

## NCA 36 Southern Pennines

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### *Overview*

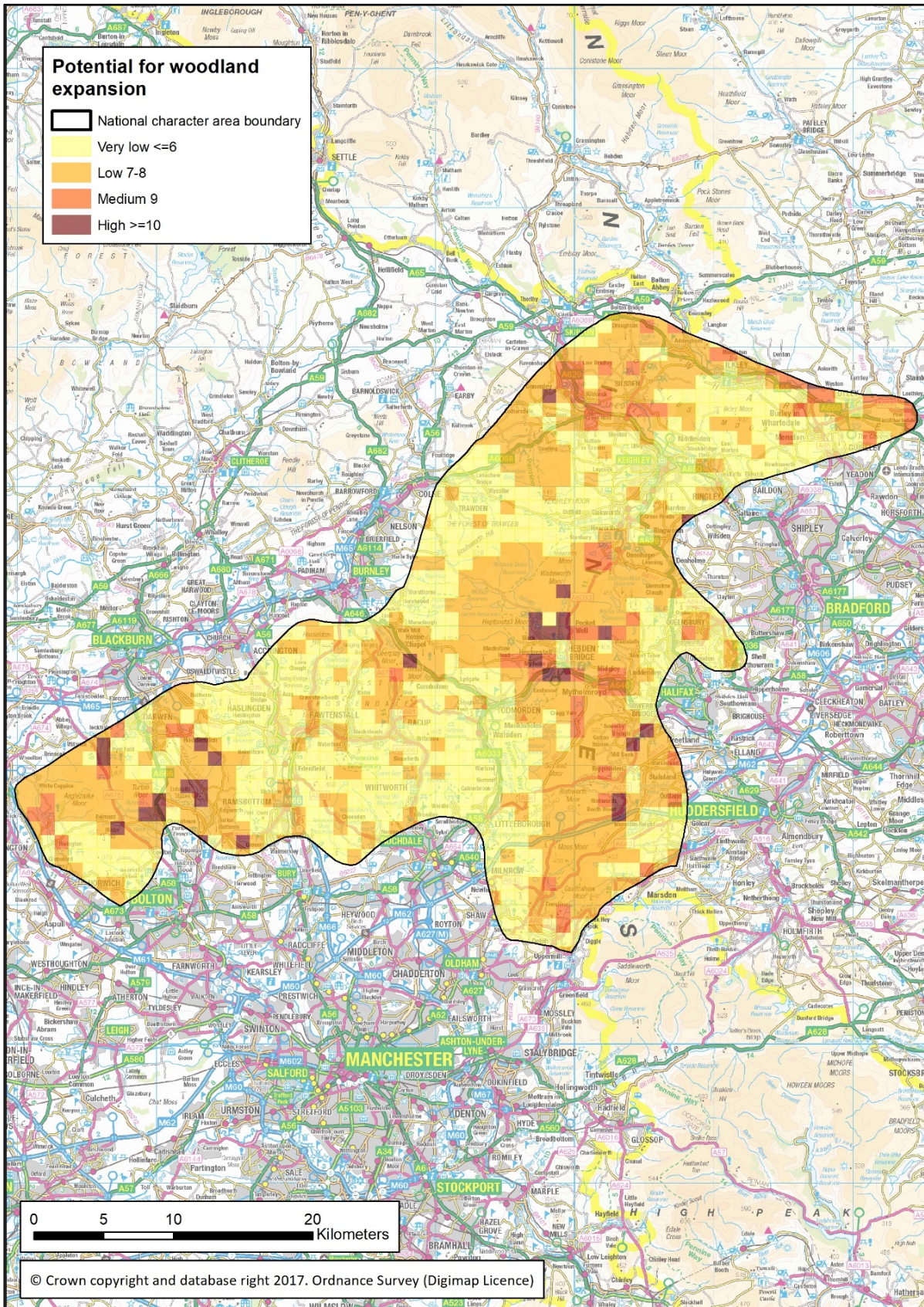
The NCA encompasses a section across the Pennine Moors, in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and is included within the Upland and Upland Fringe Agricultural Landscape Type. It is dominated by exposed moorland upland, cut by many deeply incised and steep valleys, which drain into some of the main river systems of southern Lancashire and Yorkshire. Agriculture is mainly pastoral, with dairy farming in the valleys. Fields tend to be small in the valleys, bounded by drystone walls. Higher up, fields are larger and more regular, again enclosed by stone walls. The moorlands are under common grazing. Roads and settlement are largely restricted to the valleys. The settlement pattern is highly nucleated, creating strings of villages and towns linked by main roads. Woodland cover is low, at only 6% of the NCA, though nearly 72% is broadleaved and 15% is ancient woodland. Woodland is largely restricted to the valleys, particularly steep valley or clough sides, and there are some small copses around isolated farmsteads.

### *The Historic Environment Character*

The moorland character of much of the NCA has led to good preservation of prehistoric remains, including Mesolithic deposits beneath peat, and numerous carved rocks on Rombalds Moor. There are also stone circles, and burial mounds and cairns on the moorlands as well as later prehistoric enclosed settlements. There are Roman forts at Ilkely and Castleshaw, and sections of Roman road are known, leading north and north-west from the fort at Manchester. Romano-British civilian settlement takes the form of several farmstead sites. In the later medieval period, the moors became the centres of medieval hunting forests, administered under forest law, in which manorial cattle farms, or vaccaries, were established. Towards the end of the medieval period, income from farming was supplemented by small-scale industries such as woollen textile production, coal mining and quarrying. The woollen industry grew, and settlements developed for weavers. This process became industrialised by the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with a move over to cotton in the Lancashire valleys, whilst wool remained important in Yorkshire. The development of steam-powered mills and a growth in the workforce needed to operate them, led to the massive expansion of the valley settlements into towns.

### *Opportunities for Woodland Expansion*

The mapping of historic and natural environment attributes indicates a low level of opportunity for woodland expansion, mainly restricted to the valleys and urban fringes. This is reflected in the NCA profile, where woodland expansion and restoration is listed as an additional opportunity, with more emphasis placed on the opportunities for enhancing moorland and the pastoral landscape. Existing woodland areas on the valleys sides could be extended and links made between them, to enhance connectivity.



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