

Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) Application Details

Business Reference Number:	111111	Woodland Creation application area (ha):	5h.00
Application name:	New Wood, under the Croft Woodland Project		

Introduction

The Woodland Operational Plan allows you to show that you have carefully considered all the relevant impacts and effects that the work you are proposing in your application might have on the environment and where appropriate the measures you intend to take to mitigate any adverse effects.

The Woodland Officer (WO) will take account of the details you have given in this Plan when they assess your application and it will also help them to decide on a score for your application.

General Details

You must complete this Woodland Creation Operational Plan and submit it with your Woodland Creation application.

The amount of supporting information you give will depend on the scale, location and nature of your application. You should give sufficient detail so that we can properly assess the work you propose. Your local Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) Conservancy office will be able to provide you with further advice about this.

Please note that the Woodland Officer who will assess your application may request further information or clarification about the details you give in this Operational Plan, especially those that may have an environmental impact on the site.

When you have completed your woodland creation operational plan, save the document to your computer and then upload to your on-line application.



Assessment of Potential Impact

Identifying Sensitive Areas

Check the appropriate boxes below to indicate if your application is within or adjacent to any of the following sensitive areas as defined under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

- National Nature Reserve or Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- National Park
- A World Heritage Site
- Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage or National Scenic Area
- A site designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or identified as a candidate Special Area of Conservation.
- A site classified or proposed as a Special Protection Area
- Land on which there is a Nature Conservation Order
- None of the above

Identifying Potential Impacts

Your application may have an impact or an effect on the environment. Please check the relevant boxes below to indicate if your application will have a potential impact.

- People:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on neighbouring properties or local communities?*
- Archaeology:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on a Scheduled or Unscheduled Monument?*
- Soil:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on the physical structure of soil or include deep peats (defined as peat greater than 50cm in depth)?*
- Flora:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on high value habitats such as those listed on the [Scottish Biodiversity List](#)? For example: Lowland Raised Bog.*
- Landscape:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on areas of national landscape importance such as National Parks, National Scenic Area, or Designed landscapes?*
- Fauna:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on wildlife. For example: [European Protected Species](#) such as Hen harrier?*



- Access:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on local transport networks such as public highways?*
- Recreation:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on any existing recreational facilities such as way-marked footpaths?*
- Water:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on any water bodies or water supplies?*
- Land use Balance:** *Does your application have an impact or an effect on prime agricultural land (defined as land use classes 1,2 and 3.1), or the local land use balance with agriculture?
You should refer to the 'Guidance About Woodland Creation on Agricultural Land' located on [Woodland Expansion Advisory Group \(WEAG\)](#) web page for further details.*
- No impact** *There will be **no effects or impacts** on any of the above.*

Explaining the Potential Impacts

If you have ticked any of the boxes in the section above ('Identifying Potential Impacts'), then please explain below what impact or effect the work described in your application may have.

People- The woodland will help contribute to encouraging local communities become involved in Forestry which ties in with the objectives set out by the Scottish Government and Scottish Forestry Strategy

Landscape - The woodland is within a NSA and can be seen from the township & public road. The proposed woodland will have a positive impact on the landscape as it will link up with existing woodland making the landscape more visually appealing and will fit well with the landscape character. Please see SNH Landscape Character Assessment Skye and Lochalsh review 71 Harbour Settlement

Recreation - The site contains a footpath that remains popular with hillwalkers and the proposed woodland will be a new attractive feature on the walk. Access will be unrestricted by way of self closing kissing gates on the hill walkers path.

Water - a public supply pipe runs through the proposal area.

Recreation - a public path runs through the proposal area.

Mitigating the Potential Impacts

Having identified the factors that will have an impact or effect on the site give details of the actions you will take to mitigate these impacts or effects (**refer to Annex 1**).

Landscape - see landscape appraisal perspective.

Water - an unplanted wayleave will be left in accordance with SW requirements.

Recreation - self-closing gates will be installed and an unplanted wayleave left to

maintain the existing access.

Selection Criteria

The WO will use the Woodland Creation Operational Plan to assess and support the scoring of your application.

For the woodland creation options:

Conifer; Diverse conifer; Broadleaves

Please use the Timber Transport Forum – '[Agreed Routes Map](#)' and check the relevant box below to indicate the timber transport route classification of the public road that will form the access to the new woodland being proposed.

- Agreed
- Consultation
- Severely restricted
- Excluded
- No classification

For the native woodland creation options:

Native Scots pine; Native upland birch; Native broadleaves and Native low density broadleaves

Please use the 'Native Woodland Habitat Network' map in the 'FGS (2014-20) Eligibility / Scoring Criteria' data on the [FCS Map Viewer](#) and check the relevant box below to indicate which of the habitat network zones your application is within.

