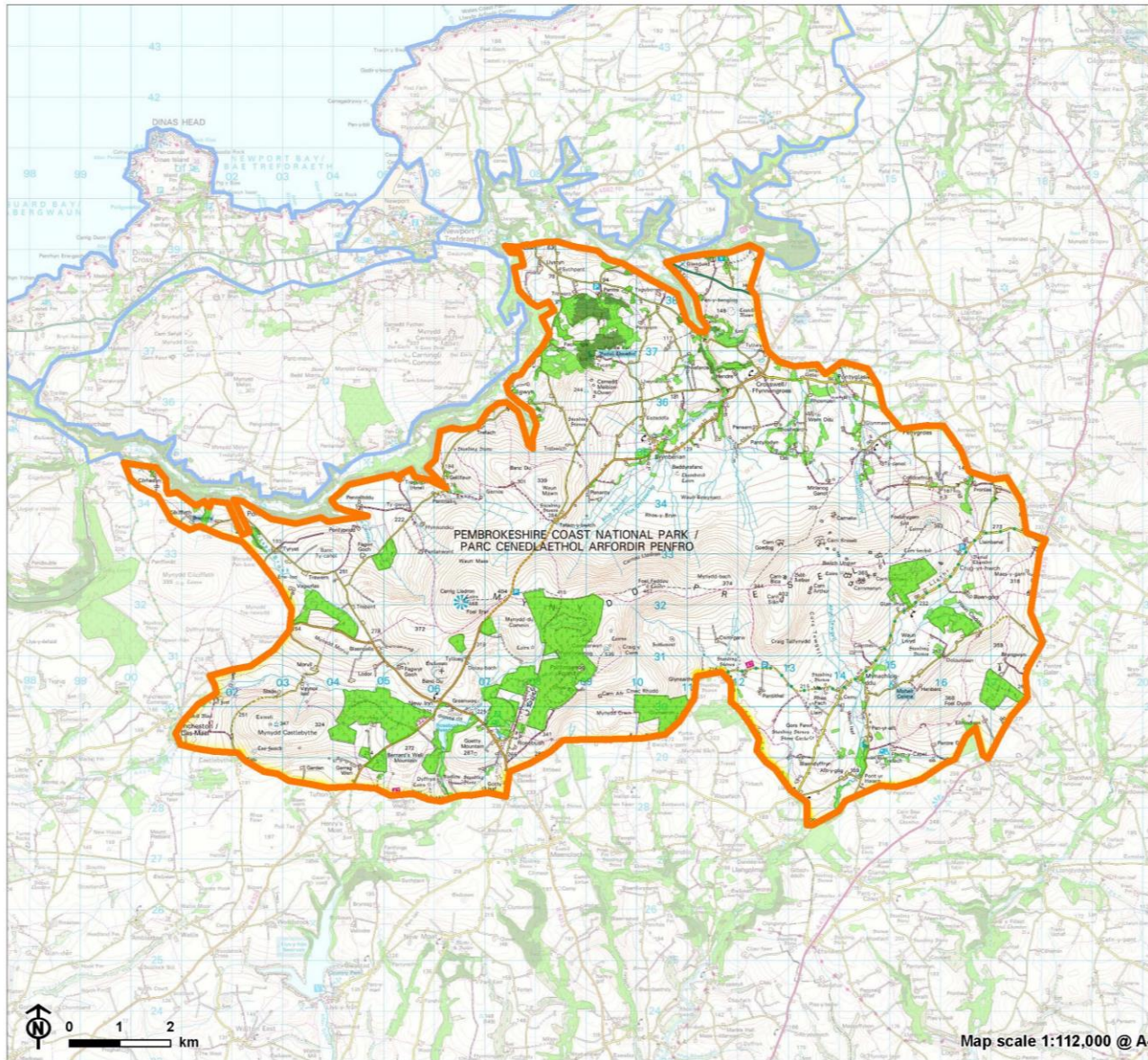


LCA 27: Myndd Preseli



Trees and Woodland Siting and
Design Guidance
Pembrokeshire Coast National
Park Authority



