.



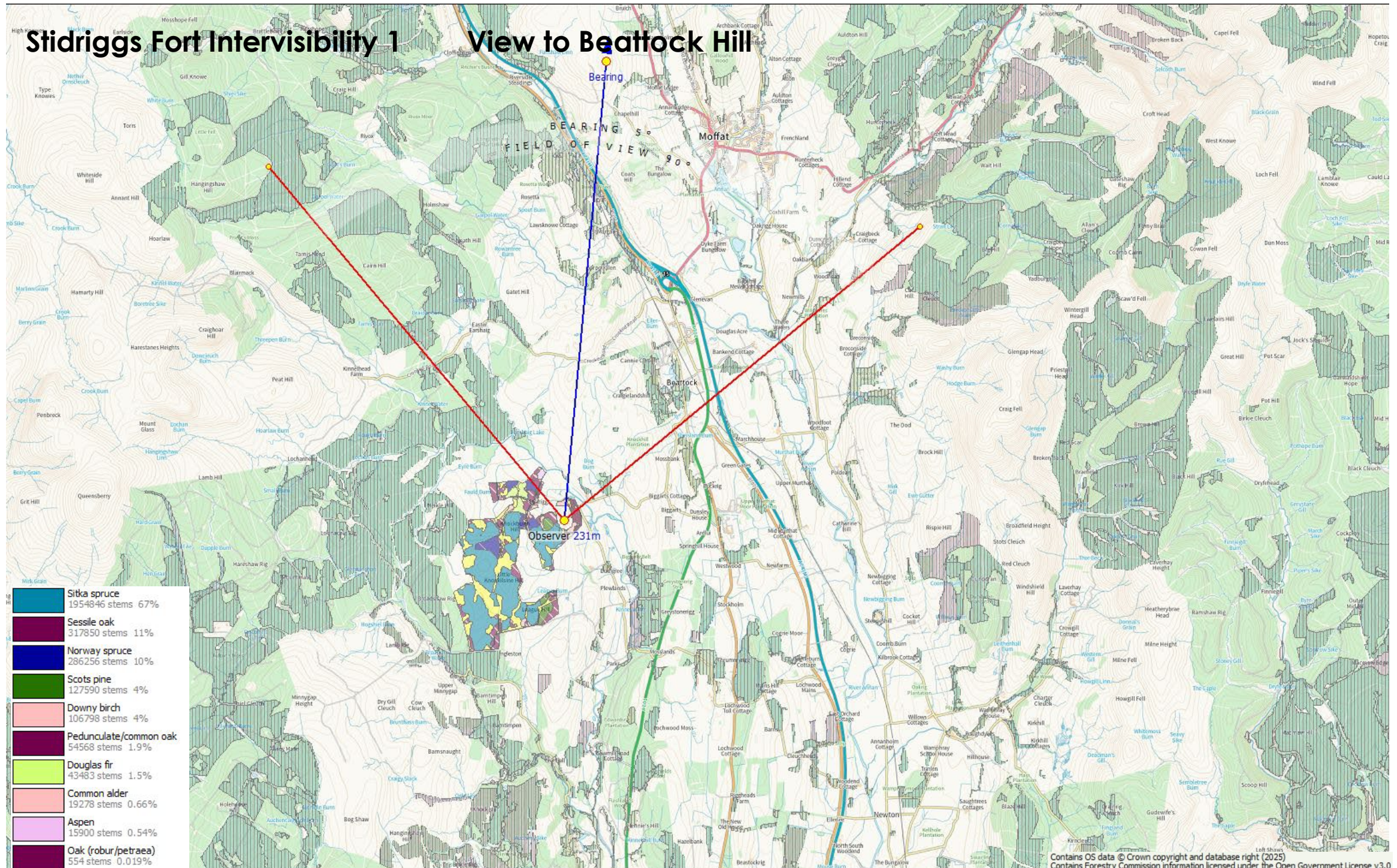
Looking north-eastwards from the Fort towards Knockhill in the middle distance, with the Moffat Hills beyond.



The view looking due south from the Fort, with Park Hill Fort occupying the small hill in the middle distance.

