

English Woodland Grant Scheme

Woodland Condition, Opportunity & Threat Assessment

Reference
COT EXAMPLE 1

(For Forestry Commission Use)

Purpose This document is the Forestry Commission's template designed to assist with undertaking a low-level assessment of existing woodlands. The assessment is designed to be a 'snap-shot', and subsequent assessments can be used to indicate change in the woodland condition. These are not funded by EWGS Woodland Assessment Grant.

Use The COT Assessment is used...

- To briefly assess the current condition of a woodland
- To identify the main opportunities for the woodland to deliver social and environmental public benefits
- To identify the key factors that may be putting at risk the delivery of these public benefits.
- To inform decisions about subsequent management, and grant support potential.

A COT assessment of this kind is a pre-requisite for applications to the EWGS Woodland Management Grant, where no management plan exists or is otherwise required.

Assessment The COT Assessment should ideally be undertaken by a professional woodland manager or someone with good experience in woodland management.

The attached COT assessment form is available to anyone who wishes to use it, whether or not it is to support grant or felling licence applications. The Forestry Commission does not guarantee the accuracy or authority of an assessment undertaken or subsequently used for any other purpose.

Form The COT assessment form is available in the Woodland Management Grant Guide. It can also be downloaded as a pdf file or as an MS Word 97 form for on-screen use, from the FC website page www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wmg.

Help for COT assessment e-form

Tab	to move to next field
Shift + Tab	to move to previous field
Ctrl + Tab	to insert a tab in a text entry
Spacebar	to toggle checkboxes

Click on a field beside a  symbol and press F1 for help

Woodland Condition, Opportunity & Threat Assessment

1. Contact and Property Information







Wood name	Stand Plantation	
Grid Reference	SP 123 456	
Wood area (ha)	8.80	
 Date of Assessment	10/10/2005	

Owner Name	Mr Smith	
Owner address	The Stand	
Post Code	AB12 3CD	
Owner Tel	01234 567890	Fax 01234 098765
Owner email	stand@provider.co.uk	
Other contact details	Mobile 07831 6574839	


Assessor Name	Mr C Onsulant	
Assessor Tel	01234 881122	Mobile 017794 881133
Assessor email	Consultancy@provider.co.uk	
Other contact details	Mobile 07831 881144	

FC Contact Name	M Young	
FC Contact Tel.	01223 314546	
FC Contact email	M.Young@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	

2. Background Survey

Tick	Designations (see below)	Name or other reference or descriptor
<input type="checkbox"/>	SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar 	
<input type="checkbox"/>	SINC, LNR, Local Wildlife site 	
<input type="checkbox"/>	ASNW, PAWS 	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	National Park, AONB, TPO 	Cotswolds AONB
<input type="checkbox"/>	SAM, OAM 	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Veteran Trees 	

3. Woodland benefits and desired outcomes

Benefits and Desired Outcomes	Describe
	The owner wishes to see the value of the wood increase in terms of it's aesthetic appearance, it's capital value and quality of the timber grown through sensitive management and by applying current UK standards. He is opening the woods to allow permissive public access and is therefore keen to see required safety standards outlined and acheived.

4. Assessment of Condition

Species composition		%
	Native Broadleaves	50
	Other Broadleaves	40
	Conifers	10
	Total	100%

Stocking	Tick one	
<i>(percentage of gross area that is under canopy cover)</i>	0 – 20%	<input type="checkbox"/>
	21 – 40%	<input type="checkbox"/>
	41 – 60%	<input type="checkbox"/>
	61 – 80%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	81 – 100%	<input type="checkbox"/>

Age Structure	%	
	Open Space	20
	Single age class	0
	2 – 4 age classes	80
	Multiple age classes	0
	Intimate and diverse	0
	Total	100%

Understorey	Tick one	
	Present	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Patchy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Largely absent	<input type="checkbox"/>

Regeneration	Tick one	
<i>Are there signs of seedling regeneration in sufficient density to maintain the canopy over the next 20 years?</i>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	N/A (too young)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Browsing and Grazing levels	Describe
<i>i</i>	Small amounts of ash regeneration currently free of any browsing damage, but there are signs of deer browsing on the bramble. Any increase in the proportion of regen / planting will require deer numbers to be monitored and appropriate action taken.

Significant Other Features	Describe
<i>i</i>	A bridlepath runs through the southern corner of the wood Some standing deadwood in the crop along the lines required under UKWAS.

Management Access	Describe
<i>i</i>	Good access exists for vehicles across field from council road. Hardstanding created for farm use would also serve for timber storage after extraction. Existing hard rides could be linked at southern edge to allow easier vehicle access around the wood. No culverts required.

Predominant adjoining landuse	Describe
<i>i</i>	Northern boundary links with neighbouring wood / scrub land, other boundaries are to arable fields.

Other comments	Describe

- i** Some evidence of spray drift on the woodland margins. Nearby footpath could be linked into permissive path.

5. Assessment of Opportunities and Threats

Comment on the **Management Opportunities** and **Threats** to the woodland as appropriate.

Social / Cultural	Describe
i	Residents of North Stand Village already use the wood on an informal basis. There is a persistent but small amount of fly tipping at the wood entrance, which requires fortnightly clearing. Roman road runs through the field some 100m away, but there are no known remains in the wood.

Environmental	Describe
i	Ground flora is weak and dominated by ivy, with nettle on the woodland / field margins, some dogs mercury under the hazel. Nettle is a result of spray drift removing natural vegetation. Early signs of Japanese Knotweed at the main entrance.

Economic	Describe
i	Timber is currently of low value mainly due to age. There will be no direct economic advantage to allowing a more formal access arrangement, but it is hoped that with an improved relationship with the public the fly tipping will reduce.

6. Work proposed to achieve the desired outcomes set out in Section 3.

Proposed work
i

- 1/ Thin broadleaves to best stem maintaining species diversity and increasing dbh size range.
- 2/ Open up existing ride and bridlepath.
- 3/ Create circular link for vehical access and permissive path.
- 4/ Tidy up existing layby creating enough space for two cars.
- 5/ Spray Japanese Knotweed.
- 6/ Fortnightly litter check.
- 7/ Annual safety check.


7. Recommendations for further survey before work commences

Recommended Surveys
i

Engage local tree warden and community of North Stand Village, inform of thinning proposal and circular walk. See if any assistance would be forthcoming with litter path maintenance etc.
Annual safety inspection along permissive path.

8. Support for woodland work

Advice for woodland owner re: Potential for grants, Felling Licence needs, potential for training, seminar attendance, organisational membership

-  EWGS grants could be available for assistance with capital expenditure on path / parking work. Felling Licence must be applied for before any thinning starts.