- Primary (within 500m of a core native woodland)
- Secondary (within 2000m of a core native woodland)
- Out with the habitat network

Site Assessment

All Applications

The design of the work in your application should be based on a thorough assessment of the site. Please complete the following.

- Describe the management objectives for the site.

A croft woodland project. To expand and increase the connectivity of the native woodland area in the locality to enhance biodiversity, amenity, creating long term shelter and a woodfuel resource. The proposal is located within a "preferred" area in the Highland Council Indicative Forestry Strategy.

- Give a description of the planting site and indicate how you have assessed factors which will affect the design of the proposal. For example soil type, archaeology, landscape.

Aspect & topography- The site is within a bowl which is south, south-westerly facing
The ground rises from 40m to about 120m above sea level

Peaty podzols and peaty gleys, pockets of upland brown earth with small pockets of deep peat not exceeding 0.25ha. Rooting depth is generally >60cm.

Vegetation is heather, deer grass, molinia dominated wet heath and is degraded by grazing pressure.

- As an initial check, please indicate the climatic suitability of the site for the tree species you have chosen. Use the [FCS Map Viewer](#) - see the 'FGS (2014-20) Site Suitability' data.

(**Note** that we will make a further detailed on-site assessment to determine the suitability of the trees for the site).

Suitability for planting (FC map viewer):

- W4 very suitable
- W9 very suitable
- W11 very suitable to suitable
- W17 suitable
- W18 very suitable/ suitable

- Describe the species which you will plant and your proposed stocking density for each species. This information can be summarised in the associated woodland creation component areas table (refer to the [Woodland Creation Technical Support page](#)).

The species choice is made up of woodland types W4, W7, W11, W17 & W18 due to the varying soil types and other climatic factors. The dominant species is Downy Birch with a mix of Oak, Hazel and Alder on the majority of the site. Downy Birch, Willow and Alder will be planted on the smaller areas of W4 type. All native broadleaves will

be sourced from seed zone 105 unless by prior agreement with FCS. Planting distances will vary according to site conditions but average stocking density will be 1600 per Ha for all species.

Species proportions are as follows:

NUB:

PBI (downy birch) - 50%

WL (eared willow) - 15%

GWL (goat willow) - 10%

CAR (common alder) - 25%

NB:

SOK (sessile oak) - 15%

ROW (rowan) - 5%

PBI (downy birch) - 40%

HAZ (hazel) - 10%

CAR (common alder) - 15%

OG is 15 % of this option for landscape. water and electricity wayleaves.

Full breakdown is given in components table

If your application is more significant in scale, or located on a sensitive site, additional information is required to clearly demonstrate that all of the potential impacts and effects have been identified, considered and appropriate mitigation proposed.

The box below should only be completed by applications that meet this requirement. Your local Conservancy office can advise you further.

- **For larger more extensive proposals, and more sensitive sites**, you should provide additional detail about the site (**refer to Annex 2**).

Protection costs are high (ie ancillary capital costs as a proportion of initial planting cost exceeds 150%) but additional scheme benefits include a significant improvement to the croft landscape, providing opportunities for woodfuel and linking of existing native woodlands to provide a stronger habitat network

Please ensure that any maps or survey reports that have been produced, to support your application, are uploaded to the online application system.

Management Operations

All Applications

Having assessed the site please provide information about how you are going to establish the new woodland. The description of management operations should always be provided for all applications.

- Describe the management operations which will be undertaken to establish the new woodland.

Protection - The enclosure will be will be protected by 1500m of new deer fencing and will make use of 500m of the existing township deer fence along the lower eastern boundary. All new and existing fencing will be maintained secure by the applicant for the duration of the contract.

Ground Preparation- The site will be excavator hinge mounded using a tracked excavator at an overall density of 1600 per ha, spacing will vary between 1m to 4m in groups depending on micro site conditions . Mound size will be circa 40cmx40cm

Planting- Planting will follow the mounding pattern and notch planting into the mound

Drainage- No drainage anticipated

Deer Management - Due to the size of the woodland enclosure deer pressure is not considered high in this area. Fence boundaries will be monitored for tracking by deer and appropriate action will be taken to reduce pressure if necessary by the estate. Any deer entering the woodland will be removed immediately

Access - This will be unrestricted with pedestrian gates at both ends of the hillwalkers track. Access will be maintained whilst establishment operations are ongoing.

Beat up operation - A beat up operation will be completed in year 2 and year 4 after planting to ensure stocking density is correct.