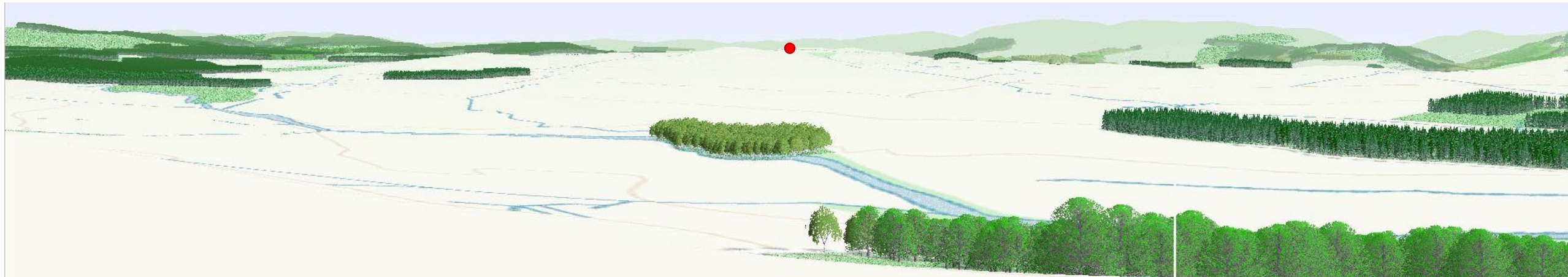
Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility 1

View to Beattock Hill



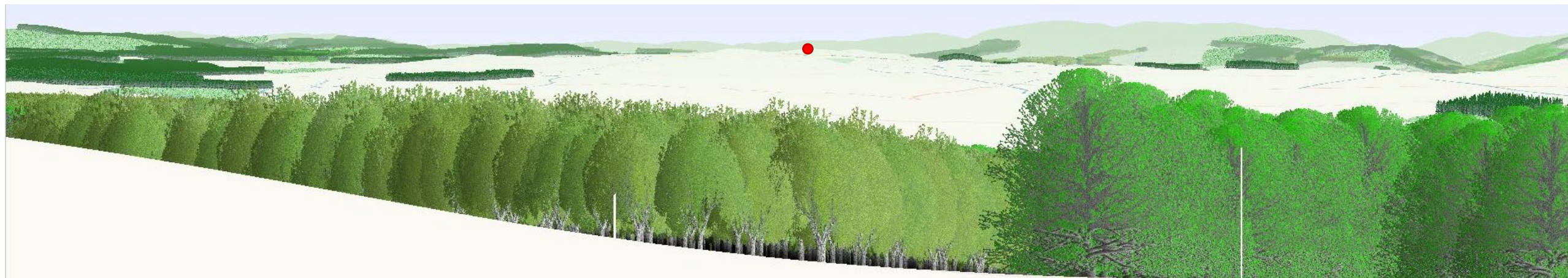
Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility 1

View to Beattock Hill



2026

Clear views towards Beattock Hill Fort are available, as are views onto the Moffat Hills, with the Kinnel Water being visible in the middle distance.

