



**SCOTTISHPOWER
RENEWABLES**

CIEEM Autumn Conference 2020

Windfarms: Everything but Turbines

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Introduction

1. Development and land use in the uplands
2. Anatomy of a windfarm: 3 case studies



Development and land use in the uplands

Current system is flawed in terms of delivering benefits

1. The current system protects what is left (EIA, Habs Regs, W&C Act, CIEEM guidance)
 2. Assessments are based only on *current* condition as a baseline
 - In danger of **Shifting Baseline Syndrome**
 - E.g. is blanket bog covered by plantation a “coniferous woodland” or a degraded blanket bog with trees on it?
 3. *Potential* condition of land is not considered
 - Should we evaluate the potential value of land as well as the current value?
 - Land is not just the current habitat, but any future potential of that land goes as well
 - Otherwise, **we fail to recognise the opportunity cost**
 4. Mitigation only for significant impacts defined by **current condition**. We therefore **only protect what is left**

“Status quo” is being maintained *at best*

Development and land use in the uplands

An Alternative?

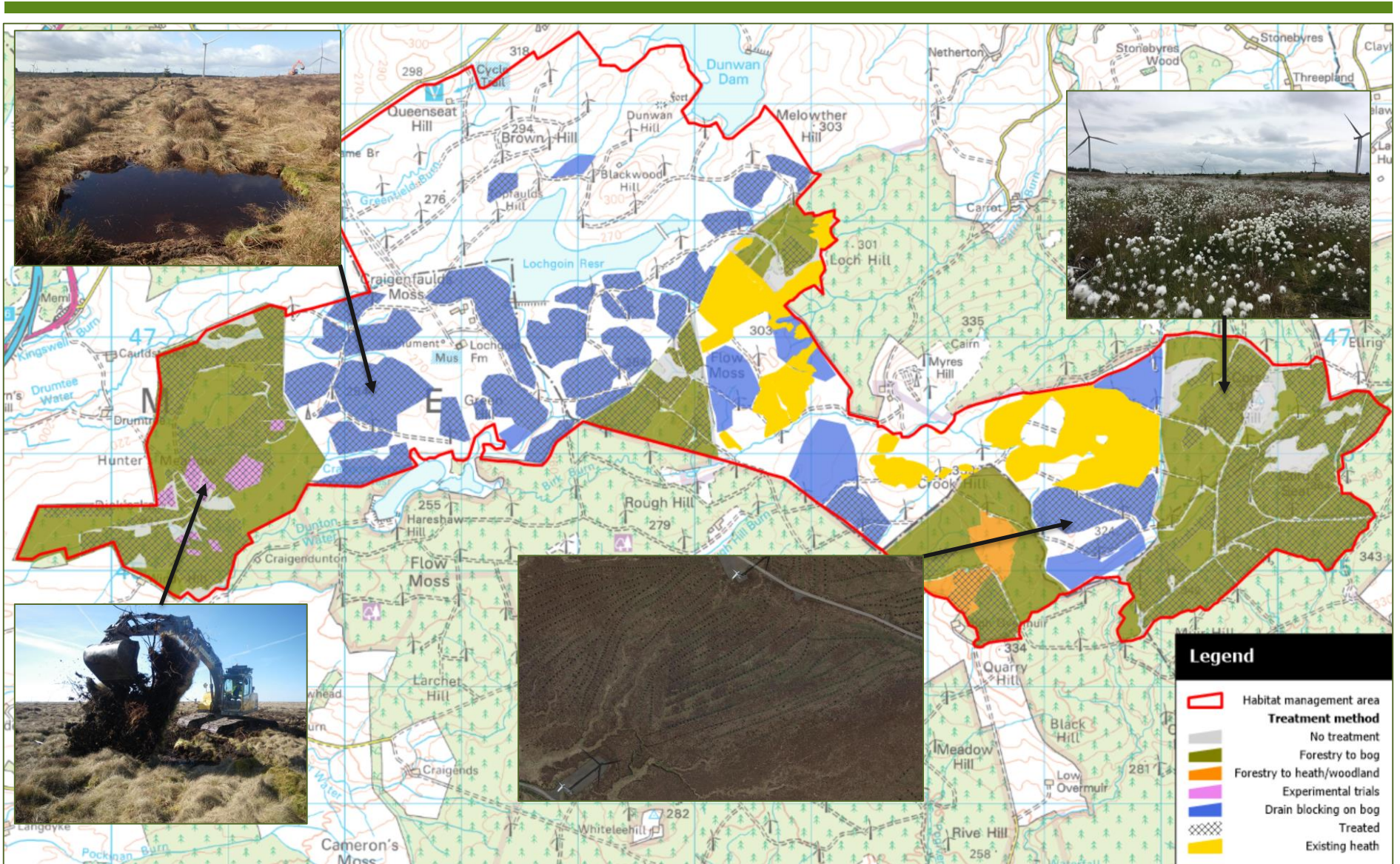
- Biodiversity Net Gain: DEFRA net gain tool remains anchored to current habitat condition. 10% improvement of currently low value features = not a lot. What will NatureScot do?
- Assess habitats for **both current condition and future potential condition**
- Mitigation and net gain becomes an exponent of the **current or potential value** of habitat (whichever is higher) leading to greater gains and **greater parity between degraded and high quality landscapes**

