

# **DOD FARM WOODLAND CREATION PROPOSAL**

## **ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY**

## **Context**

Dod Farm originally covered 129 ha of land lying roughly 8 km south-west of Hawick, and encompassing mainly steep-sided land on either side of the Dod Burn.

The farm was sold on the open market in 2022. The farmhouse and steading, with 5.2 ha of land was purchased separately from the bulk of the farm, with the latter forming the woodland creation application area. The new owners of the farmhouse have established a small-holding, and have purchased a small area of adjacent land and a redundant building from Scottish Water, where they have set up a pheasant rearing enterprise.

For the purposes of this assessment it has been presumed that the entire woodland creation application site will be removed from agricultural production. In practice, a small amount of agricultural activity is likely to continue on two areas, as noted:-

1. Two small fields, covering around 5.5 ha, will be grazed to perpetuate their floristic interests; this will most likely involve leasing the land, under a grazing lease, to the owners of the farm house.
2. An area of open ground, extending to roughly 5.2 ha, on the summit of Gray Coat, will remain outwith of the proposed deer-fenced enclosure (to retain the setting of the hill fort and cairn). While the land will not be actively grazed, it is likely that stock from the adjoining farm will informally graze the land, as the existing fence is unlikely to remain stock-proof.

Map 1 provides a picture of current situation.

## **Land Use Cover**

Almost half of the land within the application area comprises of improved and semi-improved grass, while 10% of the land is already wooded. The remaining land is unimproved, including marshy grassland, unimproved grassland, mire and bracken.

In terms of the surrounding area, the majority of the ground is in pastoral agriculture, with the better quality pasture and silage land dominating to the north, with rough grazing being prevalent to the south. Woodland cover within a 5 km radius of the site is around 30%, being very much dominated by large scale coniferous plantations to the immediate south of Dod Farm, and to a lesser extent, the west. Woodland cover outwith these large-scale plantations is limited to small scale shelterbelts and a few riparian woodlands.

## **Land Quality**

Over 94% of the land within the application area is shown as being Land Capability for Agriculture (LCA) 5.3, with 3.8% being LCA 6.2 and 1.6% being 6.3.

The Table below sets out the LCA classes for the site, and for a 5 km radius around the site. The LCA areas are shown on Map 2.

**Table 1 - Land Capability**

| LCA          | area (ha)<br>5 km radius | % within<br>5 km radius | area (ha)<br>Dod | %<br>Dod    | % Dod<br>5 km radius |
|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| 3            | 150                      | 1.9%                    | 0                | 0.0%        | 0.0%                 |
| 4            | 1293                     | 16.8%                   | 0                | 0.0%        | 0.0%                 |
| 5            | 3303                     | 42.8%                   | 117              | 94.4%       | 3.5%                 |
| 6            | 2973                     | 38.5%                   | 7                | 5.6%        | 0.2%                 |
| <b>total</b> | <b>7719</b>              | <b>100%</b>             | <b>124</b>       | <b>100%</b> | <b>1.6%</b>          |

The analysis indicates that the proposals will entail the removal of 1.6% of the land within a 5 km radius from agriculture (subject to the caveats above). Virtually all of this loss will be from LCA 5 land, and there will be no loss of LCA grade 3 or 4 land.

### **Agricultural Land Use**

In recent times the farm unit operated as a sheep-rearing unit, supporting around 270 ewes and followers, while previously around 20 cattle supplemented 220 ewes. The farm was operated on a part time basis by the owner, who left the farm to take up a full-time post in the agricultural sales sector.

The farm's infrastructure was in a poor condition, with limited stock handling and housing facilities, and poor access to large parts of the farm. Stock management was made more difficult by the lack of stock proof fences (both internally and on the marches).

Given the above, it would be reasonable to assume the proposals will result in the loss of between 27 and 42 livestock units from the agricultural economy. The loss of such numbers is not held to be significant on a regional scale.

### **Employment and Population**

In recent times the farm provided part time employment to the owner. While the previous owner has secured a full time job elsewhere it is reasonable to assume that the proposal has resulted in the loss of up to 0.5 jobs from the agricultural sector.

It is estimated that the proposal, entailing the establishment and management of ~70 ha of productive woodland, will create 0.5 jobs in the forestry sector. There will be investment in the purchase of materials and hire of contract labour, and there will be significant decline in government support payments in the longer term.

In addition, further employment will be generated through the small-scale enterprise established at Dod Farm itself, and with the house remaining in habitation, there will be no negative impact on local population levels.