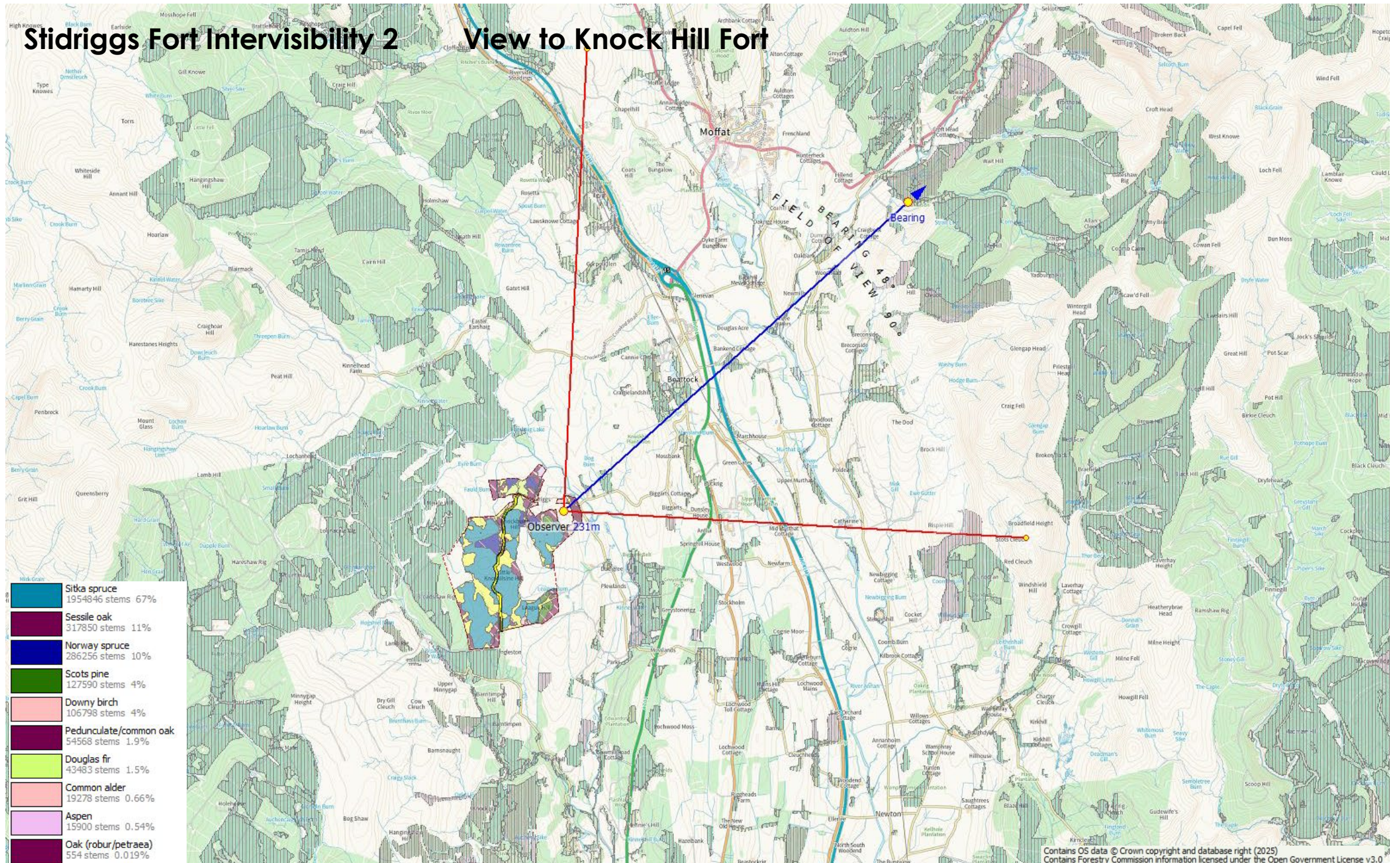


2086

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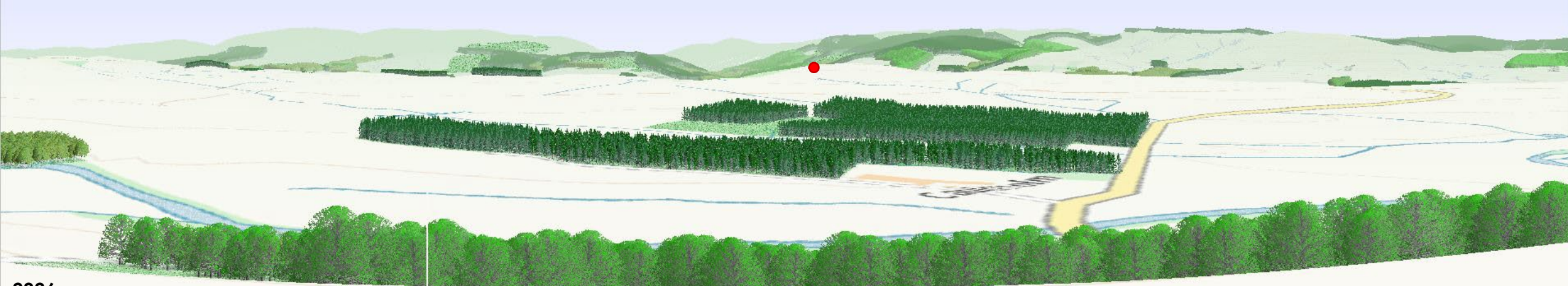
Natural regeneration within Stidriggs Wood, as well as surrounding broadleaved planting, will limit views of the Kinnel Water, but the key view onto Beattock Hill Fort will be unaffected, and all distant views will be retained.

Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility 2 View to Knock Hill Fort



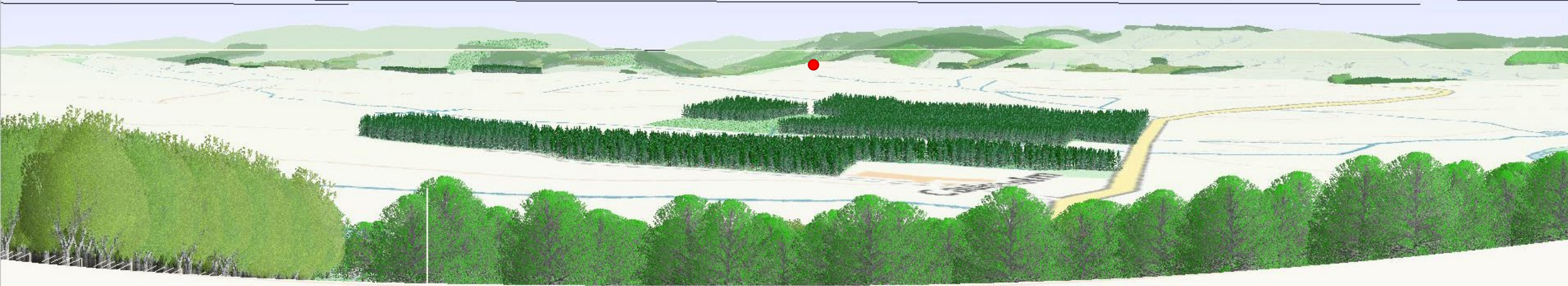
Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility 2

View to Knock Hill Fort



2026

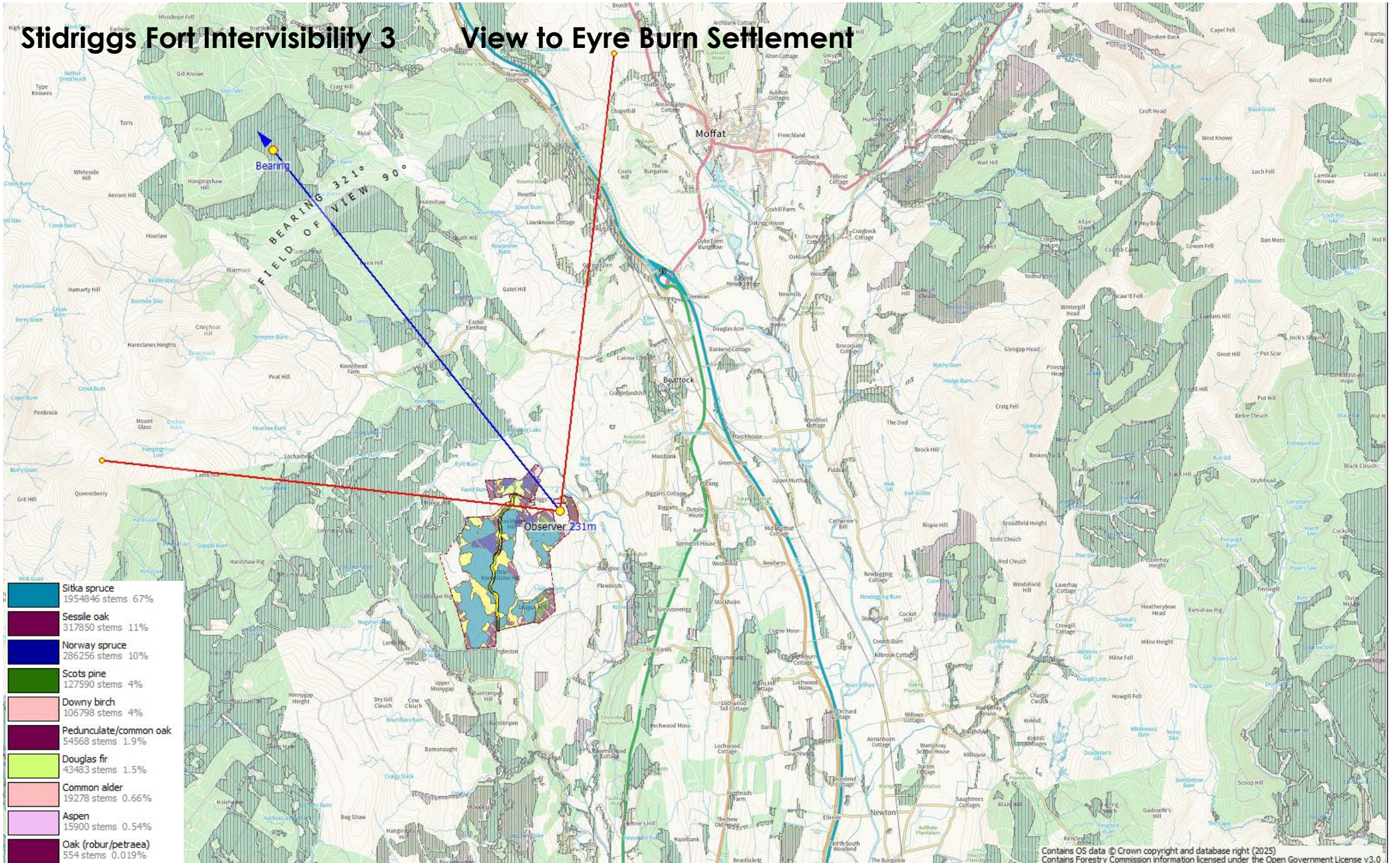
Clear views of Knock Hill Fort are available from Stidriggs, with the Moffat Hills being clearly visible on the far side of Annandale. The tree-lined Kinnel Water is visible at the foot of Stidriggs Hill.