LCA 27 location and existing woodland
coverage

 LCA 27: Mynydd Preseli

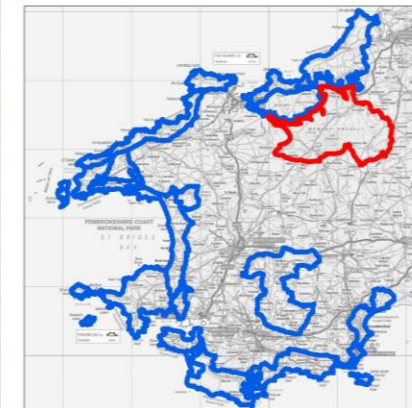
 Neighbouring LCA

Existing Woodland

Ancient woodland

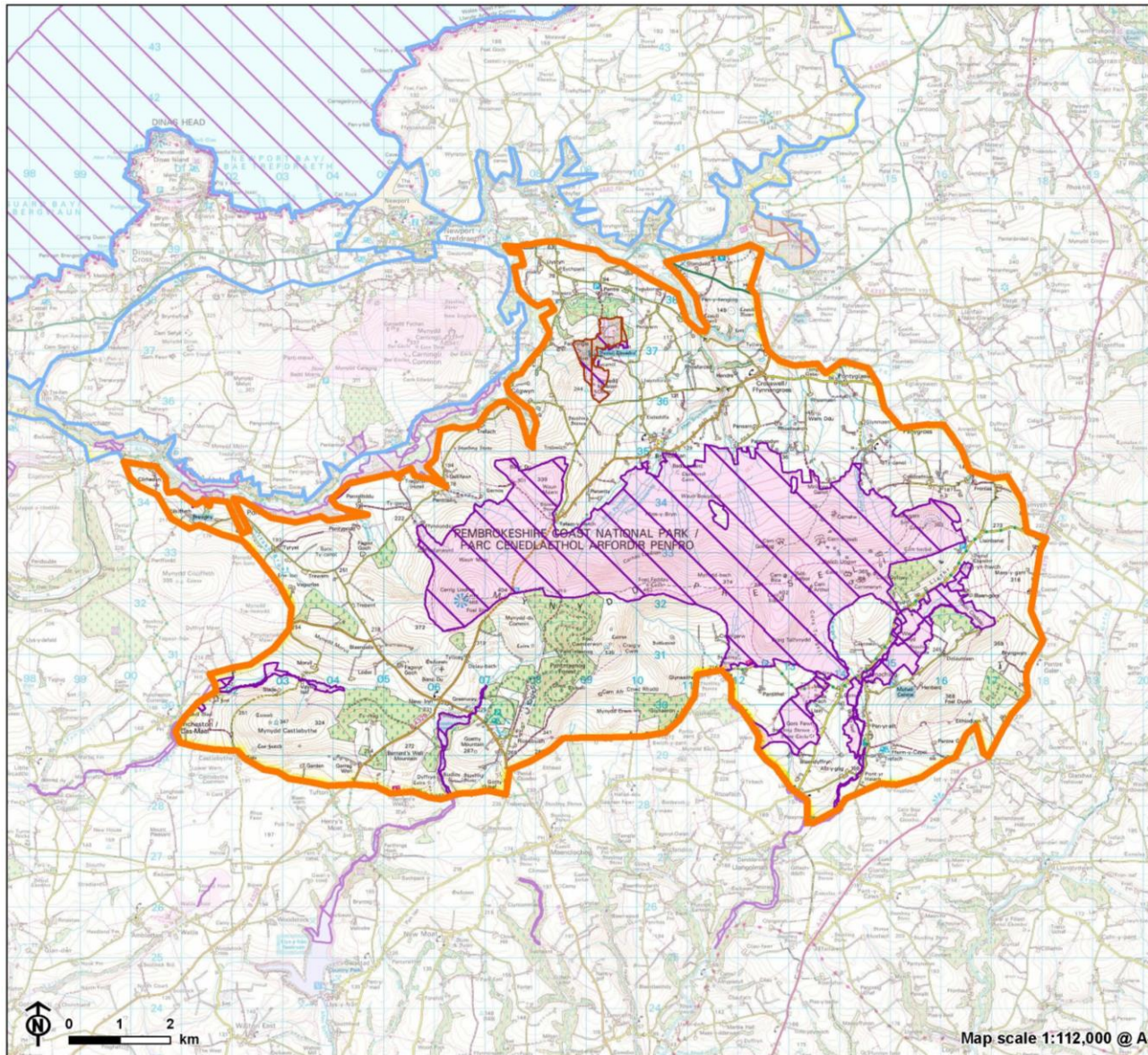
National Forest Inventory woodland*

*The NFI definition of woodland is a
minimum area of 0.5 hectares



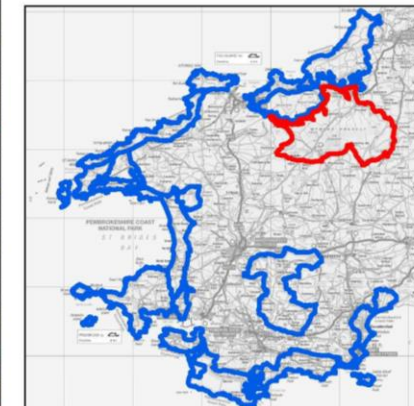
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CB:AHB EB:Collins_N LUC FIGX_11664_r0_LocationAndWoodland_A4L 09/11/2021
Source: OS, FC, NRW