## **Attachments**

**Map 1** – Land Divisions

**Map 2** - Land Capability for Agriculture – Site and 5 km Radius

## **Glossary**

**LCA:** Land Capability for Agriculture

**3.1:** Land capable of producing consistently high yields of a narrow range of crops and/or moderate yields of a wider range. Short grass leys are common

**3.2:** Land capable of average production though high yields of barley, oats and grass can be obtained. Grass leys are common

**4.1:** Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops, primarily grassland with short arable breaks of forage crops

**4.2:** Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops, primarily on grassland with short arable breaks of forage crops

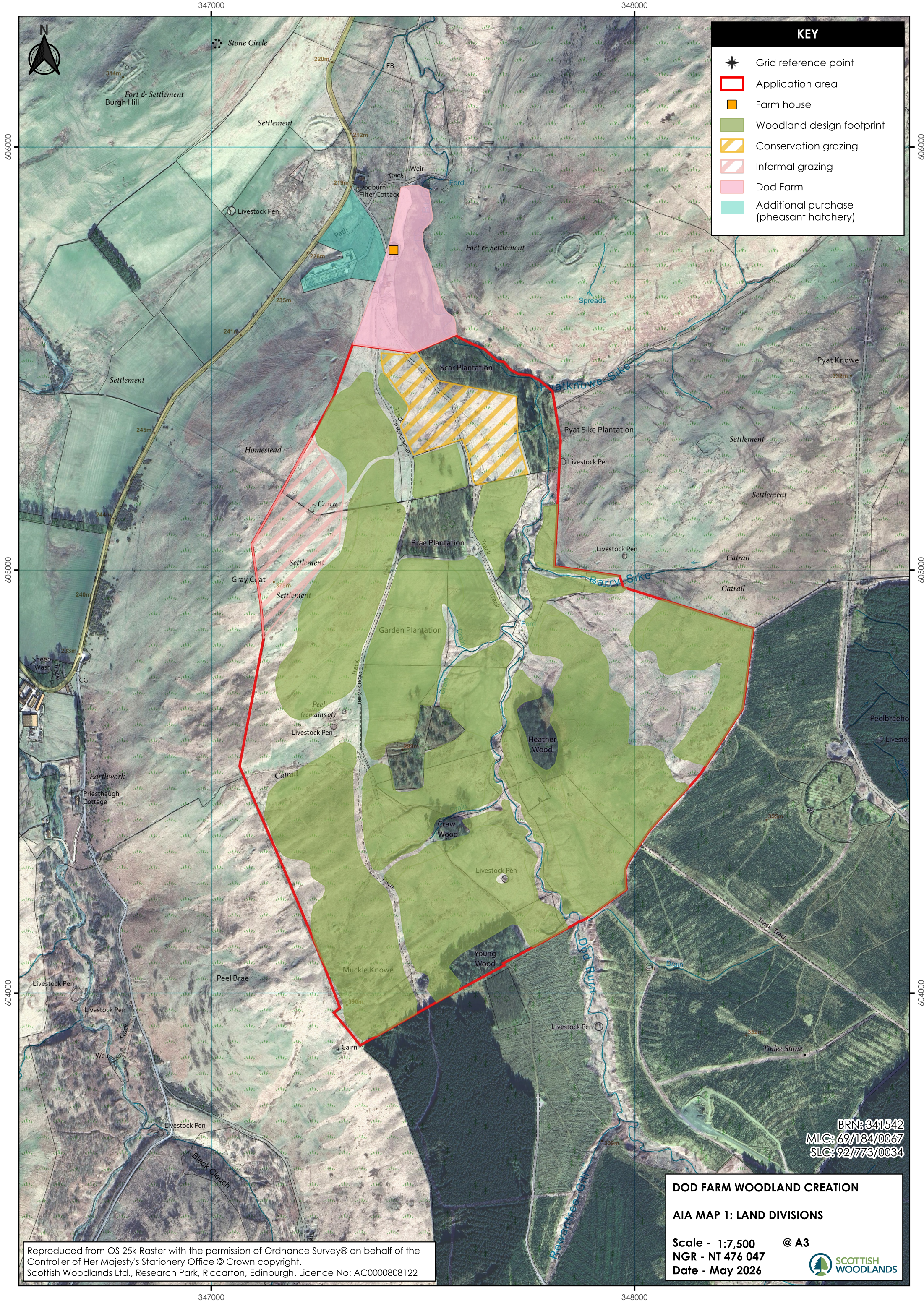
**5.2:** Land capable of use as improved grassland. Few problems with pasture establishment but may be difficult to maintain

**5.3:** Land capable of use as improved grassland. Pasture deteriorates quickly

**6.1:** Land capable of use as rough grazings with a high proportion of palatable plants

**6.2:** Land capable of use as rough grazings with moderate quality plants

**6.3:** Land capable of use as rough grazings with low quality plants



KEY

Grid reference point

Application area

Farm house

Woodland design footprint

Conservation grazing

Informal grazing

Dod Farm

Additional purchase (pheasant hatchery)