Create incentives to implement enhancement/BNG

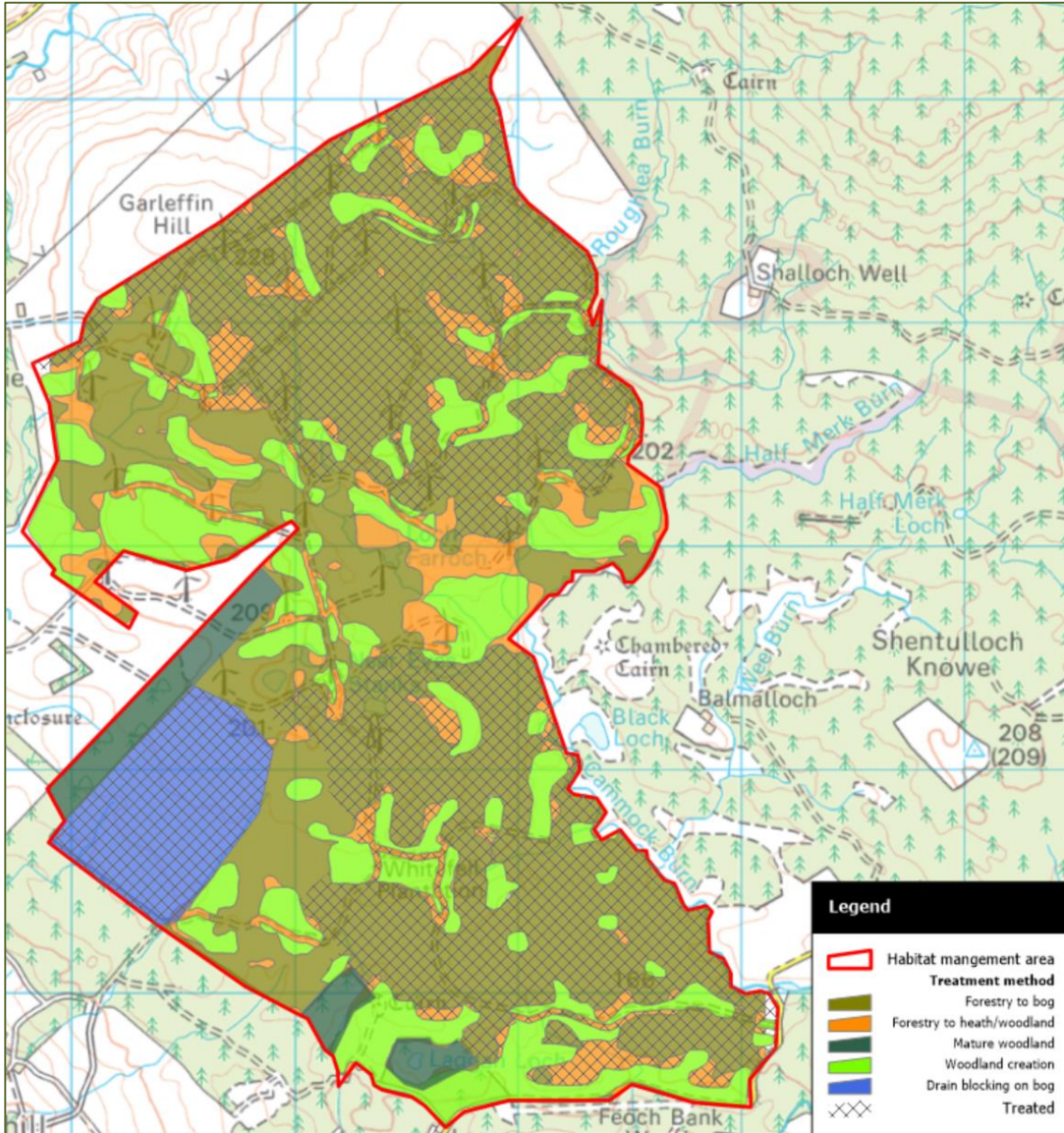
- Needs **greater weight** in the development process
- Needs **consistency** in planning consultations and decisions

It can be done...