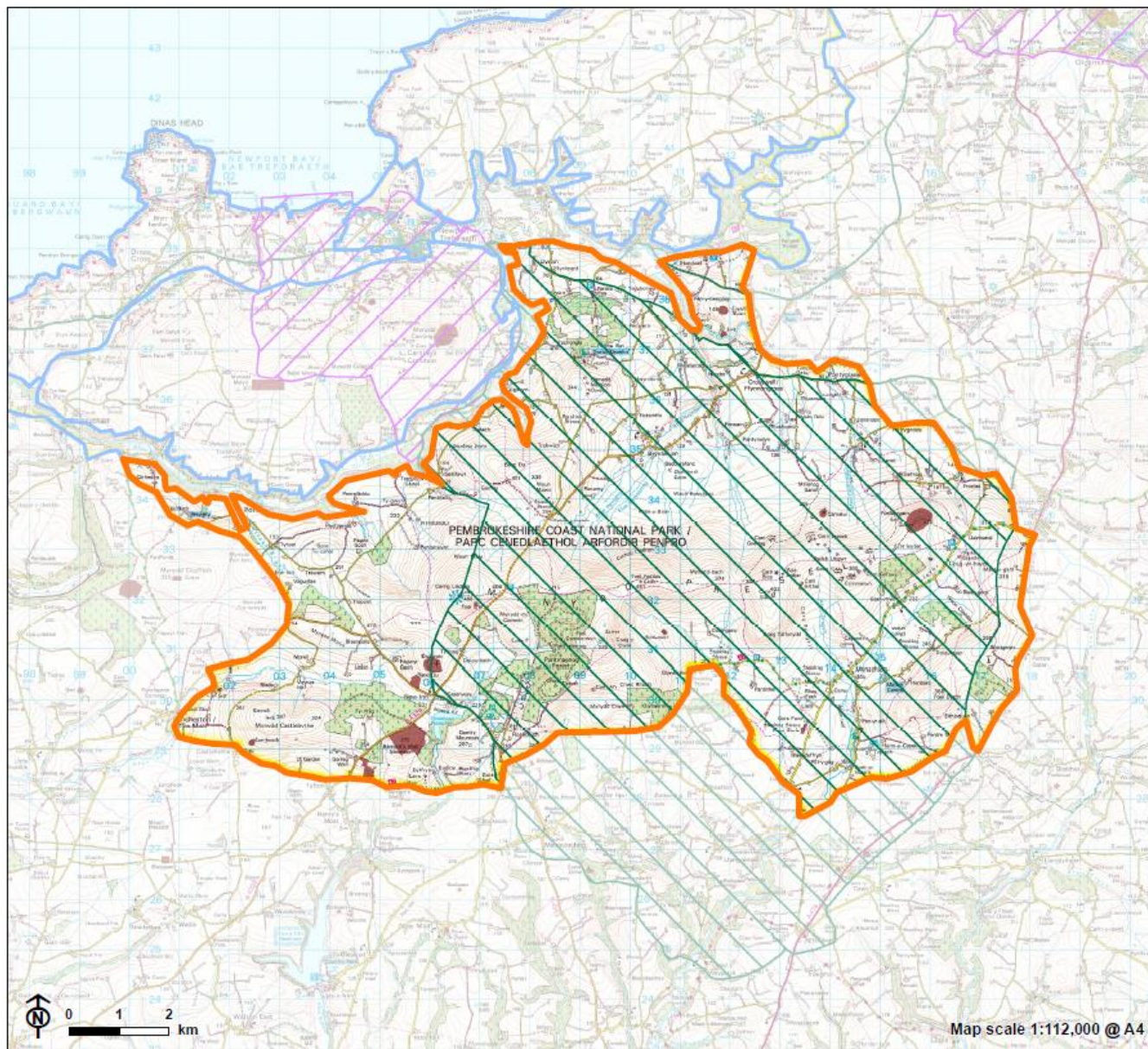
LCA 27 nature conservation designations

- LCA 27: Mynydd Preseli
- Neighbouring LCA
- National Nature Reserve
- Special Area of Conservation
- Site of Special Scientific Interest