While views on to the Kinnel Water may be lost, views to Knock Hill and beyond will be unaffected by the natural development of Stidriggs Wood.

Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility 3

View to Eyre Burn Settlement

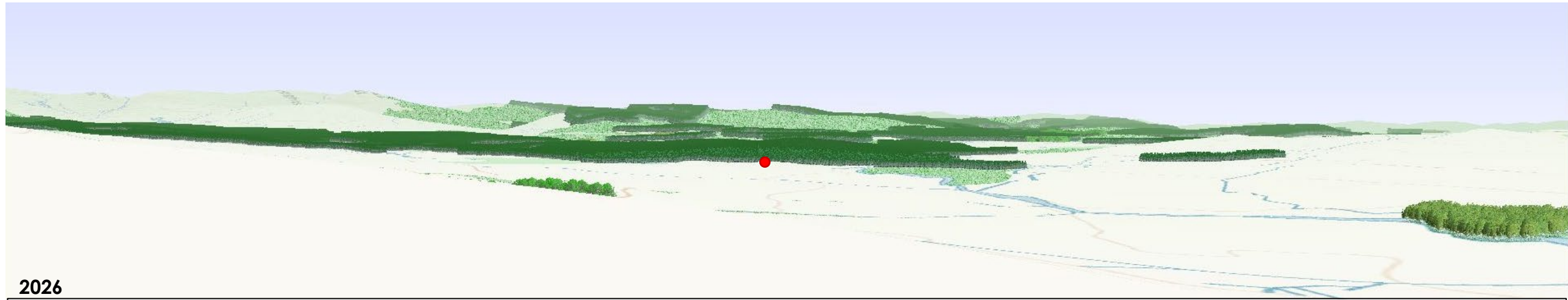


█	Sitka spruce	1954846 stems	67%
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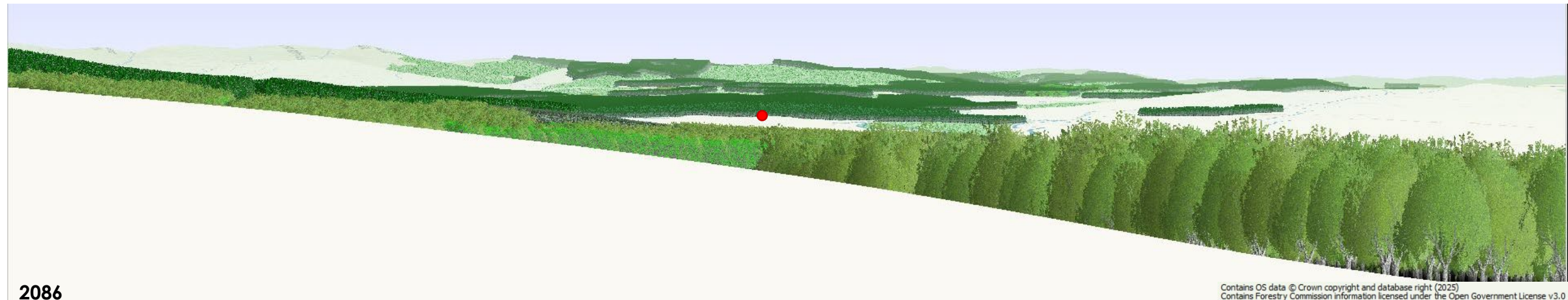
Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility 3