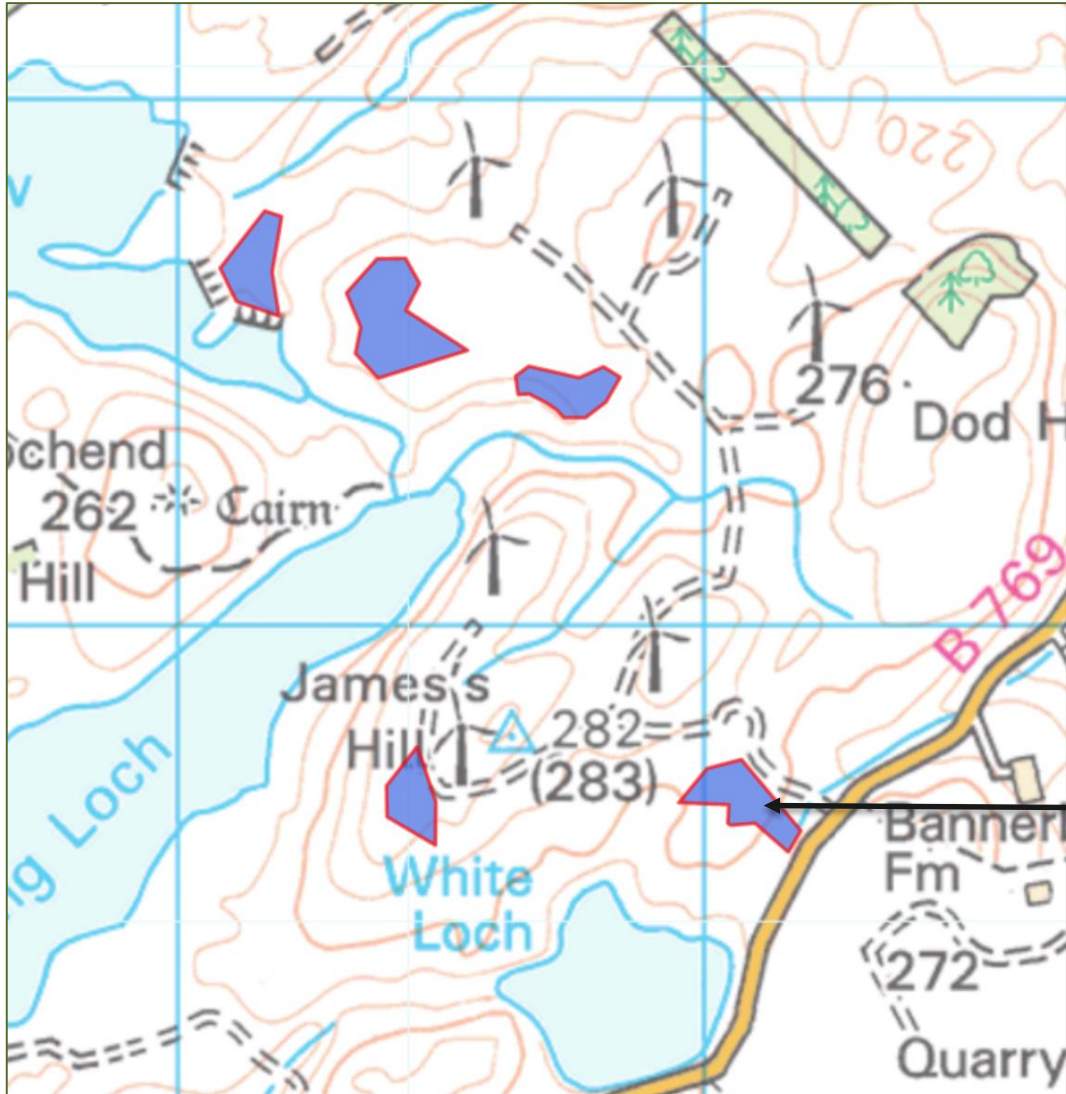
Anatomy of a windfarm: Whitelee



Anatomy of a windfarm: Mark Hill



Anatomy of a windfarm: Middleton



Summary

1. Existing assessment process based on current habitat condition may not yield meaningful net gains.
2. Current and potential habitat condition and land use should be incorporated into assessments.
3. Developers need incentives to deliver environmental benefits, and consistency between agencies.
4. There is huge potential in the developer space to do more.