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Source: OS, NRW



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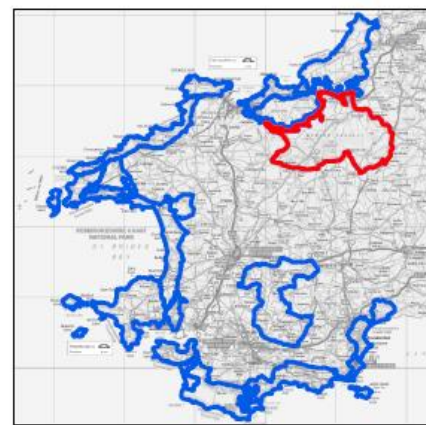
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Source: OS, Cadw

Trees and Woodland Siting and
Design Guidance
Pembrokeshire Coast National
Park Authority



LCA 27 Historic Environment Designations

- LCA 27: Mynydd Preseli
- Neighbouring LCA
- Outstanding Historic Landscape
- Special Historic Landscape
- Gardens and Kitchen Gardens
- Registered Historic Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Conservation Area



Existing woodland coverage within the LCA



View to Pentre Ifan Burial Chamber a Scheduled Monument, showing an area of broadleaved woodland to the north.

This Landscape Character Area (LCA) is characterised by extensive open grazed moorland fringed by small irregular fields containing rough grazing. Woodland comprises 9.2% of the total land cover. Angular coniferous plantations create dark blocks which dominate the lower south facing slopes of the main ridge and the Mynachlog-ddu valley, and some extend to the upper slopes where they break the skyline. These plantations are extensive, some over 100ha, although extensive areas have been felled (3.4% of the total land cover or 394 ha). Broadleaved woodland is very limited (2.8%), particularly in the uplands, although mature scrub has developed in places. Linear woodlands often follow streams draining from the uplands, predominately incised into the s north facing slopes. The fringing agricultural landscape on the edge of the LCA are more wooded, with large-scale broadleaved woodlands in the north (much of which is ancient) The patchwork of pasture fields on the undulating lower slopes and hills are enclosed by low hedges or hedgebanks with bracken and gorse, and hedgerow trees (predominantly oak).

Designated features and valued attributes within the LCA		
<i>The focus of this Guide is on the sensitivity and opportunities for woodland creation in relation to landscape character. It can only play an advisory role in the weighing of potential benefits of woodland creation against likely impacts on non-woodland habitats and cultural heritage assets, which should be considered in more detail at site level. Please refer to the main report for more detail.</i>		
Natural heritage	SAC, SPA, SSSI NNR, LNR (including Wildlife Trust/ RSPB reserves) RIGS Ancient woodland	There are four SACs which collectively cover 2982.6 (25.7%) of the LCA. There are eight SSSI in the LCA which cover 2982.6 ha (25.7%) of the LCA. The Ty Canol NNR covers 70.1ha (0.6%) of the LCA. RIGS cover 167.4ha (1.4%) of the LCA. Ancient woodland amounts to 87ha (0.75%).