Weeding - This will take place in areas where necessary after planting once a year for 5 years.

Maintenance operations will be carried out as required in order to secure establishment to contract specifications at year 5.

- **For larger more extensive proposals and more sensitive sites only**, you should provide additional detail about management operations (**refer to Annex 2**).

Please ensure that any maps or survey reports that have been produced to support your decision making are uploaded to the online application system.

Maps Required

You must submit maps with your application. Please read the [general mapping guidance](#) prior to submitting your maps.

- the perimeter boundary of the application area
- the boundary of each option
- the planting/species map
- existing water courses and planned or existing tracks on your map(s) as appropriate

Please note that, if appropriate, you might also need to submit other documentation such as ground preparation maps (refer to **Document Checklist**).

Forestry Grant Scheme





Annex 1

Assessment of Potential Impact

If you have identified the factors that will have an effect or an impact on the site give detail about how you will mitigate against any **adverse impacts**:

- **People:** Detail any discussions which you have had with neighbours, local communities or other stakeholders and explain how this has influenced your application.
- **Archaeology:** Indicate what survey work has been undertaken and describe how archaeology will be protected.
- **Soil:** Provide an accurate assessment of the soil on site and describe how you will manage the quality of the soil.
- **Flora:** Detail the nature and extent of high value habitats and describe how you will protect these habitats.
- **Landscape:** Provide details of how the impact on the landscape has been assessed and how the application has been designed to minimise any impact.
- **Fauna:** Detail the nature of the likely impacts on wildlife from your activities and how you will mitigate these impacts.
- **Access:** Detail the nature of the likely impacts on access from your activities and how you will mitigate these impacts.
- **Recreation:** Detail the nature of the likely impacts on recreation from your activities and how you propose to protect or enhance them.
- **Water:** Detail the nature of the likely impacts on water bodies or water supplies from your activities and how you will mitigate these impacts
- **Land use balance:** Detail the nature of the likely impacts on agriculture from your activities and how you will mitigate these impacts and integrate with forestry.
You should refer to the 'Guidance About Woodland Creation on Agricultural Land' located on [Woodland Expansion Advisory Group \(WEAG\)](#) web page for further details.



Annex 2

For larger more extensive proposals, and more sensitive sites describe the site and the management operations that you will carry out in more detail.

Your local Conservancy office will be able to advise you about the level of detail that will be required. However the lists below identify most of the points that you will need to consider:

Site Assessment:

- **Site surveys:** List the site surveys which have been carried out in order to inform tree species selection. For example:
 - Soil survey
 - Soil depth survey
 - Vegetation survey
- **Woodland Strategy** (or equivalent): Describe how your proposal fits with the Local Authority woodland strategy
- **Native Woodland Provenance:** For the native woodland creation options specify the [Seed Source Zone](#).

Management Operations:

- **Ground preparation:** Describe the type of ground preparation you will use, including size of mound/screef/furrow. Where you propose multiple ground preparation techniques then you must identify on a map.
- **Drainage:** Identify any existing drains/watercourses and show where you intend to create new drains.
- **Fertiliser input:** Describe the proposed fertiliser regime.
- **Protection:** Describe how the site will be protected.
- **Deer management:** Describe how deer will be managed on the site, appending a deer management plan if required. You should refer to the [Deer Management Best Practice Guide](#) and the [Joint Agency statement on deer fencing](#). You may be asked to submit a checklist from the Joint Agency guidance (May 2010).
- **Access Tracks:** Provide details of any new access tracks which will be created as part of this application.

Documents Checklist

Ensure that you have provided all of the necessary information required for your application.

Required information -

Please check the box (mark 'x' in the box) to confirm that you have provided the following:

- Map(s) of the perimeter boundary of the application area
- Map(s) of the woodland creation option boundary(s)
- Map(s) showing the planting/species
- Map(s) showing existing watercourses and planned tracks
- Table showing the woodland creation component areas
(You can get the template table for woodland creation component areas on the [Woodland Creation Technical Support page](#))

Other information required – If you have supplied other information, for example:

- a map showing planned ground preparation
- a map showing soil types and depths
- a vegetation survey
- an archaeology survey
- a landscape appraisal

Then please list here:

- Other: |
- Other: SW guidance on planting distances.
- Other: Landscape appraisal
- Other: Joint Agency Statement on Fencing checklist
- Other:

We suggest that you use the following format for saving all of your related documents so that they are easily identifiable, for example:

WC [your application name] table of component area.xls
WC [your application name] map showing ground preparation.jpeg
WC [your application name] vegetation survey.doc