View to Eyre Burn Settlement



2026

The slight knove occupied by the Eyre Burn settlement is visible on the south bank of the Kinnel Water, with the margins of the Forest of Ae forming the backdrop. Stidriggs steading is visible in the middle distance, as is the small wood surrounding it.

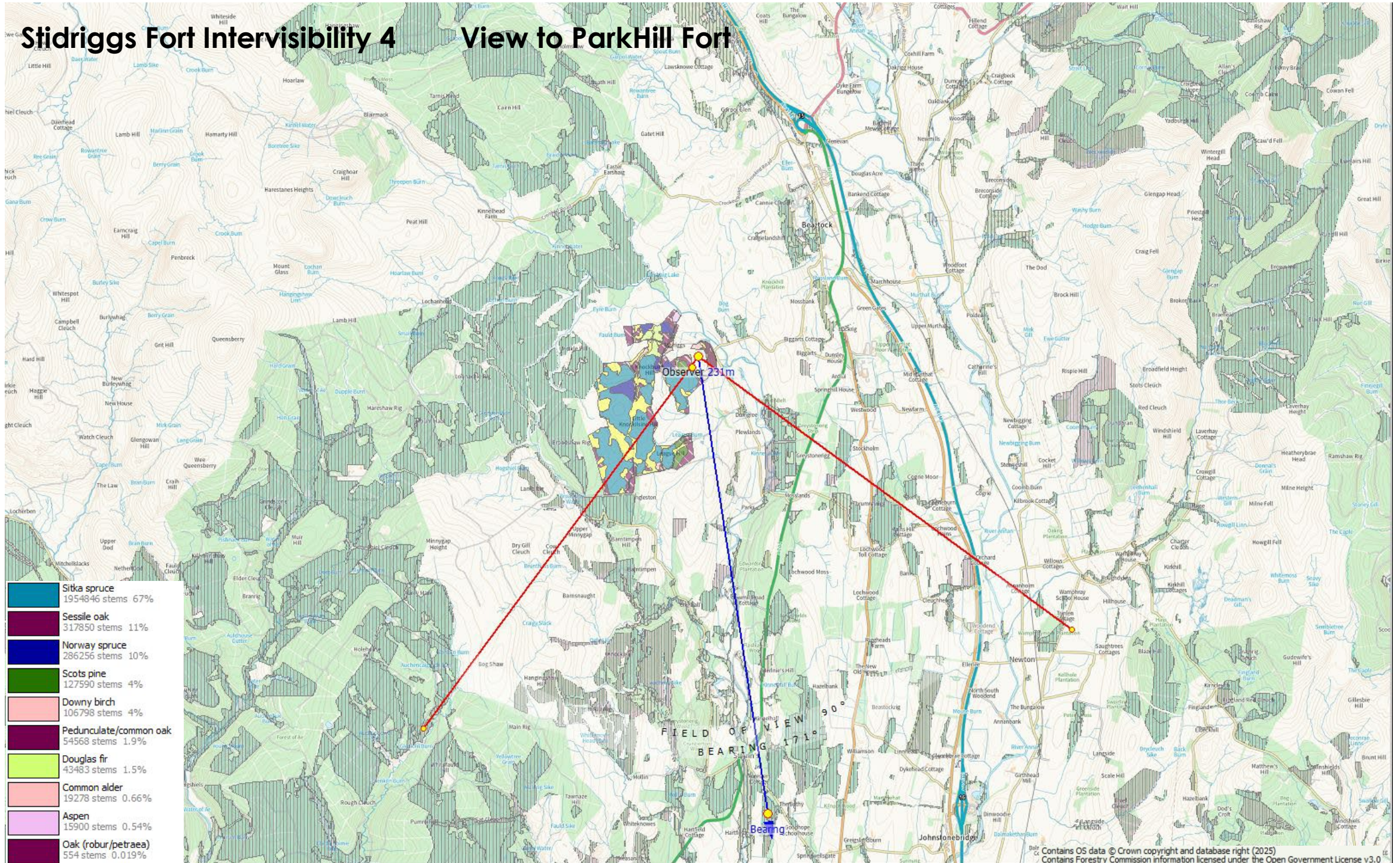


2086

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While the planting on the lower ground to the north-west of Stidriggs will frame the Eyre Burn settlement, it is set within a large area proposed for peatland restoration, and it will remain clearly visible.