Cultural heritage	National Park Register of Historic Landscapes Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and HER data	Preseli is a Landscape of Special Historic Interest in Wales which covers 8188.6ha (70.6%) of the LCA. There are 33 listed buildings in the LCA. There are 50 Scheduled Monuments which cover 83.3ha (0.7%) of the LCA. The LCA includes 987 HER records, which cover a range of archaeological and historical features, including scheduled and undesignated monuments, listed and non-listed historical buildings and locations of finds. These features date from prehistory up to recent times.
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Landscape sensitivity to new woodland planting		
Key sensitivities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The extensive upland ridge crested by a distinctive line of rocky crags/tors with associated block-littered slopes. ■ The nationally important semi-natural character of the slopes and summits (Mynydd Preseli SAC / SSSI) with valued upland habitats including heathland and acidic grassland which support a variety of plant and animal species, including ground nesting birds (e.g. skylarks and meadow pipits). ■ The bracken dominated slopes and areas of existing scrub are important habitats, particularly for the small pearl bordered fritillary, and adders. ■ The nationally important semi-natural character of the small valleys surrounding the upland areas (Eastern and Western Cleddau River SSSI, Gweunydd Blaencleddau SSSI, Waun Fawr SSSI), with their networks of wetland vegetation, including flushes, marshy grassland, wet heathland, and fen which support a variety of animal and plant species, including the marsh fritillary butterfly, and southern damselfly. ■ The pastoral character of the fringing agricultural land with small broadleaved woodland (much of which is ancient in origin) and areas of wood pasture (Ty Canol NNR and SSSI). ■ Dominance of very small irregular fields (formed following enclosure of common land in the early 19th century) surrounding the extensive open moorland. ■ The rich archaeological heritage with designated and undesignated monuments, including nationally valued prehistoric remains. ■ The landscape's high visual prominence. The extensive views to the coast and the surrounding landscapes. ■ The open, exposed character of the moorland, with a strong sense of remoteness. 	
Overview	<p>The dramatic open ridgeline and upland areas of moorland and heath are highly sensitive to change from woodland creation of any size due to their distinctive landform, visual prominence and valued semi-natural habitats (much of the area is designated as the Mynydd Preseli SAC/SSSI)</p> <p>Medium to large sized broadleaved woodland would not be out of place if carefully sited on lower slopes, particularly where they provide connectivity with the extensive woodlands in the adjacent lowland river valleys.</p> <p>The lower south-facing slopes of the LCA, are currently characterised by large scale coniferous plantations. These areas offer the opportunity for long term restructuring to a mosaic of open grassland or heathland habitats and broadleaved woodlands. Sensitivity to new mixed woodland would be higher, although smaller woodlands may be accommodated if sensitively sited as part of a long-term restructuring programme, where the longer term goal is to move to a high percentage of native woodland species.</p> <p>The pastoral character of the fringing farmland surrounding the moor, particularly the smaller valleys to the north would be sensitive to larger scale woodland creation, but smaller woodlands could extend existing woodland and provide an opportunity to link with the more extensive woodlands both within the LCA and in lowland river valleys beyond.</p>	

Landscape Sensitivity Scores					
Broadleaved woodland					
Small-scale broadleaved woodlands (≤5ha)	Low				
Small-medium scale broadleaved woodlands (>5- 15ha)		Low-Moderate			
Medium-scale broadleaved woodlands (>15-30ha)			Moderate		
Large-scale broadleaved woodlands (>30ha)			Moderate		
Mixed woodland					
Small-scale mixed woodlands (≤5ha)			Moderate		
Small-medium scale mixed woodlands (>5- 15ha)				Moderate-high	
Medium-scale mixed woodlands (>15-30ha)				Moderate-high	
Large-scale mixed woodlands (>30ha)					High



View north-west from the B4329 road across the expansive, grassland-dominated landscape, with sparse tree cover.



View south-east across small pastoral fields beneath the Preseli Hills.

Opportunities for future tree and woodland coverage within the LCA

- Woodland creation of any size or type should be avoided on the upper slopes and summits of the Mynydd Preseli and its outliers, due to the risk of masking the landscape's distinctive skylines and rocky crags, obscuring its expansive character, or negatively impacting important upland habitats.
- Restructure existing conifer plantations, removing incongruous geometric blocks, particularly those which occupy prominent positions on upland skylines and creating softer outlines that respond to topography in a way that reduces landscape impact.
- Work towards the gradual reversion of uniform plantations to a mosaic of open habitats and woodlands with a high broadleaved content. This could provide environmental benefits where existing woodland is dominated by single species, low diversity or non-native plantations, such as at the Pantmaenog Forest on the southern slopes or Ty-Rhyg below Mynydd Castlebythe.
- Encourage natural regeneration of scattered scrub woodland along narrow and steep sided upland stream valleys which offer good opportunities for connectivity.
- New broadleaved woodland planting (up to and including large-scale woodlands) could strengthen existing landscape character if located along the contours of the lower slopes of the Preseli Hills or their outliers.
- New woodlands could provide links to existing woodland, particularly the extensive woodland in adjacent lowland river valleys, such as the Gwaun and Nevern Valleys to the north (LCA 26: Cwm Gwaun/Afon Nyer).
- Small-medium or small-scale broadleaved woodland planting could increase woodland coverage in the fringing agricultural land (Mynydd Crogwy and New Inn areas) but should adjoin existing woodland and/or hedges in order to avoid masking the intricate historic field patterns of the pastoral landscape.
- Consider the opportunities for the regeneration and extension of traditional wood pasture in the fringing agricultural land.
- Small-scale woodland creation could provide opportunities to expand and increase the connectivity of existing broadleaved woodlands and linear riparian woodland in the smaller valleys, and reinforce their enclosed wooded character. Connectivity between high value ancient woodlands should be prioritised.
- Consider the potential for natural regeneration of semi-natural woodland and scrub, particularly extending along the upper courses of narrow tributaries to enhance flood management, water quality, biodiversity and to help prevent soil erosion.
- Site new small-scale woodland to screen farm-based development or small-scale tourism developments/infrastructure (such as car parks) and integrate within the existing pattern of woodland distribution and land-use.
- There are opportunities to connect and expand existing ancient woodlands, including wood pasture (particularly from Ty Canol NNR).
- Any new planting should follow principles of good design as set out in the UK Forestry Standard.
- Choose appropriate native species suited to local conditions (e.g. climate, soil, hydrology, existing vegetation) to achieve a diverse woodland mosaic character.