BRN: 341542  
MLC: 69/184/0067  
SLC: 92/773/0034

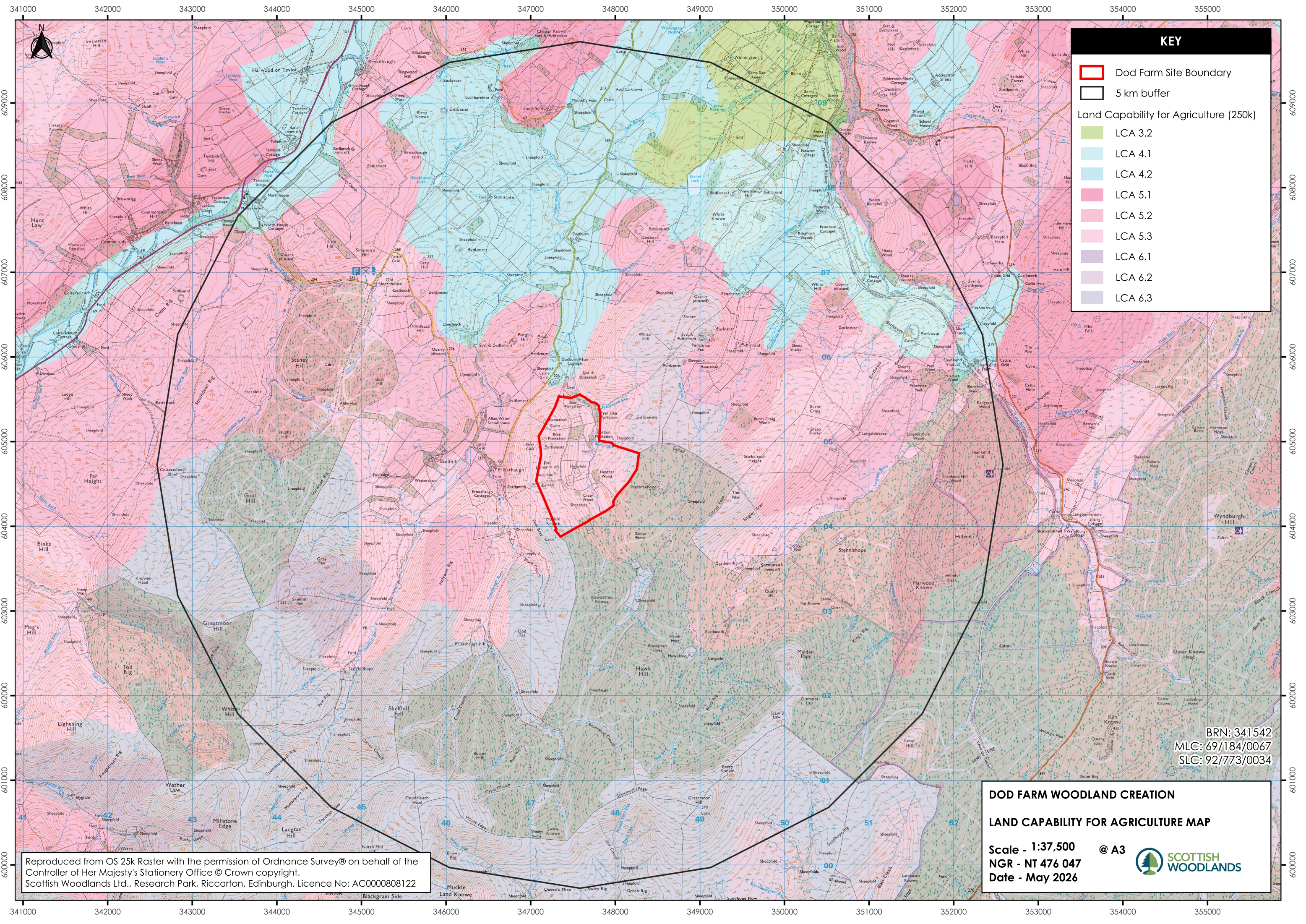
DOD FARM WOODLAND CREATION

AIA MAP 1: LAND DIVISIONS

Scale - 1:7,500 @ A3  
NGR - NT 476 047  
Date - May 2026



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**KEY**

Dod Farm Site Boundary

5 km buffer

Land Capability for Agriculture (250k)

LCA 3.2

LCA 4.1

LCA 4.2

LCA 5.1

LCA 5.2

LCA 5.3

LCA 6.1

LCA 6.2

LCA 6.3

BRN: 341542  
MLC: 69/184/0067  
SLC: 92/773/0034

**DOD FARM WOODLAND CREATION**  
**LAND CAPABILITY FOR AGRICULTURE MAP**

Scale - 1:37,500 @ A3  
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