



Location and Context

The *Foothills with Forest – Dumfries & Galloway* Landscape Character Type is found throughout the central and eastern parts of Dumfries and Galloway. It occurs in nine different locations – Cairnsmore, Rhinns of Kells, Stroan, Cullendoch, Lauriston, Ae, Oer, Eskdale and Tinnisburn.

Key Characteristics

- Dark green blanket of forest covering undulating foothills.
- Changing landscape with areas with large and medium scale forestry operations and wind farm development.
- Forested areas dominated by Sitka Spruce, interspersed with mixed conifers and broadleaf planting, undergoing felling and replanting in large coupes.
- Tall mature conifers at roadside.
- Areas of more complex, locally distinctive and smaller-scale landscapes, with semi-improved pasture with walled enclosures on open ground, occasional lochs and estate policies, distinctive ridges and landmark summits.
- Areas of relict landscape with remains of pre-improvement settlement and agriculture clustered in burn valleys.
- Wind farms, locally defining the character in some areas of central Dumfries and Galloway.

Landscape Character Description

Landform

The *Foothills with Forest – Dumfries & Galloway* Landscape Character Type is closely related to the *Foothills – Dumfries & Galloway*, but has predominantly forest land cover which creates its forest-dominated character. These foothills are generally found at heights of between 170 and 250 metres and are often undulating with gently rounded summits. The

landscape is dissected by many streams which have cut incisions into the landform.

Landcover and Settlement

The different stages of forest rotation can typically be experienced within short distances where mature conifers contrast with the raw appearance of young planting on the hillside. Design improvements are evident in many areas, e.g. deciduous fringes, informal edges, feathering on high slopes. There are locally distinctive unforested areas, with semi-improved pasture, rougher and unenclosed in higher areas, and elsewhere with patterns of drystone dykes, occasional lochs and estate policies, distinctive ridges and landmark summits. These areas are obscured by forest in areas, as are some archaeological remains. Occasionally, breaks in the tree cover reveal old stone enclosures and forts. Relict landscapes of mainly post-medieval settlement and field systems cluster in some burn valleys, including Polharrow Burn, Bargaly Glen and Archer Beck. Recreational forests are also found in this landscape type, with tourism facilities and way-marked trails integrated into the forests.

Wind farm development is occurring in the Stroan and Ae parts of the *Foothills with Forest – Dumfries & Galloway*, which are among the most extensive areas of this LCT, and where there are more plateau-like landscapes. This is changing local landscape character to the point where wind farms are becoming a key characteristic.

Perception

Although the dense conifer forest of these areas gives a strongly unified landscape character, the scale and context of some of these areas is quite variable.



This is one of 390 Landscape Character Types identified at a scale of 1:50 000 as part of a national programme of Landscape Character Assessment republished in 2019.

The area covered by this Landscape Character Type was originally included in the Dumfries and Galloway LCA (Land Use Consultants), published 1998.