Strategic guidance for new woodland / tree planting

Landform and scale

- Avoid masking the distinctive exposed ridgeline of the Mynydd Preseli with its rocky crags/tors with associated block-littered slopes.
- Design woodland to align along existing contours and undulations of the landscape, such as along the narrow, steep sided hillside streams, as well as minor valleys extending down from the open slopes. In general tree planting and spacing should be less dense as it extends higher up the slope.

Landcover (including semi-natural habitats)

- Avoid adversely affecting existing areas of non-woodland semi-natural habitats, directly or indirectly, and consider new woodland in the context of other opportunities for nature recovery of existing and potential habitat networks. This includes valued upland habitats (acidic grassland and heathland) with nationally important areas of wetland habitats (boggy flushes, marshy grassland, wet heath and fen in the small valleys surrounding the upland areas which support a variety of animal and plant species, including the marsh fritillary butterfly, and southern damselfly).

Field pattern

- Restore and reinforce the existing pattern of small pastoral fields in the fringing agricultural land by conserving and regenerating existing hedgerow boundaries and hedgebanks. Consider allowing hedgerows to grow out (where not obscuring public highways/rights of way) through reduced coppicing/flailing cycles, to enhance biodiversity.
- Conserve existing hedgerow trees and plant new ones where absent or to avoid senescence. Spacing between trees should be irregular.
- Protect, and where appropriate, extend the existing woodland along the minor watercourses connecting to the existing woodlands on the lower slopes.
- The development of scrub and woodland on the species-rich heaths and commons should be kept in check through appropriate grazing levels.

Existing tree and woodland character

- Conserve and restore existing semi-natural broadleaved woodlands and trees in the landscape, including field boundaries, to improve connectivity and strengthen the landscape framework.
- Protect areas of ancient woodland in the north of the character area at Ty Canol National Nature Reserve and Pentre-Evan Wood and along the Afon Brynberian valley. Buffer ancient woodland by establishing fringing areas and encourage natural regeneration.
- Manage and monitor invasive native or harmful species in woodlands and the impact of pathogens, pests and diseases, e.g. *Phytophthora*, *Chalara* (ash dieback), acute oak decline, bronze birch borer

Historic character

- Avoid adversely affecting, directly or indirectly, the rich cultural heritage of the area, particularly the numerous archaeological remains and their setting, including prehistoric hillforts, cairns, standing stones, burial chambers, stone circles, round barrows and settlements. These features should be kept open, and scrub removed – ideally through grazing at appropriate levels.
- Avoid siting woodland across multiple fields which may mask the historic field patterns of very small irregular fields surrounding the open moorland.

Visual character

- Conserve the extensive views to the coast and surrounding landscapes from the open ridgeline and higher slopes, including from the east-west ridgeline trail known as Flemings' Way, and the marked viewpoints at Cerrig Lladron. When designing and siting woodland, ensure that it does not obscure these important views.
- Ensure that new woodland in the fringing pastoral landscape does not detract from views to the rugged skylines of this area and open hilltops, as these are important features of the landscape.

Perceptual and scenic qualities

- Conserve the open character of the upper slopes of the Mynydd Preseli. Locate new woodland so that it does not detract from the enjoyment of the exposed and remote quality of the vast tracts of open access land in this upland landscape.
- A reversion of clear-felled areas or conifer plantations to a mosaic of broadleaved woodland and open heathland/grassland could provide ecological as well as landscape and visual benefits with their soft muted colours and open character.
- Enhance the experience for recreational users, ensuring public access is maintained across the network of public rights of way in the fringing farmland.
- Have regard to the cumulative impact of woodland creation and tree planting, ensuring it does not lead to a change of landscape character, particularly in the more open landscape of the higher slopes.