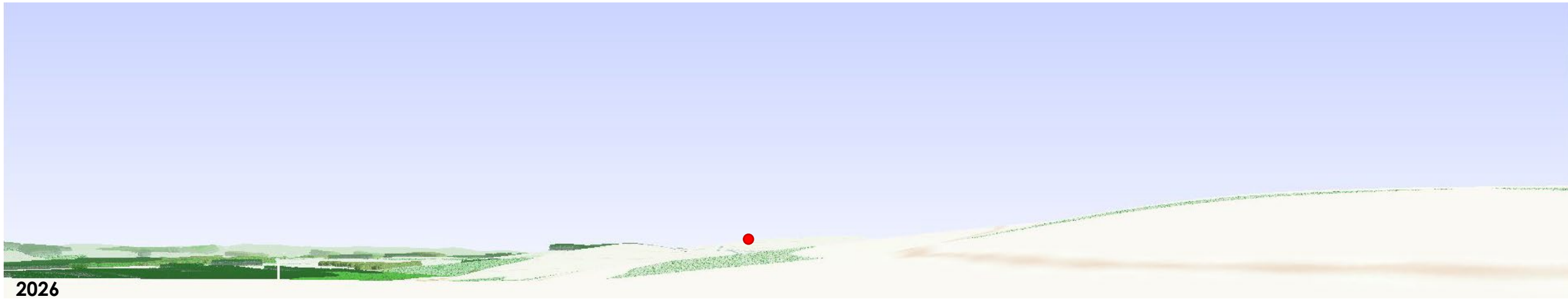
Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility 4 View to Park Hill Fort



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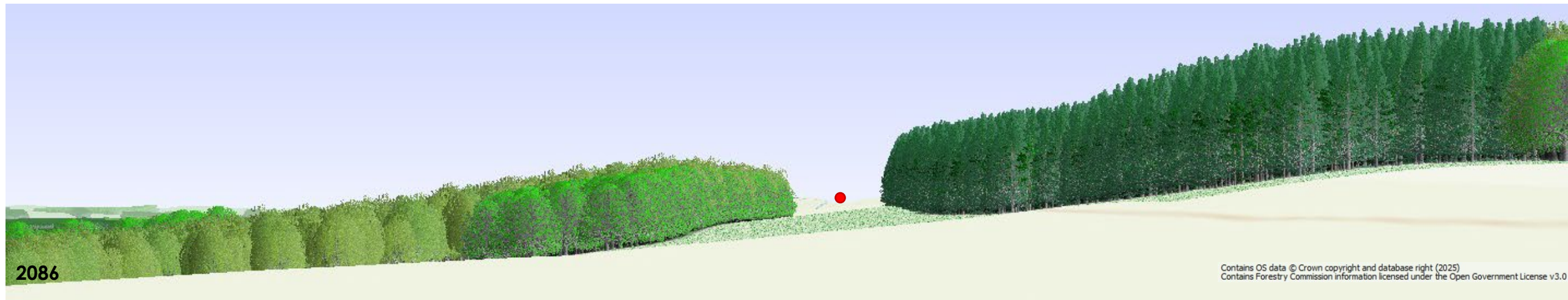
Stidriggs Fort Intervisibility 4

View to Park Hill Fort



2026

Park Hill is just visible, looking south from Stidriggs Hill Fort, as is a large swathe of Annandale, although the lie of the land prevents short distance views towards the Kinnel Burn.



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The retention of a narrow corridor of open ground due south of Stidriggs Hill Fort will allow for the continuation of views to Park Hill Fort, albeit that the view will be tightly framed. The planting around the hill fort primarily comprises of broadleaved mixtures, and where coniferous woodland is proposed, the edge of the clearing will be softened with the inclusion of aspen (as exemplified above) and birch into the woodland edges.